



PANJANG MULUD TRADITION AS A MEDIUM OF SOCIAL COMMUNICATION

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Abstract

The Panjang Mulud tradition in Serang, Banten is one of the traditions that aims to pay homage and a form of happiness for the birth of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. This tradition is meant as a feeling of gratitude for all the pleasures of life, as well as an effort by the community to tighten the social relations between one another. This study aims to examine social communication that occurs in the Panjang Mulud tradition and the meaning of social action in it for supporting a harmonious social life. This research was conducted through a qualitative approach of ethnomethodology. The data was collected through observation, interviews, and documentation triangulation. Moreover, data analysis was carried out through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions, which were then analyzed by relating social action theory with the social communication concept. Based on data findings, it was concluded that Panjang Mulud is a space created consciously to reinforce their religious and cultural identity. The activities in the Panjang Mulud tradition are believed to be a form of social action carried out consciously and more value-oriented compared to other motives.

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Abstrak

Kata kunci:

Panjang Mulud;
tindakan sosial;
komunikasi sosial;
hubungan sosial

Tradisi *Panjang Mulud* di Serang, Banten, menjadi salah satu tradisi yang bertujuan untuk memberikan penghormatan dan wujud kebahagiaan atas kelahiran Nabi Muhammad SAW. Tradisi ini bermakna sebagai rasa syukur atas segala nikmat hidup yang dirasakan, sekaligus sebagai upaya masyarakat untuk mempererat hubungan sosial antara satu dengan yang lainnya. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menelaah komunikasi sosial yang terjadi di dalam tradisi *Panjang Mulud* serta makna tindakan sosial di dalamnya guna mendukung kehidupan sosial yang harmonis. Penelitian ini dilakukan melalui pendekatan kualitatif, khususnya dalam ranah etnometodologi. Sejumlah data dikumpulkan melalui pengamatan, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Analisis data dilakukan dengan cara reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan, yang selanjutnya dianalisis dengan mengkaitkan antara teori tindakan sosial dengan konsep komunikasi sosial. Berdasarkan temuan data, disimpulkan bahwa *Panjang Mulud* adalah ruang yang diciptakan secara sadar untuk meneguhkan identitas agama dan budaya mereka. Adapun kegiatan di dalam tradisi *Panjang Mulud* diyakini sebagai bentuk tindakan sosial yang dilakukan secara sadar dan lebih berorientasi pada nilai, dibandingkan dengan motif lain seperti motif ekonomi atau motif lainnya.

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INTRODUCTION

There are three patterns of the spread of Islam in Nusantara: integrative, dialogic, and integrated dialogic-integrative. These three patterns can be seen in religious traditions and rituals still practiced by society today (Suriadi, 2019). One of the traditions is called *Muludan*, a

religious celebration of the birth of Prophet Muhammad SAW on the 12th of Rabi'ul-Awal, the third month in the Islamic calendar. Although Prophet Muhammad SAW is believed to have died on the same date and month, his death is not included in this celebration. In addition, the month of Rabi'ul-Awal is considered the second most meaningful month for Muslims after the month of Ramadan (Muhammad, 1999). The *Muludan* tradition for the people of Banten has an important meaning, namely, as a form of their love for the Prophet Muhammad. Therefore, the celebration always includes telling the events of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad and his morals as role models for all Muslims worldwide. One proof of love for the Prophet Muhammad by the people of Banten is to read more blessings and marhaban in every celebration of *Muludan*. According to their beliefs, the tradition of reading this prayer is manifested from Allah's command which reads:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

Indeed, Allah and His angels pray for the Prophet. O you who believe, pray for Him and salute Him. (Q.S. Al-Ahzab Verse 56).

A number of ceremonies carried out in the Banten region basically continue, even though there have been various changes in their implementation, especially in adjustments to the changing times. The ceremony carried out by the people of Banten is not only an effort to preserve ancestral culture, but is also to build social solidarity for its actors (Fauziyah, 2016). In this case, the interesting thing about the implementation of these ceremonies is that there are gender differences which also affect the *Mulud* celebration in Banten (Fauziyah, 2015).

The most popular tradition for *Mulud* celebration in Serang City is *Panjang Mulud*. *Panjang Mulud* is a distinctive tradition of the Muslim

community in Banten Province, especially in the Serang (Regency) and Cilegon, to celebrate the birth of the Prophet Muhammad. This tradition which has been going on since the time of the Banten Sultanate, is carried out annually based on the Hijri calendar, namely during the month of Rabi'ul-Awal, coinciding with the month of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad. Moreover, the month is also known as the month of *Mulud* or the month of Mawlid. Meanwhile, the celebration itself is called *Muludan* or *Maulidan*.

The tradition is called *Panjang Mulud* because its activities involve community processions that carry Panjang containers in the shape of boats or stretchers, or various other shapes such as animals decorated with colorful paper or banknotes of various denominations made such as flags, or boiled eggs that are decorated and made to resemble flowers. In Panjang, various basic necessities are contained, which include rice, cooking oil, noodles, and so forth. In addition, Panjang can also contain clothing, and fabrics, including various household furniture. In some places, even Panjang consists of luxury items that range widely, such as furniture and motorcycles. During the month of Rabbiul Awwal, people in various places like in Kampung Tanggul, Serang City, carry out the tradition. Some occur at the same time, some at different times, depending on the agreement of the community itself.

