

The Symbolic meaning of Marhabaan culture as a da'wah activity among the Nahdliyin community

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Abstract

Purpose - This research aims to determine and analyze da'wah activities in Marhabaan culture, which include the Marhabaan process, the symbolism of shaving a baby's hair, and the symbolism of the da'wah message on Marhabaan devices.

Method - The method used in this research is qualitative. This method clearly defines various research procedures to produce descriptive data from what is observed in Marhabaan cultural activities, whether written or oral. Data collection was carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation.

Result - This research shows that the Marhabaan culture as a da'wah activity among the Nahdliyin community is: First, the Marhabaan process as a da'wah activity has initial activities, core activities, and final activities. Second, the symbolism of shaving a baby's hair has a preaching message in which Islam requires shaving a baby's hair when they are born. Third, the symbolism of the da'wah message in the Marhabaan device includes *cau* (banana), *ulen* (glutinous rice), *cai herang* (water). *Cau* (banana) symbolizes life that is believed to grow and develop into a large family because the banana tree represents the integrity of family life. Thus, Islam, as a missionary religion, invites and expects a family to grow, develop, and have qualities so that God's mandate can be carried out well. *Ulen* (glutinous rice) has a message of da'wah, namely as muscular Islamic strength and unity by the word of Allah in surah Ali Imran:103). Meanwhile, *cai herang* (white water) preaches that humans should always have a clean heart and mind and carry out actions according to the commands of Allah and His Messenger.

Implication - This research suggests that the existence and essence of Marhabaan culture as a da'wah activity needs to be adequately maintained as a form of acculturation and negotiation between Islamic religion and culture.

Originality - The study of Marhabaan culture as an ethnography of da'wah differs from previous studies because no previous research has specifically discussed Marhabaan culture as an ethnography of da'wah.

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Kata kunci:

Makna simbolik,
budya marhabaan,
aktivitas dakwah,
masyarakat nahdliyin.

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Abstrak

Tujuan - Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui dan menganalisis aktivitas dakwah dalam budaya Marhabaan, yang meliputi proses Marhabaan, simbolisme mencukur rambut bayi, dan simbolisme pesan dakwah pada perangkat Marhabaan.

Metode - Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah kualitatif. Metode ini secara jelas mendefinisikan berbagai prosedur penelitian untuk menghasilkan data deskriptif dari apa yang diamati dalam kegiatan budaya Marhabaan, baik tertulis maupun lisan. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi.

Hasil - Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa budaya Marhabaan sebagai aktivitas dakwah di kalangan masyarakat Nahdliyin: Pertama, proses Marhabaan sebagai kegiatan dakwah memiliki kegiatan awal, kegiatan inti, dan kegiatan akhir. Kedua, simbolisme mencukur rambut bayi memiliki pesan dakwah dimana Islam mewajibkan untuk mencukur rambut bayi ketika dilahirkan. Ketiga, simbolisme pesan dakwah dalam perangkat Marhabaan meliputi *cau* (pisang), *ulen* (ketan), *cai herang* (air). *Cau* (pisang) melambangkan kehidupan yang diyakini akan tumbuh dan berkembang menjadi sebuah keluarga besar karena pohon pisang melambangkan keutuhan hidup berkeluarga. Dengan demikian, Islam sebagai agama dakwah mengajak dan mengharapkan sebuah keluarga untuk tumbuh, berkembang, dan memiliki kualitas sehingga amanah Allah dapat dijalankan dengan baik. *Ulen* (beras ketan) memiliki pesan dakwah, yaitu sebagai perekat kekuatan dan persatuan umat Islam sesuai dengan firman Allah dalam surah Ali Imran:103). Sedangkan *cai herang* (air putih) mendakwahkan agar manusia selalu memiliki hati dan pikiran yang bersih dan melakukan tindakan sesuai dengan perintah Allah dan Rasul-Nya.

Implikasi - Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa eksistensi dan esensi budaya Marhabaan sebagai aktivitas dakwah perlu dipertahankan secara memadai sebagai bentuk akulturasi dan negosiasi antara agama Islam dan budaya.

Orisinalitas - Kajian budaya Marhabaan sebagai etnografi dakwah berbeda dengan penelitian-penelitian sebelumnya karena belum ada penelitian sebelumnya yang secara khusus membahas budaya Marhabaan sebagai etnografi dakwah.

