

# What's a Name? Uncovering the Heortonyms in Sundanese Ethnicity in West Java: An Ethnolinguistic Study

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**Abstract**—This article provides an ethnolinguistic perspective of the names of various types of holidays, celebrations (heortonyms), traditions, and rituals of the Sundanese people. A descriptive qualitative method was employed to collect heortonymic data from written and unwritten sources, observations, electronic sources, in-depth interviews, and literature studies. These data were then analyzed using an ethnolinguistic approach, combining cultural and language aspects through ethnographic methods. In the cultural elements closely related to anthropology, the researchers obtained data on the system and social interaction that prevail in society. Meanwhile, in the language aspects, the data on the form and function of language in society were also gathered. The data were presented by describing the results of the data analysis. The results of this study indicated that Sundanese heortonyms could be divided into religious heortonyms (such as *Eid-Al-Adha*, *Eid-Al-Fitr*, and *Isra Mi'raj*), activities related to Ramadan fasting, activities related to sacred historical events (like *Muludan*, *Rajaban*), activities related to work (like the *Seren Tahun* tradition), activities related to various stages of human life, and practices aimed at avoiding calamities. From the discussion, it was found that these heortonyms, along with the multicultural environment, give rise to loanwords from other languages, especially Arabic. These heortonyms are directly related to history and the construction of worldviews and beliefs and are seen as distinctive language and cultural markers reflecting Sundanese values and identity.

**Index Terms**—heortonyms, ethnolinguistics, language, Sundanese culture, identity

## I. INTRODUCTION

The act of naming celebrations or holidays is a linguistic task. These names encapsulate and reflect the culture, encompassing language, religion, way of life, traditions, and most significantly, identity. Heortonyms, which are the proper names for holidays, festivals, feasts, memorable dates, or celebrations, as defined by Gałkowski (2020) and Podolskaya (1988), are used to refer to celebrations and traditions. Heortonyms can be categorized into religious and secular, as explained by Kerret and Tal (2018) that these terms correspond to Western concepts of “religion” and “secular”. The names of religious celebrations and traditions are cultural and historical phenomena present in various ethnicities, forming a branch of linguistic research that explores the interplay between ethnocultural and ethnopsychological elements in language’s functioning and evolution, as explored by Melnyk et al. (2021). Heortonyms convey the heritage, culture, and traditions of specific regions, evoking excitement and enthusiasm, according to Nair and Babu (2022). These celebrations or commemorations occur repeatedly over an extended period, combining religious rituals, traditions, and prevailing customs of the celebrating community. Preserving cultural heritage and identity while fostering community and belonging is crucial today. Holidays play an essential role as they signify

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specific times when social events take place, representing one of the earliest forms of human culture, as emphasized by Bakhtin (1990) and Starikova (2016).

Shemyakin (2015) argues that the role of integrating and consistent celebrations, known as heortonyms, is crucial in preserving culture and transmitting it across generations. These celebrations serve as an essential element in the mechanism of tradition, containing socially significant information regarding value systems and behavioral norms. Consequently, celebrations have always played a primary role in socialization, as participating in a particular culture's festivals, ceremonies, and rituals signifies recognition and adherence to its norms and values. Their collective nature sets heortonyms apart, often involving the entire community, which strengthens social bonds and reinforces cultural identity. Through these celebrations, individuals learn about their cultural heritage and pass it on to future generations. Heortonyms offer a sense of continuity and stability in an ever-changing world, reminding us of our origins and core principles. Therefore, they are an integral part of every culture, deserving of celebration and appreciation as cultural phenomena that reflect universal aspects of civilizations while showcasing the unique characteristics of specific sociocultural communities (Shemyakin, 2015).

The continued significance of heortonyms can be observed in both private and public spheres, encompassing secular as well as religious aspects of life. Numerous festivals have deep historical roots and incorporate cultural and religious elements into their traditional activities. The most crucial aspect of heortonyms is their ability to foster a sense of identity and belonging within a community. They serve as a means of preserving traditions and customs passed down through generations, as a constant reminder of people's cultural heritage. In essence, heortonyms are vital in shaping our society and enriching our lives. Some prominent religious heortonyms celebrated globally include Christmas, *Diwali*, and *Holi* for Hindus in India, *Vesak* for Buddhists, *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* for Jews, and Easter. In contrast, Muslims have three significant days in their Islamic celebrations: *Eid al-Fitr*, *Eid al-Adha*, and *Maulid Nabi* (the Prophet Muhammad's birthday) (Glavatskaya & Zabolotnykh, 2021; Rao et al., 2005; Silva et al., 2023; Sulaeman, 2019). *Eid al-Fitr*, for example, is a Muslim holiday that marks the end of Ramadan (Idris et al., 2022).

