



The Suroan Tradition: Living Hadith as a Shaper of Spiritual and Social Relations

Rani Pudji Astuti

Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Indonesia
hafizhahasyrani@gmail.com

Muhammad Nuh Siregar

Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Indonesia
muhammadnuhsiregar@uinsu.ac.id

Abstract

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The Suroan tradition in Suka Jadi Village, Perbaungan Subdistrict, Serdang Bedagai Regency, North Sumatra, represents a living manifestation of the living hadith that remains preserved within the community. This phenomenon is worth studying because, in addition to serving as a religious ritual, it embodies social and cultural values that bind community life. This study aims to describe and analyze the practice of the Suroan tradition as an embodiment of the Prophet's hadith in daily life. A qualitative approach with a field research design was employed. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with religious leaders, ustadz, and local residents, while secondary data were sourced from authenticated hadith texts (takhrij) and scholarly literature, including journals, books, theses, dissertations, and conference proceedings. Data analysis involved reduction, descriptive presentation, and conclusion drawing, with validity testing through comparison between field findings and authentic hadiths. The findings reveal that the Suroan tradition is not merely a cultural celebration but also contains profound spiritual and social dimensions. Practices such as communal prayers, fasting, religious sermons, charity, and mutual cooperation reflect gratitude to Allah, strengthen communal bonds (ukhuwah), and represent the collective application of Islamic teachings. This tradition also serves as a medium for transmitting religious and social values within the framework of local wisdom. The contribution of this study lies in revealing the role of local traditions as a medium for internalizing

hadith teachings and fostering social harmony, thereby enriching living hadith studies in Indonesia.

Abstrak	
Kata Kunci: Tradisi Suro; Living Hadis; Relasi Spritual-Sosial	<i>Tradisi Suroan di Desa Suka Jadi, Kecamatan Perbaungan, Kabupaten Serdang Bedagai, Sumatera Utara, merupakan salah satu bentuk manifestasi living hadis yang masih lestari di tengah masyarakat. Fenomena ini menarik dikaji karena selain berfungsi sebagai sarana ritual keagamaan, ia juga mengandung nilai-nilai sosial dan budaya yang mengikat kehidupan masyarakat. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan serta menganalisis praktik tradisi Suroan sebagai pengejawantahan ajaran hadis Nabi dalam konteks kehidupan sehari-hari. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian lapangan (field research). Data primer diperoleh melalui wawancara mendalam dengan tokoh agama, ustadz, dan warga setempat, sedangkan data sekunder bersumber dari hadis-hadis Nabi yang telah ditakhrij serta literatur ilmiah berupa jurnal, buku, skripsi, tesis, dan prosiding. Analisis data dilakukan melalui reduksi, penyajian secara deskriptif, dan penarikan kesimpulan, dengan uji keabsahan melalui perbandingan antara temuan lapangan dan hadis-hadis sahih. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tradisi Suroan tidak hanya dimaknai sebagai perayaan budaya, tetapi mengandung dimensi spiritual dan sosial yang mendalam. Praktik doa bersama, puasa, ceramah agama, sedekah, dan gotong royong merepresentasikan nilai syukur kepada Allah, penguatan ukhuwah, dan pengamalan ajaran Islam secara kolektif. Tradisi ini juga menjadi sarana pewarisan nilai-nilai religius dan solidaritas sosial dalam bingkai kearifan lokal. Kontribusi penelitian ini terletak pada pengungkapan peran tradisi lokal sebagai media internalisasi ajaran hadis dan pembentukan harmoni sosial, sekaligus memperkaya kajian living hadis di Indonesia.</i>

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Introduction

Hadith studies within the corpus of Islamic scholarship are no longer confined to textual and historical approaches, but have evolved toward contextual approaches that position hadith as an integral part of the dynamics of community life (Mohd. Salleh, Abdullah, et al., 2020; Saputra, Nana Gustianda, et al., 2024). The study of Living Hadith should serve as a relevant approach in contemporary interpretation, allowing hadith to be understood not merely as a text, but as something lived, interpreted, and reconstructed within the social practices of Muslim communities (Mohd. Salleh, Hamdi Usman, et al., 2020). The

study of Living Hadith is essential, as it allows hadith to be examined not only from its normative dimensions but also from the ways in which it is interpreted within interactive spaces shaped by distinctive local wisdom. Thus, Living Hadith serves as a strategic analytical lens for understanding how Muslims interpret prophetic values within the framework of living traditions.