Introduction

Islam as a missionary religion does not exist in a vacuum; it is in contact with other factors, such as culture, which is deeply embedded in society. Generations of Muslims have acquired traditions or culture passed down from generation to generation by their predecessors. Because the organization has various kinds of cultures, and culture is evolving (Sambas & Aripudin, 2007). Islam is not here to erase the good traditions that already exist. The presence of Islam complements and perfects the rules in the archipelago (Rahman, 2013). Likewise, in dealing with practices from outside, some principles explain *Al Muhafazhatu 'Ala al Qadiimil al Shalih Wa al Akhzu Bi al Jadiidi al Ashlah* (Maintaining the old traditions that are good and adopting new, better practices). Keeping in mind the purpose of retrieval and development, culture is for improvement and will become capital for developing existing culture. Therefore, Islamic values belong to formal institutions' authority and expand, manifest, and even become a spirit in society's cultural traditions (State, 2017).

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A tradition always maintained by the people of West Java, especially the people of Bandung, is the marhabaan culture. Marhabaan, or reading the book al Barzanji together, is a popular tradition in West Javanese society, especially in Bandung. This activity is part of the typical Islamic treasures among Islamic boarding schools, which have lived sustainably for a long time and continue to be maintained (State, 2017). Based on history in Islamic literature, the spread of Al-Barzanji's birthday was spread by the Sayyids, a group of Arab people from Yemen who were very influential in the process of the arrival of the Islamic mission and they were the ones who developed various ritual methods in Indonesia (Bachmid, 2014).

The same is true among communities around Islamic boarding schools or based districts Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). Marhabaan culture has been practiced in the most remote corners of the city, not only in rural areas or villages, which are the core base of Nahdlatul Ulama, but also in more modern and heterogeneous urban areas in Bandung. The NU community cares for the marhabaan culture; this kind of culture is ingrained in their daily life and social life (Interview with HT, Islamic boarding school leader, Bandung, 03/05/2020). Apart from being a routine ritual carried out at every significant event, such as commemorating the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, housewarming events, aqiqah events, and the like, it is also held every Friday night. More than that, the marhabaan event has become one of the social bonds and mobilizations of the community because it is carried out regularly and in congregations, both in mosques, prayer rooms, and in the homes of those who take their turn at the event (Abdul Fatah, 2008).

Marhabaan culture is a tradition in which some symbols must be explored more deeply. The characters found in culture are concrete, general, and absorbed. Meanwhile, religion has marks that a person believes in. The existence of religious symbols will strengthen their belief in religion (Dillistone, 1986). Therefore, these cultural and religious symbols can be studied using an ethnographic approach. This ethnographic study as a spiritual phenomenon examines one of the cultural products for the birth of the concept of da'wah, which originates from local culture (Mulyana, 2002; Wibisono, 2013). Marhabaan culture as ethnography tries to examine and discover the procession and meaning of symbols found in marhabaan cultural activities as a whole, both in terms of reading (barzanji), interactions, the language used, experiences, beliefs, value systems adhered to and so on.

The relevance of research on marhabaan culture has been carried out, for example, by Nur Rosyid (Rosyid, 2012). His research results show that the development of the shalawatan tradition in Surakarta and its surroundings has changed. Practice should not be contradicted by modernity. Tradition is contextual. The process of contextualizing the trial takes place through commodification. This process is built through two media, namely recording media and performing. Apart from that, Habib, as an artist, made an audience by establishing his name through a series of inaugurations.

Furthermore, this commodification process changes relationships called "religious franchises." Suitability with the franchise concept lies in the "Ahabul Musthofa" label, shalawat products, and stage management. All of this is done through standardization of practices and products. Thus, consciously or not, the global business logic of franchising has impacted the contextualization of the shalawat tradition.

M. Junaid (2005) researched the Barzanji Sha'ban tradition of the Bugis community Wajo, East Tanjung Jabung. Based on research carried out anthropologically, it can be found that the reading of mauleh is carried out in the month of Sha'ban. The implementation is for a month, with time rotating from one house to another. Reading in the month of Sha'ban, this is done as a form of gratitude to Allah for all the blessings Allah gave.

