Haul Solo Tradition: Structural-Functional Analysis for the Harmonization of Multicultural Society in Surakarta

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Abstract  
This research focuses on the Haul Solo tradition, an annual cultural event that has been celebrated for hundreds of years. The tradition has become a defining characteristic of the city of Surakarta, particularly among the people of Kampung Arab. The aim of this study is to explore the congregation's interpretation of the Haul Solo tradition, the role of societal elements within it, and their function in maintaining social harmony. This study employs a qualitative approach with an ethnographic methodology. The data was collected through ethnographic interviews, participant observation, and documentation. The implementation of the Haul Solo tradition is closely tied to the roles of various societal elements, including family descendants, close relatives, santri, local government, and local society. Each element's role is adjusted according to their social status. By collaborating effectively, the multicultural structure of society is strengthened. The Haul Solo tradition serves not only as a commemoration of the death anniversary of Habib Ali Al-Habsyi, but also as a means of preserving and maintaining harmony within a multicultural society. The function of the Haul Solo tradition in bonding elements of society consists of 3 functions, religious function, social function and economic function.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia’s ethnic diversity presents a dynamic aspect of people’s lives. With around 300 different ethnicities coexisting, the country boasts a rich cultural heritage that is both vast and diverse (Antara & Yogantari, 2018). This cultural diversity should be viewed as a gift from God that can have a positive impact on Indonesia, such as the development of the creative industry and tourism based on local wisdom. However, diversity in a multicultural society can also be a source of tension and conflict (Mahdayeni et al., 2019). Social divisions can arise from friction, which can lead to negative perceptions and mutual suspicion. This can cause disharmony and a crisis in social relations (Noor, 2020). Cultural conflicts between different ethnic groups are not uncommon in Indonesia. Examples include the Dayak and Madura conflicts in Sampit, conflicts between Islamic and Christian groups in Maluku, and conflicts between the Chinese ethnic group and local communities in 1998 (Abadi & Muthohirin, 2020). Surakarta City has experienced racial conflicts among its diverse population, including conflicts between Javanese and Arab ethnicities, as well as Javanese and Chinese ethnicities (Rustopo, 2007). The conflict between ethnic Javanese and Arabs was caused by a disagreement over payment for services between local pedicab drivers and people of Arab descent. Tensions between the two sides triggered a racial conflict in Surakarta City, which, as part of Indonesian territory, is not immune to such conflicts. Surakarta City is home to a diverse community comprising of Javanese, Arab, Chinese, and Madurese ethnicities. However, building harmony in a multicultural society remains a challenge due to the presence of individuals who are intolerant of differences. This often leads to conflict and the promotion of egoistic attitudes (Sihombing, 2019). Cultural diversity among ethnic groups should be preserved and respected by promoting tolerance in society. (Aminuyati et al., 2022) Cultural differences pose a challenge to achieving harmony in a multicultural society.

Social integration in a multicultural society can be achieved through the application of local wisdom. Social integration in a multicultural society can be achieved through the application of local wisdom. Social integration in a multicultural society can be achieved through the application of local wisdom. This involves a process of social interaction and a social system that embodies harmony, led by local leaders (Prasojo & Pabbajah, 2020). Local wisdom plays a crucial role in addressing various forms of disharmony in today’s society, such as the challenges faced by the people of Aceh. It is important to acknowledge and utilize the knowledge and practices of local communities in finding solutions to these issues (A. Rahman et al., 2022). Therefore, multicultural groups can be identified by the presence of local wisdom within them.

Surakarta City, with its multicultural society, implements local wisdom to achieve harmony. Previous research has shown that this is achieved through traditional practices, such as the jimpitan (Parawangsa, 2022), malam selikuran (Bakri & Muhadiyatiningsih, 2019), and ruwahan (Dewi, 2022). In addition to the aforementioned traditions, Surakarta City also has a Haul tradition aimed at promoting harmony in society. This tradition, commonly referred to as Haul Solo, is typically held to commemorate the death of a prominent figure in Javanese society. However, in Surakarta City, the Haul tradition is not only observed by Javanese people, but also by the Arab community. The Haul Solo tradition
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is celebrated annually in Surakarta Arab Village. The Arab Village in Indonesia has many traditions, including the iwadh tradition in the Arab Village of Manado (Lahilote, 2021). Similarly, the Surakarta Arab Village upholds its traditions with equal importance. Previous studies on the cultural aspects of the Arab Village of Surakarta have been limited. The research conducted so far has only focused on the acculturation of ethnic houses (Bazher, 2018), religious tourism often involves visiting the tombs (Latif, 2019), the historical formation of Surakarta Arab Village (Bazher, 2020), and the use and development of trading space (Setyaningrum et al., 2022). The absence of studies in Surakarta Arab Village, particularly regarding the Haul Solo tradition, makes this research distinct from previous studies.

