



'Standing up' *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* as cultural expression in Indonesia: A historical approach

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This study aims to discuss the historiography of standing up *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* in the cultural expression in Indonesia. This research is classified as qualitative research with a historical approach method reinforced with documentation, interview and observation. To deepen the meaning of *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* using analysis using the symbolic interpretive theory of Clifford Geertz. Interestingly, the tradition of *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* becomes a symbolic meaning of the expression of homage to the Prophet Muhammad and has the content of Maḥabbah teachings to the Prophet. This research concluded that standing up *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* began when Sheikh Tajuddin as-Subkhi started his stand while reading the Prophet's Mawlid as a symbol of respect for the Prophet Muhammad. The *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* has various forms of celebration as a cultural expression in Indonesia, manifested in various forms of celebration in Javanese cultures, such as muludan, srakalan, kekahan, temu manten, manakiban, sema'an al-Qur'an, and respect for newly arrived ulama.

Contribution: This article has contributed to discovering the traditions that developed in Indonesia, which intersected with *Maḥallu al-Qiyām*, thus identifying some expressions of Javanese culture in whose dialectic with standing *Maḥallu al-Qiyām*.

Keywords: Mawlid; *Maḥallu al-Qiyām*; standing up; cultural expression; Indonesia.

Introduction

There is a belief in prophet lovers that when the ritual of *mawlid* enters the peak session, all those present shall stand up as though honor the arrival of the Messenger of Allah. Standing, or in Arabic terms *Maḥallu al-Qiyām*, is the climax of a series of readings of praise texts that were specially composed as evidence of the people's love for the Prophet Muhammad. The presence of the beloved is like a panacea for souls afflicted with longing because they never meet eyes. It is enough to feel accompanied by a belief in a presence; at least it can calm the spiritual turmoil that has arisen since witnessing there is no god, but Allah and Muhammad is His messenger or confession of faith (Said 2018:103–134).

The *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* tradition usually appears at the *mawlid* event in the *Rabi'ul Awwal* month (Weinrich 2020). *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* is a tradition of 'standing up' when reciting *shalawat* to the Prophet Muhammad through the book of *mawlid*, such as *al-Barzanji*, the book by Sheikh Ja'far al-Barzanji (d. 1766) (Jamaluddin 2011:347–370). *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* in Javanese tradition is called *srakalan*. This term is a loan word from the word *asyraqal* (Arabic) in the quote from the book of *al-Barzanji* in the sentence *Yā nabī salām 'alaika, Yā Rosūl salām 'alaika, Yā habīb salām 'alaika, sholawātullāh 'alaika Asyroqol badru 'alainā, fakhtafat minhul budūru, Mitsla husnik mā ro-ainā, qotthu yā wajhas-surūri* (al-Barzanji:129). This sentence becomes the reading when the worshippers stand, so the word *asyraqal* by the Javanese people has been termed the tradition of *srakalan*.

Standing is a symbol of honouring Prophet Muhammad, and it usually becomes a tradition for members of *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) organisation, when celebrating the *mawlid* of Prophet Muhammad (Aryani 2017:1–30). The symbol of 'standing up' is conducted to honor someone or even something; for example, Indonesia Raya (national song) is played during a flag ceremony and the anthem, and all participants must stand. The goal is to respect the flag and the national heroes.

When reading *Mawlid al-Dibā'i*, *al-Barzanji*, *Simṭu al-Durār*, and entering the reading of *Marhaban*, it will usually be accompanied by *Maḥallu al-Qiyām*; thus, it is often referred to as *marḥabanan*. *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* itself is a 'standing up' to honor the Prophet Muhammad. At the end of the reading of the

Note: Special collection: Historical Thought and Source Interpretation.

book of *mawlid*, before the *doa'* (prayer) is read, all worshippers stand while chanting the verse *Maḥallu al-Qiyām*. Because of the event's solemnity, serenity, peace, and compassion, they seemed to welcome the arrival of the Prophet Muhammad, and even many worshippers were crying.

The *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* tradition usually appears at the *mawlid* event in the *Rabi'ul Awwal* month (Weinrich 2020). It is also held at important moments of cultures in Indonesia, such as in the *Walīmatu al-Aqīqah* event through offering alms by slaughtering goats as well as *tasmiyah* (giving name), to the bridal processions or parades, *tedhak siten* (stomping on the earth) for babies who are starting to learn to stand, and welcoming the arrival of *kiai*.

Thus, this tradition intersects with Islam and local culture in Javanese. However, this tradition is considered by some Muslims as *bid'ah* (something new in religion), therefore this ritual is considered a religious deviation (As'ad 2019:350–372; Svensson 2013:89–111). Its perpetrators are stigmatized as heretics, and this tradition is widely practiced by many assemblies such as the *Majelis Aḥbabul Mustāfa*, *Majelis Riyadatul Jannah*, *Majelis Rasulallah*, *Majelis Nurul Mustāfa*, *Majelis Kanzus Shalawat*, and *Mafia Shalawat* (Ngadhimah 2018). *Nahdlatul Ulama* is the largest Islamic organisation in Indonesia and has a long history. Founded in 1926 by *Hadratussyaikh* KH Hasyim Asy'ari, NU has played a major role in developing Islam that is moderate, inclusive, and coexisting with local culture. *Aḥbabul Musthofa* is one of several assemblies that exist to facilitate people in understanding and emulating Prophet Muhammad. It was established around 1998 in the city of Solo, precisely Mertodranan Village by Habib Syech bin Abdul Qadir Assegaf. Both groups recognise the importance of the Islamic traditions of the archipelago in the Indonesian context. They may have different views on how to honour and preserve these traditions, but both value Indonesia's Islamic cultural heritage.