Eka Octalia Indah Librianti (Librianti & Mukarom, 2019) in a thesis entitled "Tahlilan Culture as a Da'wah Media", shows that one of the media for preaching is the tahlilan tradition, which contains religious values and social values. Gayda Bachmid (Bachmid, 2014), entitled "The Book of Barzanji in the Perspective of the Muslim Community in Manado, North Sulawesi shows that intralinguistic aspects are closely related to extralinguistic elements that meet in social themes such as the value of honor, togetherness, brotherhood, and respect. Cultural themes contain the values of calm, happiness, and gratitude. Metaphysical themes (philosophy) include the matters of belief, faith, and belief. The relationship between this research and the research that will be carried out lies in the culture, while the difference lies in the studies it discusses. Based on some of the relevance of previous research, this research will explain the procession and symbolic meaning of marhabaan culture among the Nahdlatul Ulama, precisely at the Al-Quwwah Islamic Boarding School, Bandung City.

Research Methods

The method used in this research is qualitative. This method clearly defines various research procedures to produce descriptive data from what is observed in Marhabaan cultural activities, whether written or oral (Mustari & Rahman, 2012). Thus, various factors in the form of written, verbal, and documented documents can be analyzed and studied to find something meaningful in them.

This method aims to find out and understand a phenomenon experienced by research subjects, such as motives, behavior, opinions, interactions, language, actions, motivations, and so on, naturally using various natural methods. This paradigm deepens social phenomena, meaning the social environment in which actors, events, places, and times exist. This social phenomenon was carried out in qualitative research, which was developed based on several fundamental questions,

namely as follows: (a) What and how did this activity occur? (b) Who is involved in the movement? (c) Since when has the training been going on? (d) Where the action takes place.

This method aims to find reliable results. So that the results can be trusted and accounted for, several requirements are needed, such as data requirements, data collection techniques, data management, and analysis of observed data (Ghony F., 2016). This research includes field research, in which researchers must be directly involved in the ongoing activity process to understand the social interactions within a group or institution in a particular community environment more deeply (Akbar & Usman, 2006).

Results and Discussion

The Development of Islam in the Sundanese Tatars

Islam in the Sundanese Tatars appears to have a more egalitarian, harmonious face, far from structural and cultural violence, and a personality that is far more than just Islam in the sense of just a phenomenon (Sumpena, 2012). Islam entered the Sundanese Tatars with complete peace, providing spiritual values for the Sundanese people who already had a banif nature by worshipping only one god (monotheism) (Raffles, 2018). His presence was received joyfully; no swords or blood were sacrificed, and no lives or casualties were lost. Everything went according to God's will until finally, the term *di appeared* to society that Islam is Sundanese and Sundanese are Islamic.

In Carita Purwaka Caruban Nagari, it is stated that the areas in Tatar Sunda that were successfully converted to Islam by Sunan Gunung Djati, apart from Cirebon, were the areas of Kuningan, Sindangkasih, Talaga, Luragung, Ukur, Indralaya, Bantar, and Imbanganten. Galuh and Sumedang were converted to Islam by Cirebon during the time of Sunan Gunung Djati. The Luragung area was converted to Islam in 1481 AD. The Kuningan, Talaga, Galuh, and surrounding areas occurred in 1530 AD. The Rajagaluh area was converted to Islam in 1528 AD and 1530 AD (Lubis, 2011).

According to the folklore of Sindangkasih (Majalengka), this area was conquered by Cirebon envoys under the leadership of Prince Muhammad and Siti Armila. Queen Sindang Kasih, named Nyai Rambut Kasih, refused to be converted to Islam but gave freedom to her people who wanted to convert to Islam. According to Carita Purwaka Caruban Nagari, Walalusang developed Islam in the South Priangan area at the end of his life. According to traditional sources in Garut, Kian Santang was the son of the king of Padjajaran (Prabu Siliwangi). He had a dispute with his father, but in the end, it was agreed that Kian Santang would be given the freedom to spread Islam throughout the Sunda kingdom. Based on traditional sources from Ciamis, Islam entered the Galuh area (Ciamis) with Prince Mahadikusumah or Maharaja Kawali. Prince Mahadikusumah is known as a very trusted cleric in Cirebon. Patilasan, in the form of stone remains, which may have been a former mosque building on the island of Lake Panjalu (Ciamis), shows the beginning of Islam in that area (Sujati, 2019).

Islam entered the Sumedang area through marriage. Prince Santri, known as The first Muslim regional ruler of Sumedang. Prince Santri, from his mother's side, is a descendant of King Padjajaran, and from his father's side, he is a descendant of Sunan Gunung Djati (Wanta, 1991).

