

The symbolic meaning and the values of Islamic education in *Khataman Al-Qur'an*

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ABSTRACT

Studies on the activities of the *Khataman* al-Qur'an (completing in Qur'anic reciting) have been carried out by many researchers, however, the studies more focused on ritual processions, the combination of local customs, as a requirement in wedding ceremonies, and others. In fact, there is a shift tendency for *Khataman* ritual activities, from traditional to large-scale celebrations and contestations. This article is to describe and analyze the perspectives of the parties involved in interpreting the activities of the *Khataman* ritual, as well as revealing the values of Islamic education contained. The research method is qualitative-ethnographic which relies on researchers as human instruments. The subjects of the study were determined by snowball sampling, while the main data collection techniques were participatory observation, in-depth interviews, documentation, and data triangulation. Data analysis was carried out simultaneously of selection, reduction, categorization and data theorization in a series of *Khataman* ritual events in Bogor Regency. The results show that the meanings contained in the rituals of the Qur'an can be grouped into exegetical, operational and positional meanings. Meanwhile, the values of Islamic education contained in a series of *Khataman* rituals in Bogor Regency include: the value of gratitude, patience and consistency, blessings, togetherness, generosity, and the value of appreciation or recognition. It is hoped that this research can also contribute to the field of living Qur'an, namely the study of how the Qur'an is understood, lived, and practiced in the daily lives of Muslims, especially in Bogor Regency.

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INTRODUCTION

In Indonesian context, the teaching and learning activities of the Qur'an, especially for children, have been going on for a long time. It can be considered in conjunction with the early activities of spreading Islam in Indonesia, which according to popular opinion occurred massively in the 12th century AD (Munip, 2010). In Aceh, learning to read the Qur'an was carried out in Dayah, Meunasah or houses, then developed to take place in 'Rangkang'. The earliest teaching began with the recitation of the Qur'an by following the rules of tajwid (Fadhilah, 2019; Manan, 2017). In Minangkabau West Sumatra, learning to read the Quran was carried out in Surau (Pratama et al., 2013; Wirdenengsih et al., 2017). Meanwhile, learning to read the Qur'an in Java is carried out in people's homes, mosques, and Islamic boarding schools. Not infrequently, the establishment of a pesantren (Islamic boarding) began with the activity of learning to read and write the Qur'an which was attended by several students, then developed into a large pesantren (Sayono, 2005).

The next development is the increasingly widespread memorization of the Qur'an. If in the past, the tradition of memorizing the Qur'an was more prevalent in the pesantren, but now the activities of tahfidz al-Qur'an (memorization of Qur'an) occur in many places. It was recorded that in 2012/2013 the number of educational institutions organizing the tahfizh al-Qur'an program was 142,285 which was attended by at least 8,469,500 students (Jakfar et al., 2020). Now, there are also Rampant activities to read the Qur'an fully 30 juz (chapter) in WhatsApp application groups (Fauzi, 2019; Sugiman, 2019). In some regions, the ability to read the Qur'an is even a requirement for the bride and groom who will hold a marriage contract. That is, the ability of an adult Muslim to read the Qur'an has become an inseparable part of the traditions, customs and culture of the local Muslim community. More than that, the tradition of awarding 30 chapters of al-Qur'an recitation to relatives who have died also occurs in some Indonesian Islamic communities, in addition to the rituals of Tahlilan, Yasinan and others (Siskareni, 2019).

It is undeniable that learning to read the Qur'an has spread throughout the country, with a variety of different learning methods and techniques. Not only in the informal activities in people's homes, but also takes place formally in the educational institutions such as TPA (Qur'anic Educational Park). The extra-curricular activity of reading the Qur'an for students has also become a policy in many educational institutions. Various practical methods in reading the Qur'an have also emerged, such as the Baghdadi method, Qira'ati, Iqra, and others (Ummah & Wafi, 2017).