The phenomena make the study of the historiography of *Maḥallu al-Qiyām*, as well as various cultural expressions being interesting, and these are the underlying reasons for this research. Based on the mapping of previous studies, *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* is still open for study. Study of *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* is a specific study of cultural expression in Indonesia that previous researchers have not discussed.

This research is important because the *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* tradition intersects with Islam and Javanese culture. In addition to providing information about the forms of religious expression of the community through the *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* tradition in Indonesia, it also helps to explore the meaning of various symbols that accompany the actions of traditional actors so that they can enrich the literature on the relationship between religion (Islam) and culture in Indonesia. Therefore, it can improve knowledge about acculturation between Javanese Islam from an anthropological perspective by displaying social phenomena (Ali 2011:1–35). From the mapping of the study above, the study of this phenomenon is focused on: the history of *Maḥallu al-Qiyām*,

the opinions of scholars about *Maḥallu al-Qiyām*, the meaning contained in *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* through Clifford Geertz's symbolic interpretive approach, and the cultural expressions in Indonesia covering *Maḥallu al-Qiyām*. This research is expected to provide new historical facts about the practice of *Maḥallu al-Qiyām*.

This research is classified as qualitative research with a historical approach method. With data collection techniques using documentation study, interview and observations that aim to observe directly with the perpetrators of the *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* and feel firsthand the meaning of the symbols practiced by them in the 'standing' of *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* tradition. Also supported by document techniques, it is useful as additional data so that it can be studied and used as an authentic source of literature.

To analyse the data, the researcher used a symbolic interpretive theory of Geertz. In line with Geertz's concept, the system of meaning is the meeting point between knowledge and value made possible by symbols. As for previous research on *Maḥallu al-Qiyām*: 'the stand *mawlid* issue among Indonesian Muslims in the period from circa 1875 to 1930' by Nico Kaptein, 'Historiography on *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* on *mawlid* tradition' (Kaptein 1993a:124–153). Marion Holmez Katz and Nico Kaptein, two Western scholars, wrote specifically on the historical side of the *standing rite in the tradition of reading the Prophet's birthday*. In his book entitled *The Birth of the Prophet Muhammad: Devotional Piety in Sunni Islam*, Katz deals specifically with *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* in the section on *Standing as an Expression of Emotion* (Katz 2007:1–275), while Nico, in his article entitled *The Establishment of Mawlid Issue Among Indonesia Muslims in The Period from Circa 1875 to 1930*, seeks to explain the historiography of *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* specifically with the background of the archipelago. More in-depth information on the history of the *mawlid* can also be traced from Kaptein's work entitled *Muhammad's Birthday Festival* (Kaptein 1993a). From the study of the literature sources mentioned, this paper tries to present the outsider perspective, which is offered as the scientific information to understand the tradition of *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* in general in sharing cultural expressions in Indonesia.

Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance to conduct this study was obtained from the Raden Mas Said State Islamic University of Surakarta, Ethical clearance to conduct this study was obtained from the Raden Mas Said State Islamic University of Surakarta by Dean of the Faculty of Adab and Language UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta on 16 January 2023.

Results and discussion

Maḥallu al-Qiyām historiography

History of the *Mawlid* (Muhammad's birthday)

An in-depth study of the history of the celebration of the Prophet Muhammad's *mawlid* has been carried out by

Nico Kaptein in his monograph *Muhammad's Birthday Festival*. The Fatimid dynasty ruled Egypt from 969 to 1171; for the first time, a formal birthday celebration involving state institutions was held. The function of this celebration indicated that there was a political tendency at that time, as an effort to strengthen the legitimacy of the power of the *Ahlu al-Bait* (descendants of the Prophet) and the *Imam* (Shia's leader), which was identical to the *shia* faction as the authority of this dynasty. Nico Kaptein notes that the reading of the *mawlid of diba'* was initiated by the warlord Salahuddin al-Ayyubi who was inspired by the Christmas celebrations at that time, to ignite the spirit of the Muslim troops; a *mawlid* celebration was held during which stories of the Prophet Muhammad's wars were read. The reading made the spirit of the Muslims flare again. At that time, the Muslim army rose highly motivated to expel the Christian army. The reading had a positive effect. Although no definite source mentioned when this *mawlid* celebration began, most historians consider that the *mawlid* began to be held in the last decade of the Fatimid dynasty in the 12th century AD (Kaptein 1993b:23).

Early literature that can be used as a reference to describe the history of *mawlid* cannot be separated from the figure of Nur al-Din (d. 1174), otherwise known as Umar al-Malla who has a *zawiya* (Sufi hut) in Mosul, Iraq, with a large following from various backgrounds. It is said that in that place, lively celebrations of the Prophet's birth were held for several days (Bulatov, Seferbekov & Seferbekov 2020:298–308). There is a compilation work on the life and habits of the Prophet Muhammad entitled *Wasīlat al-Muta'abbidīn fī Širāt Sayid al-Mursalīn*; this incomplete manuscript is attributed to al-Malla because it was written in the same period as al-Malla's lifetime. In the notes contained in the manuscript, it is written that the work was last read on Tuesday, 6 *Rabi' al-Awal* 569 H/1174 AD.

