



Ramadan Munggahan tradition in West Java: Celebrating Culture and Religious Values

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Abstract: The purpose of this research is to discuss Islamic values, especially in the Sundanese tribe in West Java, from a tradition Munggahan. The Munggahan tradition is an event that is always celebrated by Muslims before welcoming the holy month of Ramadan. The research method is qualitative with field studies using descriptive methods to analyze complex and clear data. The research discusses the definition of Munggahan, munggahan tradition according to Islam, traditional activities carried out, and Islamic values contained in munggahan. The conclusion of the research is that Munggahan is a hereditary cultural heritage carried out by the Sundanese community and is a tradition that needs to be preserved by us as citizens of West Java. In Islamic law, there is no prohibition for the implementation of the Munggahan tradition, if all is done without any elements of misguidance and aims to establish friendship among Muslims, especially in West Java. Munggahan tradition has so much meaning and wisdom without any specific prohibition in the Qur'an that regulates this tradition. This research is expected to contribute in maintaining the Islamic values and culture of the Munggahan tradition for efforts to preserve culture in Indonesia.

Keywords: Tradition, Islam, Sundanese, Munggahan

Introduction

In the land of West Java, the echoes of Ramadan are not only accompanied by the chanting of holy verses and the tempting aroma of takjil. The 'Munggahan' tradition is transformed into a special moment, knitting together and preserving the noble values of ancestral culture. Long before Ramadan arrives, the pulse of the Munggahan tradition has been felt. The meaning of tradition itself means inheritance that has been passed down to children and grandchildren to be preserved as customs, seen from the terminological view of the meaning of tradition which has a connection between the past and the present which is closely intertwined as a cultural value. The Munggahan tradition is full of meanings such as the flurry of colour in the kitchen, skilled hands concocting special dishes. Delicious traditional cakes are created, delivering a nostalgic aroma that evokes childhood memories. Munggahan is not just about eating delicious dishes. This tradition is full of meaning, a forum for friendship and sharing happiness. Families and relatives gather, bonding and strengthening the bonds of brotherhood. Behind this tradition is a story of cultural harmonisation and Islamic values (Baho, 2019; Bukido, 2020). Ancestral traditions that have existed for a long time combine with Islamic teachings, giving birth to unique traditions that are full of meaning. This introduction will take us through the Munggahan tradition, trace its history, and uncover the meaning behind each ritual. We will see how this tradition has become a social glue and unifier of the people, as well as a tangible proof of the acculturation of culture and Islamic values in the land of West Java (BaHammam, 2012; Venegas-Borsellino, 2018).

In the country of Indonesia, which is very abundant in traditions and cultures that have noble values for various tribes, races, and a mixture of acculturation that occurred in the past, making the Indonesian nation a rich nation (Machdalena, 2023; Şimşek, 2023). Acculturation for the Indonesian people makes the value of each region richer and more characterised, especially in West Java. One of the occurrences of thick acculturation is when Islam entered Indonesia as the archipelago. Islam entered the Sundanese land at a time when the majority of the community embraced the beliefs of their ancestors that were passed down from generation to generation (Leow, 2022; Qadri, 2023). The spread of Islamic beliefs was carried out by Sunan Gunung Djati who was the founder of the sultanate in Cirebon, the spread of Islam led to the acculturation of Hindu-Buddhist culture which further added to the Khazanah in every cultural value in Sundanese land aka West Java.

In this modern era, many cultures in West Java are still visible, although many of them are on the verge of extinction due to westernisation, one of the cultural traditions that are still being carried out is the munggahan tradition. The munggahan tradition is one of the concrete examples of the richness and diversity of culture that is still maintained in West Java, despite facing great challenges from the increasingly massive flow of westernisation and modernization (Dagkas, 2006; Kadri, 2007; Sandikci, 2007; Touzani, 2008). Munggahan, which is held before the holy month of Ramadan, is not just a ritual or custom, but more than that, it contains deep meaning and philosophy that is closely related to the lives of Sundanese people. This activity is a means of self-introspection, soul cleansing, and mental and physical preparation before entering the fasting month. and physical preparation before entering the fasting month (Al-Kaisi, 2022; Masaka, 2022). In addition, Munggahan also serves as a moment to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood between community members,

through a series of activities that involve social interaction, such as cleanliness and cleanliness.