Nina Herlina Lubis discovered that the stimulus was the source of Islam's entry into the Priangan region from Cirebon. Meanwhile, Islam entered the South Banten, Bogor, and Sukabumi regions from Banten. Thus, the West Java region (Sundanese Tatar) is divided into two parts for spreading Islam: the Western, with the centers being South Banten, Jakarta, Bogor, and Sukabumi. The eastern part is Cirebon as the center, and the distribution areas are Kuningan, Majalengka, Indramayu, Subang, Cianjur, Sumedang, Garut, Tasikmalaya, Ciamis, and Bandung (Lubis, 2011).

Islamic Traditions in Tatar Sundanese

Islam in the Sundanese Tatars appears to have a more egalitarian, harmonious face, far from structural and cultural violence. He has a personality far more than Islam in the sense of just a phenomenon (Sumpena, 2012). Islam entered the Sundanese Tatars with complete peace, providing spiritual values for the Sundanese people who already had a Hanif nature and worshipped only one god (monotheism) (Raffles, 2018). His presence was received joyfully; no swords or blood were sacrificed, and no lives or casualties were lost. Everything went according to God's will until finally, the term emerged in society that Islam is Sundanese and Sundanese are Islam.

Sundanese people have their variant of character in their inherent practice order, which has become an inseparable tradition from the community's annual, monthly, weekly, and even daily implementation (Koentjaraningrat, 2004). This practice results from people's views, feelings, and intentions of understanding a moral teaching value, believed and practiced with various procedures. One practice that has long been ingrained in the understanding of Sundanese society is the marhabaan tradition, which is carried out at significant events such as Mauludan and Aqiqahan, weddings, and every Friday night.

Marhabaan is a tradition that lives among the Sundanese people in order glorifies the birth of the Prophet Muhammad, precisely in the month of Rabiul Awwal. The name Marhabaan comes from the Arabic word marhaban because in this tradition, shalawat 'ya nabi salam 'alaika 'mahall al-Qiyam' is usually recited. In Sundanese society, this prayer is better known as 'marhaba,' therefore this tradition is known as 'marhabaan'. It is the same as the Yasunan tradition. It is called Yasinan because what is read is the Yasin letter. This tradition is often also called muludan because it is done in the month of Rabilul Awwal, which in Sundanese society is that month better known as the month of Mulud, taken from the Arabic mawlid or maulud (Wahidi, 2015).

Marhabaan Process

Initial activity

The initial activities of this marhabaan include preparation. The meaning is related to an excellent time to start the activities of this marhabaan event by conditioning the opportunities for the priest, participating members, and the local community. Then, prepare the equipment and things needed to carry out this tradition. The marhabaan procession requires various preparations, starting with cakes, dishes, cooking, and the al-Barzanji book used for reading. After this was finished, the imam, the students, and the community entered the mosque where the marhabaan event was being held. When everyone was present, the imam began by reciting a prayer of salvation for all Muslims and sending Surah Al Fatihah to the Prophet Muhammad, his family, and friends,

as well as to Muslims who had died (Interview with IT, Islamic boarding school teacher, Bandung, 03/09/2023).

Core activities

After the initial activities are finished, the main action begins. The priest starts reading the book al-Barzanji, which begins with the reading.

عطر اللهم قبره الكريم بعرف شذي من صلاة وتسليم

then, all participants answered with words.

اللهم صلّى وسلّم وبارك عليه

Then, the prologue continues, and the opening of the book al Barzanji consists of four chapters. When the imam read the fourth chapter, there was a reading of Mahallul Qiyam (standing while reading the prayers) so that all participants stood in the congregation while reading the prayers with tone and rhythm. Mahallul Qiyam when reading prayers to the Prophet. The participants deliberately stood up to express joy over the birth of the Prophet, and Mahallul Qiyam was considered to have sacredness to achieve specific goals such as safety, blessings, and so on (Interview with HT, Islamic boarding school leader, Bandung, 05/10/2023).