The above facts indicate that learning to read and memorize the Qur'an still continues to be part of the educational tradition of Indonesian Muslims. Among the unique traditions in the series of learning to read the Qur'an is the tradition of Khataman. Students who have successfully completed the Qur'an reading lessons, from the first surah al-Fatihah, to surah an-Nas as the last surah are appreciated by the teacher and his friends in an event called Khataman al-Qur'an. Khataman activities are celebrated in the rituals that may differ in the series of activities in some regions, in addition to the possibility of similarities. In the Agam area of West Sumatra, this Khataman tradition is called Katam kaji (Gusnanda, 2007), while in the Bugis community, it is called Mampanre temme (Wekke, 2013).

As a ritual activity, the tradition of Khataman is certainly full of symbols and meanings, so it is usually held solemnly. The participants involved in the Khataman ritual activities will behave and act according to their respective roles. Simplicity in the implementation of Khataman rituals does not reduce the meaning of values and philosophies of the activity. Not infrequently, this Khataman ritual is intertwined with the traditions or customs of the local community, giving rise to the uniqueness of each. However, along with the development of populist and modernization culture that plagued Muslims, the tradition of the Khataman also shifted, from meaningful simple rituals to ceremonial activities of ceremonies, celebration and contestation.

Based on the researcher's investigations, there are two patterns of organizing the Khataman ritual in Bogor Regency. First, is the traditional Khataman ritual. This Khataman ritual was found in the Nurul Qur'an al-Islami Islamic Boarding School in Bogor. They maintain the traditional Khataman ritual procession because they view this activity as sacred and of worship value. Therefore, all processions of Khataman ritual activities are maintained for generations. Changing the procession of Khataman rituals means lowering the sacredness and quality of the rituals. Second, Khataman activities are held massively and contain elements of contestation and celebration. This activity was found in Khataman activities in order to succeed the Bogor Ngaos Program which was initially initiated by the Regional Government of Bogor Regency.

The results of the researcher's observations on several Khataman activities organized by the Bogor Muslim community in the framework of Bogor Ngaos, obtained several descriptions as follows: First, the Khataman event was held massively and involved a very large number of participants. Some activities that have been carried out have even brought thousands of participants, as happened at the Bogor Regency Government Building Complex, Tugu Kujang, and at Bogor Manunggal Park. Second, there is a committee formed specifically as the executor and person in charge of the activity. Third, the activities of the Khataman are centered in a place that is spacious and able to accommodate many people. Sometimes, the choice of venue for the event is based on considerations so that it can be widely witnessed. Fourth, the schedule of events in the Khataman activities is not only in the form of reading and chanting the Qur'an, but also filled with remarks and other activities.

By looking at the initial facts in the field, research on the Khataman ritual in Bogor Regency needs to be carried out, especially related to the two phenomena of organizing the Khataman ritual, between maintaining the tradition on the one hand, and the Khataman activities which are held with full of contestation and celebration. At least, by observing and exploring these two phenomena, an adequate understanding of the diversity of Khataman traditions will be obtained which have taken root as an inseparable part of the culture of the Indonesian Islamic community. On the other hand, the content of the meaning and value of Islamic education behind the series of Khataman rituals also needs to be explored in depth.

METHOD

As part of anthropological cultural research, researchers prefer to use a qualitative approach of the case study type, which prioritizes emic rather than ethics. The main characteristics of this study are its natural nature, what it is, and the depth of information conveyed in the research report. Thus, the ability of researchers as human instruments will color the overall quality of this research. This study take about 2-3 months.

The location of this research is Karikhil Village, Ciseeng District, Bogor Regency and the Bogor Regency Education Office. Karikhil Village was chosen because in this location there are a number of teaching places to read the Qur'an which also organizes Khataman rituals for its students. The implementation of Khataman rituals in the village is carried out traditionally by maintaining traditions passed down from generation to generation. Meanwhile, the Bogor District Education Office was chosen because the institution is the leading sector in the implementation of the Bogor Regency Government's policy on Bogor Ngaos. This institution is also the organizer of mass and large-scale Khataman activities every year for students who have completed learning to read the Qur'an.

