POKEN BANTE: A TRADITION OF THE MANDAILING COMMUNITY IN WELCOMING EID AL-FITR

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Abstract
The Poken Bante is a Mandailing community tradition in welcoming Eid al-Fitr. This tradition is carried out on the last day of Ramadan. This study aims to examine the activities of Mandailing people in the Poken Bante tradition, to understand the relevance of the Poken Bante tradition and Islamic teachings, and to analyze the meaning and value of the Poken Bante tradition in welcoming Eid al-Fitr. This tradition was studied using qualitative research with an ethnographic approach. The primary data was obtained through participant observation and in-depth interviews. Ethnographic notes are essential in primary data collection. Secondary data was obtained through articles, books, and archives. Data analysis in this research is ethnographic analysis by systematically examining the data obtained, the relationship between the data, and the overall relationship of the data. This research took place for one month, starting from the middle of Ramadan to Syawal in 1444 H (April - May 2023 M), located in Panyabungan District, Mandailing Natal Regency. This research found that the Poken Bante tradition is a meat market activity that arises on the last day of Ramadan due to the high demand for meat needs from the Mandailing community. The relevance of this tradition and Islam is reflected in the integration of Mandailing culture and Islamic teachings based on the Mandailing philosophy of Hombar do Adat dohot Ibadat. The meaning and value of the Poken Bante tradition are togetherness, unity, integrity, and helping.

Keywords: Poken Bante Tradition; Mandailing; Eid al-Fitr, Islam

INTRODUCTION
Eid al-Fitr is one of the most awaited moments for Muslims. After the series of Ramadan worship that has been carried out by Muslims, it is celebrated on the day of victory with various forms of celebration. The momentum of Eid al-Fitr is used as a form of victory against the lust of worldly life. The month of Ramadan, as a holy month, is required to leave the lust of the world and focus on good deeds. Humans who are able to practice this are considered as people who have won. Eid al-Fitr is called a day of victory because Muslims have carried out the pillars and conditions of fasting and conquered lust (Maharani 2020). Eid al-Fitr symbolizes the end of the month of Ramadan, which falls on Shawwal and is characterized by giving alms, gathering with family and friends, and celebrating the successes of Ramadan (Satt 2017). For Moroccans, Eid al-Fitr is considered the "Festival of Iftar," celebrated from the first day of Shawwal with various local traditions and wisdom (Chaachouay and Zidane 2022).

The celebration of Eid al-Fitr is welcomed
with joy by Muslims. Welcoming Eid al-Fitr is done with various customs and traditions by the community. Indonesia, as a pluralistic country with a variety of ethnic groups, cultures, regions, and so on, welcomes Eid al-Fitr with a variety of different welcoming cultures. Welcoming Eid al-Fitr is inseparable from the customs and traditions inherent in a community and region. Indonesia, a country with the largest Muslim population in the world and diverse cultural patterns of society, shows that culture and religion are closely related, especially at the moment of Eid al-Fitr (Rianti et al. 2018). Various Indonesian local wisdoms have been incorporated into several holiday moments and Islamic teaching (Wardana, Setiarto, and Wigati 2023).

The welcoming of Eid al-Fitr can be seen from the traditions of various ethnic groups and regions such as the Serawai Ethnic in Bengkulu has a tradition of welcoming Eid al-Fitr called Bakar Gunung Api, which is carried out on the night of takbiran with the purpose of the ritual is as a form of community gratitude to the creator and sending prayers to the spirits of families who have died (Chak, 2023). Then, the tradition of the Meriam Karbit Festival in Pontianak in order to welcome Eid al-Fitr with the meaning of courage and foster the spirit of togetherness (Alfiansyah, 2023). Then there is the tradition of Daul music performed in Madura in order to welcome Eid al-Fitr, which is one of the traditional music traditions that serves to celebrate the last day of Ramadan fasting (Ningrum, 2023). In addition, the Mangalomang tradition for the Batak tribe is held one day before Eid al-Fitr (Wahyudi et al. 2017).

Mandailing is the name of an ethnic group and region in North Sumatra. The Mandailing tribe is spread across the Southern Tapanuli region, with the center of ethnicity in Mandailing Natal Regency. Aspects of life and life of Mandailing people are governed by religion, culture, customs, and traditions (Amal and Siregar 2023). The life of Mandailing people cannot be separated from customs and religion. Businesses and religion must align with each other, noting that if traditions violate religious rules, faith must be prioritized. This concept is contained in the Mandailing philosophy of Hombar do Adat dot Ibadat. Mandailing people, especially in Mandailing Natal Regency, mainly adhere to Islam. Islamic teachings and sharia must be prioritized when clashing with Mandailing customs. The conception of nature and the surrounding environment becomes a teacher who has a significant influence on the life of Mandailing people so that the philosophy of Hombar do adat dot ibadat emerges with the aim of custom and religion in line with this conception (Effendi, Nugraha, and Aisyah 2018).

Implementing Mandailing customs and culture has been combined with Islamic teachings and vice versa. The arrival of Islam to Mandailing has had a significant impact on the lives of Mandailing people and has changed the characteristics of the old beliefs of the community (Saragi 2015). The combination of custom, culture, and Islam is reflected in a series of traditional processions and Islamic teachings in the life of the Mandailing people. Significant adaptation demands in addressing socio-cultural changes and movements (Batubara 2023). One of the moments in the Islamic series is seen in welcoming Eid al-Fitr, called the Poken Bante tradition. Poken Bante is a Mandailing community tradition in welcoming Eid al-Fitr, held on the last day of Ramadan.