When compared to other traditions that aim to celebrate the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, a number of other locations also celebrate similar celebration traditions. Like the *Panjang Mulud* tradition in Banten, several other areas have similar traditions, but are packaged under different names. For example, in Kendal Regency, Central Java, it is known as the *Web-wehan* tradition, which means the tradition of exchanging food between neighbors. In Solo, Central Java, there is the *Grebeg Maulud* tradition, which consists of a mountain procession filled with goods. In the East Java region, especially Banyuwangi, there is also the *Endog-endogan*

tradition, namely carrying eggs decorated and made to look like flowers as a symbol of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad SAW.

There is a tradition of cooking Beulangong Kuah in Aceh, namely the tradition of cooking beef or goat and jackfruit to be served and enjoyed with the community in commemoration of the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Furthermore, in Kudus Regency, Central Java, there is the *Ampyang Maulid* tradition, namely the tradition of parading a stretcher filled with kepel rice wrapped in teak leaves. Still in the East Java region, namely in Pacitan, there is also a tradition of making Ulam Sari Sacred Rice. This tradition is carried out by cooking rice which consists of *uduk* rice and chicken sticks, as a symbol of purity and birth. Whereas in Cirebon, it is known as the *Panjang Jimat* tradition, which is a procession tradition that is usually carried out at the Kasepuhan Palace, Kanoman Palace, and Kacirebonan Palace, Cirebon (Farid, 2016; Manullang, Risa, Trihudyatmanto, Masri, & Aslan, 2021).

Based on comparing the traditions above, *Panjang Mulud* appears as a special tradition unique to the Banten region. In this case, the name *Panjang Mulud* indirectly gives an idea of the community's procession, which is synonymous with carrying a long vessel like a boat, complete with ornaments. This is a characteristic of the Banten region because, in historical records, the *Panjang Mulud* has been going on since the days of the Banten Sultanate. Al-Ayubi (2017) in his research mentions that some parties argue that the *Panjang Mulud* tradition was born during the time of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa (1651-1672), while others state that the *Panjang Mulud* tradition began during the second Sultan of Banten, namely Maulana Yusuf (1570 - 1580). The *Panjang Mulud* has existed since Banten was led by Sultan Abdul Mafakhir, namely in 1634 AD (Munawaroh, Suhendi, Putri, Safitri, Nadiyah, & Mulyadi, 2022). Therefore, based on these historical facts, *Panjang Mulud* is an old tradition that still survives to this day, is preserved and developed, and continues to experience various

renewals in its content and packaging, celebrated yearly by the community, including the local government and business actors.

In fact, more than a decade ago, in 2003, tourism actors such as the Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant Association (*Persatuan Hotel dan Restoran Indonesia*/PHRI) of Serang Regency had also used this tradition as momentum to increase the number of tourists, especially to the beaches in the Anyer-Cinangka area by making Panjang in the form of a giant tumpeng two meters high consisting of 3 quintals of rice, 1 quintal of sticky rice, 25 chickens, 2 crates of eggs, 10 kilograms of fish, 3 kilograms of emping, and 10 kilograms of giant prawns, cooked by hotel and restaurant chefs (Hakim, 2006). Meanwhile, by the District and City Governments of Serang, this tradition has also become a tourist calendar (Sahabudin, Tahir, Hadian, & Nugraha, 2019).

In fact, not every tradition in the community is well maintained and preserved. This tradition has been able to survive across space and time, be preserved, celebrated in such a way, and receive very special treatment both culturally and structurally, because it is considered to have a meaning that is not only an individual-spiritual ritual, but also a cohesive-collective ritual for the social life of the community. It is a social fact understood and interpreted as a space for developing social cohesiveness. This understanding and meaning is congruent with what is stated by about religion, namely as a set of beliefs and practices related to sacred things, namely something that is set aside and forbidden - beliefs and practices that unite one another in a single moral community - all those who submit to it (Shonhaji, 2012; Ismanto & Mulia, 2021).

This is in line with the view of Sociology, where religion's primary concern is its function for society. Religion contributes in maintaining the integrity of society (Bauto, 2014). In a similar manner is the *Panjang Mulud*. The tradition of celebrating the birth of Prophet Muhammad SAW, considered a part of religious practice, can survive and be well preserved

because it is based on religious beliefs and sacredness, thus forming and uniting its people, as Durkheim calls it, a single moral community. In the context of social relations, the *Panjang Mulud* tradition is seen as a social sphere that functions to unite fellow members of society and contains a sense of kinship. In this case, *Panjang Mulud* is a forum as well as a social media in order to enable the community as individual communicators to interact within it. Furthermore, through implementing *Panjang Mulud* activities, communities can establish close relationships with one another, both local (indigenous or native) communities and immigrant communities, including with communities outside the village. Thus, at first glance, *Panjang Mulud's* existence is interpreted not only as a mere tradition but also as a medium of communication in relation to the social communication that occurs within it.