Living Hadith, within the context of local wisdom, can function as a cultural instrument for shaping and sustaining social relations that are integrated into forms of spiritual meaning-making (Harahap et al., 2025). Hadiths concerning social and spiritual relations are actualized through communal practices such as almsgiving, fasting, prayer, and shared experiences in daily life (Hanafi, 2023). Hadith not only embodies a transcendental dimension but also strengthens social bonds and expands spaces for religious and social participation. Consequently, the construction of Living Hadith cannot be separated from the local realities of communities that regard the Prophet's teachings as both a source of values and a basis of legitimacy in shaping social order, positioning Living Hadith studies as a tool for analyzing the relationship between religion and the living culture within society (Aini & Al-Hanifah, 2023).

A concrete example of the intersection between hadith values and local wisdom can be found in the Suro or *Suroan* tradition, practiced by the community of Sukajadi Village, Serdang Bedagai, North Sumatra. The Suroan tradition, observed in welcoming the month of Muharram, carries its own distinctive features, particularly through the acculturation of diverse ethnic and cultural elements in Serdang Bedagai. This tradition serves as a collective forum for the community to reaffirm religious values in contextual forms. The transcendental practice that unites spiritual and social values is embodied in unique Suroan rituals such as fasting, mosque feasts (*kenduri masjid*), recitations of protective prayers (*doa tolak bala*), and the exchange of rice packages among congregants each representing the communal reinterpretation of hadith values. This tradition demonstrates that Islamic teachings, especially hadith, can be practiced in a dynamic and grounded way without losing their essential meanings.

"This context highlights the importance of studying the Suroan tradition as practiced in Sukajadi Village. Amid the prevailing trend of homogenizing religious practices and the decline of local traditions due to modernization, exploring Living Hadith within local practices contributes to preserving religious expressions rooted in community values and identities. Previous studies have examined Living Hadith within the Suroan tradition as expressed in various forms, including marriage (Indiantoro et al., 2022), cultural practices (Rofiq, 2024), and worship activities reflecting hadith values in education (Puji Lestari et al., 2021). However, research that specifically addresses the Suroan tradition through the lens of Living Hadith particularly its contribution to the formation of social relations remains scarce. In fact, this tradition embodies both spiritual and social values that warrant deeper scholarly investigation.

Based on the aforementioned foundations, this article aims to examine the Suroan tradition in Sukajadi Village as a form of Living Hadith praxis both as a manifestation of spiritual relations between humans and God, and as a social mechanism that strengthens community cohesion. This study explores how hadiths related to the Suroan practices and the month of Muharram, particularly those observed on the day of Ashura, are understood and practiced using a Living Hadith approach. The article seeks to demonstrate that hadith is not only alive within texts but also exists within the social spaces of communities, continually undergoing cultural and spiritual transformation.

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach using field research methods to observe, record, and document the practice of the Suroan tradition in Suka Jadi Village, Perbaungan Subdistrict, Serdang Bedagai Regency, North Sumatra. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews with religious leaders, *ustadz*, and community members, who served as primary data sources. Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained from prophetic hadiths, which were subjected to *takhrij* analysis to ensure their validity and authenticity, as well as

from supporting literature including scholarly journal articles, books, undergraduate theses, master's theses, doctoral dissertations, and relevant conference proceedings.

The collected data were analyzed through data reduction stages, involving the filtering and categorization of field findings based on specific themes relevant to the research focus. The data were then presented in descriptive narratives, supported by primary data. Prior to drawing conclusions, data validation was carried out by comparing field findings with authentic prophetic hadiths. Based on the entire process, it can be concluded that the Suroan tradition practiced by the community represents a manifestation of Living Hadith an embodiment of devotional practices that emerge and thrive within local culture, grounded in the spirit of the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (Darussamin, 2025).

Result and Discussion

Hadiths Concerning the Month of Suro and Muharram

The month of Suro in the Javanese calendar reflects a form of cultural adaptation of Muharram in the Hijri calendar, although both carry distinct constructions of meaning (Musonnif, 2017). Etymologically, the term 'Suro' is derived from 'Ashura', referring to the tenth day of Muharram, which holds significant status in Islamic tradition, as explained in various hadiths regarding the virtues of fasting on that day (Dwi putra, 2022).