The next *mawlid* celebration recorded was in the era of Muzaffar al-Din Kokburi of the Begteginid dynasty (1168–1233), which was held to welcome the new year in the 13th century A.D. in Irbil (Weinrich 2022:147–200), estimated by the Kaptein, about 80 m, from the tomb of Umar al-Malla in Mosul, Iraq. As narrated by Ibn Khallikan (d. 1282), during this celebration a large number of people came from various regions, and the event involved the participation of many art workers and musicians. A special feature of the celebration was Sufistic singing. According to Ibn Khallikan's notes, the celebration also featured an Andalusian writer and the figure of Ibn Dihya, the author of *al-Tanwīr fī Mawlid al-Sirāj al-Munīr al-Bašhīr al-Nadhīr*. Still, unfortunately, the original manuscript was not found (Kaptein 1993b:40). The tradition of writing biographies in Islam has actually been rooted in history since the 8th century AD, with evidence known from several related works of literature such as *Mawlid Amīr al-Mu'minīn*, which narrates the life story of Ali bin Abi Talib whose writing is attributed to Wahb ibn Wahb ibn 'Abd Allah ibn Zam'a, Abu'l-Bukhturi (d. 815).

According to Kaptein, Kurtz, and other historians, the tradition of literacy in this segment is inseparable from

Shi'ite intellectualism. Meanwhile, the authoritative text that can be the work attributed to Abu al-Hasan al-Bakri is used as an early reference for the literary tradition of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday book and the foundation for systematic writing of the *mawlid* genre text in the later period entitled the book of *al-Anwār*. However, its validity is still debated considering that the manuscripts found still leave ambiguous information about the author and year of writing. In addition to al-Bakri's work, *al-Durr al-Munazzam fī al-Mawlid al-Mu'azzam* was compiled by Abu al-'Abbas al-'Azafi (d. 1236) and is also a genre of literature written in the *mawlid* era.

When it comes to the beginning of the emergence of the Prophet's birthday tradition (Katz 2007:76), Katz finds that the roots of the rite of 'standing' in the reading of the Prophet's *Mawlid* can be found since the time of Taqī al-Din al-Subki (d. 1355), as described by his student named Taj al-Din (d. 1368). He narrates, Taqī al-Din attended an assembly of Qur'anic in the Umayya mosque with the judges and officials of the city. On that occasion, when the story of the birth of the Prophet was read, Taqī al-Din stood as a form of respect and was followed by all who came at that time. Although there is no definite explanation of the date of this incident, it is clear that since that time, the tradition of *mawlid* has grown among Sunni scholars (Katz 2007:79). The tradition of welcoming the birthday of the Prophet in Indonesia is termed *muludan*. It is called *muludan* because it is carried out in the month of *Mulud* (in the Javanese calendar) or *Rabi'ul Awwal*. *Muludan* is performed in people's homes. *Muludan* is performed in people's homes. The host invites the public to attend the event. The time is not limited but is usually held after *asar*, *maghrib*, or *isha* prayers. This tradition was pioneered by a *kiai* who was able to revive religious activities at that time.

In Javanese tradition, *sekaten* is an annual event that has been regularly held in Solo and Yogyakarta since the 15th century. This event is a tradition carried out to commemorate the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad. This ceremony will be held in the same period of time in 1 year, namely every 5th–11th of *Rabi'ul Awwal* or in the Javanese calendar, also often referred to as the month of *mulud* (Figure 1 and 2).

'Standing up' in *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* practice by Indonesian Scholars' views

Essentially, there are various forms of showing respect, one of which is standing up. It is a custom in a symbol of respect. However, it will have another value if a good thing is intended for a command or suggestion, such as 'standing up' for parents because they want to be devoted and respect them. With the *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* tradition, its true meaning is to feel happy at the birth of Prophet Muhammad (Rosyid 2021:114).

The process of standing during *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* has been discussed by *ulama* (scholars), like Sheikh Tajuddin As-Subkhi (d. 1370), a hadith expert scholar who initiated the



Source: Collectie Nederland, n.d., *The banquet muludan, commemorating the birth and life of the Prophet Muhammad, at Serang, Java*, viewed n.d., from <https://collectienederland.nl/page/aggregation/nationaal-museum-van-wereldculturen/TM-10001268>

FIGURE 1: Muludan celebration commemorating the Prophet Muhammad in Serang Banten 1949.



Source: ANRI, n.d., *ANRI Kempen DIY 1950–1965 No.2397*, viewed n.d., from <https://anri.go.id/>

FIGURE 2: Displaying the Photo Archive of Grebeg Mulud Sekaten in Yogyakarta; it appears that mountains of produce are paraded towards the Great Mosque on 29 November 1952.

recommendation to stand when it came to the *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* session. He is a scholar who has reached the degree of *hujjatul Islām* or one who memorises more than 300 000 hadiths, with all the *sanad* and *matan* or the transmission of hadith. One day, he and his scholars and students held a *qasīdah* reading. When the *qasīdah* (Islamic song) was read suddenly, Sheikh Tajuddin As-Subki held his stick and stood up, followed by the congregation. They felt extraordinary peace, compassion, and solemnity by standing up and making their hearts long for Prophet Muhammad. Their tears flowed, expecting the Prophet's intercession. It can be said that the first person to hold the *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* tradition was Sheikh Tajuddin As-Subki, who had a high degree of scholarships, such as Imam Nawawi (d. 1277) and Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani (d. 1449) (Kaptein 1993b).