Indonesia is a country with a multitude of ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups, each having their own distinctive local celebration traditions. This gives rise to a wide range of heortonyms found throughout the country. Among Indonesia's well-known religious festivals is *Nyepi*, a Hindu New Year celebration that involves a day of silence and introspection (Merta & Wijaya, 2022). Another significant festival is *Vesak Day*, observed by Buddhists to honor the birth, enlightenment, and passing of Buddha (Silva et al., 2023). In South Sulawesi, the Toraja funeral ceremony called *Rambu Solo* occurs (Anggraeni & Putri, 2021). These heortonyms offer valuable insights into the value and beliefs that form the foundation of Sundanese culture. Similarly, heortonyms like *Haw é Setra* and *Ngarot* hold profound meanings in the Sundanese philosophy of life. *Ngadu Batur*, on the other hand, represents the traditional Sundanese approach to conflict resolution, emphasizing mediation and reflecting the harmonious nature of the Sundanese people. These heortonyms not only showcase Indonesia's cultural and religious diversity but also serve as a means of preserving and passing down traditions from one generation to the next. Nair and Babu (2022) note that many traditional festivals are celebrated enthusiastically and joyfully. By studying these heortonyms and recognizing its cultural importance, we can gain a greater appreciation for the richness and diversity of Indonesian cultures. This becomes particularly crucial in a world where globalization and modernization pose threats to the preservation of traditional cultures and their unique identities.

Researching traditions and celebrations in a specific region is an intriguing subject encompassing culture, history, and language. These customs and festivities hold significant value within local and regional cultures. Examining the importance of heortonyms and other cultural practices becomes crucial to develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of the diverse range of human cultures and beliefs. By studying these traditions, we can comprehend how communities have evolved and adapted in response to changing circumstances and environments. This knowledge not only aids in appreciating the intricate web of human culture and language in West Java but also serves as a starting point for further exploration and research into the varied cultures of Indonesia. The study of heortonyms also plays a role in preserving Sundanese culture and traditions, which face the risk of being eroded due to modernization and globalization. By understanding and valuing the distinct cultural identities of different ethnic groups, we can foster diversity and inclusivity, and ultimately build a more harmonious and tolerant society. Moreover, it allows for the development of a nuanced and emphatic understanding of the world around us. An example of multiculturalism is a festival that combines religious rituals and traditions with the prevailing customs of an ethnic group. Multiculturalism refers to a society or global context where numerous distinct ethnic and cultural groups are viewed as politically, socially, and culturally equal (Clayton, 2019). Ethnicity, in turn, emerges as a result of actions taken by ethnic groups as they continually shape and reshape their self-definition and culture.

The construction of ethnic identity and culture is influenced by structure and agency, a dynamic interaction between ethnic groups and the larger society (Nagel, 1994). Among the ethnicities known for their vibrant celebrations, rituals, and traditions are the Sundanese people, who reside in the West Java region. Sundanese culture boasts numerous distinctive heortonyms that reflect their unique cultural heritage. Interestingly, the term heortonyms is not widely used in most studies. Multiculturalism refers to a society that acknowledges and values the diversity present in different ethnic and cultural groups. The formation of ethnicity is shaped by the actions undertaken by ethnic groups as they continually define and redefine their culture. In the context of West Java, the Sundanese ethnic group showcases

heortonyms that reflect their cultural identity and traditional practices. However, most research on these traditions tends to focus solely on practical aspects, neglecting the intricate complexities of the involved cultures and languages. This study, on the other hand, examines religious heortonyms, which encompass various religious celebrations such as *Idul Adha* and *Eid al-Fitr*, heortonyms related to Ramadan fasting, heortonyms associated with sacred historical events like *Rajaban (27 Rajab)* or *Isra Mi'raj*, *Muludan*, *Rowahan*, as well as traditions on different stages of human life, including *Ekah (Akekahan, Khitanan)*, death traditions (*Tahlil*), agricultural activities (rice ceremony for *Dewi Padi*, *Ngalaksa*, *Seren Taun* Tradition, *Ngarot* Tradition, *Hajat Lembur* Tradition), and heortonyms related to averting calamities (Sea Feast Tradition).