This study compares the Haul tradition to previous research in literature. Mustolehudin conducted research on the Haul tradition in the Gresik region with the aim of promoting social harmony (Mustolehudin, 2014). This study analyzes the tradition of earth haul and alms in Gresik from a sociological perspective, using Geertz's cultural and magical paradigm. Hidayat & Ariton (2021) have also studied similar topics, exploring the role of haul tradition in fostering social harmony within the Semarang City community. The analysis of research conducted on the Ujung-Ujung community focuses on the symbols that serve as community bonding. Qoyyimah & Sabardila (2021) examined the haul tradition in Kalangan Village, Boyolali. The study analyzes people's perceptions and values associated with the haul of Ki Ageng Singoprono. Previous research has focused on various analytical studies and theories. However, this study will concentrate on the analysis and new theories, specifically the structural-functional paradigm. The analysis in this study will adopt Radcliffe Brown's thoughts on structural-functional theory. This paradigm will provide a clearer understanding of the roles played by the elements of society involved in the traditions and the forms of cooperation applied in them. The focus will be on the functional relationship between elements of society, both Arab and ethnic Javanese, in building harmony through haul traditions in the Arab Village of Surakarta City.

METHODS

The research utilized qualitative methods and an ethnographic approach to explore the informant's perspective on the tradition of Haul Solo in the context of multicultural community harmony. The research utilized qualitative methods and an ethnographic approach to explore the informant's perspective on the tradition of Haul Solo in the context of multicultural community harmony. The use of an ethnographic approach was particularly relevant to this research as it allowed for a holistic exploration of the informant's viewpoint within the socio-cultural context of society (Spradley, 1979). This research is situated in Surakarta Arab Village, chosen due to its association with the haul tradition and the presence of diverse ethnicities, including Javanese and Arab. The living conditions of this multicultural community make it an ideal research location for producing patterns of social harmonization with haul tradition. The study's data was collected through ethnographic interviews and participant observations of local Javanese and Arab organizing committees, as well as visitors to the haul tradition and local government. Secondary data from previous studies and documentation of local research locations were also used to reinforce the collected data. The obtained data was analyzed using domain, taxonomic, componential,
and cultural findings analysis techniques. The aim of the data analysis technique used is to explore the meaning of informants regarding the culture of the haul tradition, its roles, and its function in the context of harmonizing multicultural societies. The analyzed field data are elaborated using Radcliffe Brown's theory of Structural-Functional. This approach produces a holistic study of the role of community elements in the *Haul Solo* tradition and the function of these traditions in harmonizing the structure of a multicultural society.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

*Haul Solo* tradition in the Arab Village of Surakarta

Tradition is commonly interpreted as a cultural heritage passed down through generations (Reusen, 1992). In accordance with Muhaimin in Rahman (2019), tradition is commonly defined as *adah*, or custom in Arabic. Additionally, Rahman posits that tradition serves as a framework for societal behavior, and thus often becomes a normative standard in individuals’ lives. The concept of tradition as a habit is particularly relevant to the cultural practices of the *Haul Solo* tradition that is passed down to the current generation as part of their heritage. The term 'haul' refers to a ceremony commemorating the death of religious figures (Amin, 2002). This tradition is the result of a process of acculturation between Islamic and Javanese cultures. According to Clifford Geertz, Islam underwent syncretism with Javanese culture, resulting in what is referred to as *agama jawa* (Geertz, 1960). The scholar perceived the process of syncretism negatively. Another group of *ulama* interpret Javanese religion as a manifestation of Javanese commitment to compromise with Islam (Rofiqoh et al., 2021). The tradition of haul is a cultural and religious practice that commemorates the death of famous religious figures in certain regions. It originated from the syncretism process between the Islamic religious system and Javanese culture, and is known as *agami jawi*. The tradition of haul is a cultural and religious practice that commemorates the death of famous religious figures in certain regions.