The subject of the study was determined by snowball sampling technique, a technique for determining data sources starting from the presence of key informants or key information givers. In this case, the key informant does not have to be the main character in the implementation of the ritual, but can be a person known first by the researcher who has a direct connection with the ritual. Furthermore, the key informant is asked to provide recommendations to obtain other research subjects, and so on, until a number of representative research subjects are obtained. The initial key informant who was the subject of research from Pabuaran Village was a teacher who had long organized teaching and learning activities to read the Qur'an at his home. Meanwhile, researchers are also interview the Head of the Bogor District Education Office and other staff as key informants.

The main data collection techniques of this study are observation, participation and in-depth interviews. Researchers were involved participatorily in the entire series of Khataman ritual events, especially in Karikhil Village. Meanwhile, observations on the implementation of the Qur'an Khataman ritual organized by the Bogor Regency Government cannot be carried out directly, because it only occurs once a year. However, researchers are trying to obtain video recordings of the Khataman activities, in order to obtain a complete picture of the implementation of these activities. The results of these observations will then be reported in the form of field notes or field notes as raw data to be analyzed.

In-depth interviews were conducted by researchers to obtain comprehensive verbal data on the implementation of Khataman rituals. Researchers have interviewed a number of research subjects representing the organizers, ustadz, kyai, students, parents, and other parties deemed necessary when collecting data in the field. In order for this in-depth interview to run smoothly, researchers make a short keyword or list of questions. This interview was also recorded using a voice recorder application tool on a smartphone. The results of this in-depth interview are then converted into interview transcripts which are raw data for later analysis.

Researchers also use documentation techniques as data collection techniques to complement observations and interviews. A number of important documents found in the field will be collected and further analyzed according to the interests of this research. Some documents that can be collected from the field include Khataman prayer manuscripts, lists of participants' names, photos of activities, and other documents relevant to the object of this study. In addition, data triangulation techniques will also be used to check the correctness of the data or information that has been collected.

Data analysis in this study was carried out simultaneously with data collection as characteristic of qualitative research. The data analysis techniques carried out by researchers consist of data selection activities, data reduction, data classification, and data theorization (Rijali, 2019).

FINDINGS

3.1 The Meaning of Khataman AL-Qur'an

As a form of ritual, the activities of the Khataman are certainly full of meaning. Every symbol, element and stage in the ritual in the activities of the Khataman contains meaning for the perpetrator of the ritual. Solemn ritual performers, of course, will follow the whole series of rituals enthusiastically and solemnly. This is because they have an interpretive awareness of the series of rituals that are being followed. They are aware that there is a positive meaning hidden behind a series of ritual stages. This positive meaning is what ritual practitioners seek. They believe that the ritual activities they participate in will have a positive impact, directly or indirectly, on improving their spiritual experience.

The discussion of the meaning of the Khataman ritual in this study certainly cannot be separated from the existence of these two forms of rituals, namely the traditional style and the contestation and celebration of Khataman. To uncover the meanings contained in both types of Khataman rituals, researchers use the categories of meaning expressed by Victor Turner, namely, exegetical, operational, and positional meanings.

The exegetical meaning is inferred from the informant or ritual participant. The operational meaning can be deduced not only from the utterances of informants, but also from their actions in rituals. While positional meaning can be inferred from interpreting certain symbols in relation to other symbols in ritual. Meanwhile, ritual functions can also be classified into two functions, namely integrative functions and emotions. The integrative function can be seen that rituals will

be able to integrate and unite the people by reinforcing cultural values above individuals and groups. The emotional function can be seen that rituals can be a medium to express the emotions of the participants, both positive and negative. (Turner, 1991).