In terms of communication, the *Panjang Mulud* tradition can also be interpreted as a medium of social communication which has positive implications for the creation of a harmonious social life. The *Panjang Mulud* tradition or other traditions carried out by the community, apart from having ritual and spiritual significance, also contain different meanings in social life, namely as a medium of social communication which has positive implications for the creation of the development of a harmonious social life. For example, in traditions related to the celebration of Eid al-Fitr, the tradition carried out is seen as an effective medium of communication in building social relations in society (Yanti, 2019). Thus, the *Panjang Mulud* tradition is able to create a sense of togetherness among social beings. The context is that the *Panjang Mulud* tradition is also considered capable of building harmony with nature (Natasari, 2021).

The *Panjang Mulud* tradition is simply also concerned with aspects of social communication. Conceptually, social communication is an interactional process with several characteristics, one of which is that it occurs in a physical and social context. Social communication can assist

individuals in forming self-concept, self-actualization for survival, obtaining happiness, avoiding pressure and tension, and building relationships with others. Therefore, social communication can help individuals to work together with other community members to achieve common goals that have been directed, as well as to shape and support the process of social integrity (Mulyana, 2017), either in the form of controlling conflicts and social deviations, within a particular social system or in the framework of uniting certain elements in a society so as to create a social order (Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2017).

In this context, the *Panjang Mulud* tradition is a spiritually oriented (religious) ritual that can be considered important and bind the congregation in one community, carried out in mutual cooperation, symbolizing togetherness, as well as being a powerful communication medium for members of the community (Tihami, 1999). The communication container in question contains a process in the pattern of social interaction that occurs. Social interaction is established, both involving relationships between individuals, between groups, and between individuals and groups. This social interaction is capable of being the beginning of the establishment of social relations and social communication between humans (Liliweri, 2009).

The existence of social communication as part of the human communication process allows for substance as verbal and nonverbal communication. Regarding *Panjang Mulud*, the existence of nonverbal communication can be said to be a part of it. Nonverbal communication is a strategic site that aims to show the inseparable link between nature and culture in human behavior (Segerstrale & Molnár, 2018). Thus, humans interact and behave not only in relation to other humans, but it is possible to come into contact with nature, the environment, and the cultural aspects that surround them. On a different side, the *Panjang Mulud* tradition socially has special focus for the perspective of Social Action

theory as another study within it. In fact, the *Panjang Mulud* tradition, which is still maintained and carried out every year, belongs to actions that are rational in nature, based on awareness based on a certain orientation. This orientation is then narrowed down to two things, namely the existence of motives and goals. Therefore, Max Weber's views are essential to support when he asserts that rational actions carried out by humans are basically related to conscious considerations and choices when declaring these actions (Kalberg, 1980).

A number of communication behaviors, although subjective, actually have a meaning, which is intended to influence or orient the behavior of others. Weber then bases the analysis of social action in relation to individual communication behavior on four criteria. The first one is value-oriented rationality. This refers to actions taken by individuals based on the rationality of more dominant values, based on idealistic interests, rather than aspects of habit and emotion. The second criterion is instrumental rationality which is based on materialistic interests that are more dominant and its rationality is oriented towards the most profitable choices. The third is affective actions, namely actions that are mostly controlled by feelings or emotions without reasoning. Fourth, traditional actions are believed to be actions that are formed from habits, without conscious reflection or planning.

Concerning the above points, the authors consider it important to study this issue further with the research locus centered in Waqf Village, Tembong Village, Cipocok Jaya District, Serang City. Administratively and regionally, the Waqf village is located in the Serang City area, with high community mobility, complex social life, and of course having diverse religious understandings. However, they still maintain various religious traditions. On every Thursday night, or Friday night, for example, they usually hold *Yasinan* activities (read the Yasin verse) together at the mosque, accompanied by *marhabanan* activities (to welcome the Ramadhan month),

including other religious traditions such as *rewaban*, *tablilan*, *khaul*, *tujuh bulanan* (seven- month commemoration), *Rebo Wekasan*, *Mulud Fatimah*, and the Commemoration of Islamic Holidays (*Peringatan Hari Besar Islam/ PHBI*) such as Isra Mikraj and Nuzulul Quran. Similarly, the birth of the Prophet Muhammad, or *Muludan*, is always commemorated, accompanied by the *Panjang Mulud* activity. Similar to other places, the *Panjang Mulud* activity in Waqf Village was also lively, attended by all levels of society, both natives and immigrants, even involving people from other villages.

Various religious activities in Wakaf Village are also centered in the mosque. Likewise, with The *Panjang Mulud* tradition, the mosque is used as a place as well as a center of activity. Because, apart from functioning as a place of worship, the mosque is also a place for various other community activities. Al-Ghazali (2018) in his research stated that the mosque is an instrument of community empowerment which has a very strategic role in improving quality and can unite the community. They were very enthusiastic in participating in this activity from the beginning to the end of the activity. Local culture (local wisdom) must be one of the basic considerations in formulating policies development in Banten Province (Syarbini, 2011). The study of the transformation of religious understanding at the local level is part of the way to map changes in people's ways of thinking, as well as the occurrence of cultural shifts in a broader sense (Abdullah, Mujib, & Ahnaf, 2010).