According to Sayyid Muhammad Bin 'Alawi al-Maliki al-Hasany, he was stated that Imam al-Barzanji, in his birthday book in prose, says that some of the noble hadith expert priests considered it good (istihsan) to have stood at the birth of the Prophet, how lucky the people were who glorified the Prophet and made that the pinnacle of their life's goal (Sholikhin, 2010). The standing posture was taken as a body movement to express respect for Muslims, and because of joy and joy for him, as well as thanks to Allah that he had sent the Prophet Muhammad to illuminate human life, not because he was physically present then. So, the intention used was to respect and appreciate the personal greatness of the Apostle as if to feel the distinction between his attitude and his position as an Apostle. Therefore, the participants try to bring out the Prophet in themselves (Interview with HT, Islamic boarding school leader, Bandung, 05/09/2023).

Last Activity

The reading of chapter 18 is complete. Then, the priest rereads the closing prayer. When the book al Barzanji task is finished, all participants are invited to eat the previously provided food. After the participants have eaten the food, the house owner or family members offer snacks or what is now called "dessert" in the form of coffee, tea, traditional cakes, and cigarettes.

When the author interacts at the marhabaan event, the author analyzes naturally that, at that time, all participants interacted while relaxing, using this moment to discuss urgent matters, various actual problems, for example, agricultural problems, economic problems, health, religious problems, education, and the health of their respective families, and occasionally interspersed with humor.

After this stage is completed, all participants say goodbye to go home on the completion of the marhabaan procession, so don't forget that family members also give souvenirs in the form of alms, which are put in envelopes in a Cenning Ati (sincerely) manner as a form of thanks to all participants. The explanation above concludes. Description of the general procession of the

Marhabaan event and according to the author's observations during interactions at this event, it can be seen that, in general, the implementation of the Marhabaan event is almost the same in every event/momentum that develops in West Java, especially at Al-Quwwah Islamic Boarding School, Bandung City.

JID | 354 *The Symbolism of Shaving Baby's Hair*

The word symbol comes from the Greek word symbol, a sign or characteristic that tells someone something. WJS Poerwadarwinta (Poerwadarminta, 1954) in the General Indonesian Dictionary states that a symbol or symbol is something such as a sign, painting, saying, badge, and so on, which sounds something that contains a specific meaning, for example, the color white symbolizes purity. In the Philosophical Dictionary, Lorens Bagus (Lorens, 1996) mentions symbols, which in English: Symbol, in Latin: Symbolicum, and in Greek: Simbolon, from Syballo (conclude, mean, give an impression).

The meaning of this symbol needs to be differentiated from signals and signs. An indication is something or a situation that is told by the subject to the object so that the entity knows at that moment. A character is a thing or situation that explains or tells an object to the topic. Therefore, the relationship between a symbol and an object is not as simple as between a sign and its thing. Still, there is a basic need for symbolization (Van Den Boogert, 2017).

Islam is a missionary religion, and Islam is a value system that originates from Allah. Islamic truth is absolute, single, eternal, and universal. Therefore, Islam was formatted and programmed by Allah not for His interests but for the interests of humans towards safety and prosperity in life, both in this world and the hereafter (Syarbini, 2011).

Islam requires shaving a baby's hair when it is born, and usually, the baby's hair is shaved on the seventh day. Some scholars have different opinions regarding the law of shaving a baby's hair. However, most scholars allow the shaving of a baby's hair. Shaving your head is an excellent recommendation of the Prophet to be implemented when a new child is born on the seventh day. Rasulullah SAW said which means "Every child is bound by his aqiqah. On the seventh day, an animal was slaughtered for him, given a name, and shaved" (HR. al-Tirmidhi). In the book al-Muwaththa, Imam Malik narrated that Fatimah weighed the weight of Hasan and Husein's hair and gave the charity the importance of that hair (Rahmat, 2015).

Regarding whether or not a lot of hair needs to be shaved, there are no regulations on whether it should be shaved or not. But what is clear is that the shaving must be done evenly. You can only shave part of your head and leave the other part. Of course, the more hair that is shaved and the heavier it is weighed, the greater the alms.

Rasulullah SAW said: "*Every child is pawned with his aqiqah, slaughtered from him on the seventh day, his head is shaved, and he is given a name.*" (Authentic hadith narrated by At-Tirmidhi).

Shaving the hair of newborn babies is not just a tradition that has long been embedded in society but is also a recommendation and religious teaching. Shaving a baby's hair is usually done at the same time as marhabaan; of course, behind the tradition of shaving a baby's hair, there are many benefits and many positive values, especially for the baby's health.