3.2 Islamic Educational Values in Khataman Ritual

In Khataman ritual activities, of course, the very useful educational values can be found. There are at least some values, including:

1) The value of Thingking God

A person who manages to recite the Qur'an for the first time will certainly be very happy and grateful. He thanked all those who had helped him so that he could read the Qur'an and recite it. He will thank his teachers who have been teaching to read the Qur'an patiently. He will also thank the peers who participated in the recitation together.

Not to forget, he also thanked Allah for giving him the pleasure of being able to read the Qur'an and recite it. Not everyone is able to read the Qur'an, let alone be able to recite it. That is why, being able to recite the Qur'an is a great gift and blessing that deserves to be grateful.

As a form of gratitude, a person who has recited the Qur'an intends to hold a Khataman event. This event is actually voluntary. There is no obligation for a person who has recited the Qur'an to perform Khataman rituals. However, generally people who have just finished reading the Qur'an hold Khataman as gratitude and expression of happiness, as well as sharing happiness with others.

2) The Value of Patience and Consistency

Not everyone who can read the Qur'an has ever complete in reciting it fully. Only those who have patience and istiqamah (consistency) can successfully recite the Qur'an. He has to face laziness and boredom. He must also be patient to always read the Qur'an and listen to its recitation in front of the teacher or ustadz who listens to it, from time to time, day by day. Every mistake in reading, will be a valuable lesson so as not to repeat itself in the future.

Therefore, those who succeed in reciting the Qur'an are those who manage to overcome laziness, boredom, and other negative distractions. The success of facing laziness needs to be thanked and celebrated by holding Khataman rituals.

3) Blessing Value

In the Khataman, there are also blessings for all parties who participate in the event. Especially for the person who held the event, he got blessings from the sincere prayers chanted at the event. Meanwhile, the other participants also received blessings in the form of enjoying dishes as well as getting blessings from the prayers chanted.

The blessing in question is certainly not material gain, but in the form of equanimity, and spiritual happiness that is difficult to tell. Listening to the recitation of the Qur'an and agreeing to the khatmil Qur'an prayer will certainly affect inner and spiritual calm. This spiritual tranquility will be a valuable capital for someone in facing the next journey of life.

4) The Value of Togetherness

The Khataman ritual will certainly foster the value of togetherness and brotherhood among participants. They will share tasks and help each other so that the Khataman

procession can run smoothly and successfully. Khataman activities can also cause motivation or enthusiasm for people who have not been able to recite the Qur'an. There was a strong desire that he could immediately recite the Qur'an.

5) The Value of Generosity

It is undeniable that the Khataman ritual costs money, even though it is held simply. All these costs are spent so that they can share with others. Only those who have the value of generosity are willing to hold Khataman ritual. He didn't feel sorry to spend the cost of organizing Khataman.

6) Value Awards and Recognition

The activities of the Khataman can also be interpreted as containing the value of appreciation and recognition. Those who successfully complete the Qur'an recitation 30 juz deserve to be awarded. They should also be recognized as worthy to read the Qur'an independently, or even authorized to teach the Qur'an to others. Well, the form of appreciation and recognition can be obtained through the activities of the Qur'an. All attendees and participants of the activity witnessed and gave blessings to people who successfully completed the Qur'an.

DISCUSSION

Symbolic Meaning in Traditional Khataman Al-Qur'an

a. Exegetical meaning

Based on interviews with a number of participants of Khataman activities held at the Nurul Qur'an al-Islami Islamic Boarding School, several descriptions were obtained as follows: First, most Khataman participants considered that participating in the Khataman event was part of worship that would get rewards from Allah Almighty.

Because it is considered as worship, Khataman participants must dress modestly as in carrying out prayers. They should also be in the holy state of the hadath. That is why, all Khataman participants are required to perform ablution before participating in the activity. During the activity, they are also required to keep their ablution not to be canceled. For them, the symbol of clothing worn by participants indicates the sanctity and sacredness of the event because it contains worship value.

Second, some participants interpreted the presence of participants outside the students who were Khataman, and the presence of the ustadz in the event as a form of solidarity between students. They intend to provide support to their friend. On the other hand, students who have not khatam will be motivated to immediately recite the Qur'an and can be "graduated" like their friends who are studying the Qur'an.