There have been many studies conducted on the *Panjang Mulud* tradition by researchers from various disciplines. Some examples are the research from Said (2016); Al-Ayubi (2017); Sahabudin et al. (2019); and Suriadi (2019). However, among many studies, there has not been any prior research related to the *Panjang Mulud* that is carried out based on the perspective of communication science, specifically in the perspective of social communication. On the other hand, *Panjang Mulud* is rich with communication aspects that are not only interesting but also important

subject to study. Among the aspects that the researcher wants to study is the *Panjang Mulud* tradition as a medium of social communication.

This research was conducted with the aim of knowing how social communication takes place in the *Panjang Mulud* tradition, and what the meaning of social action from the *Panjang Mulud* tradition is for the establishment of a harmonious social life. It is expected that there will be more of similar studies based on the perspective of communication science from diverse aspects in the future. Thus, in addition to enriching the repertoire of research in the field of communication science and other social sciences, it can also bring a real contribution to the development of science and provide solutions to social problems in the community. It is hoped that in the future there will be more and more similar studies based on the point of view of communication science, from various aspects of course, so that in addition to enriching research treasures in the field of communication science and other social sciences. It also has a real contribution to the development of science and provides solutions to social problems in society.

METHODS

This research was conducted using a qualitative approach, which means that this research usually occurs at a natural level, allowing many human behaviors and events to occur, as well as emphasizing aspects of the participants' perceptions and experiences and their way of interpreting life (Creswell, 2014). The method used is ethnomethodology, which was developed by Harold Garfinkel and is rooted in the phenomenological tradition of Albert Shultz. Shultz's thinking, which is appreciated by Garfinkel, is a thinking that places humans as subjects who have the ability to construct a social world based on their strength and ability to interpret (interpret) things. In this case, social actors interpret situations for their actions, reach goals, and other motivations to gain intersubjective

understanding, while coordinating their actions which are generally able to direct the social world that surrounds them (Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2017).

Furthermore, ethnomethodology is the empirical study of how a person responds to their everyday experiences in the social world. Ethnomethodology in this case aims to study the social reality of daily interactions (Basrowi & Sukidin, 2002; Salim, 2006). In other words, from an ethnomethodological point of view, a ‘social fact’ is created because of the interpretive actions of each member of society – activities that become a vehicle for actors to produce and organize conditions in everyday life itself (Denzin & Lincoln, 2009). Likewise, the *Panjang Mulud* tradition, how to interpret *Panjang Mulud* as a tradition and medium of communication, the social facts born in *Panjang Mulud* are basically created based on the interpretive actions of the people or society within it, who believe in, carry out, and at the same time celebrate it.

Data sources in this study consisted of primary data sources and secondary data sources. Primary data sources consist of original objects or documents in the form of raw materials from the main actor, or what is referred to as first-hand information and is primary in nature. The data collected in this primary source usually comes from the actual situation at the time an event occurred, either based on the results of interviews or direct observation. The second source, is a secondary data source, in which this data source comes from a second party or other sources that were available before the research was conducted (Silalahi, 2006). This research uses interactive data analysis. Data analysis in this study starts from the data reduction process, followed by data presentation, and the last is drawing conclusions. All data collected as research data was obtained through observation techniques, interviews, and documentation of the data related to the *Panjang Mulud* tradition.

For observation, this stage was carried out by observing the process of implementing the *Panjang Mulud* tradition. As for interviews, this data

collection technique was carried out through a number of questions in the interview guide which were addressed to several informants. The informants were selected based on considerations (purposive sampling) in accordance with the required data requirements. The number of informants referred to include, first, a local community leader who serves as Chair of the Mosque Welfare Council (*Dewan Kesejahteraan Masjid/ DKM*) and a village elder named Misna. This informant was considered to have authority in religious affairs, including the implementation of the *Panjang Mulud* tradition by the local community. Second, Musoffa, a former head of the neighborhood known to be active in every religious activity, including implementing the *Panjang Mulud* tradition. Third, Fahrurozi who represents the presence of migrants in the village. Fourth, Samsudin, a native who is also actively involved in every *Panjang Mulud* activity. Given their role and position in society, the four residents were considered representative to be used as informants in this study. The aim was to obtain as much information as possible and understand the implementation of the *Panjang Mulud* tradition as the location where this research was conducted.

Furthermore, the finding data that was successfully collected was then analyzed and interpreted based on the theory of social communication and social action as the analytical knife in order to further draw conclusions and verification. In the documentation stage, data collection was carried out by examining other data outside the primary data that was deemed relevant and in accordance with the research focus. Data based on documentation can be obtained through literary sources, media texts both conventional and digital, as well as documents from the public.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Social Communication In The Panjang Mulud Tradition

The *Panjang Mulud* tradition is one of the community traditions involving many people, ranging from planning to implementation. Apart from being a spiritually (religiously) oriented ritual that is considered important to be followed by every element of society, the implementation of *Panjang Mulud* also consists of various activities that require the involvement of many parties. Therefore, the spirit of mutual cooperation and togetherness among the community elements in the context of implementing the *Panjang Mulud* tradition is absolutely necessary, from the beginning to the end of the activity. The implementation of activities and the involvement of various parties in the *Panjang Mulud* tradition subsequently creates a communicative situation between community elements, both communication in the social and cultural contexts that take place simultaneously.