Poken Bante comes from two syllables with the meaning of the word poken is market, while bante is slaughter. In the context of bante in Mandailing terms, it does not only focus on slaughter, but the word bante means juhut or, in Indonesian, called meat. Poken Bante is a meat market that appears on the last day of Ramadan.
fasting. This meat market is only temporary and is only intended for the moment of welcoming Eid al-Fitr.

The *Poken Bante* tradition has become an obligation for Mandailing people in welcoming the day of victory. Stalls of meat traders will decorate every side of the market in the Mandailing Natal region. The types of animal meat sold are beef and buffalo. The meat sold by traders is hung based on certain pieces. Turning meat during *Poken Bante* makes it durable, and buyers can see the beef quality sold (Lubis 2019).

One of the unique features of *Poken Bante* is the meat stall. The butcher's stall consists of only four bamboos held up at a seventy-five-degree angle, and the top ends of the four bamboos tied together. Then, on top of it, a bamboo support is made to place coconut leaves. The coconut leaves served as a roof to protect the meat vendors from the sun. Some add plastic sheeting as an additional protection from the sun and protection when it rains. The relationship between Islam and the archipelago culture has formed local Islamic traditions by making religious identity a part of the richness of religion and ritual in Indonesia (Siregar 2020).

According to the Mandailing community, the *Poken Bante* tradition originated from the difficulty of the community in buying beef or buffalo because the price is high, so people can only afford beef or buffalo once a year even though the origin of this tradition cannot be ascertained in concrete history. However, this tradition emerged after Islamization in the Mandailing region so that the local culture could integrate with Islamic teachings. Socio-economically, the Mandailing region is directly adjacent to West Sumatra Province, which is predominantly Muslim, so it becomes a geological pathway for the entry of Islam into Mandailing, and currently, the majority of Mandailing people are Muslim (Nasution, Ikbal, and Pohan 2021).

*Poken Bante* occurs because of the need to cook delicious food to welcome Eid al-Fitr Mandailing people. Beef or buffalo meat is considered the main ingredient of high-value dishes. This is based on Mandailing culture, which places animal meat, especially buffalo, in the highest position of traditional animals. In the implementation of *Horja*, a buffalo becomes a traditional animal with the most elevated position because *Horja* with the foundation of slaughtering buffalo is called *Horja Godang* so that it can invite all institutions and traditional elements in society from various regions (Batubara, Atem, and Anam 2023). In addition, the economy is one of the factors causing the emergence of the *Poken Bante* tradition because people cannot afford beef.

This tradition needs to be studied more deeply because there has been no research with the main focus on the relationship between the *Poken Bante* tradition and welcoming Eid al-Fitr. To increase knowledge and cultural insight in Indonesia, it is important to study a tradition that has yet to be reviewed much by others. Based on this background, this study aims to examine this tradition in the life of Mandailing people, analyze the relevance of the *Poken Bante* tradition and Islamic teachings, and understand the meaning and value of this tradition. This research will be analyzed using the theory of symbolic interactionism. Symbolic interactionism views that interaction as carried out through symbols, starting with oneself and others. Researchers use this theory to understand existing meanings and how meaning functions as an important container in the case under study (Handberg et al. 2015). Symbolic interactionism helps how this tradition interprets people's interactions, symbols, and events with each other and displays and explains their actions. Symbolic interactionism states that humans always interpret and define their every move, and symbolic interactionism considers
humans active agents in interpreting meaning (Gallant 2014).

**Literature Review**

The relationship between culture and religion has been integrated into the socio-cultural life in Indonesia. Culture can merge into the activities of implementing religious teachings and religion, which can blend with community culture. Culture and religion are an inseparable unity that can develop and give birth to various symbols and behavior patterns in specific communities (Seramasara 2019). Religion, beliefs, and culture can be potential sources of moral purpose and individual strengths capable of encouraging adherence to certain practices (Hordern 2016). The impression of culture and religion is always assumed to be negative, but culture and religion have a mutually beneficial power (Abdulla 2018). The intense strengthening of Islam influences community traditions (Solihah 2019). The *Poken Bante* tradition in welcoming Eid al-Fitr witnesses the relationship between culture and religion. Regarding research on this tradition, a specific and in-depth study still needs to be conducted. In addition, research that examines the *Poken Bante* practice is still general with limited studies.

There needs to be more research on *Poken Bante*, although there are some other research focus on this topic. The first research (Lubis 2019) discusses the ethnographic study of the Mandailing community in welcoming the month of Fasting and Eid. According to the study results, a *Poken Bante* tradition is a form of gratitude for implementing Ramadan worship and an expression of a sense of togetherness for gathering families and relatives who go home from overseas. The second research (Tanjung, Lubis, and Siregar 2022) discusses the Hajj season in Mandailing Natal: Tradition and Social Status. The findings of this study are that during the Hajj season there are several traditions, one of which is the *marbante* tradition. The *marbante* practice is almost similar to this tradition rule, except that the *marbante* tradition is a tradition of slaughtering animals (cows or buffaloes) which are then distributed to the community. The value contained in *marbante* is the value of togetherness and harmony.