Third, the practitioners of the ritual also interpret the procession of the sequence of Khataman activities as a form of prayer procedures with the testament of the Qur'an. The procession and ritual performance of the Qur'an is considered sacred and must be followed solemnly. They hope the prayer offered in the Khataman will be granted by Allah Almighty.

b. Operational meaning

Operational meaning is a kind of validation in the form of actions of Khataman ritual participants on their verbally developed meaning of the ritual. Therefore, the main source of exposure of this section is the observation of their behavior while following rituals.

It appears that what the participants of the Khataman ritual said which is sacred and has the value of worship is shown by the clothes they wear. All students who participate in Khataman activities dress as they should in performing prayers. The male students wear sarongs and skullcaps, while the female students wear Mokena. It seems that, for the students, covering the nakedness is an important requirement in participating in Khataman activities as a requirement in carrying out prayers.

Meanwhile, the meaning of solidarity expressed orally, is also shown by them in the form of concrete actions. Some students seemed to help each other in preparing for the Khataman event so that it could run smoothly. Some prepare food and drink; some solemnly listen to the Qur'an readings.

In another part, their interpretation of the fulfillment of khatmil Qur'an prayers is also shown by their behavior. They seemed to solemnly agree with the chanting of the prayer chanted by the ritual leader. Moreover, it turns out, they also pray specifically according to their personal interests when reciting the khatmil Qur'an prayer. This is recognized by almost all students who participated in the activity.

There were participants who claimed to pray for ease in understanding the lesson. There are also those who pray that their sick families will be given a speedy recovery. There are also those who pray that their parents will be given good fortune. Some students even pray that their hearts will be given peace because they have just experienced a breakup. Such is the description of the operational meaning shown by the ritual participants.

Symbolic Meaning in the Contestation and Celebration of Khataman

a. Exegetical meaning

Based on random interviews with some participants of the Bogor Ngaos Khataman activity, the following notes can be taken. First, some participants joined in the activity because they used the Khataman al-Qur'an program as a form of Islamic shiar and da'wah. They feel, as a Muslim, they must be actively involved in these da'wah activities. That is why, some participants spend time, energy and money to attend the event.

On the other hand, there are also participants who interpret their presence at the event as a form of compliance of a subordinate to the policies of his superiors. They have a dual motivation in attending these activities, namely as a form of participation in Islamic da'wah activities as well as showing compliance with the policies of the leadership.

Secondly, the series of activities in the Khataman is seen as something natural. They did not question the singing of the song Indonesia Raya and a series of remarks from officials and other forms of celebration. For participants, the celebration of the Khataman activity is interpreted as a form of adjustment to the times.

Third, they interpret the activities of the Khataman in the Bogor Ngaos Program as a means to gain Islamic knowledge from lecturers. Please note, every time there is an activity of Khataman must be held religious lectures by speakers who are considered competent in Islamic religious science.

b. Operational meaning

What was verbally developed by some participants of Khataman activities was also shown by their behavior. Attendance at the event, which is interpreted as a form of compliance with leadership policies, is manifested in the act of filling out the attendance list provided by the committee. They attend according to the schedule of events written in the invitation. The level

of participation of participants in the activity is also quite high. The room where the event is held is almost always full of participants.

On the other hand, the meaning of Khataman activities as a form of Islamic shiar and da'wah is also shown through the symbols worn by the participants. They are compactly dressed in Islamic clothing, generally white. The large number of participants present is also proof of the value of da'wah and Islamic shiar. The increasing number of participants who attended showed that this Muslim activity was supported by the community. On the other hand, they also want to show that Bogor is a base for Muslims who love the Qur'an.

c. Positional meaning

The series of events in Khataman activities as part of Bogor Ngaos have interrelated meanings between symbols or event activities. Various symbols contained in Khataman activities contain meanings that reinforce each other with elements of contestation and celebration. For example, the installation of several banners in the arena with pictures of regional leaders shows that Khataman activities are a place for promotion, socialization and at the same time show the existence of regional leaders as organizers.