According to Sheikh Bakri Syatha in *I'ānatut Thālibīn*, when people hear the mention of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad, they stand up to pay respects. This kind of standing is considered good because it contains the exaltation of the Prophet, which has been done by the majority of *ulama* and is worth following. This source was also confirmed by

Sheikh Bakri bin Muhammad Syatha Ad-Dimyathi (d. 1892) in his work *I'ānatut Thālibīn*. He argues that it has become a tradition that when people hear about the birth of the Prophet Muhammad, they will stand up in respect for the Prophet Muhammad, the messenger of the end times. Standing like that is based on *istihsān* (good presumption) as a form of respect for the Prophet Muhammad (Ad-Dimyathi 2005:363). From the explanation above, standing during prayer is good because it is a form of respect for the Prophet Muhammad. The *shalawat* is a way to express the longing for the Prophet Muhammad and believe that the Prophet is present in the heart (As'ad 2020:409).

Sayid Muhammad bin 'Alawi al-Maliki al-Hasani (d. 2004), a Meccan *ulama*, also made a tradition of *mawlid* reading (*muludan* in Javanese terms) and preserved it gives a plausible reason for this phenomenon. He argues that standing at the mention of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad was not carried out by previous scholars (*salafushālih*), but that does not mean it is forbidden. Although the law is not obligatory, it is not *sunnah*, and it is not even permissible to believe in it with the two laws. The *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* tradition means respect for Muslims and joy for the Prophet Muhammad (Al-Hasani 1995:29–30). In Snouck Hurgronje's observation notes, the Javanese *ulama* colony took on its role as part of the intellectual group in Mecca in the 18th century A.D.; he dubs this colony as the heart of the religious life of the East-Indian Archipelago (Hurgronje 2006:291). Among the popular scholars in the Javanese colony in Mecca was Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani (d. 1897), who came to Mecca at the age of 15. The book of al-Nawawi can be referred to trace the history of the distribution of the *mawlid* book in Indonesia, entitled *Targhīb al-Mushtaḳīn li-Bayān Manzūmat Zayn al-'Ābidīn*, which was first published in Cairo in 1875 AD, presents an explanation from *al-Barzanji's mawlid* from the grammatical and semantic aspects of the poems in the Nazam version of *al-Barzanji's* work. In his first work, al-Nawawi emphasized that the rite of 'standing' in the reading of the Prophet's birthday has a basis, as explained by al-Samanhudi (d. 1785) in *al-Durr al-Tamīm Mawlid Sayyid al-Awwalīn wa al-Ākhirīn*, that the habit is a *bid'ah hasanah* (good religious creation) (something good) (Kaptein 1993a).

Al-Nawawi's second work, *Madārij al-Su'ūd ila Iktisā'i al-Burūd*, published in Cairo in 1878 AD, is a *syarh* (explanatory) book of *al-Barzanji's* prose works. In that century, the book by al-Nawawi was very popular among Muslims in the archipelago; and even now, the book can be found easily in bookshops in Indonesia. In his second work, al-Nawawi very clearly defended the rite of 'standing' as a form of attitude that was *mustahab* (recommended) as contained in the poem by the Iraqi poet, Yahya al-Sarsari (d. 1258) (Kaptein 1993a).

In addition to the two works of al-Nawawi that have been mentioned, another source that can be referred to study the historical side related to the celebration of *mawlid* is the compilation of fatwas with the title *Muhimmāt al-Nafā'is fi Bayān Aṣ'ilat al-Hadīth*, which appeared in 1892. According to

Hurgronje, the *mufti* (giver of fatwas) at that time was thought to be Ahmad ibn Zayn Dahlan, a person who had a strategic role as an Islamic scholar and was an authoritative source who lived in Mecca from 1870 to 1886 (Hurgronje 2006:122).

In the fatwa compilation book, *Muhimmāt al-Nafā'is* by Sheikh Zayni Dahlan (d. 1886), regarding the 'standing' ritual during the celebration of the Prophet's birthday, Mufti Haramain viewed it as *mustahab* (recommended). From the discussion on the rite of 'standing' during the celebration of the Prophet's birthday by examining the works of both al-Nawawi and Ahmad Zayni Dahlan, it can be concluded that this rite is not forbidden among traditional scholars (Hooker 2001:593–96). The previous conclusion will be different when we refer to the work of Abdul Karim Amrullah (d. 1981), familiarly known as *Buya Hamka*, entitled *Irsyād al-'Awwām*, which argues *mawlid*. Through this book, he tries to straighten out the common habits found during the procession of reading the Prophet's birthday among the common people. In his view, what has been done so far, such as using a tambourine as an accompaniment to the reading of the Prophet's birthday, is contrary to the *adab* (etic) taught by the Prophet. On specific matters relating to the rite of 'standing', Hamka disagreed with the group who stated that 'standing' was a *bid'ah hasanah*, or even *sunnah* as stated by al-Subki (d. 1355). Because, according to him, this opinion is weak. Hamka concluded that 'standing' in the process of the Prophet's birthday is considered a late (rejected) *bid'ah*, and no evidence shows its *sunnah*.

Apparently, because of the article written by Kaptein, disagreements about the rite of standing up in the celebration of the birthday are quite strong in various regions of the *Nusantara* (archipelago). The interesting thing about this event is that the dispute chose to remain on the intellectual path and a war of opinion, not leading to physical confrontation. According to Kaptein, the group who contends about the rite of 'standing' became two major currents: reformist groups who reject the 'standing' rite and traditionalist groups who support the rite as part of customs. 'Standing up' more closely emerges as a natural process driven by feelings and emotions to pay tribute to someone. 'Standing up' more closely emerges as a natural process driven by feelings and emotions to pay tribute to someone. It is alleged that the rite of 'standing' in the celebration of the Prophet's birthday is a product of Sufistic practices that occurred in the past, where morality became the focus and was put forward in carrying out worship and rituals, including reading the story of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad when the birthday celebration was held (Zamhari 2013:119–144).