The *Poken Bante* tradition is similar to the *meugang* practice in Aceh. The *meugang* rule is about slaughtering animals, cooking meat, and eating meat on Islamic holidays. Implementing the *meugang* tradition is more dominant during the welcoming of the month of Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr. There have been many studies on the *meugang* tradition. First, research (Desfandi et al. 2021) discusses the *meugang* and *kenduri Nuzululquran* tradition in Aceh community in the Covid-19 pandemic period. The research findings state that the tradition of *meugang* and *kenduri Nuzululquran* still exists because the Acehnese people believe that carrying out religious orders and the *meugang* tradition can keep away from danger and disaster. Second research (Putri and Amri 2018) on acculturation in the *meugang* tradition. The research findings show that the *meugang* tradition contains social, cultural, and religious values in welcoming the Muslim holidays because of sharing and helping each other. Third research (Idris and Amalia 2022) on Islamic shari’a and traditions in Aceh Darussalam. The research findings convey that religion and culture are integrated in patterns of behavior, outlook on life, and social and cultural systems so that they are integrated into the daily lives of the Acehnese people. This can be seen from the implementation of the *meugang* tradition, which is closely related to Islamic teachings and is a form of practicing the verses of the Qur’an and the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, which Muslims in Aceh carry out in the form of inherent culture and tradition.

The *Poken Bante* tradition has become
synonymous with the celebration of Muslim holidays. It proves that this tradition is carried out in welcoming the month of Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr. In its context, the *Poken Bante* tradition was originally intended to welcome Eid al-Fitr, but this tradition has spread to other Muslim holidays, such as during Ramadan and the Hajj season.

The *Poken Bante* tradition is a symbol of joy for the arrival of the month of Ramadan, and a form of gratitude for the worship carried out during the month of Ramadan until reaching the day of Victory. This tradition is also an expression of togetherness for the gathering of family and relatives at the moment of Eid al-Fitr. The moment of Eid al-Fitr is the right time for migrants to go home to their hometowns. The homecoming tradition in Indonesia has become an important ritual for migrants ahead of Eid al-Fitr to release homesickness for family and hometown (Japarudin 2023). The homecoming tradition contains spiritual, psychological, and social values as a form of cultural heteronomy (Lubis, Fachrizal, and Lubis 2017). The gathering of families on Eid al-Fitr is a moment to cook delicious food. Cultural and religious relations can influence food consumption, and food is an important part of human life and relationships (Shipman and Durmus 2017).

Findings in previous studies have similarities and differences with the author's research. Concretely, specific research on the *Poken Bante* tradition has not been maximally carried out and only describes the general substance. This tradition was not the main focus of previous research. The author's research has similarities in the context of the relationship between the *Poken Bante* tradition and Muslim holidays. Meanwhile, the difference between this research and previous research is that the main focus of this research study is the tradition in welcoming Eid al-Fitr, which includes Mandailing community activities in the *Poken Bante* tradition. The relevance of the tradition between *Poken Bante* and welcoming Eid al-Fitr, as well as the meaning and value of this tradition. Thus, this tradition can be understood by future generations as part of Indonesia's cultural wealth.

**Conceptual Framework**

This research is motivated by the lack of articles on the *Poken Bante* tradition, while this tradition is routinely carried out yearly. The irony is that the *Poken Bante* tradition has begun to penetrate other Muslim holidays. For example, this activity has been carried out during the Hajj season in Mandailing Natal as the *marbante* tradition (Tanjug et al. 2022).

The integration of culture and religion is intertwined in the frame of harmony of the diversity of Indonesian society. The relationship between culture and religion has been embedded in ethnic and religious rituals, so the combination of culture and religion will be seen in various cultural and religious traditions. Religious rituals are carried out to maintain tradition and culture in the context of plurality as part of the taste of *Islam Nusantara* (Ilahi 2017). The integration of culture and religion is reflected in the *Poken Bante* tradition, which symbolizes the harmony of diversity in Indonesia. Islam is a universal and persuasive religion that can integrate its identity with local culture so that Islam can be readily accepted by the community (Supriatna 2019).

The *Poken Bante* tradition to welcome Eid al-Fitr explains specifically the relationship between culture and religion in activities, behavior patterns, and the meaning of traditions in the lives of Mandailing people. This tradition is a form of local wisdom from culture and religion in Mandailing people's lives. This can be seen from the community's activities carrying out this tradition in welcoming Eid al-Fitr.
This research uses the theory of symbolic interactionism. The theory of symbolic interactionism was initiated by George Herbert Mead as outlined in his book entitled Mind, Self, and Society. Symbolic interactionism theory is a perspective, a point of view, and a way of guiding people to see the reality of social life (Syawaluddin 2017). This concept is used to explain the various actions of actors in social interactions (Sonnhoff and Selter 2021). Symbolic interactionism is present in understanding humans from a social perspective because humans cannot be understood independently but can be understood through human relations with other humans in the form of meaningful interactions (Gordillo-Rodriguez, Pineda, and Gómez 2023).