Panjang Mulud as a tradition which contains rigid aspects of communication, in relation to communication in a cultural and social context. Social communication in the *Panjang Mulud* tradition is created from planning, implementation, to the end of the activity. The planning stage begins with a community meeting held in the courtyard of the Nurul Hikmah Mosque, with the initiator consisting of the RT (*Rukun Tetangga*) Chair, religious leaders who are concurrently the Mosque Welfare Council (*Dewan Kesejahteraan Masjid/DKM*) administrators, and youth leaders. In the meeting, all residents were invited to be involved in discussions about the committee, implementation time, form of activity, and the number of dues that must be paid by each head of the family.

In this meeting, there were intense communication and interaction between community members, both indigenous people who used to carry out the *Panjang Mulud* tradition and immigrant communities who were new

to and following the tradition, young and old. The discussion usually begins with determining the implementation date, adjusting to the community's free time, and considering the timing of the *Muludan* implementation in neighboring villages so there are no clashes. The next discussion is the formation of a committee consisting of the chairman, secretary, treasurer, and other sections, followed by discussion of the activities and determining the number of invitees from other villages, groups of tahlil and marhaban readers, extended pick-up groups, and so on. The final discussion is usually about the amount of fees charged to residents. The amount of this fee is adjusted based on need. The livelier the activities, the more significant the contributions issued by the community. In order not to be burdensome, contributions are made in installments which are billed by the committee periodically. For this reason, this planning stage is usually carried out one or two months before the implementation of activities.

According to the agreement, the implementation stages of the 2021 *Muludan* and *Panjang Mulud* activities would be held on Sunday, October 3rd, coinciding with the 26th of Safar 1443 Hijri. The implementation date was deliberately moved forward (not in the month of Rabi'ul-Awal) and was mutually agreed so that the activities would not clash with other villages. This is the interview results with The Head of DKM as well as the head of the Wakaf Village:

“This year we decided to move *Muludan* forward, not exactly in the month of Rabi'ul-Awal to avoid clashing with *Muludan* in other places. If the time is the same as in the neighboring village, it will be difficult later on how we can invite each other. Because, every *Muludan* we must invite the village next door. Likewise, the village next door, definitely invite our village.”

On the D-day of the activity, the entire committee in black and white uniforms with caps were busy working in accordance with their respective roles. Some were coordinating the event, some were welcoming

guests, and so on. Likewise, the community in general was preparing to welcome the implementation, including preparing the *Panjang* they make.



Figure 1. One Of The Long (*Panjang*) Shaped Boat

For residents, the *Panjang* that is made or purchased with all its contents is a form of alms which will later be divided and given to other parties who have been determined by the committee. Because of the nature and motivation of charity, residents would compete to make and prepare the best possible *Panjang*, even as large and complete as possible. Some are in the form of animals such as camels, in the form of boats, planes, miniature mosques, to the simplest ones such as boxes but decorated with various knick-knacks. The contents, ranging from basic ingredients such as rice, cooking oil, noodles, to clothes, towels and the like, including household furniture. In fact, not infrequently, the *Panjang* are decorated with banknotes with various nominal values that are shaped like flags and so on, thereby adding to the lively atmosphere and inviting the attraction of people to be involved in. The *Panjang Mulud* contain usually depends on

the natural potential possessed by each region. However, in Wakaf Village, the community makes expression according to their wishes and abilities.

The community believe that charity is part of religious teachings, and whoever gives charity will surely get the reward and blessing of life. Therefore, the costs incurred by each resident in making the *Panjang* vary greatly. Some reach millions of rupiah because the shape and *Panjang* consist of goods with above-average prices. There are also those who only pay a small fee because the long form only contains basic necessities. All of that depends on the ability of each citizen, which is based on volunteerism, and what is certain is that the form and all the *Panjang* made reflect the joy and expression of joy and togetherness of the citizens in commemorating and celebrating the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. This is the former head of RT 002 of The Wakaf Village said:

“Regarding the amount of costs incurred for making the length, it’s relative, depending on the ability of each. So, there is no benchmark for the amount of costs incurred and there is no coercion, whether to make it or not is up to each one. If you want to make it this long, it’s up to you. But the point is that no matter how much money we spend, we are willing to spend it because this is part of our alms.”

Furthermore, on the scheduled day of implementation, the *Panjang Mulud* activity was comprised of a number of activities. It started with the recitation of tahlil and continued with reading the book of Bar promise containing praises to the Prophet Muhammad SAW. It is also called marhabanan which is carried out alternately by a group of people – usually ustad or santri who are brought in from the pesantren (Islamic boarding school) or from the surrounding village – which is centered in the mosque where the activities are carried out. The event took place, accompanied by the arrival of *Panjang Mulud* which were collected in front of the mosque. Meanwhile, the community on the day of the implementation, both men

and women, children, teenagers, youth, and parents, left their houses with joy, and interact with one another to welcome the presence of the committee and the team. They also mingled with the community members from other villages who wanted to witness the excitement of the event.