Activities that involve social interaction, such as village cleaning, grave pilgrimage, and the tradition of eating together. Although in this modern era many traditions have been eroded, Munggahan still survives as a proof of local strength and wisdom in maintaining cultural identity amidst the onslaught of globalization (Alghamdi, 2020; Kirkland, 2021; Tantri, 2021). Its presence is not only an ancestral heritage that must be maintained, but also a reflection of the diversity and richness of Indonesian culture that must be maintained and preserved.

Methodology

This research method will use qualitative research with field studies using descriptive to analyse complex data clearly. Qualitative research is research that starts from an inductive mindset, which is based on participatory objective observation of a social symptom (phenomenon). The qualitative approach allows researchers to explore the complexity and social context of a phenomenon, as well as understand the subjective perspectives of the individuals or groups involved, the data collection technique is carried out by observing several individual Muslims, especially the Sundanese tribe. the results of data collection will be in the form of an analytical description so that it will broaden the insight for the research material this time.

Based on the results of research conducted by Anisah, S. (2021)., there are relevant links with this research related to the meaning of theology in the munggahan tradition. In her research, Anisah focused more on the theological analysis of the munggahan tradition, especially in the context of Tanjung Kamal Hamlet. Nevertheless, this research has a different focus from the research being conducted. This research aims to review the Islamic values contained in the Sundanese munggahan tradition in general, discuss the overall picture related to this tradition, and reveal the perspective of Islamic law regarding the implementation of this tradition whether it is allowed or even considered misleading. Therefore, through understanding the munggahan tradition from an Islamic perspective, it is hoped that this research can provide a deeper and clearer understanding of the tradition that has been passed down among Sundanese Muslims.

In addition, previous research also provides a relevant foundation in the context of analysing the munggahan tradition. One of them is a study conducted by Prehatinia, T. T., & Isana, W. (2022). which discusses the development of religious traditions and rituals in West Javanese society. Although it does not specifically discuss the munggahan tradition, this research provides a broad picture of the diversity of religious traditions in the region. This analysis is important to understand the social and religious context in which the munggahan tradition is carried out. By combining the results of previous research with an Islamic analysis approach, it is hoped that this research can make a significant contribution to understanding the role and tradition of munggahan in an Islamic context and open up further discussion regarding its implementation and relevance in the religious practices of Sundanese Muslims.

Result and Discussion

1. Munggahan Tradition

The tradition called 'Munggahan' is carried out a few days before the fasting in the holy month of Ramadan. Munggah comes from the word unggah which means to rise or increase, which is said that in ancient times the spirits and spirits of ancestors or relatives who have died. In accordance with its meaning, the word munggah implies a change for the better from the month of Sha'ban to the month of Ramadan to improve the quality of our faith while fasting in the month of Ramadan. The term 'Munggahan' is taken from the word 'Munggah' in Sundanese which means walking or going up, this can be interpreted as walking to a higher degree in the month of Ramadan. The reason behind the name 'Munggahan' is that everyone who starts fasting in the holy month of Ramadan expresses gratitude for what is given and gets closer to Allah SWT.

According to some interviews conducted in Jatinangor, Sumedang. The Munggahan event is celebrated a day or a week before the holy month of Ramadan. In munggahan activities are carried out with family, relatives, and friends who gather in one house, to pray together, then continued with eating together or botram in Sundanese. But this tradition is not only done at home, there are also those who deliberately come to tourist attractions to simply do botram. It does not have to be luxurious, but the food can be adjusted to the needs of each. Because the point is to establish friendship, togetherness and harmony as Muslims. Actually, this Munggahan tradition is not only botram or praying together, some people do activities such as cleaning family graves, keeping in touch and apologising to family, parents, relatives and friends.

However, some munggahan traditions in Sumedang, such as beating the drum in the mosque, are now almost lost and not visible anymore. In the past, before electronic media (television) entered the villages, one of the markers of the start of the holy month of Ramadan was marked by the beating of drums in every mosque. Lately, the activity of beating the drum as one of the munggahan traditions in Sumedang has slowly begun to disappear, because nowadays people can easily access television to see the results of the Isbat trial as a sign of fasting time through television. Whereas before the Isbat session of 1 Ramadan was broadcast on television, the beating of the drum that was crowded in the villages was a sign that fasting was held the next day.

The month of Sha'ban, often referred to as 'Ruwah' in Sundanese, is considered a sacred time when the spirits of ancestors gather. During this period, communal prayers are performed to honour and remember departed ancestors or family members. Sundanese people continue to observe the tradition of Munggahan as a way to welcome the holy month of Ramadan, which is closely related to the importance of the month of Sha'ban. Although munggahan is often associated with Sundanese society, it is actually one of Indonesia's cultural traditions with many lessons in it. Each region in West Java has different Munggahan traditions but the core of this tradition is forgiving each other, praying together, pilgrimage and eating together.