Symbolic interactionism theory seeks to reveal the meaning and symbols of human action (Sukidin and Suharso 2015). Mead revealed that the basic idea of symbolic interactionism theory is a symbol because this symbol is what distinguishes humans from animals (Razak 2017). The symbolic interactionism perspective emphasizes the way society is created and maintained through the process of face-to-face, repeated, and meaningful social interactions between individuals (Carter and Fuller 2016). The foundation of this theory is the symbols and meanings carried out by actors in their community environment activities (Husin, Rahman, and Mukhtar 2021).

In general, there are several figures who joined the theory of symbolic interactionism, including George H. Mead, Charles H. Cooley, William I. Thomas, Herbert Blumer, and Erving Goffman. The popularity of symbolic interactionism theory is inseparable from the role of Herbert Blumer as a key figure in this theory. The theory of symbolic interactionism moves to reveal the meaning of reality from patterns of human behavior in interaction. Interactional shows character traits displayed in concrete sequences of behaviour toward others (Smith 2021). Symbolic interactionism theory is used as a pragmatic method in viewing social interactions that are formed through individual behavior and interpreted symbolically in social life actions (Alver and Caglar 2015).

Mead's theory of symbolic interactionism emphasizes social life as the top priority in his analysis because the whole of social life initiates the individual mind logically or temporarily (Razak 2017). Social groups are born first and result in the development of the mental state of self-awareness (Ritzer and Goodman 2016). Mead’s framework in this theory is that humans must be studied from the past, present, and future. Symbolic interactionism seeks to reveal how meaning is formed and how meaning is represented in social interactions, then understand the meaning through its interpretation (Syamsudin et al. 2022). Symbolic interactionism believes that space has the potential to shape agency and that space needs to be interpreted in order to understand human behavior and society (Cabanas 2020).

George Herbert Mead proposed the basic concepts of symbolic interactionism theory, namely action, gesture, symbol, mind, self, I and Me, and society (Ritzer and Goodman 2016). Mead assumed that gestures become the basic mechanism for performing social actions in a more general social process (Sukidin and Suharso 2015). Mead saw that the mind is not a sign but a social process of action and reaction (Razak 2017). Meanwhile, the body is the self, and the self can develop if the mind is able to develop (Ihsanudin 2019). Mead’s most important contribution to society is his thoughts on mind and self (Ritzer and Goodman 2016).

The theory of symbolic interactionism was refined and popularized by Herbert Blumer. According to Blumer, the theory of symbolic interactionism has three premises, namely:
humans act based on the meaning of things that exist for them, meaning comes from the social interaction of human culture and society, and meaning will continue through the interpretation process (Desti, Wahyunig, and Elsera 2022). Symbolic interactionism figures try to consider the number of basic principles of this theory, namely: (1) humans have the ability to think; (2) the ability to think is born from the process of social interaction; (3) through social interaction, humans learn meanings and symbols; (4) meanings and symbols make humans perform actions and interactions; (4) humans can change meanings and symbols in actions and interactions through interpretation: (5) humans can make modifications and changes; (6) patterns of action and interaction are mutually integrated and form society (Ritzer and Goodman 2016).

Symbolic interactionism theory is a cultural research model with the aim of revealing the reality of human behavior with its basic philosophy of phenomenology (Endraswara 2017). This theory examines culture through human behavior that emphasizes socio-cultural interactions in society. Socio-cultural interactions will show symbols that contain meaning. Symbols can take the form of objects, events, sounds, writings, dances, paintings, architecture, and music that are given meaning by humans (Haris and Amalia 2018). Symbolic interactionism is based on ideas about the self and its relationship with society so that it can be broadly described, and the themes, processes and framework of the theory explained in detail (Dalmeda and Elian 2016). Symbolic interactionism reveals that meaning comes from a personal role that is dynamic and subject to change in a social context due to inconsistency (Chen, Davison, and Ou 2020).

This theory can assist researchers in conducting an ethnographic study of the Poken Bante tradition in welcoming Eid al-Fitr. Ethnographic research on this tradition seeks to understand the socio-cultural interactions of the community in carrying out the tradition with in-depth study and enjoying all the processes in the tradition. Symbols are important to observe so that their meaning can be known in detail.

The Poken Bante tradition is an integration of culture and religion. The integration of the two needs to be expressed in the context of symbols and meanings through socio-cultural interactions. The study of this tradition using the symbolic interactionism theory approach will consider the basic principles of this theory through thinking ability, social interaction, meaning and symbols, action, interpretation, modification, and integration. The reality of human behavior in this tradition is a reference in symbolic interactionism theory so that it can show the basic principles of this theory.

RESEARCH METHOD

The Poken Bante tradition of welcoming Eid al-Fitr was chosen as a research topic based on the following reasons. First, the Poken Bante tradition is a topic that has not been widely studied in previous research, so articles about this tradition are still minimal, and the study needs to be more in-depth. Second, the Poken Bante tradition emphasizes the relevance of culture and religion, so it is necessary to understand this relationship further. Third, this topic will describe the symbols, meanings, and values of the Poken Bante tradition.

The research activity of the Poken Bante tradition in welcoming Eid al-Fitr uses qualitative research with an ethnographic approach. Ethnography is a variety of techniques from qualitative research that deeply examines a society's culture (Windiani and Rahmawati 2016). Ethnography aims to provide a picture of human life lived and experienced by human groups in a particular place and at a specific time.
Ethnographic research in studying this tradition seeks to interpret the culture and behaviour patterns of the community as a form of empirical field knowledge practice.