On the other hand, the reception committee was busy receiving and inviting guests from neighboring villages and other invitees to enter the mosque to join the group of tahlil and readers. At the same time, a long pick-up was carried out to the residents' homes by the committee and a special pick-up group of 10-25 people dressed in *taqwa* (*koko*) clothes. While carrying and sounding the beat of *Terbang Gede* (big flying musical instruments), they read tahlil and salawat to the Prophet Muhammad, which is usually also followed by the residents together. The recitation is a combination of the word of tawhid and Salawat (salutation) to the Prophet Muhammad SAW. The sentence “*Laa ilaha Illallah Mubammad Rasulallah*” is the most profound sentence of dhikr because it implies the belief that Allah is the only God and there is no God but Allah. The sentence also contains a belief that the prophet Muhammad is the messenger of Allah the Almighty. In addition, the Salawat that is chanted along with the Tawhid word is a prayer as well as a form of respect and love of Muslims for their prophet, Muhammad SAW. In addition to Arabic pronunciation, they also sing songs in the local language as follows:

Hayu kabeh dulur-dulu dadi wong ajeu takabur...

Hayu kabeh dulur-dulur dadi wong ajeu takabur...

Hayu kabeh dulur-dulur, maring Allah kudu syukur inget kangge ning kubur...

Which means:

Come on, brothers and sisters, do not be arrogant/*takabur* as humans

Come on, brothers and sisters, do not be arrogant/*takabur* as humans

Come on, brothers and sisters, to Allah we must be grateful, we must remember the grave

The song in the local language contains an encouragement to all people not to be arrogant. Instead, everyone is obliged to always be grateful to Allah for all the blessings given. In addition, everyone must also always remember death or remember the grave. Therefore, in addition to being grateful, one must also always increase worship to Allah the Almighty.

The *Panjang* were then paraded around the village to be taken to an open field and then lined up in the yard or field in front of the mosque. To make the event even more lively, the committee set firecrackers to cause a loud bang mixed with the sound of the beat of musical instruments and the singing of the long accompaniment group. The situation was so expressive, reflecting the joy and happiness of the community.

The long contents were collected and separated by the committee according to the type and designation. Some were specially designated for religious leaders, for invited guests from the surrounding village community, orphans, for families who cannot afford it, and those with other rights. Likewise, the money that has been collected from *Panjang* made like flags, is collected and then counted and distributed as alms to those who are entitled. At the same time, without being commanded, people who are not included in the committee voluntarily also participate in the process of counting, distributing, and distributing long content. This process is usually completed before dawn arrives.

The stage after implementation was the last stage of the *Muludan* activity and the *Panjang Mulud* tradition, in the form of a community meeting containing get-togethers to evaluate activities as well as the disbandment of the committee. In these activities, community leaders who are also religious leaders will be involved in conducting a thorough evaluation of the running of the action. Because the atmosphere was fluid, the evaluation activities were also fluid, so all parties openly accepted the shortcomings and weaknesses of implementing the activities. The event ended with shaking hands with each other and continued with eating together as a form of togetherness and gratitude for the smooth running of the *Muludan* and *Panjang Mulud* activities. Typically, this activity is carried out one or two weeks after the *Muludan* and *Panjang Mulud* tradition is held.

Dingley and Catterall (2020) find that traditional religion, mysticism, and past references have a relatively significant influence on identity in orality. Through the lens of participatory communication, religion's roles pertaining to environmental issues can be comprehended. Religion plays a role in participatory communication via faith-based organizations, religious gatherings, and sites of worship. Religion is a factor that promotes effective communication, knowledge creation, and the development of sustainable communities (Akhda, Admin, Haryadi, & Andarwati, 2019).

Meaning Of Panjang Mulud Tradition As Social Action

The people of Waqf village have a high spirit in welcoming and preparing for the *Panjang Mulud*. They view *Panjang Mulud* as a religious tradition that must be cared for, maintained, and preserved as a manifestation of love for the Prophet Muhammad SAW and a form of obedience to religious teachings. As a result, they always carry out the tradition with joy, without coercion, and no matter how much it costs for these activities, they are willing to spend it. Therefore, it is not surprising that they seem to be competing with each other to make and prepare the *Panjang* with all its contents as well and as much as possible.

The people of Waqf village even believe that the better the form and the more varied the content, the more rewards, and blessings they would get. In this case, they relate it to the religious commandment about alms. According to them, making the *Panjang* and its contents is a form of alms. Alms are a religious commandment which has implications for the reward to be obtained. Therefore, the more charity you do, the more rewards you will get. They also believe that if you have issued a long form of alms with all its contents, sustenance will usually flow smoothly. Moreover, even with the business or work they do, it will produce doubled sustenance. This is the interview with The Former Head of RT 002 the Waqf Village:

“Giving alms is a religious order, so we are obliged to release some of what we have in the form of long products and their contents such as basic necessities, household utensils, money or others. And we believe that everything you give in charity will be replaced by Allah with even more sustenance.”

In addition, the *Panjang Mulud* tradition is also a moment for people to interact and communicate with each other. It is said so because this momentum from planning to the end of implementation always involves all components of society, young and old, men and women, indigenous people and immigrants, including people from other villages who are deliberately invited, either as guests or recipients of blessings in the form of basic necessities and other things coming from the *Panjang* from the community contributions. Through this momentum, community members can interact, communicate, and chat with each other. Thus, in addition to expressing gratitude and happiness for the birth of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, *Panjang Mulud* is also a momentum to share happiness by giving alms, including sharing and exchanging stories between residents about various things.