According to the majority of scholars (*jumhur ulama*), the day of 'Ashura falls on the tenth day of Muharram. Among those who hold this view are Sa'id ibn al-Musayyab, Hasan al-Basri, Malik, Ahmad, Ishaq, and other scholars. This opinion aligns with the apparent meaning (*zahir*) of the hadith and its explicit wording. The assumption that the term refers to the time when camels become thirsty is considered far from the intended meaning. Furthermore, the second narration from Ibn 'Abbas refutes such an interpretation, as he stated that the Prophet Muhammad used to fast on 'Ashura, until people mentioned that both

the Jews and Christians also observed fasting on that day. The Prophet then said, 'If I live until next year, God willing (*in shaa Allah*), we will fast on the ninth day.' This clearly indicates that the fasting previously observed did not occur on the ninth day, thereby confirming that the fast took place on the tenth day (Al-Naisaburi, n.d.).

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ : حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عَوَانَةَ عَنْ أَبِي بِشْرٍ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ الْحِمَيْرِيِّ عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَفْضَلُ الصَّيَامِ بَعْدَ رَمَضَانَ شَهْرُ اللَّهِ الْمُحَرَّمُ وَأَفْضَلُ الصَّلَاةِ بَعْدَ الْفَرِيضَةِ صَلَاةُ اللَّيْلِ

Qutaibah ibn Sa'id narrated to us, saying: Abu 'Awanah narrated to us, from Abu Bishr, from Humayd ibn 'Abd al-Rahman al-Himyari, from Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him), who reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: 'The best fasting after the month of Ramadan is fasting in the month of Allah, namely Muharram. And the best prayer after the obligatory prayers is the night prayer (qiyam al-layl) (H.R. Sahih Muslim, No. 1163).

Within the context of the Javanese calendar established by Sultan Agung of Mataram in the 17th century, the month of Suro was not merely adopted terminologically from Muharram, but reinterpreted within the framework of Javanese cosmology and spirituality. This positioning renders the month of Suro as a temporal space imbued with symbolic and mystical meanings, marked by various ritual practices such as *tirakat* (ascetic devotions), *tapa bisu* (silent meditation), and restrictions on hosting celebratory events. Consequently, a symbolic transformation of Ashura's meaning occurs in the form of a cultural interpretation that lives and evolves within Javanese society (Dwi putra, 2022).

Although there is a shared sense of momentum between the months of Suro and Muharram as periods of spiritual transition, their meanings unfold within distinct epistemological frameworks. Muharram is described as one of the

sacred months honored by Allah, within which the day of Ashura is specifically recommended as a day of fasting.

حَدَّثَنَا هُشَيْمُ بْنُ بِشِيرٍ أَخْبَرَنَا مَنْصُورٌ يَعْنِي ابْنَ زَادَانَ عَنْ قَتَادَةَ عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مَعْبَدٍ الرَّمَازِيِّ عَنْ أَبِي قَتَادَةَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ سُئِلَ عَنْ صَوْمِ يَوْمِ عَرَفَةَ فَقَالَ كَفَّارَةٌ سَنَتَيْنِ وَسُئِلَ عَنْ صَوْمِ يَوْمِ عَاشُورَاءَ فَقَالَ كَفَّارَةٌ سَنَةٍ

Hushaym ibn Bishr narrated to us, saying: Mansur ibn Zadan informed us, from Qatadah, from ‘Abdullah ibn Ma’bad al-Zammani, from Abu Qatadah (may Allah be pleased with him), who reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) was asked about fasting on the day of ‘Arafah. He said, ‘It expiates the sins of two years.’ He was then asked about fasting on the day of ‘Ashura, and he said, ‘It expiates the sins of one year (H.R. Muslim, No. 1162).

The fast of the Day of ‘Arafah is specifically recommended for those not performing the Hajj, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) broke his fast on the Day of ‘Arafah while he was undertaking the pilgrimage.

وَحَدَّثَنَا الْحَسَنُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ الْحُلَوَانِيُّ حَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ أَبِي مَرْيَمَ حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَيُّوبَ حَدَّثَنِي إِسْمَاعِيلُ بْنُ أُمَيَّةَ أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ أَبَا غَطَفَانَ بْنَ طَرِيفٍ الْمُرِّيَّ يَقُولُ سَمِعْتُ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنَ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا يَقُولُ حِينَ صَامَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَوْمَ عَاشُورَاءَ وَأَمَرَ بِصِيَامِهِ قَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: فَإِذَا كَانَ الْعَامُ الْمُقْبِلُ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ صُمْنَا الْيَوْمَ التَّاسِعَ، قَالَ: فَلَمْ الْعَامُ الْمُقْبِلُ حَتَّى تُوَفِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

Hasan ibn ‘Ali al-Hulwani narrated to us, saying: Abu Maryam narrated to us, Yahya ibn Ayyub narrated to us, Isma’il ibn Umayyah narrated to me that he heard Ghatafan ibn Tarif al-Muriyya say: I heard ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abbas (may Allah be pleased with both of them) say: When the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) fasted on the day of ‘Ashura and commanded others to do so, they said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, if the next year comes, God willing (*in shaa Allah*), we will fast on the ninth day (Tasi’a).’ He said: ‘Then, before the next year came,

the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) passed away (H.R. Muslim, No. 1134).

وَحَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ وَأَبُو كُرَيْبٍ قَالَا حَدَّثَنَا وَكِيعٌ عَنْ ابْنِ أَبِي ذَنْبٍ عَنِ الْقَاسِمِ بْنِ عَبَّاسٍ عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُمَيْرٍ لَعَلَّهُ قَالَ عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: لَئِنْ بَقِيتُ إِلَى قَابِلٍ لَا صُومَنَ التَّاسِعَ.

Abu Bakr ibn Abi Shaybah and Abu Kurayb narrated to us, saying: Waki' narrated to us, from Ibn Abi Dhi'b, from al-Qasim ibn 'Abbas, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar, who narrated from 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with both of them), who said: The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, 'Indeed, if I live until the coming year, I will surely fast on the ninth day (of Muharram) (H.R. Muslim, No. 8:12-13).

وَحَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ حَدَّثَنَا وَكِيعٌ بْنُ الْجَرَّاحِ عَنْ حَاجِبِ بْنِ عُمَرَ عَنِ الْحَكَمِ بْنِ الْأَعْرَجِ. قَالَ انْتَهَيْتُ إِلَى ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا وَهُوَ مُتَوَسِّدٌ رِدَاءَهُ فِي زَمْرَمَ. فَقُلْتُ لَهُ أَخْبِرْنِي عَنْ صَوْمِ عَاشُورَاءَ. فَقَالَ إِذَا رَأَيْتَ هَلَالَ الْمُحَرَّمِ فَاعْدُدْ وَأَصْبِحْ يَوْمَ التَّاسِعِ صَائِمًا. قُلْتُ هَكَذَا كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَصُومُهُ؟ قَالَ نَعَمْ.

Abu Bakr ibn Abi Shaybah narrated to us, Waki' ibn al-Jarrah narrated to us, from Hajib ibn 'Umar, from al-Hakam ibn al-A'raj, who said: I approached Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with both of them) while he was resting with his cloak as a pillow near the Zamzam water. I asked him, 'Tell me about the fasting of 'Ashura.' He replied, 'When you see the crescent moon of Muharram, count the days and fast on the ninth day.' I asked, 'Is that how the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) observed his fast?' He said, 'Yes.'" (H.R. Muslim, No. 1133).

The explanation from Ibn 'Abbas indicates that, in his view, the fast of 'Ashura falls on the ninth day of Muharram, based on his interpretation (*ta'wil*) that the term 'Ashura' (which linguistically means the tenth day) is derived from a counting method associated with the days when camels experience greater

thirst. This is because the Arabs traditionally referred to the fifth day when camels began to feel thirsty and seek water sources as the fourth day. Similarly, other days were named in this manner, leading to the interpretation that what is referred to as the tenth day actually corresponds to the ninth day (Al-Asqalanī, 2005).

Based on the above explanation, in Javanese tradition, the month of Suro undergoes a semantic expansion that encompasses not only religious dimensions but also cosmological and esoteric aspects. Therefore, understanding the term 'Suro' must be situated within a proportional context—as a form of cultural acculturation that reflects Islamic values, including hadiths concerning Muharram and Ashura, yet absorbed and modified within the framework of local culture. Through this approach, hadith is not understood merely as a normative text, but as a living source of values, interpreted contextually by the community, as manifested in the Suroan tradition.

The Practice of the Suroan Tradition Among the Community of Sukajadi Village

The Suro month tradition practiced by the community of Sukajadi Village represents a part of Javanese cultural heritage that has been deeply rooted and passed down through generations. This tradition is observed at the beginning of Muharram in the Hijri calendar, which corresponds to the month of Suro in the Javanese calendar. The celebration of the Suro tradition is not merely regarded as an annual ritual, but also as a form of spiritual and cultural reflection by the local community in responding to the Islamic New Year.

The community believes that the month of Muharram marks a transitional period between the old year and the new year, laden with symbolic meanings. In local beliefs, this month is regarded as a time filled with both blessings and caution, as it is believed that fortune and misfortune may arrive simultaneously (Sandimen, 2025). Therefore, the arrival of 1 Muharram is considered sacred and must be approached with vigilance and care.