The tradition of shaving a baby's hair is a celebration for a family because of its presence, a lamp of the heart, a new jewel. In this event, residents who carry out this tradition usually invite close relatives, friends, or neighbors to witness the happiness felt by the family and, at the same time, give a good name that has the meaning of prayer so that everyone who calls their name will also pray according to the baby's name. Usually, this event is held during a tasmiyah or aqiqahan event in Islam. The event was packaged as Thanksgiving while reading the book al-Barzanji (marhabaan). Then some families invited tambourine groups and marawis to complete the event (Rahmat, 2015).

The tradition of shaving the baby's hair is accompanied by rabana tapping while drinking coffee with the congregation attending the event. Sounding the art of hadroh music creates enthusiasm, motivating all present to remain consistently seated until the event ends. The situation became even busier when the father came out of his room carrying his baby and swayed for a while; not long after, the people who took part in the event stood up while chanting prayers addressed to the Prophet Muhammad SAW. The baby hair-shaving event began. All guests and the public were allowed to cut the baby's hair. His father took the baby around the community to have his hair shaved. Then, the hair that had been cut was put into a container filled with water and various kinds of flowers (Interview with HM, Islamic boarding school teacher, Bandung, 16/09/2023).

According to KH. Hasan Tojiri's practice of shaving babies' hair is not only carried out in the Indonesia Al-Quwwah Islamic Boarding School environment but this event can be found in various regions in Indonesia. Shaving a baby's hair is a religious practice based on local wisdom. Newly born babies are usually called to prayer in their right ear and the iqamah in their left ear. This provides understanding so the baby can remember his creator and worship him as an adult. Shaving a baby's hair is a teaching practiced by the Prophet Muhammad. After being shaved, the hair is weighed. After being considered, the weight of the hair is measured using the gold price at that time. For example, if the hair weighs 1/2 gram, the parent will give alms to the poor, abandoned children or people entitled to receive the donations for 1/2 gram of gold, and the gold is cashed in first. So what is given to people who need it is money (Interview with HT, Islamic boarding school leader, Bandung, 16/09/2023).

Apart from that, the benefits of shaving a baby's hair in Islam are as follows: (a) shaving the baby's hair can prevent visual disturbances to the baby's eyes. Because if the hair is too long, it will cover the eyes and interfere with the baby's adjustment to his environment. (b) If the baby's hair is long, it is feared that it will cause irritation and injury to the baby's ear canal. (c) After shaving the hair, it will be easy to see the baby's skin diseases, such as irritated sores or other diseases. (d) Making hair more radiant, beautiful, strong, and healthy is the ethics of shaving babies' hair in Islam, a blessing for every human being (Divika, 2019).

Symbolism of the Message in the Marhabaan Device

The marhabaan cultural device is full of symbolism and moral messages in people's lives. The symbol of life is conveyed in the form, appearance, color, and type presented in this culture. Messages of solidarity, faith, wholeness, family, security, prosperity, and signs of gratitude to Allah SWT. The devices used in the marhabaan event contain religious messages.

Cau (Banana)

JID | 356 Bananas are a dish that is included in marhabaan culture with other foods. The community's argument for choosing bananas as one of the foods in the marhabaan tradition is because people have the perspective that bananas are a fruit that has many benefits and is very necessary in everyday life, so they cannot be separated from people's lives.

The usefulness of banana trees can be seen from the various parts of the tree that have benefits for human life, starting from the stem, heart, fruit, and leaves. The banana plant is also a family symbol. It is a symbol of life that is believed to grow and develop into a large family because the banana tree represents the integrity of family life, which is always surrounded and flanked by its children; if someone dies, then someone is born. In other words, the culture that is carried out by the Al-Quwwah students and the community is that if one of the perpetrators dies, there will be future generations around them who will continue the tradition so that its existence is maintained.

Islam is a missionary religion in which Islam invites and expects a family that must grow and develop and have the qualities so that God's mandate to make humans as Caliph Fi Al-Ard will run by religious guidance and invitations. Then, humans are given the task by Allah to benefit and invite goodness to the people around us, especially in the hadith of the Prophet, which explains that "the best of you are those who provide the most benefits to fellow humans." So, in essence, we have to benefit those around us with our abilities as a form of good social relations.