Therefore, the objective of this study is to investigate the importance and symbolism associated with religious heortonyms and their role in shaping the identity and cultural legacy of the communities that celebrate them. By conducting interviews and surveys involving participants from diverse cultural backgrounds, we discovered that heortonyms play a vital role in preserving and passing down cultural values, beliefs, and customs from one generation to the next. These traditions also connect individuals and their historical roots and ancestors, fostering a sense of belonging and community. Furthermore, the study revealed that heortonyms are not static; they exhibit dynamic nature, adapting and evolving in response to changing social and cultural contexts.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Heortonyms

The study of names, referred to as 'onomastics,' has a long history and continues to evolve. Dating back to Ancient Greece, the study of names has been instrumental in understanding language and how humans communicate and organize their world (Hough, 2016). Within the field of onomastics, one specific branch is heortonyms, a term coined by Podolskaya (1988). Heortonyms encompass the names of feast days, holidays, traditional celebrations, and festivals, among others. Examples of heortonyms in Russia, for instance, include Victory Day on May 9<sup>th</sup>, International Women's Day on March 8<sup>th</sup>, Geologist Day on June 6<sup>th</sup>, New Year on January 1st, Christmas Day on December 25<sup>th</sup>, *Eid al-Fitr* or Islamic spring holiday, corresponding to its Arab origin, *Eid al-Fitr* or the feast of breaking the fast which marks the end of Ramadan, and Moscow 1980, also known as a festival on *The 1980 Summer Olympics*, officially known as *The Games of the XXII Olympiad* (Gałkowski, 2020; Podolskaya, 1988).

Starikova's (2016) research on Rusin ethnic heortonyms in Russia includes traditions and rituals associated with the various stages of human life (birth, marriage, death), human activities, and significant historical events. These celebrations' names are culturally significant markers that reflect the values of the ethnic group and are closely intertwined with the development and formation of their worldviews and beliefs. The terminology used in these holidays demonstrates multiculturalism, as it includes loanwords from Hungarian and German (Starikova, 2016).

Ivanova's research explores the religious holiday called The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin and its significance in different cultural contexts. In Eastern Slavic countries like Russia, this religious holiday is linked to agricultural traditions. It is celebrated as the Harvest Festival, where farmers express gratitude for a bountiful harvest and believe that Mother Mary blesses and protects agriculture and families, particularly mothers. In Poland, the celebration of The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin is associated with the planting season. The analysis of the names of Russian and Polish celebrations of this religious holiday reveals both the universal and specific aspects of their semantic structures. This difference arises from Poland being part of the West Slavic region and having a distinct culture and language compared to Russia (East Slavic). Structurally, the names of these celebrations consist of combinations of nouns and adjectives and a combination of nominative and genitive case nouns (Ivanova, 2018).

### B. Sundanese Culture

Ekadjati (2014) states that Sundanese culture thrives and evolves within the Sundanese community, primarily residing in the Land of Sunda. In Indonesian society, Sundanese culture is considered a regional rather than a national one. Sundanese culture possesses distinct characteristics that set it apart from other regional cultures in Indonesia (Ekadjati, 2014, p. 8). The Sundanese ethnic group has numerous festive celebrations of holidays, rituals, and traditions (known as heortonyms) that are still practiced today. These heortonyms bear Sundanese names such as *Ngalaksa*, *Ruwatan* Tradition, *Nyukur*, *Akekahan*, and *Ngirabkeun*, to name a few.

### C. The Concept of Identity From an Ethnolinguistic Perspective

Riley (2008) suggests that when individuals communicate using a specific language, their speech partner will interpret the message based on the vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structures used. This interpretation aims to determine the speaker's identity within the social context, including their origin, nationality, culture, religion, and ethnicity, as language reflects the cultural identity ingrained in it (Riley, 2008, p. 69). Language, functioning as a tool for social interaction, plays a crucial role in shaping cultural identity. It represents and frames individuals' linguistic and cultural backgrounds, enabling them to exchange personal experiences, social realities, cultural norms, and historical traditions within a specific group, thus fostering a vibrant sociocultural environment within a country (Parajuli, 2021). Ethnolinguistic identity can differ depending on the specific ethnolinguistic groups that the individual's own group is compared to, either in terms of contrasting or complementing characteristics.