Maḥallu al-Qiyām* in the tradition of Indonesian society; standing in the *Muludan

'Standing up' more closely emerges as a natural process driven by feelings and emotions to pay tribute to someone. It is alleged that the rite of 'standing' in the reading of the Prophet's birthday is a product of Sufistic practices that

occurred in the past, where morality became the focus and was put forward in carrying out worship and rituals, including reading the story of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad when the birthday celebration was held. The rite we are discussing has become a part of a series of rituals in the celebration of *mawlid* in various regions; especially in Indonesia, the 'standing' session will always be present at every reading of the *mawlid* text. Even though this rite grows and develops, it cannot be separated from disagreements among the ulama, especially the Salafy-Wahhabi group, who reject the practice of this tradition (Rubaidi 2020:431–456).

One of the *mawlid* assemblies that many worshippers participate in is the Sekumpul assembly at Martapura (Figure 3). The assembly was presided over by a charismatic cleric Sheikh Zaini bin Abdul Ghani more popularly known as *Abah Guru Sekumpul* (d. 2005). In 1996, Guru Sekumpul together with Habib Anis (d. 2006) held a *mawlid* event by reading *Mawlid Simṭu al-Durār* which was composed by Habib Anis' grandfather, Habib Ali bin Muhammad al-Habsyi (d. 1915). In its development, both Haul Sekumpul and Haul Habib Ali al-Habsyi in Solo have become the two biggest Haul celebrations attended by many congregations in Indonesia (Laits Atsir, [interview], pers. comm., 02 September 2022).

Standing in the procession of *Aqīqah* or *Kekahan* in Javanese culture

Maḥallu al-Qiyām is the most important moment in the reading of the *mawlid* by standing in honour of the birth of Prophet Muhammad. Meanwhile, the transcendental or essential meaning is the meaning that interprets the symbols of tradition into the essence of a certain purpose, thus giving birth to a view of the purpose of people's lives in carrying out the tradition. The *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* tradition is seen as a form of salvation for the baby, usually on the 7th day, the name of the baby is inaugurated with a prayer (*walīmatul tasmiyah*), so people make celebrations or *selamatan* traditions a form of



Source: Sekumpul Martapura Archives

FIGURE 3: *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* during the recitation of Maulid by Shaikh Zaini Abdul Ghani (Guru Sekumpul) with Habib Anis Solo in Martapura 1996.

thanksgiving for the child. The *Mahallu al-Qiyām* tradition is seen as worship because every human activity carrying out Islamic law is nothing more than human servitude to Allah alone.

The *aqīqah* tradition in Javanese custom is often referred to as *kekahan*; it involves shaving the baby's hair and giving a name with a standing session of *Mahallu al-Qiyām*. Based on research in the field, the authors obtained information about the stages of a systematic series of events in the *Mahallu al-Qiyām* tradition in *aqīqah*. The information was obtained from the informants' personal notes and as a result of interviews conducted with several informants. The information obtained is as follows: after cooking the *aqīqah* goat, the treat is ready to be served to the congregation; in the evening, the invitees are present to fill the room of the host's house, and then the activity is commenced.

Firstly, starting the *Mahallu al-Qiyām* tradition by reading *tawassul* (intermediary). The *kiai* leads the process by sending *al-Fātihah* gifts to the the host's family and relatives who had died. This is a religious philosophy that teaches children to always pray for their parents even though they have died. And pray for the safety and well-being of the baby and the baby's parents, especially relying on the Prophet Muhammad and praying for smooth sustenance. Secondly, reading *shalawat*, *kiai* and *aqīqah* congregation read *shalawat* as a sign of the start of the event both in reading the books of *mawlid* such as *Mawlid al-Barzanji*, *Mawlid Simṭu al-Durār*, *Mawlid al-Dibā'i*. In *Mawlid al-Barzanji*, after reading the *attiril* or the first to fourth chapters *wa lamma tamma min amlihī syahrani' alā masyhūri al-aqwāli al-marwiyiyah*. In *Mawlid Simṭu al-Durār*, when it comes to chapter seven *fahīna qoruba awānu wadh'I hādza al-ḥabīb*, or in *Mawlid al-Dibā'I* when it comes to *fahtazzal arsyu tharaban was tibsya'ra wazdād al kursiyu haibatana wa waqāra wamtala' atis samāwātu anwāra wa dhajjatil malāikatu tahlīlan wa tamjīdan wastighfāran*. Then continued with *Mahallu al-Qiyām*, or 'standing' as the core event of the tradition. When *Mahallu al-Qiyām* begins, the baby is held in the middle of the congregation; in addition to the parents holding their child, someone behind the baby's parents sprays perfume on the congregation, as a symbol of praying for the baby. Then honey or dates are prepared to *tahniq* the baby by a *kiai*.

Thirdly, shaving the baby's hair. It has become the custom of the people before the *Mahallu al-Qiyām* tradition that part of the baby's hair is shaved or cut when standing or *Mahallu al-Qiyām* is carried out (Figure 4). The hair that has been shaved earlier is then placed in a container, and then the hair is weighed and converted to the price of gold, and then donated. Clerics or *kiai* mainly carry out the process of cutting hair to obtain blessings, and then it is continued by parents and family.