One of the practices that has been preserved to this day is the prohibition against engaging in outdoor activities on the first day of Muharram. This tradition is rooted in the belief that leaving the house on that day may invite misfortune or harm to one's family. Conversely, the community is encouraged to remain at home, gather with family members, and engage in increased prayers and reflection as a means of seeking safety and protection from all forms of calamity (Susanto, 2025). Thus, the Suro month tradition in Sukajadi Village reflects local wisdom values that are rich in both spiritual and social dimensions. It serves as a reflection of how the community interprets time, change, and self- and communal protection through a harmonious blend of cultural and religious approaches.

The commemoration of the Suro month in Sukajadi Village not only reflects the living spiritual heritage within Javanese society but also embodies diverse forms of religious and cultural expression, rich in symbolic meaning. This tradition generally manifests in two distinct yet complementary forms of practice, both framed within the same interpretive structure: the community's engagement with the sacred values of the month of Muharram.

First, a segment of the community continues to uphold the belief that the eve of 1 Muharram, or Satu Suro night, is sacred. In Javanese tradition, this night is regarded as spiritually charged, prompting individuals to conduct personal rituals. One common practice is the ritual cleansing of heirlooms, which may take the form of physical objects such as keris (ritual daggers), spears, or other ancestral relics or intangible elements like spiritual recitations, prayers, or inherited teachings (Arisky & Agus M. Fauzi, 2024). This purification ritual is not merely aimed at preserving physical artifacts, but also serves as an expression of reverence for ancestral legacy and a spiritual medium to dispel negative energy in preparation for the Islamic New Year.

Second, the use of the term 'Suro tradition' also refers to the commemoration of the night of 10 Muharram, which in Islam is known as the night of Ashura. On this night, the community organizes collective activities such

as communal prayers, *tahlil* recitations, religious sermons (*pengajian*), and social practices such as food distribution. This tradition highlights the communal dimension of the Suro month observance, where values of togetherness, social solidarity, and community cohesion form the core of its implementation (Khalil, 2025). In this context, the night of Ashura is understood not merely as a ritualistic event, but as a spiritual moment that also carries significant social and historical value within both Islamic tradition and local culture.

Kedua bentuk tradisi tersebut menunjukkan bahwa masyarakat Desa Sukajadi memiliki cara khas dalam merepresentasikan bulan Suro, yang tidak hanya didasarkan pada ajaran Islam tetapi juga bersinergi dengan nilai-nilai budaya lokal. Tradisi ini merupakan wujud nyata dari proses dialektika antara spiritualitas Islam dan kearifan budaya Jawa yang terus hidup dalam ruang keseharian masyarakat hingga hari ini.

The commemoration of the night of 10 Muharram, known as the night of Ashura by the people of Sukajadi Village, represents the culmination of the Suro month tradition, which is rich in both religious significance and social solidarity. This tradition is not merely an annual routine, but serves as a manifestation of the integration between Islamic religious practices and local cultural wisdom, preserved across generations (Safera & Huda, 2020).

On the night of Ashura, the community collectively gathers at the mosque, which serves as the center of both religious and social activities. The organization of these activities is prepared by a committee, typically consisting of local religious leaders and traditional community figures. Prior to the event, a deliberative meeting (*musyawarah*) is held by the religious leaders to design the sequence of activities, which is then communicated to all village residents (Susanto, 2025).

One of the key components of this tradition is the encouragement for each family to bring rice accompanied by their own side dishes. These meals are later arranged, shared, and exchanged among community members, serving as a medium for fostering solidarity and a spirit of sharing within a communal

framework. Among the prepared dishes, there is a distinctive culinary element that characterizes the event: *ambengan* or *nasi tumpeng*, prepared by the organizing committee as a symbol of gratitude and togetherness. Another essential dish that cannot be omitted is *bubur* (porridge), which in the Suro tradition is prepared using various mixed grains such as mung beans, red beans, and peanuts, combined into a significant communal meal. This porridge is cooked using locally harvested ingredients, seasoned with simple spices, and reflects the distinctive flavors of traditional Javanese cuisine (Sandimen, 2025; Susanto, 2025).

Once all the meals are prepared, the sequence of activities begins with a communal prayer led by local *ustadz* and community leaders. This prayer serves as a supplication to Allah SWT, seeking safety, blessings, and protection for the entire community from all forms of misfortune. The prayers offered reflect the collective hope that the Islamic New Year will serve as a starting point for personal and communal improvement, encompassing spiritual, social, and moral dimensions (Khalil, 2025).