In the perspective of communication, this *Muludan* and *Panjang Mulud* tradition can be referred to as a social fact, a medium of communication with various meanings for the establishment of harmony

and social cohesiveness. One of them is the meaning of friendship. In the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (Kemendikbud, 2017), *silaturrebmi* means friendship or brotherhood, connecting kinship and affection that wants goodness. Based on this understanding, it can be understood that *silaturrebmi* has meaning as a form of social action to establish relationships, both friendship and brotherhood, including re-knitting cracked or tenuous relationships, which are based on the principle and nature of love in order to obtain goodness.

In this context, the *Panjang Mulud* tradition is also a bridge for people to meet and interact with each other to knit friendship and kinship relations based on the values of love to build social harmony between them. For the people themselves, *silaturrebmi* is a manifestation of awareness in carrying out religious orders that are oriented towards joint efforts to build harmonious social relations. This awareness was recognized by both indigenous people and immigrants, including people from neighboring villages who were invited to this activity, as well as religious leaders and village elders.

They also realize that along with the dynamics of the times and era, there are currently various obstacles and challenges in an effort to create a harmonious situation in social life. These obstacles and challenges can come from within or outside, which can potentially cause conflicts and disrupt social relations that have been established so far. Therefore, through this *Panjang Mulud*, the community continues to build awareness to bind themselves to each other, to knit friendship with each other. Because through this tradition, they are always intensely involved in interacting, communicating, admonishing each other, gathering, and working together to make this long tradition of *Mulud* a success. As a previous study said, the development of the harmony messages disseminated through the media related to religious community tolerance has a positive impact on other villages as literacy and promotion to build tolerance between religious communities (Susanto, Sumardjo, Sarwoprasodjo, & Kinseng, 2022).

More specifically, for the local community, the *Panjang Mulud* tradition is a consciously created space to affirm their religious and cultural identity. In terms of religious identity, the *Panjang Mulud* tradition is part of the attitude of a Muslim who has a sense of love for the Great Prophet Muhammad SAW, so that the momentum of his birth is always celebrated with joy. Meanwhile, in terms of cultural identity, *Panjang Mulud* is a tradition that has been passed down from generation to generation, so they feel obliged to continue to care for and preserve it.

As for the immigrant community, they also choose to be actively involved in this *Panjang Mulud* tradition. In addition to respecting the traditions that grow in the community where they currently live, this participation is also interpreted as a form of unification, or in the sociological language referred to as part of the community itself (in group), so that its existence is not considered different or as something else. More specifically, some of them even said that their involvement and participation in this tradition was an effort to entrust themselves as migrants to local residents, so that they could feel safe and comfortable where they live now because they feel protected. Therefore, they are happy to be actively involved in the long tradition of *Mulud*, starting from involvement in the preparatory meeting as committee members, making the long, until the end of the activity. The migrant resident said:

“Yes... we can meet each other, talk and even joke with our neighbors, even with people from other villages, because of this *Muludan* event. That way, we greet and ask each other how they are. Also, the *Muludan* is a part of the inter-community friendship. Moreover, I am a newcomer, so it is important to interact with the indigenous people here to be actively involved. Yes...., at least to entrust me.”

On the other hand, the friendship that has been established during this long tradition of *Mulud* also crossed the geographical boundaries of the area where they lived. On this occasion, residents from other villages were invited to celebrate and revitalize the activities, including special

guests such as government officials, community leaders, religious leaders, and other parties. They blend in with the local community, interacting with one another. According to some of them, this kind of gathering is the right momentum to get to know each other between residents as well as a place to entrust each other. Thus, the relationship between the residents of the villages can be harmonious, and if there are any problems, they can be immediately addressed and resolved because of the bonds of friendship that have been built, though, among others, the long tradition of *Mulud*.

Furthermore, each invitation received a blessing as a form of respect and the establishment of the bond of friendship. Likewise, those coming from lower economic groups who were specially invited to participate also received the same blessing. The blessings that are used as gifts to take home come from the community's property. After being paraded around the village, the long pieces are then collected in one place. The contents, whether basic necessities, cloth, clothes, money, or other things, are collected and selected according to their type and purpose. Only after that is it divided into plastic bags to be given to each invited guest and other parties deemed entitled to receive it. Meanwhile, the community that owns the *Panjang* does not receive it at all and does not even have the right to recover the content of the long term because, from the beginning, they have intended to make the *Panjang* and its contents to be donated or give to those who deserve it.

According to residents and community members, this is where the true wisdom of the *Panjang Mulud* tradition is. In addition to friendship, the long tradition of *Mulud* is a form of joy, gratitude, as well as an opportunity to share. Therefore, they reject the notion that the *Panjang Mulud* tradition is a place to show off, part of a wasteful act, or a fabricated activity. On the other hand, the *Panjang Mulud* is not only a celebration of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad but also an event for friendship and sharing. One of the residents said:

“Let it be if there are people who say that this *Panjang Mulud* is a show-off, or there are also those who say this is a redundant act. For me, if someone thinks that *Muludan* is a show-off or a redundant act, that means they don’t understand the essence of *Muludan*. *Muludan* is a form of our joy at the birth of the Prophet Muhammad, a sign of our gratitude. His name is also grateful, it’s only natural that this and that activity is made (long *Mulud*, pen.), but later we will donate it to those in need. So, where’s the show? Where is the waste too?”