Research on the *Poken Bante* tradition uses data collection through primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through participant observation and in-depth interviews. Participant observation was conducted to see a series of this tradition activities, and researchers immersed themselves in it. Meanwhile, in-depth interviews were conducted to obtain the data and information needed for this research. The researcher can make ethnographic notes of the various events that occur. Ethnographic records consist of field notes, recordings, pictures, artefacts, and so on, which document the entire series under study (Hamzah 2020). The informants used in this research are traditional leaders, traders, and Mandailing people. Furthermore, secondary data were obtained through articles, books, archives, and online media. These data were reviewed and mapped to get accurate data.

Data analysis in this research is ethnographic analysis by systematically examining the data obtained, the relationship between the data, and the overall relationship of the data. Data analysis is carried out after all data are collected. The analyzed data is then written in a language style that is easy to understand. This research lasted one month, starting from the middle of Ramadan to Syawal in 1444 H (April - May 2023 M), located in Panyabungan District, Mandailing Natal Regency.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

*Poken Bante Tradition in Mandailing*

Mandailing is an ethnicity and region where most of the population is Muslim. This is located in the southern part of North Sumatra Province and borders directly with West Sumatra Province. Mandailing people's lives is woven into the nuances of culture and religion. Mandailing culture and Islam complement each other with real integration and are contained in the Mandailing philosophy. *"Hombar do Adat dohot Ibadat"* as a Mandailing philosophy is a reference for cultural and religious relations for Mandailing people. This philosophy emphasizes the importance of culture and religion in the life of Mandailing people. Still, this philosophy also emphasizes that if a culture violates religious rules, religion takes precedence. This is inseparable from the religiosity of Mandailing people and places religion as the main foundation.

The relationship between culture and religion is reflected in the *Poken Bante* tradition. This tradition is a tradition before Eid al-Fitr. This tradition is carried out on the last day of Ramadan or one day before Eid al-Fitr. This tradition is an impromptu meat market that appears on the last day of Ramadan because of the community's habit of consuming meat on Eid al-Fitr. The phenomenon of this tradition has been going on for quite a long time but has not been identified since this phenomenon began to be implemented. Based on the information obtained, this tradition emerged based on economic difficulties in the previous period, resulting in the inability to buy beef or buffalo so that people only consume at certain moments, one of which is during Eid al-Fitr.

People's habit of consuming meat to welcome Eid al-Fitr is the reason for the proliferation of meat vendors on the last day of Ramadan. This activity has been ongoing for a long time and has become a hereditary tradition. The *Poken Bante* tradition is a unique activity in preparation for Eid al-Fitr. Mandailing Natal as a region with a majority Muslim population has been able to combine culture and religion. Beef is the main consumption in various activities in culture and religion.
The Poken Bante tradition lasts only one day, from morning until night. The meat traders are impromptu traders whose daily activities are not in the beef or buffalo trade. The impromptu meat traders start preparing their stalls or selling places at night. This stall is only made of bamboo and coconut leaves. Four bamboo poles are erected at a seventy-five-degree angle with the top ends joined together and tied with rope. After that, the top is made a support to put coconut leaves. The coconut leaves serve as a roof to protect the vendors from the sun. Some traders add tarp as a roof to get around the sun's heat and when it rains. Many meat traders set up stalls in the Panyabungan market. The corners of the market and on the side of the road become the area for these meat traders to set up booths.

The traders start slaughtering the cattle or buffalo at night so that the meat sold in the morning is still fresh. Based on information, the majority of meat traded is beef. Beef is the most demanded and preferred meat by Mandailing people. The reason beef is more desirable to Mandailing people is because the texture of beef is more palatable than buffalo meat. In addition, beef tends to be thinner, tender, and soft, so when cooked, beef cooks faster.

The Poken Bante tradition is already in full swing at dawn. The market is already crowded with people hunting for fresh meat with a wide selection of cow organs. People start visiting the call around 4 a.m. to buy meat. According to one informant, the reason for buying meat at dawn is that only a few people visit the market at dawn, and the meat is fresh. Another informant mentioned that the reason for buying meat at sahr time is so that the heart can be processed and cooked more quickly. In addition, informants mentioned that Sahur is an excellent time to buy meat because they can choose the cattle organs they want.

The Poken Bante tradition in the Panyabungan area is centered on two places, namely the Panyabungan New Market and the Panyabungan Old Market. These two places are important arenas for the Mandailing community to buy beef. People from various villages and sub-districts in Mandailing Natal come to buy meat in these two places. This tradition that lasts from morning to night fills the market with people hunting for meat. It can be seen from the roads and parking areas filled with vehicles and the community's mobility around the market. Traffic jams are expected during the implementation of this tradition, with people jostling each other to find and buy their needs.