The Ashura night activities conclude with a *tausiyah* or religious sermon delivered by a local *ustadz*. In this session, the community is encouraged to reflect on Islamic values, strengthen their vertical relationship with Allah through acts of worship, and improve their horizontal relationships with others through better social interactions (*muamalah*). The moral and spiritual messages conveyed in the *tausiyah* serve as guidance for the community to enter the new Islamic year with renewed enthusiasm and a commitment to personal and collective betterment.

The Suroan Tradition as a Form of Spiritual and Social Relations

The Suroan tradition within Javanese society represents a form of local wisdom that integrates both religious and cultural dimensions (M Mujibuddin & Zuliana, 2025). This tradition serves as a reflection of communal identity, functioning as a medium of gratitude rooted in the teachings of Sunan Kalijaga, who propagated Islamic teachings without eradicating Javanese cultural traditions. Consequently, it embodies a form of spiritual articulation constructed

within a complex cultural space (Jessica Pramesti Pranoto & Marselius Sampe Tondok, 2024). In this context, the month of Suro is positioned as a sacred period marking the Islamic New Year, while simultaneously serving as a reflective-transcendental moment. Ritual practices such as *tirakat* (spiritual seclusion), *tapa bisu* (silent meditation), *kenduri* (communal feast), and *kirab pusaka* (procession of sacred heirlooms) represent symbolic manifestations of a belief system that has undergone a long-standing internalization of values across generations (M Mujibuddin & Zuliana, 2025). Spirituality within the Suroan tradition functions not only as a medium of religious expression, but also as a mechanism for reproducing social values and symbolic relations within the community (Izzah et al., 2022).

First Almsgiving (*Sedekah*)

One of the elements that unifies Islam with local wisdom is the strengthening of the social dimension of the *Suroan* tradition, particularly through the practice of exchanging packages of rice among community members who participate in the ritual activities (Saputra, Eramahi, et al., 2024). This activity is not merely a festive tradition of food-sharing but carries a profound message of generosity and communal solidarity instilled from an early age. From a socio-religious perspective, such practices represent a mechanism of internalizing the value of *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) in a culturally embedded manner. The encouragement of almsgiving is also explicitly affirmed in the hadiths. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) emphasized and recommended almsgiving, as illustrated in the following narration:

الصَّدَقَةُ عَلَى الْمِسْكِينِ صَدَقَةٌ، وَهِيَ عَلَى ذِي الرَّحِمِ اثْنَتَانِ: صَدَقَةٌ وَصَلَةٌ.

Giving charity to the poor is counted as one act of charity, while giving charity to relatives carries a double reward: the reward of giving charity and the reward of maintaining family ties (H.R. Ibnu Majah, No. 1844, H.R. At-Tirmidzi, No. 658 dan H.R. An-Nasa'I, No. 2583.).

Based on the aforementioned hadith, the act of offering food – whether brought by community members or prepared as traditional dishes during the Suroan ritual – is not only regarded as a charitable act of worship but also serves as a means of fostering social relations within the community. The shared meals symbolize a form of mutual generosity that bridges social divides between the wealthy and the poor, as the food exchanged typically consists of dishes commonly consumed in daily life. Thus, food functions as a social medium that strengthens communal bonds and promotes mutual assistance without regard to socioeconomic status. Moreover, food sharing during the Suroan tradition is not limited to Javanese participants; other ethnic groups such as the Banjar and Malay communities also participate, reflecting the tradition's role in enhancing interethnic social cohesion within this heterogeneous society.

Second Fasting (*Sawm*)

On the night of Ashura according to the Hijri calendar, the Suroan tradition is intentionally commemorated on the night of the 10th of Muharram to remind the community to observe fasting as a Sunnah act of worship. Imam Shafi'i emphasized that it is recommended to fast on both the 9th and 10th days together, as the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) fasted on the 10th day and intended to fast on the 9th as well (Ad-Dimasyqi, 650). This is also referenced in Sahih Muslim in the book *As-Shalah*, narrated by Abu Hurairah, in which the Prophet stated, 'The best fasting after Ramadan is in the month of Allah called Muharram.' Some scholars suggest that the reason for fasting on both the 9th and 10th days together is to distinguish this practice from that of the Jews, who fast only on the 10th day. The hadith literature alludes to this interpretation".

Some scholars state that the probable reason for recommending fasting on both the ninth and tenth days simultaneously is to differentiate the practice from that of the Jews, who fast only on the tenth day. The existing hadiths imply this interpretation.