Initially, the *Haul Solo* tradition was not as popular as it is today. Historically, the tradition was started by one of the descendants of Habib Ali Al-Habsyi. In the past, the number of worshippers attending the *Haul Solo* tradition was around 15 to 20 people. It is worth noting that in the first generation, the worshippers who attended were renowned *ulama* who are still remembered today. The *Haul Solo* tradition has persisted despite facing numerous obstacles. In 2020, the tradition faced several challenges, as reported by the committee member in charge of its implementation. In response to the central government's policy of restricting social activities due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the *Haul Solo* tradition was held behind closed doors. As in the past, the 2020 *Haul Solo* tradition was attended by only a few dozen worshippers and close family members. Similarly, the 2021 *Haul Solo* tradition was also held behind closed doors, but due to word of mouth, the number of attendees increased from the previous year. In 2022, the *Haul Solo* tradition will be held as usual. The *Haul Solo* tradition is held annually in the month of Rabiul Akhir to commemorate the death of Habib Ali Al-Habsyi, a prominent religious figure. The tradition has been passed down through generations (Mashar, 2018). The Solo Haul tradition is unique among haul traditions in other regions, as it is held for five consecutive days with a series of different events. The *Haul Solo* tradition took place from November 1-5, 2023 and has been ongoing.
for 112 years. From the first to the third day, participants engaged in religious education activities, including reading hadiths of the prophets. The term 'Rauhah' was introduced by the Habaib Hadhramaut to refer to this non-formal system of education. (Haidar & Idi, 2023). The implementation of activities related to Rauhah always involves the use of the book as a reference for learning. In the series of events for the Haul Solo tradition, the book of Ihya’ Ulimuddin is used as a reference for Rauhah activities.

**Figure 1.** Rauhah Activity in Haul Solo Tradition

On the evening of the second day after Rauhah, there is also a Yemeni dance performance accompanied by gambus music. The fourth day is the highlight of the Haul event, which includes readings of Yasin, Tahlil, Manaqib, and Tausiah and is closed with praying.

**Figure 2.** Fourth Day of Haul Solo Tradition

On the next day, it has entered the last day by reading wirid, ratib, Mawlid Simtudduror accompanied by hadroh, tawasul and closed with praying. The book of Mawlid Simtudduror was written directly by Habib Ali Al-Habsyi as a public media in remembering and exemplifying the ethical values of the Prophet SAW (Khotimah & Arfan, 2021). This book
contains beautiful verses that express love for the Prophet Muhammad SAW. The language used reflects Habib Ali’s sincere love for the Prophet. The verses in Simtudduro’s mawlid book are so beautiful that they can touch the hearts of readers, making this book very popular. Habib Ali’s work educates the public about the story of the Prophet Muhammad SAW and encourages readers to love him more as an eternal role model.

Figure 3. Last Day of Haul Solo Tradition

The tradition of haul has solo always been well-received by worshippers and ulama throughout the archipelago. This enthusiasm has made it one of the largest annual religious events in Surakarta City, with worshippers coming from various parts of the region. Worshippers participation in the Haul Solo tradition is motivated by the goals to be achieved, which are based on the community's interpretation of the tradition. There are four types of community meanings that encourage participation in the Haul Solo tradition: (1) Increased spiritual value; (2) Improvement of Islamic science; (3) A form of love for Al Habib Ali Al-Habsyi; (4) Seeking blessings from karamah Habib Ali Al-Habsyi.

The Role of Community Elements in the Haul Solo Tradition

Each member of society has a specific role based on their social status. This status is not determined by prestige, but rather by their position in society. The Haul Solo tradition cannot be implemented without the support and contribution of every member of society involved. The Haul Solo tradition cannot be implemented without the support and contribution of every member of society involved. These members include:

The Family of Habib Ali Al-Habsyi and His Close Relatives

In the Haul Solo tradition, the family status of Habib Ali’s descendants can be referred to as the host of the organizer. Based on this status, the family is responsible for organizing the event, including determining dates, funding, reference books, and leading each series of events. The committee responsible for organizing the Haul Solo tradition is not open to the public due to its sacred nature and specific criteria. Therefore, not all members of society are eligible to become part of the organizing committee. Only individuals from a specific social status can hold this position, while those from other social statuses may have alternative roles.
Local Government

As a regional policy maker, the local government has played a crucial role in ensuring the smooth running of the Haul Solo tradition event. The government's responsibility is to create regulations that maintain order among the crowds of worshippers. This is evident in the changes made to road rules around the Pasar Kliwon area to anticipate congestion and ensure the orderly movement of worshippers. During the Haul Solo tradition, the rules that were originally applied to Jalan Slamet Riyadi, which were previously one-way, were changed to accommodate two-way traffic. Additionally, the local government closed Jalan Kapten Mulyadi Simpang Sangkrah to Simpang Baturono to support the proper implementation of the Haul Solo series. This road closure can also serve as a trading location for local communities. Furthermore, the local government recommends 9 different parking facilities to provide comfort for worshippers who arrive by private vehicle. The local government supports the tradition of Haul Solo as a policy maker to ensure the proper execution of the series of events.