Ulen (Glutinous rice)

Glutinous rice, or in Sundanese *ulen*, the choice of Glutinous rice at the marhabaan event has symbolic reasons. Glutinous rice (*ulen*) is a favorite food of the Sundanese people. Ulen' means strength and strong unity. Even though it comes from small grains that are very hard and separate, they will be able to stick together after being cooked and processed. This symbol means that even though society is separated, it can unite exceedingly. Also, *ulen*, which can survive for a long time, is interpreted as a strength for unity and togetherness, which must stay long to create harmony, happiness, and love. Allah says in surah Ali Imran/3: 103:

"And hold fast, all of you, to the rope (religion) of Allah, and do not become separated." (Department of Religion, 2009).

The symbolic message above is very much in line with the teachings of the Islamic religion about caring, unity, and oneness. The strong agreement will bring wisdom to Muslims because the greatness of the Islamic faith is not seen from its quantity but from its quality of togetherness and unity. Islam, as a religion that Allah approves, must have strong and solid strength in realizing brotherhood and unity among Muslims. The message from Glenn is given at the Marhabaan event so that everyone present can learn from what is presented.

Cai Herang (White Water)

Cai herang, or water, is a drink always served at various events, especially marhabaan. The choice of water has its reasons for the students and the local community. They believe that water provides positive benefits for human life because if life was without water, all humans would feel thirsty, and there would even be no life at all. This symbolic meaning of white water gives us a message that humans must have a clean heart and mind in carrying out all actions. With this purity,

it will give birth to sincerity in worship. Water is also often used as medicine to cure diseases. Usually, the water is provided prayers by kyai or people trusted to cure diseases through the intercession of these prayers. Therefore, water given a blessing contains mysticism, which some people believe. However, this water does not prevent idolatry. While people consider water a medium for curing disease, God still heals (Interview with HT, Islamic boarding school leader, Bandung, 01/10/2023).

Meanwhile, the devices used at marhabaan events include delicious. Menyan is a mystical device that some people believe can bring forth spirits. But it is different from the minyan used at marhabaan events. The community has a paradigm that incense can repel mosquitoes and make the room smell good so that people can be comfortable carrying out these traditions (State, 2017). According to the Indonesian dictionary, menyan/incense is frankincense, astanggi, and so on, when burned the smoke smells good. Meanwhile, Mendupati means smoking by burning incense, and Pedupan is a brazier (small) incense holder where incense/incense is burned (Saputra, 2017).

Burning incense comes from the beliefs of ancient people who were untouched by Islam and used to summon spirits. When Islam is present amid cultural struggles that have polytheistic practices, Islam interacts and negotiates with an approach that is appropriate to the conditions at that time. As a logical consequence, dogma is given that it is Islamic and does not directly reject previous traditions. Burning incense during the marhabaan event is no longer used to summon spirits or be idolatrous, but its purpose is to freshen the room and repel mosquitoes.

Then, the symbolic meaning of menyan can give us a message so that we can live this life: Give fragrance to yourself and others. Wangi here is interpreted as good behavior that can invite other people to carry out positive activities according to Allah's instructions and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. Then, we must be able to associate and interact with people who are pious and good; the aim is so that they carry us away and so that society has a positive view of us, so that our presence in the community does not bring bad things, but can make people aware to return to the path that Allah approves (Interview with HT, Islamic boarding school leader, Bandung, 01/10/2023).

Looking at the conditions in the past, which were not yet modern, it is very possible and practical if Ingredients are used as room fresheners. The researcher also agreed with the informant about burning incense at the Marhabaan event. Still, in the current context, it would be better if a more modern room perfume replaced the incense because its substance is to scent the room. However, if people still burn incense at marhabaan events, then that is not a problem because it has become a historical trace. This is a characteristic of Indonesian Islam.

Conclusion

The marhabaan culture at the Al-Quwwah Islamic Boarding School in Bandung City is a portrait of a tradition that has become entrenched, especially among the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). In the process, this tradition begins with prayer, reading the book al-Barzanji, then ends with reading a prayer. Apart from that, this tradition contains several symbolic meanings that provide information about moral messages such as shaving a baby's hair, the symbolic purpose of banana, the symbolic meaning of menyan, the symbolic meaning of *ulen* (glutinous rice), the symbolic meaning of traditional cakes, and the symbolic meaning of water. The moral message, for example, is that God

gives humans the task of providing benefits and encouraging goodness to the people around them. That goodness must be passed on to subsequent generations. This study confirms that there is a cultural connection between Islamic teachings and local culture, which continues to be developed by Muslims in Indonesia.

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