حَدَّثَنَا حَرَمَلَةُ بْنُ يَحْيَى أَخْبَرَنَا ابْنُ وَهْبٍ أَخْبَرَنِي يُونُسُ عَنْ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ أَخْبَرَنِي عُرْوَةُ بْنُ
الزُّبَيْرِ أَنَّ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا قَالَتْ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَأْمُرُ بِصِيَامِهِ قَبْلَ
أَنْ يُفْرَضَ رَمَضَانُ فَلَمَّا فُرِضَ رَمَضَانُ كَانَ مَنْ شَاءَ صَامَ يَوْمَ عَاشُورَاءَ وَمَنْ شَاءَ أَفْطَرَ

It has been narrated to us by Harmalah bin Yahya, who reported from Ibn Wahb, who narrated from Yunus from Ibn Shihab, who narrated from Urwah bin Zubair that 'Aisyah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) commanded fasting on the day of 'Ashura before fasting in Ramadan was made obligatory. When fasting in Ramadan became obligatory, fasting on 'Ashura became optional; one may fast or break the fast on that day (H.R Bukhari, No. 1893 & Muslim, No. 1125).

The explanation of the above hadith is that scholars have unanimously agreed that fasting on the day of 'Ashura is Sunnah, not obligatory. However, they differ in opinion regarding its ruling during the early period of Islam, specifically at the time when fasting on this day was first prescribed before the obligation of fasting Ramadan (Al-Asqalani, 1379, p. 462).

Imam Abu Hanifah stated that fasting on the day of 'Ashura is obligatory, whereas Imam Shafi'i held two opinions. The first, which is the more widely accepted view among his followers, is that the fast has always been Sunnah since its inception and was never obligatory for the Muslim community. Initially, fasting on 'Ashura was considered a strongly recommended Sunnah (*Sunnah mu'akkadah*), but after the obligatory fasting of Ramadan was legislated, it became an ordinary Sunnah rather than the emphasized practice it once was. The second opinion held by Imam Shafi'i is that fasting on 'Ashura was obligatory during the early period of Islam (Ad-Dimasyqi, 650).

The difference of opinion revolves around the requirement of making the intention (niyyah) for obligatory fasting on the night before. Abu Hanifah did not require this and stated, 'In the past, people used to break their fast at the beginning of the day of 'Ashura, then they were commanded to fast starting from midday and were not required to make up (qadha) the fast.' Other companions

held that fasting on this day is Sunnah, thus permitting intention to be made during the day. Abu Hanifah firmly maintained his view that fasting on 'Ashura' at the beginning of Islam was obligatory, based on the command to perform it, which itself carries an obligatory ruling, supported by the hadith stating, 'After fasting in Ramadan was made obligatory, the Prophet said, "Whoever wishes may fast (on 'Ashura'), and whoever wishes may leave it."' Meanwhile, followers of the Shafi'i school argue with the hadith which says, 'This is the day of 'Ashura', and Allah has not made fasting obligatory upon you.' In Arabic, the words عَاشُورَاءَ ('Ashura') and تَاسُوعَاءَ (Tasua') can be read with or without the final hamzah (Ad-Dimasyqi, 650).

Based on the above hadith, this also serves as an important lesson from the Suroan tradition to emphasize the significance of fasting in the month of Muharram as part of the Prophet's Sunnah. Nevertheless, the community observes fasting primarily on the tenth day, following the consensus of scholars. Thus, the fasting practiced by the community is not merely a component of the Suroan tradition but also an implementation of the Prophet's teachings in Islam. The community believes that fasting on the day of 'Ashura' is an act of worship that fosters mutual reminders among one another.

Third Supplication for Protection from Calamities (*Doa Tolak Bala*)

The culmination of the Suroan tradition is embodied in the collective prayer sessions held at the mosque and attended by the community. The communal feast (*kenduri*) serves as a forum for prayer and spiritual reflection to welcome and conclude the Hijri year, as well as a space for strengthening social bonds among community members (Nurjannah, 2017). In this context, men assume the primary role as the main actors within the religious public sphere. Meanwhile, women play an equally important domestic role by preparing dishes to be brought to the mosque during the Suroan tradition. This division of gender roles reflects a traditional social pattern that functions effectively within the community and constitutes a balance of roles in the execution of religious rituals (Sandimen, 2025).