Fourthly, it is the closing prayer. After the congregation sat back down, the baby was put into the room. Then, continued reading of birthdays such as *Mawlid al-Barzanji*, *Mawlid Simṭu*



Source: Author's personal documentation, 2019

FIGURE 4: *Mahallu al-Qiyām* during the performance of *aqīqah* accompanied by *Shalawat* and shaving the baby's hair as well as naming (*tasmiyah*).

al-Durār, and *Mawlid al-Dibā'I* until the end, then the closing prayer. The series of *aqīqah* activities at the last stage is reading *do'a* (prayer). The last part of this tradition closed by reading the *Mawlid* prayer led by the *kiai*, who was present at that time (Nugroho Notodiharjo, [interview], pers. comm., 10 October 2022).

This rite is a form of expression of *ta'dzīm*, closely related to the event of the Prophet's arrival in Medina. *Srakalan* is a traditional Islamic religious ritual that combines verses of praise to Allah and the Prophet Muhammad (Said 2018). In other terms, this ritual can also be called *Marhabanan* or *diba'an* (*Mawlid Ad-Diba'iy*). The *srakalan* tradition becomes a religious ritual held at important occasions, such as in the *Puputan* or *aqīqah* ceremony (alms for slaughtering goats and naming newborn babies). One Javanese culture that is always passed down from generation to generation is the *Tedhak Siten*. *Tedhak Siten* is also known as the ritual of descending the land or stepping on the earth. *Tedhak Sinten* comes from two words: *tedhak*, which means foot or step, and *siten*, which comes from *siti*, which means land. *Tedhak siten* is a traditional event where a child aged seven-eight (245 days) will be led by his mother to walk on the ground. This is an acculturation between religion and Javanese culture, which means that the baby born adapts to the place of birth. The purpose of the *Tedhak Siten* ceremony is as a form of gratitude because the child will start learning to walk. In addition, this ceremony aims to introduce the child to the natural surroundings and the motherland (Pemberton 2018:280).

Based on the results of field research (observation), it can be concluded that the ceremony of *Tedhak Siten* has very good values for a child. These values include: firstly, walking through seven *jadah* (local food) is a depiction of the will of the child's parents to be able to overcome obstacles in life. Secondly, by climbing and descending the sugarcane ladder, the child is taught about determination to achieve his chosen goals. Thirdly, entering the chicken coop, children are taught that in social life with the community, they must know the community's boundaries to receive them well. Fourthly, in

the ritual of distributing *udhik-udhik*, the child is taught how to give charity and prosper the people around him. Fifthly, the *setaman* water flower bath has values about the goodness of how the child must maintain the good name of himself and others. Sixthly, the use of *tumpeng* contains religious values, where the child is taught about God, who has bestowed grace on the family and the environment. The *aqiqah* ceremony involves prayers and Quran readings. These are done as a sign of gratitude for the birth of the baby and they will pray for well-being and blessings in his life. While some people may choose to stand while prayers are recited, this is not a mandatory religious requirement. Basically, the posture during prayer (standing, sitting, or lying down) is *sunnah*, meaning it is recommended, but not an obligation.

Standing up *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* when welcoming clerics

Respect for the *ulama* is usually shown by the *Nahdlatul Ulama* community in many ways, for example: obeying the *kyai*'s orders, not starting a conversation before being invited by the teacher, *sowan* (meet) *ulama* when endure life's problems and ask for advice or prayer, soften the voice in front of the *kyai*, and stand up to welcome the *kyai* and many more.

Regarding standing up to welcome the arrival of the *kyai*, a hadith explained the legal basis for the law; for example, *Sayidah* Fatimah stood when her father (the Prophet Muhammad) came to her and vice versa (Fathul Bari 11:50). In addition, Sheikh Ali as-Shabuni explained the law of standing as respect for fellow Muslims; the majority of *fiqh* experts state that it is permissible to stand to honour new arrivals; if the new arrivals are noble and good Muslims, it is proper to respect them. Because respecting a Muslim is obligatory, and glorifying him because of his religion and goodness is an act that Islam recommends, such an act is a way to cultivate love (As-Shabuni 1983:10). Therefore, some Indonesians stand up to welcome guests as a symbol of respect.

The arrival of the cleric Habib Abdul Qadir Assegaf from Jeddah is the last of *rihlah*'s trip (journey) to Indonesia. This is known through documents about his visit which was stopped in 1987, because he was very busy. However, his visit brought something special compared to his last visit to Kwitang. On Sunday morning, January 11 1987, at exactly 08.30 WIB, al-Habib Muhammad al-Habsyi came out of his room to the pulpit and immediately said to the congregation present to introduce Habib Abdul Qadir Assegaf as the successor of the prophet: 'Ladies and gentlemen- Father, today you are lucky to be the successor of the Prophet. Now I will welcome you in front with ten tambourines, later we will see his face which has the light of the Prophet.' (Antoe Djibrel, [interview], pers. comm., 18 November 2022).

Islam in the Indonesian archipelago is synonymous with its hospitality. People in Indonesia are able to get along and

be friendly to anyone regardless of religious, ethnic, and racial differences. The ability to accept this difference is understandable because people have long been accustomed to living differently. Even Indonesia is built on these differences. Among the traditions that have been institutionalised in our society is standing up when guests come. The guest in question can be a cleric, official, parent, friend, or close friend. The guest in question can be a cleric, official, parent, friend, or close friend. They stand to the extent of respecting and welcoming the arrival of *ulama* by 'standing' *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* while reading *shalawat*, which described this as having a symbolic meaning (Muhammad Muthohar, [interview], pers. comm., 12 October 2022).