Based on the information obtained, meat (Juhut) and cow bones are the most commonly purchased organs by the community. The price of beef organs varies, and the time of day affects the price of beef organs. In the morning, the average price of beef is around 180.000/kg, while beef bones cost around 140.000/kg. These prices will change in the afternoon, evening and night. Based on observations, the price of beef at noon is around 170.000/kg, and beef bones are around 130.000/kg. Meanwhile, in the afternoon, the price of beef began to drop dramatically to around 130.000 – 150.000/kg, and bones were around 100.000/kg. Furthermore, beef in the evening is around 100.000 – 120.000/kg, while bones are around 70.000 – 90.000/kg. According to traders, the lower beef and bone prices are so that all Mandailing people can buy meat and cook delicious and delicious dishes on Eid al-Fitr. Beef and bones are the two organs most in demand by the community. In addition, the parts of the cow organs that are usually processed are Tabo-Tabo (fat inside the cow's stomach) and Ulingkuling (beef skin) (O. Nasution, personal communication, April 21, 2023).
Meat is the main ingredient in preparing dishes and cuisines for Eid al-Fitr. Meat has become an obligation in the menu of dishes in welcoming Eid al-Fitr. According to informants, beef is always the main ingredient, but if the economy is limited, people will switch to chicken (A. Rangkuti, personal communication, April 21, 2023). People try to cook delicious food so that there is a specialty of food in welcoming Eid al-Fitr. The informant said cooking Bante side dishes is more mandatory than Mangalomang and Mangalame. Mangalomang and Mangalame are a tradition of the Mandailing community in welcoming Eid al-Fitr (A. Rangkuti, personal communication, April 21, 2023). Informants also mentioned that families facing economic constraints will buy Tabo-Tabo (belly fat) only because it is relatively cheap. Some mentioned that rather than not Margule Bante (not cooking meat) due to economic inability, Tabo-Tabo is the target to be purchased and processed in welcoming Eid al-Fitr (Hasanuddin, personal communication, April 21, 2023).

The Poken Bante tradition will be seen until the evening. The traders will try to sell out their meat by lowering the price. Even some traders who sell meat in the village will come to Panyabungan Market to sell meat that is not sold in the village area. Traders will only leave once the meat is sold out. During the Eid al-Fitr Takbiran, it was observed that traders were still busy selling meat to the community, and the community was still enthusiastically hunting for meat. According to informants, they deliberately come back to buy meat at night even though they have already bought meat in the morning because the price of meat at night is relatively low, and the meat purchased will be used as stock and stored in the refrigerator (M. Lubis, personal communication, April 21, 2023).

Mandailing people process and cook meat with a variety of dishes. Some make curry, Rendang, soup, Dendeng, and others. One of the informants said meat is usually processed into curry (Rule Bante), Rendang, and soup. Beef (Juhut), Tabo-Tabo, and Ulingkuling become organs in Gule Bante, Rendang, and Dendeng. Meanwhile, beef bones are usually processed into soup. Informants mentioned that Gule Bante, Rendang, and soup are cooked directly on the day of Poken Bante so the menu will vary.

Rendang and Dendeng are traditional culinary delights of the Minangkabau people from West Sumatra made from beef (Nurmufida et al. 2017). However, Mandailing people are also accustomed to processing beef into Rendang and Dendeng as dishes. This is inseparable from the cultural relations between Mandailing and Minangkabau. This relationship exists because the two regions of these tribes are side by side. The Mandailing Natal region is in the south of North Sumatra Province and directly borders West Sumatra Province, so several cultures are the same and interconnected. The Mandailing people's sense of taste differs greatly from the Minangkabau people's. The majority of Mandailing people really like the cuisine of the Minangkabau people. This is why Mandailing people usually cook Rendang and Dendeng.

The aroma of Poken Bante will be smelled in every corner of the community's house. This aroma comes from meat dishes cooked by Mandailing people in their homes. This aroma is felt in the sense of smell so that the aroma of Gule Bante can envelop the Mandailing region. Mandailing people call this aroma the aroma of Gule Bante because this aroma is only clearly smelled during the Poken Bante tradition when the whole community cooks meat. This aroma becomes its characteristic in this tradition that is not found in other Mandailing traditions.

The Poken Bante tradition of welcoming Eid al-Fitr is important for Mandailing people
because they can gather with relatives. Eid al-Fitr is an essential moment for migrants to return to their hometowns to conduct friendship and strengthen kinship. *Mudik* has become a tradition in Indonesia, carried out on Eid al-Fitr (Kale et al. 2023). *Mudik* has become an annual tradition in Indonesia during Eid al-Fitr, where people return to their hometowns or migrate from one region to another (Giwangkancana et al. 2023). Through this moment, the community, especially those who live in the village, will try to welcome and prepare all the needs in serving families who go home from overseas. *Gule Bante* is a dish of togetherness with migrants who go home to their hometowns during Eid al-Fitr.

The development of the times has made the *Poken Bante* tradition not only carried out at the moment of welcoming Eid al-Fitr. Informants revealed that the *Poken Bante* tradition has begun to appear at the moment of other Islamic holidays (D. Nasution, personal communication, April 21, 2023). One of the moments when the *Poken Bante* tradition began to be carried out was during the welcoming of the month of Ramadan. In addition, the *Poken Bante* tradition is also seen during the Hajj season. This is by research from (Tanjung et al. 2022) entitled Hajj Season in Mandailing: Tradition and social status. The emergence of traditions at other moments proves that socio-cultural changes occur in society following the demands of the times.