Local Society

Koentjaraningrat defines local society as a human collective that interacts with one another and is united by a shared sense of identity, customs, and distinctive behavior patterns (Koentjaraningrat, 2015). The Surakarta Arab Village is home to people of different ethnicities, including Javanese and Arab. While the Arab community dominates the implementation of the Haul Solo tradition, the Javanese society also benefits from it. The millions of worshippers who participate in the Haul Solo tradition provide significant benefits. In addition to fulfilling spiritual needs, the Haul Solo tradition provides opportunities for trade to millions of worshippers. With the support of the government, which enforces road closures for vehicles, traders, mostly of Javanese ethnicity, can take advantage of the occasion to improve their economy. The presence of millions of worshippers during the Haul Solo tradition undoubtedly provides significant benefits for traders. Therefore, Javanese traders eagerly anticipate the Haul Solo tradition as an opportunity for economic improvement. Additionally, local government-arranged parking facilities are utilized by locals who work as parking attendants, providing further benefit to the Javanese people during the Haul Solo tradition. The Arab community, who serves as the organizing committee, also employs Javanese volunteers as cooks. As part of the Haul Solo traditions, each pilgrim is served with a traditional Yemeni dish called kebuli rice. The committee slaughters around 150-200 goats annually to provide free meals to the worshippers. The majority of the cooks involved in the Haul Solo tradition are volunteers from the local community, which ensures their continued involvement in supporting the smooth running of the event.

The Function of Haul Solo Tradition in Harmonizing Multicultural Society Structure

The concept of harmonization is well-known for promoting diversity among different cultures and fostering peaceful coexistence (Mohd Khalli et al., 2022). A harmonious life is not one without conflicts or cultural differences among people. Harmonization in society occurs when individuals with different actions and feelings can align to resolve conflicts. Harmonious conditions can inspire individuals to achieve harmony and effectiveness in intercultural interactions (Xu, 2022). In a harmonious society, relationships between individuals require coordination. The Haul Solo tradition strongly involves various elements
of society, and every action between these elements requires coordination for harmony of actions and roles. Each community member’s role in implementing tradition fosters and maintains the social structure of the local community. The Radcliffe-Brown functional structural theory emphasizes the relevance of this phenomenon. Brown argues that living societies always possess structure, similar to organisms (Koentjaraningrat, 2014). Social structure is comprised of a network of relationships between individuals and groups. Culture serves a social function by mutually influencing the cultural and social systems. Ceremonies and rituals promote social solidarity and foster moral and social consciousness. Therefore, culture exists to meet both individual and collective needs, including the stability of the social structure and society.

According to structural-functional theory, the *Haul Solo* Tradition is a cultural system that impacts the social order. It serves both individual and collective needs. The implementation of this tradition is influenced by various societal elements. It is important to note that the local community is highly multicultural, and the three elements of society have their respective roles based on their social status. In a structural-functional perspective, culture, such as the *Haul Solo* tradition, plays a crucial role in maintaining the social structure of the local community. However, during its implementation, every sector of society has fulfilled its role impartially, without discriminating between Javanese or Arab ethnicities. The *Haul Solo* tradition has provided an opportunity for all members of society to collaborate and benefit from one another. The Arab community, who served as the organizing committee, received regulatory support from the government and assistance from the Javanese community, who volunteered their time. Similarly, the Javanese society got benefits from the economic opportunities presented by the *Haul Solo* tradition, which is utilized by traders and parking attendants.

The tradition has been held 112 times and has had a positive impact on society. Its sustainability can foster trust among different societal groups and serve as a strong foundation for the stability of the multicultural community structure. The *Haul Solo* tradition fosters cultural adaptation and community harmony through mutual understanding and collaboration among people of diverse backgrounds. It emphasizes the importance of facing challenges together while respecting cultural differences. The text highlights the significance of good collaboration between elements of a multicultural society in achieving harmony. In accordance with Lomas and Xue’s perspective, a harmonious life is achieved through the dynamic integration of various elements into a unified whole (Lomas & Xue, 2022). Consistent practice of this tradition strengthens and preserves the value of harmony in the community’s collective consciousness, even in a multicultural society. This aligns with the pattern of community harmony in Sumber Sari village, Lampung Province, which utilizes local culture to reinforce community integration. Through dance media, the Lampung ethnic community and Javanese transmigrants demonstrate a pluralistic attitude with the desire to actively participate and interact positively in a multicultural society (Saehu & Muchtar, 2023). The utilization of local culture can promote active participation among diverse communities and serve as a means of positive interaction. Therefore, local culture can play a significant role in integrating and harmonizing a multicultural society.
The **Haul Solo** tradition as a culture has several functions that are able to knit harmonization in a multicultural society. These functions include:

