

The Cultural Display of Maulud in Lombok: Harmonious Interplay of Islam and Local Adat

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Abstract

The birthday of Prophet Muhammad is usually celebrated not only in Islamic countries where Muslims are the majority, but in places where the Muslims are in minority. In Lombok, a small isle located to the east of Bali, the majority of the islanders, the Sasak, ritualise this important event in accordance with their own cultural tradition. This paper generally discusses on the varied contextualisation of the Prophet Muhammad birthday, called the Maulud¹, and more specifically, it attempts to explain: i) how the Sasak Muslims of Lombok create and develop their own local cultural fashions to commemorate the prophet Muhammad's birthday, ii) how they are connected to Islam, iii) and how they synchronize and the relationship between both of local customary and universal tenet of Islam as a guide to correct living. These three main issues exposing the interplay of syari'at and adat in the Maulud celebrations serve the evidence that Sasak Muslims of Lombok are not a homogenous entity. Domesticating Islam in accordance with the varied Sasak's cultural symbols and meanings is quite prominent especially when the birth of the Prophet Muhammad is revived in jubilee. The notion of localized Islam gets stronger, and even reaches its highest tone especially when the central figure of Islam is remembered to reassert the essential role of adat as accompanying element of religion. The selected Maulud celebrations of this study is focused among Muslims living in Lingsar (West Lombok), Bayan (North Lombok), Lenek and Songak (East Lombok).

¹ Maulud derives from the Arabic word, *milad*, meaning the birth. In some places the birth of prophet is called *mauludurrasul*, *maulud nabi*, *maulud*, *mulud*.

Abstrak

Hari kelahiran Nabi Muhammad SAW umumnya tidak hanya dirayakan di negara-negara dimana mayoritas penduduknya beragama Islam, tetapi juga di wilayah dimana kaum Muslim merupakan minoritas. Di Lombok, misalnya, sebuah pulau kecil yang bertetangga dekat dan terletak di sebelah timur Pulau Bali, Sasak merupakan suku asli yang mayoritasnya adalah pemeluk Islam. Mereka setiap tahunnya memperingati kelahiran Nabi Muhammad saw (Maulud) sesuai dengan tradisi budaya mereka masing-masing. Makalah ini secara umum bertujuan membahas beragam bentuk kontekstualisasi budaya dan keagamaan dari perayaan kelahiran Nabi Muhammad, yang disebut Maulud, yang diselenggarakan oleh mayoritas Sasak Muslim di Lombok. Secara lebih spesifik lagi, tulisan ini mencoba menjelaskan: 1) Bagaimana masyarakat Sasak Muslim di Lombok menciptakan dan mengembangkan berbagai model budaya yang unik di dalam memperingati ulang tahun nabi Muhammad, 2) Bagaimana mereka menghubungkannya dengan Islam, dan 3) Bagaimana mereka melakukan sinkronisasi – menciptakan harmoni, atau keterpaduan hubungan– antara adat-istiadat lokal dengan syari'at Islam sebagai panduan tata tertib mengatur kehidupan bersama.