For residents and community members, silaturahmi is a mandatory command that must be fulfilled by every Muslim, as many commands are contained in the Qur’an and al-Hadith. They also believe that friendship in addition to strengthening the bonds of relations between members of the community, can also prolong life, according to the meaning of the word long in the term *Panjang Mulud*, namely longevity, which some people believe that *Mulud* will surely be given a blessing in the form of a long life.

Local culture can build a civilization where the human, as the actors of the civilization, is able to formulate a system of values contained in the tradition. To this end, local culture can build national civilization when the local culture is formulating as the ontological level of culture (Anggraeni, Hakam, Mardhiah, & Lubis, 2019).

Panjang Mulud has become community-based urban tourist attractions in Serang and can attract more comprehensive tourists (Sahabudin et al., 2019). The motives underlying the participants in *Panjang Mulud* traditions are the motives of worship, economy, feelings and social motive, acknowledgments, and worship. Participants judge themselves as devout muslim, generous, and capable. The meanings formed in this tradition are as self-expression, identity, moment, and the way to reach destinations. Transcendental communication exists in every process of *Panjang Mulud* tradition and is directly interpreted by the participants through verbal actions such as prayer, dhikr’s *Mulud*, marhaban, and recitation or

nonverbal such as alms to bring out the *Panjang*, hospitality, and pilgrimage that returned to the participants' belief as a form of faith, which being characterizes of transcendental communication (Nurushaumy, Jaiz, & Muldi, 2019).

The commemoration of the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad is an Islamic culture, the legality of its implementation as its super culture. Meanwhile, the culture is the form and manner of the activities of the Prophet's birthday which are carried out based on region, class, ethnicity, and profession. When mawlid is carried out based on local wisdom (region, class, ethnicity, profession), then special diversity appears in certain areas and does not conflict with the main culture. This is referred to as a subculture (Syaifudin, 2021). The diversity of art performance of Bantenese culture, evolving from generation to generation, and it cannot be separated from the influences of religion, especially Islam (Said, 2016).

The shift in the period from the government structure affects the practices in realizing the *Panjang Mulud* tradition, not only social beings but also in harmony with nature. People can give charity in this *Panjang Mulud* tradition (Natasari, 2021). Islamic tradition and religious culture in the halal tourism industry have a very important role in the halal tourism industry. These two elements are the main attraction in the attraction of halal tourism destinations in Indonesia. Tourists can learn and feel about Islamic tradition and religious culture in halal tourism packages that have religious and kindness values. The integration of Islamic tradition and religious culture in halal tourism is allowed in Islam as long as it does not conflict with Islamic law (Sholehuddin, Munjin, & Adinugraha, 2021). Various cultures that exist in Serang Regency can be used as characteristics to the region so that the area can develop its own cultural potential (Hermana & Halimah, 2019).

Character education based on cultural and religious values in the *Panjang Mulud* tradition is expected to be the basic capital of each individual so that they are not only good at academics but also have to

be good at character. The purpose of building character education based on cultural and religious values in The *Panjang Mulud* tradition is to form characters and souls aware of their identity. It is necessary to be planted from a young age. The character formed will make the individual adaptive to change (Murni, Hendrayana, Leksono, & Hufad, 2021).

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

Based on the data and findings of the research above, it can be concluded that, *first*, the *Panjang Mulud* is a space created consciously to confirm their religious and cultural identity. In terms of religious identity, carrying out the *Panjang Mulud* is part of the attitudes and actions of a Muslim with a sense of love for the Great Prophet Muhammad SAW, so that the momentum of his birth is always celebrated with joy, voluntarily. Meanwhile, in terms of cultural identity, *Panjang Mulud* is a tradition that has been passed down from generation to generation, so the people feel obliged to continue to care for and preserve it. Furthermore, it is at the same time also a social space for the community to interact and communicate in order to build a spirit of togetherness, solidarity, including harmony that is woven by the spirit of religion. *Second*, *Panjang Mulud* tradition activities are a form of social action that is carried out consciously and is more value-oriented than other motives such as economic or other motives. It is said to be more value-oriented because the social actions it performs are based on the religious spirit, namely believing that *Panjang Mulud* is a religious tradition that must be cared for, maintained, and preserved as a manifestation of love for the Prophet Muhammad SAW as well as a form of obedience to religious teachings. As a result, the people of Banten always observe the tradition with pleasure, without coercion, and regardless of the cost, they are willing to spend their money on these activities. Since the commitment to these values is so deeply rooted in

the community, rational considerations regarding utility, efficiency, etc., are irrelevant.

Suggestion

This topic's research object can be expanded in subsequent investigations. Future phenomenological researchers of this Islamic tradition are encouraged to investigate the meaning of loyalty to *Panjang Mulud* and the social construction of society in the celebration of *Panjang Mulud*.

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