**Religious Functions**

The **Haul Solo** tradition fulfills the spiritual needs of worshippers. During each series of traditional events, worshippers receive Islamic knowledge. For example, they participate in the activity of **Rauhah**, which involves studying the book of *Ihya’ Ulumuddin*. One of the activities offered is the non-formal education program called **Rauhah**, which uses the book of *Ihya’ Ulumuddin* as a reference to improve Islamic religious knowledge. The book was written by Al Ghazali, who provided detailed teachings on moral formation, including morals towards Allah, oneself, and others (Budiyono, 2019). This program is highly valued by the worshippers, who see the **Haul Solo** tradition as an opportunity to strengthen their faith and Islamic knowledge. The **ulama** who provide this education are highly respected and renowned, and their teachings are widely spread. Worshippers are consistently reminded of the significance of studying religion, improving morals, and fostering brotherhood among human beings. Regarding community harmonization, worshippers are taught to build moral values towards others, such as greeting, visiting when invited, visiting when sick, and helping during disasters. The education of worshippers about brotherhood and moral values in life can help maintain harmony in society. Worshippers are also encouraged to increase their faith and devotion to Allah SWT. This practice can promote positive mental health by avoiding negative influences, thereby helping Muslims maintain strong character and morals throughout their lives.

**Social Functions**

The **Haul Solo** tradition serves both religious and social functions. It has a clear framework for preparation and organization, and every step involves social interaction among members of society. Good cooperation is necessary to ensure the successful implementation of the tradition. Intercultural communication is also important to support this goal. In organizing the **Haul Solo** tradition, every member of society plays a useful role and supports one another. They are experienced in facing challenges and managing potential conflicts, indicating that social interaction between individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds can be successful. Social interaction among people of different ethnicities can increase intimacy and encourage community acceptance of existing differences (Kartika et al., 2023). In this way, social cohesion among members of society can be fostered, leading to a harmonious and multicultural community structure. Continuing the **Haul Solo** tradition can provide significant benefits. Consistently implementing traditions each year encourages cooperation, kinship, and trust among members of society. These values can become social capital in unifying a multicultural society. According to Woolcock’s in Pangalila et al., (2024) social capital is the result of communication and interaction between individuals. It is a strong foundation for strengthening community harmony. The **Haul Solo** tradition plays a crucial role in maintaining a harmonious and balanced multicultural community structure.

**Economic Functions**

The **Haul Solo** tradition serves as a means of driving the community's economy. Javanese people can open a trading business according to their interests and abilities. Most
The traders in the *Haul Solo* tradition sell various foods and drinks. The traders, who are mostly Javanese, have been given permission by the local government and the organizing committee to trade around the event location at certain times. The presence of millions of worshippers in this tradition creates opportunities for traders, who take advantage of the momentum to increase their earnings. The *Haul Solo* tradition contributes to the local Javanese economy, benefiting not only traders but also parking attendants and innkeepers. Worshippers attend the *Haul Solo* tradition not only from within the city, but also from outside the city and even from abroad, which requires lodging and parking. The local community has always recognized the significance of this tradition. The *Haul Solo* tradition benefits many aspects of society, including religious, social, and economic. By maintaining a harmonious social structure, the *Haul Solo* tradition can continue to serve its purpose. Therefore, many parties support the implementation of the *Haul Solo* tradition as a cultural system to maintain a multicultural community structure. The involvement of every community element is crucial for the sustainability of this tradition and the benefits it brings to society.

**CONCLUSION**

The *Haul Solo* tradition is an annual event held by the people of Surakarta Arab Village to commemorate the death of Habib Ali Al-Habsyi. The *Haul Solo* tradition is an annual event held by the people of Surakarta Arab Village to commemorate the death of Habib Ali Al-Habsyi. The tradition holds significant meaning for worshippers, motivating them to participate. Community elements play a crucial role in the implementation of this tradition. The *Haul Solo* tradition serves as a means of social cohesion, as it involves all elements of society working together. This tradition can provide benefits to the local community in religious, social, and economic aspects.

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