The collective prayer performed is an expression of gratitude to Allah SWT for the blessings granted throughout the year, including health, welfare, and security in Desa Sukajadi. Consequently, the community offers *sedekah* in the form of food brought from their homes as a token of thanks for the sustenance bestowed by Allah. Furthermore, the supplications made during the prayer seek to invoke Allah's mercy upon humanity, as reflected in the Prophet's hadith stating:

إِنَّ الصَّدَقَةَ لِتُطْفِئَ غَضَبَ الرَّبِّ، وَتَدْفَعُ مِيتَةَ السُّوءِ

“Indeed, charity (*sedekah*) averts the wrath of Allah and wards off a bad death (H.R. Sunan At-Tirmidzi, No. 664).

The prayers recited during the *kenduri* constitute an essential part of the ritual, reflecting the community's transcendental awareness of the concept of time in Islam (Badry et al., 2022). This tradition demonstrates how Islamic values such as self-reflection (*muhasabah*) and supplication for future blessings are enlivened through collective rituals that are not only spiritual but also social in nature. The Suroan tradition reflects the community's belief in living religious practices inspired by the Prophet's hadith, which are not merely read and understood textually but are embodied through meaningful local cultural practices. Moreover, the Suroan tradition highlights the social bonds among community members as a way to preserve local wisdom while maintaining the teachings of Islam through the Prophet's hadith.

Critical Analysis: The Role of the Suroan Tradition in Strengthening Social Cohesion, From a sociological perspective, the Suroan tradition operates as a cultural mechanism that reinforces both bonding social capital (ties within the community) and bridging social capital (ties across diverse groups). The shared religious experiences—such as fasting, almsgiving, and collective prayer—are not isolated acts of worship but function as repeated social rituals that embed trust, reciprocity, and mutual assistance among community members. These practices diminish social distances between socio-economic classes, ethnic

groups, and even between different generations, thereby creating a cohesive social fabric that resists fragmentation. This aligns with Putnam's theory of social capital, in which repeated communal engagement strengthens collective identity and cooperation.

Intergenerational Transmission of Values, The Suroan tradition also plays a crucial role in transmitting religious and cultural values across generations. Elder community members act as custodians of tradition, imparting not only the procedural aspects of the rituals but also the underlying theological and moral teachings drawn from the Prophet's hadith. This process creates an intergenerational dialogue in which young people internalize Islamic values through lived experiences rather than abstract instruction. Consequently, the Suroan tradition functions as a form of informal religious education that complements formal schooling, embedding religious observance within the local cultural landscape and ensuring the continuity of both faith and heritage.

Resilience Against Cultural Erosion, In the face of globalization and rapid socio-cultural change, traditions such as Suroan serve as anchors of communal resilience. By providing a recurring framework for spiritual reflection and mutual support, this tradition helps the community resist the erosion of local customs and the homogenizing effects of modernity. The combination of religious authenticity—validated by alignment with authentic hadiths—and cultural relevance ensures that the tradition remains meaningful to contemporary practitioners. As a result, the Suroan tradition not only preserves local wisdom but also adapts it to modern contexts, enabling the community to maintain its distinct identity while engaging with broader societal changes.

Conclusion

The Suroan tradition practiced by the community of Sukajadi village represents a cultural heritage that is not only understood as an annual religious ritual but also serves as a means to strengthen the spiritual relationship between humans and God. The ritual practices gradually merge with Islamic teachings

through collective prayers, *tahlil* recitations, *tahtim*, and concluding religious sermons. The community regards the transition of the Hijri year during the month of Muharram particularly on the nights of the 1st and 10th of Muharram as a collective spiritual space that fosters awareness of the importance of worship, self-reflection, and hope for a better life. In this context, the Suroan tradition acts as a bridge between Islamic values and local traditions, harmoniously integrated into the cultural expressions of the Javanese community.

Moreover, the Suroan tradition also holds a strong social function in fostering cohesion and solidarity among residents. The Suroan transition shapes the community as citizens who prioritize social values by reminding one another to express gratitude through bringing and exchanging food, as well as celebrating together in religious festivities. It creates a social interaction space that strengthens interpersonal relationships and builds a sense of mutual belonging within the community. Values of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), togetherness, and care are vividly manifested in the practice of the Suroan tradition, making it a form of local wisdom that plays a vital role in maintaining social harmony. Thus, the Suroan tradition not only preserves cultural and religious values but also sustainably strengthens the social and spiritual structure of the community.

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Author Contributions Statement

RPA contributed to the conceptualization of the research, the design of the study framework, and the collection of primary and secondary data through fieldwork and literature review. She also conducted the initial analysis and drafted the preliminary version of the manuscript. **MNS** contributed to refining the research design, validating and interpreting the data in relation to the hadith literature, and providing critical revisions to enhance the academic rigor of the paper. Both authors discussed the findings together, approved the final version of the manuscript, and agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

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