Maḥallu al-Qiyām in *Temu Manten* of a marriage

In carrying out the wedding reception activities, 'standing' *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* while reciting the *srakalan* has become a staple event that must be carried out. The wedding reception is a thanksgiving event that is held after the marriage contract takes place. The ceremony of *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* while reciting the *srakalan* is performed while the bride and groom are still outside the venue and ends when the bride and groom sit in the bridal chair accompanied by their family entourage. The ceremony of *Srakalan* during the occasion of a wedding reception is said to be a must because it has become a cultural tradition of the community. However, *srakalan* should not be said to be mandatory because there is no law or shari'a of religion that suggests the process of its implementation. Religious rituals in *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* activities (Figure 7) are those activities related to the religious field that exists in people's lives in applying Islamic teachings in everyday life. Reciprocity between religion and society is closely related to socio-religious values and positively influences the wider community. The social meaning framework in *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* is an activity that is carried out together to form humanist values with a socio-theological approach (Figures 5 and 6).

In addition, in the social context, the *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* tradition can perpetuate religious traditions that are local wisdom. This tradition of collaboration between Islam and Java has abundant goodness. Because there are many good things that people remind the next generation. The tradition of the full value of goodness must be maintained because spreading goodness is the *sunnah* of the Prophet and is a symbol of Islam. The wisdom of *Maḥallu al-Qiyām* is useful in uniting religious spirit, which is carried out in the congregation. Strengthening ties of brotherhood and harmonising relations between communities. Because, in essence, transcendental communication in religious practice has implications for good social relations between human beings. Receiving guests or friends who come is a kind and polite act in the culture of many countries, including Indonesia. When attending or holding a wedding (*temanten*), 'standing' to welcome the bride and groom's arrival by 'standing' reading *shalawat* is one of the common polite actions.

Mahallu al-Qiyām in Manakiban

The reading of Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jailani's *manakib* by the al-Khidmah Assembly led by K.H. Ahmad Asrori al-Ishaqi (d. 2009) also ends with the reading of *srakalan* or *Mahallu al-Qiyām* by quoting from the book *Simṭu al-Durār* by Habib Ali bin Muhammad al-Habsyi. In the *manakiban* process, the hagiography of Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jailani was the first to be read, which was quoted from the book *Nurul Burhani* by Sheikh Muslih Mranggen. After reading the chapters in the *Manakib*, starting from chapters one to eight, it is closed with a prayer and continued with *Mahallu al-Qiyām* (Nasrudin et al. 2021:1–24).

In reading the biography of Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jailani, known as *Manakiban* activities, there is the inspiration for Sufism values that can be implemented in everyday life. Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jailani, was able to harmonise the two dimensions so that the teachings of Sufism and fiqh could go together. He was also the greatest Sufi of his time who contributed significantly to the development of Sufism which was institutionalised in the *tarekat* (order).



Source: Kwitang Archives

FIGURE 5: *Mahallu al-Qiyām* welcomes the arrival of Habib Abdul Qadir Assegaf from Jeddah at the Habib Ali Kwitang Assembly 1987.



Source: Author's personal documentation, 2014

FIGURE 6: *Mahallu al-Qiyām* wedding ceremony by recitation of *srakalan* to bring together brides-to-be in Javanese tradition.

His high position made him the leader of the saints (*Sultan al-Auliya'*) and the polar guardians (*Quthubu al-Auliya'*). He has also become a central figure among Sufi lovers, such as the practitioners of the *manakib* book, which coupled with the extraordinary beauty of the *karomah*, earned him the title of *muhyiddin* (religious life) as stated in Sheikh Muslih Mranggen's *Manakib Nurul Burhani* (Fuadi 2021:243–65).

Figure 7 explains that the ritual of *Mahallu al-Qiyām* was also practised by the Al-Khidmah Assembly when practising *manakiban* that is hagiographic reading from Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jailani, so that worshippers could emulate it. The ceremony is conducted together with reading sessions from the book of *Mawlid al-Diba'i* followed by the ritual of *Mahallu al-Qiyām* as a form of *mahabbah* (love of Prophet) and homage to the Prophet Muhammad.

Mahallu al-Qiyām in Sem'aan al-Qur'an

Based on the author's observations, the practice of standing during *Mahallu al-Qiyām* is also carried out during the Wednesday Pahing MANTAB Sema'an activity at the Baitussalam Blembem Mosque, Sooko, Ponorogo. This tradition was pioneered by Kiai Hamim Djazuli (Gus Miek), with the names of the *Majelis Sema'an Al-Qur'an* and *Dzikrul Ghofilin Jantiko Mantab*.

Thousands of Muslims have become *pendherek* (followers) of *Sema'an al-Qur'an Jantiko Mantab*. Thus, the *Sami'in Setia* (Gus Miek's term for the *Sema'an* congregation) also held five daily prayers in congregation accompanied by the Duha prayer, listening to the recitation of the Qur'an by the *huffadz* (memorisers of the Qur'an) from the beginning until the end (30 Juz of Qur'an). After that, perform *Dzikrul Ghofilin* between Maghrib and Isha prayers. The event's highlight was the *Khotmil Qur'an* prayer, which was said by the Prophet Muhammad, and attended by no less than 60000 angels who agreed (Muhammad Tanwir, [interview], pers. comm., 22 October 2022).



Source: Al-Khidmah documentation

FIGURE 7: *Mahallu al-Qiyām* in the activities of Jamaah Manakib Al-Khidmah with Kiai Asrori al-Ishaqi and Habib Umar bin Hafidz Hadramaut in 2010.