On the other hand, the composition of invited participants in the Khataman activity also shows the breadth of the network or relations of the organizers. The invitees who attend sometimes have no direct connection with Khataman activities. Their presence is limited to collegial and structural relations with the organizers of Khataman activities.

The presence of journalists or the preparation of press release manuscripts can also be interpreted that Khataman activities need to be widely publicized, so that they can be known by other parties about the success of the agenda or program of the Regional Government. Thus, it is expected that empathy will grow from various parties towards the performance of the Regional Government. Muslims will increasingly sympathize with other government programs. Meanwhile, the welcome event given to the Regional Government can also be interpreted as giving a stage so that it can be used as well as possible to get political support from Khataman participants.

CONCLUSION

From the foregoing, it can be concluded as follows. First, the symbolic meanings contained in the Khataman rituals can be grouped into exegetical, operational and positional meanings. The exegetical meaning appears in the perception of ritual participants who consider that Khataman is part of worship that will get rewards from Allah Almighty. That is the reason Khataman participants dress modestly. They should also be in the holy state of the hadith. For them, the symbol of clothing worn by participants indicates the sanctity and sacredness of the event because it contains worship value. They also interpret the procession of the sequence of Khataman activities as prayer with medium of the Qur'an. The procession and ritual performance of Khataman is considered sacred and must be followed solemnly. They hope, the prayers offered in the ritual will be granted by Allah Almighty. While the participants of Khataman held in the framework of Bogor Ngaos interpreted the event as a form of shiar and Islamic da'wah. They feel, as a Muslim, they must be actively involved in these da'wah activities. That is why, some participants spend time, energy and money to attend the event.

On the other hand, there are also participants who interpret their presence at the event as a form of compliance of a subordinate to the policies of his superiors. They have a dual motivation in attending these activities, namely as a form of participation in Islamic da'wah activities as well as showing

compliance with the policies of the leadership. The series of activities in Khataman is seen as natural. They did not question the singing of the song Indonesia Raya and a series of remarks from officials and other forms of celebration. For participants, the Khataman which is full of celebration is interpreted as a form of adjustment to the times. They also interpret Khataman activities in the Bogor Ngaos Program as a means to gain Islamic knowledge from lecturers.

The operational meaning is reflected in the clothes they wear. All students who participate in Khataman activities dress as they should in performing prayers. They also help each other for the smooth running of the Khataman. Meanwhile, the operational meaning also found in Khataman in Bogor Ngaos. Attendance at the event, which is interpreted as a form of compliance with leadership policies, is manifested in the act of filling out the attendance list provided by the committee. The level of participation of participants in these activities is also quite high. The room where the event is held is almost always full of participants.

Positional meanings are also found in Khataman in various symbols found in ritual activities. The presence of dishes in any form at the Khataman indicates that the ritual contains the function of binding brotherhood between ritual participants. Enjoying a meal together is a symbol of brotherhood between students. On the other hand, the preservation of the traditional Khataman for generations shows the meaning of sacrality among its participants. Khataman ritual processions continue to be maintained in sacrality, because they interpret the ritual as a means of worship and asking for prayers to Allah which is sure to have a positive impact on everyone who attends. Meanwhile, the series of events in Khataman activities as part of Bogor Ngaos have interrelated meanings between symbols or event activities. Various symbols contained in Khataman activities contain meanings that reinforce each other with elements of contestation and celebration.

Second, the values of Islamic education contained in a series of rituals of the Khataman in Bogor Regency include the value of gratitude, patience and cost, blessings, togetherness, generosity, and the value of appreciation or recognition. All educational values contained in the activities of Khataman al-Qur'an should continue to be maintained and maintained properly. Khataman activities have proven to have a positive impact on the success of education in an Islamic perspective.

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