Mandailing people carry out various traditions of welcoming Eid al-Fitr. In addition to the *Poken Bante* tradition, *Mangalomang* and *Mangalame* traditions are also carried out on the last day of Ramadan. The *Poken Bante* tradition is considered as an obligation in welcoming Eid al-Fitr. The fact is that almost all Mandailing families and communities buy and cook meat at that moment. Unlike *Mangalomang* and *Mangalame*, some people only carry out these two traditions. *Mangalomang* is a term in Mandailing language which means making *lemang*. *Mangalame* is an activity carried out by families or groups to make *dodol*. *Alame* is a typical Mandailing *dodol*. *Mangalomang* activities are still carried out by several families and groups in Mandailing. At the same time, *Mangalame* has begun to be abandoned because its manufacture requires a long time and extra energy. *Mangalame* is cooked for almost one day (from morning to evening). When it is cooked, alame must be stirred continuously without stopping, so it requires many people and drains energy.

The *Poken Bante* tradition is well known in Indonesia, especially in the North Sumatra region. Various television media, newspapers, social media, and so on have covered this activity. This can be seen from secondary data obtained from internet media. The phenomenon of *Poken Bante* has been a long-standing custom and is still ongoing in the moment of welcoming Eid al-Fitr. This tradition has shown the relationship between culture and religion in the lives of Mandailing people.

Mandailing people view the *Poken Bante* tradition as a sacred activity in welcoming Eid al-Fitr. Informants said that the *Poken Bante* tradition is a form of gratitude for the blessings of the month of Ramadan, appreciation for being able to carry out the obligatory and *sunnah* worship of Ramadan, a form of victory in restraining worldly desires, and an expression of happiness for being able to gather with extended family who partly live overseas (Hasanuddin, personal communication, April 21, 2023).

**Relevance of *Poken Bante* Tradition and Islamic Teachings**

The relationship between Mandailing culture and Islamic teachings has been embedded in the lives of Mandailing people and influences each other. The relationship between Mandailing
culture and Islam, as stated in the Mandailing *Hombar do Adat dohot Ibadat* philosophy, is a reference to be implemented in the lives of Mandailing people. Through this philosophy, Islamic teachings become the central element in the wheels of Mandailing people’s lives.

The implementation of the Mandailing philosophy can be seen in the *Poken Bante* tradition in welcoming Eid al-Fitr. This tradition is a realization of Mandailing culture. This tradition has been combined with Islamic teachings to make the *Poken Bante* tradition more identical to the tradition of welcoming Eid al-Fitr. Some people even mention the *Poken Bante* tradition as an Islamic tradition in the Mandailing Natal region. Based on the symbolic interactionism theory, the relationship between the *Poken Bante* tradition and Islamic teachings is born from a process of social interaction that is interpreted through the ability to think. The ability to believe in combining culture and religion through meaning and symbolization so that it is shown in an arena of social action. Social action in the relationship between this tradition and Islamic teachings presents meaning and symbols that can be interpreted. The community can modify this tradition as a place to welcome Eid al-Fitr through action patterns as a form of Mandailing community integration.

The relevance of the *Poken Bante* tradition and Islam is reflected in several activities that are integrated. This tradition symbolizes the month of Ramadan will soon end and the day of victory will arrive. In implementing this tradition, beef will be hung using ropes or wires to keep the meat durable and fresh. The symbolic interactionism approach in the *Poken Bante* tradition interprets the socio-cultural interaction of the Mandailing community, which shows symbols in the form of objects, events, sounds, and so on. This symbol has a meaning that is contained as a sign of victory day. This tradition activities show human activities in the form of social interactions that birth to symbols and meanings.

Eid al-Fitr, a day of victory, is welcomed by Mandailing people with great joy, reflected through the *Poken Bante* tradition. According to informants, the cow organ as the main ingredient will be cooked with a variety of processed foods that will be served when breaking the fast on the last day of Ramadan fasting and also after the Eid prayer because Eid al-Fitr is perfect time for families to gather and forgive each other and release longing (D. Nasution, personal communication, April 21, 2023). Symbolic interactionism in approaching the *Poken Bante* tradition plays an important role in cultural studies, focusing on three points. First, this tradition succeeds in producing cultural meaning. The production of cultural meaning can be seen in a series of *Poken Bante* tradition activities that occur in the lives of Mandailing people. Second, this tradition produces meanings that can be analyzed textually. Textual analysis of the meanings contained in this tradition has been explained as an important part of this approach. Third, this tradition becomes a study of culture and experience carried out through its activities. This tradition is an interesting cultural study in the sciences of culture and religion.

The Meaning and Value of *Poken Bante* Tradition in Welcoming Eid al-Fitr Day

*Poken Bante*, as a tradition in welcoming Eid al-Fitr, has meaning and value contained in the implementation process. The series of this traditions can be reviewed for meaning and value through the perspective of Mandailing culture and Islamic teachings. The study of the importance and value of the *Poken Bante* tradition in welcoming Eid al-Fitr will elaborate on various community activities, traders, behaviour patterns, symbols, and so on so that the meaning and value can be revealed.

The *Poken Bante* tradition is a meat market
activity that emerges on the last day of Ramadan and is temporary. The emergence of this meat market aims to accommodate the need for meat needed by the community to prepare food in welcoming Eid al-Fitr. The demand for beef in Mandailing will increase, so many meat traders are required to accommodate the community’s needs. The increase in impromptu traders is a bridge to improve the economy of the traders. In connection with the symbolic interactionism theory, this tradition was born from social interaction as a form of human and community thinking. This tradition expresses the reality of human behaviour in a community group.