2. Islamic Values Contained in Munggahan

The Munggahan tradition contains various fundamental Islamic values for Muslims. One of them is the value of gratitude which is manifested through respect to Allah SWT for all His gifts, including the opportunity to fast in the holy month of Ramadan. This moment becomes a place of reflection to express gratitude for the blessings and favours given by Allah to His people. Munggahan also teaches the value of simplicity in life. Although it involves food preparation and togetherness, this tradition emphasises the importance of not dwelling too much on material luxuries, but rather on simplicity, sincerity and willingness to share with others. This reflects Islamic teachings on the importance of living life with gratitude and humility.

The Munggahan tradition also plays a big role in strengthening social relations and togetherness according to Islamic teachings. By holding events with family and neighbours, Munggahan creates a strong emotional bond between people in the community. This makes us feel more united, help each other, and care for each other, which are important values in Islam. In the Qur'an, it is stated 'The believers are indeed brothers. Therefore make peace between your brothers and fear Allah, so that you may have mercy' (QS Al-Hujurat: 10).

Munggahan also plays an important role in strengthening Muslims' adherence to religious teachings by organising prayers together, dhikr, and celebrating religious moments with great solemnity. This shows how important it is to worship sincerely and deeply, and to deepen our spiritual connection with Allah SWT.

spiritual relationship with Allah SWT. So, Munggahan is not just a cultural tradition, but also an important tool for building Islamic values in the daily lives of Muslims.

3. Process of Munggahan Traditions

The Munggah process is a unique tradition carried out by the people of West Java in welcoming the arrival of the month of Ramadan. It is a highly anticipated moment for families and local communities. Homes become busy with preparations, from cleaning to arranging furniture so that everything looks neat. However, these preparations are not only limited to the physical house, but also the heart. Some people seek harmony with family or friends, while others make pilgrimages to family graves, and still others organise prayers together to invoke the blessings of the imminent month of Ramadan.

When the day of Munggahan arrives, everyone welcomes guests, whether they come from near or far. The event begins with a joint prayer in the living room, where all family members gather to express gratitude and ask for blessings for the month of Ramadan that will soon arrive. All prayers are said with hope, signalling enthusiasm to welcome peace and blessings in the holy month. After the communal prayers, everyone gathers at the dining table that has been prepared with delicious dishes. From traditional pastries to mouth-watering specialities, everything is available. But beyond the food, it's also a time to strengthen social bonds. It's a time when everyone feels united, supports each other, and builds closer relationships.

While the way Munggahan is held may vary from place to place, the essence of the tradition remains the same, bringing families and neighbours together and cleansing the heart to welcome the month of Ramadan. This tradition is not only about maintaining cultural heritage, but also about strengthening our social and spiritual bonds. Munggahan

is a joyful, loving moment that symbolises the cultural and spiritual richness of the people of West Java

Conclusion

In this journal, we explore the tradition of Munggahan in West Java, which is a blend of culture and religious values in welcoming the holy month of Ramadan. This tradition is not just a series of rituals, but also a celebration that has been passed down from generation to generation and is full of meaning for the Sundanese people.

Munggahan becomes an important moment where family, relatives, and friends gather together to offer prayers, forgive each other, and establish friendship. In the midst of modernisation, this tradition remains a symbol of togetherness and harmony among the community, underlining the strong values of family and brotherhood in Sundanese culture.

The Munggahan tradition is not just a series of events, but also a symbol of the cultural and spiritual wealth of the people of West Java. The Islamic values reflected in this tradition, such as gratitude, simplicity and brotherhood, become the basis that strengthens social ties among individuals in society. However, in the midst of changing times, this tradition needs to be maintained so that it remains relevant and able to attract the interest of the younger generation.

The preservation of the Munggahan tradition is crucial in ensuring that this cultural heritage does not become extinct. Preservation efforts can be done through various means, including coaching, counselling, and the use of digital media to promote this tradition. Actively involving the younger generation in the implementation of the Munggahan tradition is also important to maintain its sustainability and relevance in the modern era.

With its blend of ancestral traditions and Islamic teachings, Munggahan reflects the harmony between local culture and religious values, which strengthens the cultural identity and spirituality of the people of West Java. Therefore, it is very important to continue to maintain, nurture and promote the Munggahan tradition so that it remains an integral part of Indonesia's overall cultural wealth, as well as a valuable legacy for future generations.

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