

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Semarang is one of the most important cities in Central Java. Its strategic location on the north coast of Java gave birth to an interesting history and rich culture. In the 18th century, Semarang became one of the centers of trade for migrants. One of the main pillars of this trade activity was the Tanjung Emas Port, which remains an important economic gateway for the city today. The harbor in Semarang, especially Tanjung Emas Harbor, has a close relationship with the rivers in Semarang, especially Kali Semarang. In the past, Kali Semarang served as Semarang's main harbor, with commercial ships anchored there, even going as far as Chinatown. Tanjung Emas Port was later developed.

Kali Semarang is the basis for the creation of the embryonic city of Semarang. According to a 1965 map of Semarang, the embryonic city was in the area that became the Johar market area (Widjanarka, 2007). Urban villages were created along its course, and settlements emerged from migrants who stopped by to trade or settle there. Today, Semarang's legacy as a port city is reflected in the diverse communities that live there, with some old kampongs indicating that they were inhabited by ethnic migrants (Maziyah et al., 2021).

The arrival of traders from various countries to Semarang through the Kali Semarang in the past had an impact that is still felt today, reflected in the form of cultural acculturation, traditions that continue to be preserved, a blend of architectural styles and the religious life of the community. The ethnic diversity brought by migrants gave birth to distinctive multicultural settlements, one of which is Pekojan Village inhabited by the Koja people, a group of Muslim Indians from Gujarat (Justisia Channel, 2020). According to Justisia Channel (2020), the Koja community that inhabits the Pekojan area, apart from being known as traders, also plays a role in

spreading the teachings of Islam, blending in with the local community through marriage and living together.

Over time, the presence of Koja people who settled and interacted with the natives formed a complete and distinctive community, resulting in the formation of Pekojan Village. This village is not only a center of trading activities, but also a place of rich cultural acculturation, where traditions and customs from various backgrounds blend harmoniously. This is reflected in the daily life of the community, ranging from language, routine activities that continue to be preserved, livelihoods to religious celebrations that are carried out together. Pekojan Village, one of the oldest villages in Semarang, has various historical relics, one of which is the Jami' Pekojan Mosque. Jami' Pekojan Mosque has an aesthetic, specific, and rare architecture that combines local and foreign elements and saves the historical journey of Semarang City related to the role of foreign traders who played a role in spreading Islam in Semarang City. The Semarang City Government has designated the Jami' Pekojan Mosque as one of the cultural heritage buildings in the Mayor's Decree No. 646/50/1992.

The mosque has its own authenticity compared to other mosques. Not only does it serve as a place of worship, but also as a witness to cultural acculturation between Indian Islamic traditions and local culture. This can be seen from the Ramadan tradition at Jami' Pekojan Mosque. One of the unique traditions that is still preserved is the Indian Porridge dish, an iftar dish, which refers to a meal served to break the fast at sunset during the month of Ramadan for Muslims. In the beginning, the Indian porridge dish was an iftar dish for Muslim traders from Arabia and India made by Indian traders. This tradition continues to be preserved to this day due to the positive response from the community, including the cooperation system in providing ingredients for making porridge.

Today, Jami' Pekojan Mosque stands not only as a historic physical building, but also as a marker of Semarang's multicultural identity and heritage that continues to live on during modern urban society. Various worship activities such as Quran recitation and other Islamic activities are routinely conducted. Amidst the accelerating pace of

social change, the historical and cultural values attached to the mosque and the surrounding neighborhood face real challenges. Modernization, urbanization, and shifts in people's lifestyles have caused a shift in the role of local traditions and cultures that have been inherited for generations.

Despite its historical significance as one of Semarang's oldest multicultural neighborhoods, there is no comprehensive digital documentation of its history, traditions, and socio-cultural development. The lack of digitization of Pekojan's archives and historical narratives risks the knowledge of the village being eroded by time and not fully transmitted to the younger generation. This raises concerns that the collective memory of the importance of Pekojan Village and the role of the Jami' Mosque as the cultural and religious center of the community will be lost. Based on this reality, the theme of Pekojan Village and Pekojan Jami Mosque is raised in this documentary as an effort to preserve local cultural and historical values. The choice of this theme is motivated by the importance of reintroducing the role of migrants in shaping Semarang as a multicultural port city, as well as maintaining collective awareness of the values of tolerance, harmony, and diversity that have long lived in this village. Through a visual and narrative approach, this documentary film seeks to revive old, almost forgotten stories and make them relevant today.

The purpose of making this documentary film is to provide an understanding to the community, especially the younger generation such as high school and university students, about the importance of maintaining and appreciating local cultural heritage. This documentary is also directed toward educational stakeholders, including teachers, lecturers, cultural researchers, and academic institutions who are concerned with the values of multiculturalism, tolerance, and heritage education. The film is expected to serve as an educational and inspirational medium that illustrates how a community can uphold diversity and maintain traditional values amidst the dynamics of modernization by documenting the history and culture of Pekojan Village, this film aims to build awareness of the importance of preserving cultural identity as part of the nation's invaluable wealth.

1.2 Problem Formulations

Based on the background in this study, the problem formulation obtained is as follows:

1. What are the pre-production stages in making a documentary film *The Hidden Soul of Pekojan*?
2. How do audiences respond to documentary film *The Hidden Soul of Pekojan*?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives of this research include:

1. Explaining the pre-production process in documentary film making about the tradition, culture and history of Jami' Pekojan Mosque Semarang through the explanation of each stage. This research is expected to provide insight into pre-production techniques and procedures.
2. Identifying audience responses through documentary film on tradition, culture and history at Jami' Pekojan Mosque Semarang. The identification is made in the hope of gaining an understanding of the audience's perception of information, appreciation and input that can be used in improving the quality of documentary films in the future.

1.4 Significant of Research

The significances of this project are as follows:

1. Theoretical Benefits
 - a. Contributes to understanding of local culture and traditions while enriching the academic literature related to religion and historical values.
 - b. Serves as a reference and reliable source of information for future studies in similar fields.
2. Practical Benefits
 - a. Provides a comprehensive documentation of unique traditions practiced during the month of Ramadan at Jami' Mosque of Pekojan.

- b. Acts as a tool to promote and preserve the cultural and religious heritage of Ramadan traditions in Jami' Mosque of Pekojan, Semarang.
- c. Aims to raise public awareness and appreciation of the cultural richness and values embedded in these traditions.

1.5 Output

The output of this research preparation is a 16 minute and 46 second-documentary film entitled *The Hidden Soul of Pekojan*. This film aims to review the history, traditions and culture of Pekojan Village Semarang, especially the Jami' Pekojan mosque. In addition, another goal of making this documentary film is expected to be a source of knowledge for the next generation of Jami' Pekojan Mosque administrators and the general public to continue to maintain traditions and culture from generation to generation so as not to be eroded by the times due to the lack of existing documentation from previous years. The documentary film of *The Hidden Soul of Pekojan* tells the story of the Jami' Pekojan Mosque, which is evidence of the history of the entry of Islam in the city of Semarang as well as the heritage of traditions and culture that have developed to this day.