The *Poken Bante* tradition, as a form of social interaction and action, presents various symbols with specific meanings in its activities.

The *Poken Bante* tradition is a means of friendship between the community because of the contact and communication between the community and traders. Meat sold during this tradition is hung using ropes or wires. The purpose of turning the meat is to maintain the condition and quality of the meat so that it remains durable and fresh. In addition, the purpose of hanging the meat is that buyers can see the quality of the meat being sold. Meat that is not hung may arouse buyer suspicion because currently, there is a lot of circulation of poor quality meat such as *Daging Gelonggongan*. *Daging Gelonggongan* is meat injected with water to increase its weight. It is a fraudulent practice by traders to increase the weight of cattle. It is impossible to hang the meat because the water will fall out if it is turned. The meaning and value in this show that traders have an honest nature for a sense of togetherness in the frame of Mandailing culture and Islamic teachings. In addition, through this symbol, the meaning of solidarity and kinship is realized as a form of community integrity in Mandailing. The symbolic interactionism approach in viewing the interaction process and social actions has given birth to a symbol carried out in this tradition. This symbol can interpret various meanings as a result of human behaviour in community groups.

The meat and organs of the cow are processed into various dishes. These dishes are intended for breaking the fast on the last day of Ramadan and for Eid al-Fitr. The whole family and relatives will eat it, especially on the first day of Eid. *Mangan Fajar* is a term for eating together before carrying out Eid prayers by all families in Mandailing. Before *Mangan Fajar* is carried out, the whole family apologizes to each other and then continues *Mangan Fajar*. *Mangan Fajar* is held after morning prayers until before leaving for Eid prayers. This moment becomes an arena for gathering all families and relatives who migrate to various regions. Symbolic interactionism theory views the cooking menu and *Mangan Fajar* moment as symbols in Mandailing society. This symbol contains the meaning and value of brotherhood, togetherness, and love.

*Mangan Fajar* and *Gule Bante* are essential symbols in this activity. This symbol is born from a social interaction born from the ability to think. This social interaction has shown a symbol and meaning in the *Poken Bante* tradition. The purpose contained in *Mangan Fajar* is a sense of kinship, love, and a sense of belonging. At the same time, the meaning of *gule bante* is to strengthen *Ukhuwah Islamiyah* with the value of maintaining the integrity between families in the bond of descent.

Based on the basic principles of symbolic interactionism theory, there is a phenomenon of community behaviour, namely the *Poken Bante* tradition through the ability to think. This tradition accommodates the social interaction of Mandailing people. This social interaction occurs due to social contact and communication between fellow communities and traders. Social interaction in this tradition educates the community to understand the meaning and symbols that arise
in implementing the *Poken Bante* tradition. Each symbol contained in this tradition has specific meaning. For example, *Gule Bante* is a symbol in this tradition, which means togetherness, unity and solidarity. *Gule Bante* is a symbol in the form of food. This tradition displays various actions by Mandailing people integrated into Mandailing culture and Islamic teachings.

**CONCLUSION**

The community carries out various traditions in welcoming Eid al-Fitr in Indonesia. The *Poken Bante* tradition is carried out by the Mandailing community in receiving Eid al-Fitr. This tradition is a meat market activity held on the last day of Ramadan. At this moment, there will be many stalls of meat traders scattered in the corners and roadside of the Panyabungan Market. These meat sellers are impromptu traders who appear due to the high demand for meat that day. The stalls are only made of bamboo, coconut leaves, and tarpaulin. This tradition starts in the morning (at dawn) until the evening. The meat sold by traders is mostly beef. Cows are slaughtered at night (the last night of Ramadan), and during the *Poken Bante* tradition, the heart is hung to keep the meat durable and fresh. Almost the entire community will flock to the market to buy meat because beef, as the main ingredient of *Gule Bante*, has become an obligation for the district to be able to cook *Gule Bante*. People who cannot afford beef will buy chicken or Tabo-Tabo (fat inside the cow's stomach) because the price is relatively low.

The relevance of the *Poken Bante* tradition to Islamic teachings is reflected in the Mandailing philosophy of *Hombar do Adat dohot Ibadat*, which is a reference for Mandailing people in social life. Mandailing philosophy means that customs and religion must be in line and integrated. If there are customs that violate religious rules, faith must be prioritized. This philosophy places Islamic teachings as the primary foundation in implementing customs and religion in Mandailing society. This tradition is often conveyed as inherent in Islam, while this tradition is an action and a series of Mandailing community behaviors. This is due to the strong relationship between Mandailing culture and Islamic teachings. The meanings and values of this tradition are togetherness, unity, integrity, solidarity, helping, and love.

Research on the *Poken Bante* tradition portrays the relationship between culture and Islam in people's lives. Culture and religion can walk together in social interactions that may give birth to a social action containing symbols and meanings. The relationship between culture and religion becomes a strength in building social integration. Research on this tradition has limitations because it has yet to be able to reveal the significant changes in this tradition. This limitation is a research opportunity that needs to be revealed in further research.

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