Source: Author's personal documentation, 2019

FIGURE 8: *Mahallu al-Qiyām* on the Majelis Sema'an al-Qur'an and Dzikrul Ghoflin Jantiko MANTAB Rabu Pahing Ponorogo in 2019.

Gus Miek preached through the medium of *Sema'an al-Qur'an*. There are four arguments for his inspiration for teaching Sufism through the al-Qur'an. Firstly, Gus Miek's development of the al-Qur'an tradition at the Ploso Islamic Boarding School; secondly Gus Miek's way of interacting with his guests; thirdly a critique of government programmes, and fourthly Gus Miek's anticipation in the 21st century (Ibad 2007:19).

Figure 8 explains that the practice of *Mahallu al-Qiyām* was also carried out during the activities of *Sema'an al-Qur'an* and *Dzikrul Ghoflin Jantiko MANTAB Rabu Pahing* in Ponorogo. *Sema'an al-Quran* activities begin from dawn by reciting the Qur'an 30 Juz until *khatam* (finished). Before the final prayer (do'a) in the Sema'an event, the congregation stood at *Mahallu al-Qiyām* while *salawat* prayers to increase the feeling of *mahabbah* (love) for the Prophet Muhammad.

The symbolic theory used to read this tradition is Clifford Geertz's theory. Geertz explained that a symbol is a sign that can be seen as a concept that humans consider as a characteristic of something that contains logical-analytical qualities or through associations in thoughts or facts. A symbol is an object that has a meaning that is in accordance with the reality of human life, thus humans themselves indirectly give that meaning (Geertz 1992:55). Geertz's symbolic interpretive theory can be used in anthropological studies to examine different cultures in society.

Furthermore, symbolic interpretive theory specifically examines the nature of the importance of meaning for human life. In line with Geertz, culture is a system of symbols, therefore cultural processes need to be understood, translated, and interpreted to know their true meaning (Ishomuddin 2020:929–36). The *Mahallu al-Qiyām* tradition is used as a research source to interpret its various inherent cultures. This rite is in line with the realm of cultural anthropology, which specifically pays attention to traditions and religious ceremonies related to human and cultural issues. Therefore, the establishment of *Mahallu al-Qiyām* in cultural expression in Indonesia is a form of respect and glorification to the Prophet Muhammad so that every tradition related to *Mahallu al-Qiyām* has good values to be able to love and emulate the Prophet Muhammad.

Mahallu al-Qiyām is a term in Javanese tradition that refers to an act of standing up in various ceremonial or ritual contexts such as *srakalan*, *marhabanan*, *akikahan*, *tedhak siten* and others. This ritual does have important meanings and symbolism in Javanese culture. Firstly, in the context of religious ceremonies or Javanese traditional rituals, the act of standing up in *Mahallu al-Qiyām* can be considered as an act of displaying respect for God. It is a way to show respect and devotion to the spiritual entity revered in the tradition. Secondly, *Mahallu al-Qiyām* can also be seen as a way to create concentration and awareness in the practitioner. By standing upright, one can more easily focus on prayer, meditation, or the ritual that is being performed. This helps create a stronger bond between the individual and the spiritual or transcendental aspect in Javanese tradition. Thirdly, in many traditional Javanese ceremonies, *Mahallu al-Qiyām* can also be interpreted as a hope for salvation and blessings. Through this ritual, the practitioner can express his hope that all his efforts will get good results, avoid danger, and get blessings from a respected spiritual entity. Fourthly, *Mahallu al-Qiyām* is also a part of Javanese cultural identity. Its use in various ceremonies and rituals is a way to maintain and pass on Javanese cultural traditions from generation to generation. Thus, the practice of *Mahallu al-Qiyām* also reflects a sense of pride in the culture and heritage of the ancestors.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the analysis of *Mahallu al-Qiyām* in the cultural expression in Indonesia, it can be concluded that: firstly, *Mahallu al-Qiyām*'s 'standing' according to Sharia law (fiqh) is that there is no argument in either the Qur'an or hadith specifically that commands or prohibits 'standing' when *Mahallu al-Qiyām*, so Sheikh Bakri Syatha, is of the opinion that 'stand' to honor the Prophet Muhammad as good (*istihsān*). Nevertheless, there are opinions of scholars such as Buya Hamka who consider it a *bid'ah* (a new innovation in religion). Secondly, based on symbolic interpretation theory, Geertz said that every culture contains a certain symbol or meaning, so that 'standing' on *Mahallu al-Qiyām* means respect and *mahabbah* (love) for Prophet Muhammad, as the meaning of joy for Muslims Prophet Muhammad, thus, *Mahallu al-Qiyām* has a social meaning relationship between the meaning of the text and behavior thus forming theological social behaviour. Thirdly, *Mahallu al-Qiyām* has various forms of expression of celebration in Javanese culture, such as *muludan* (commemoration of the birth of the prophet), *srakalan* (reading *asyraqal*), *kekahan* (aqiqah newborn baby), *temu manten* (meeting of a bride and groom), *manakiban* (reading the biography of al-Jailani), *sema'an al-Qur'an* (reciting the Qur'an), and respect for newly arrived *ulama*.

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Authors' contributions

The first author M.A.F. contributed in designing the ideas and concepts of this research that emerged from his observations in the theme under study. Furthermore, A.A.R. contributed in applying research methods that were in accordance with the theme discussed. Then, S.S. contributed to data validation techniques to match the applied methodology. Y.T. played a role in exploring research sources in order to get a more objective and in-depth analysis. R.I. played a role in checking for writing errors and reflecting them. M.M. contributed to analysing and interpreting data, along with its suitability to research concepts and designs.

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