Language serves a dual purpose in shaping the rich cultural identities of specific groups, acting as a means to express a wide array of opinions, ideas, emotions, and knowledge. Each language, tied to distinct geographical regions, represents the voices of its speakers and embodies their cultural identities. Language and culture interact through human communication, continually generating cultural values, traditions, and identities (Maine et al., 2019). Language, being an integral part of life from an early stage, allows individuals to develop specific lifestyles and cultures within their families and communities, thereby unveiling social and cultural realities that might otherwise remain concealed. This highlights the interconnectedness of language and culture, where language serves as both a component and a tool of culture (Boltayevna, 2020).

Engaging in communication using a particular language involves the need to grasp and comprehend the profound social and cultural norms, values, and ways of life, as well as the various signs, symbols, and conventions associated with a specific culture. This understanding enables individuals to express and exhibit their unique cultural identities. Likewise, culture, as a social construct, plays a significant role in the development and evolution of language, primarily shaping how individuals convey their personal narratives within their family and community. People from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds find joy in promoting solidarity, as language serves as the foundation for representing and transmitting culture across generations (Parajuli, 2021).

### III. METHOD

This research employs a qualitative methodology with an ethnographic approach to explore the intercultural and intracultural diversity within society. Intercultural diversity pertains to differences between two distinct cultures, while intracultural diversity refers to variations between subcultures within a particular culture (Fetterman, 2010). The ethnographic approach encompasses two key research dimensions: culture and language. By closely examining cultural aspects influenced by anthropology, the study gathered data on the prevailing social systems and interactions within the community. Simultaneously, the study also focuses on language aspects to ascertain the form and function of language within the cultural context of the community. Adopting a holistic perspective inherent to the ethnographic approach, the research delves into all available information, observations, interviews, theories, and emerging patterns during fieldwork to uncover the essential cultural elements that collectively paint a comprehensive picture of the field.

The data collection for this study involves multiple sources, including documents, newspapers, observations, online resources from the Internet, the Department of Transportation's website, and oral accounts. Written documents such as manuscripts, books, and *Mangle* magazine obtained from the Sundanese Culture Research Center at Universitas Padjadjaran, as well as letters, photographs, and pictures received from *Pikiran Rakyat* and *Kompas* newspapers, are also utilized. The research data primarily consist of heortonyms associated with religious, international, national, and local holidays, rituals, and traditions celebrated annually in West Java. These data were categorized into four groups: religious celebrations (such as *Eid al-Fitr*), celebrations marking different stages of human life from birth to death, nature-related festivities, and agricultural rituals (such as the celebration of *Hajat Lembur*). The initial stage involves visiting various locations in West Java that could provide information on celebration days, rituals, and cultural traditions that contribute to sociocultural integration. Information from oral sources was gathered through interviews with knowledgeable informants. The subsequent stage focuses on verifying the written and oral sources and examining pictures and interview results. In the interpretation stage, the facts were analyzed to develop a narrative addressing the research questions. To gain a comprehensive understanding of holidays, rituals, traditions, language, and culture, this study incorporated the perspectives of ethnolinguistics, cultural concepts, and history. Additionally, the onomastic concept, particularly the heortonymic concept, was employed in data analysis.

Each research site, namely Cirebon Regency, Cirebon City, Majalengka, Ciamis, Indramayu, Sumedang, Bogor City and Regency, Tasikmalaya City, and Regency, have distinct customs, festivities, and ceremonial practices that are exclusive to their respective regions.

### IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Religious holidays hold great significance as they serve as major commemorations in Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism. The government actively supports various religious communities by providing financial assistance for religious education and the construction of places of worship. Consequently, Indonesia boasts a diverse and culturally rich religious landscape encompassing a multitude of traditions and practices. Whether it be the Islamic celebration of *Eid al-Fitr*, the Christian celebration of Christmas, or the Hindu festival of *Diwali*, these religious holidays play a vital role in upholding the freedom of worship for individuals in accordance with their respective religions or beliefs.

#### A. Islamic Heortonyms Related to the Main Holiday

The study of heortonyms and their spiritual meaning allows us to gain a profound insight into the significance of religion within the Sundanese culture and its influence on their worldview. Through this exploration, we can also examine the connection between an individual's religious beliefs, denomination, level of devotion, and cultural background and beliefs. Within the Islamic faith, there are two prominent holidays, namely *Eid al-Adha* (also known as

*Hari Raya Haji* or *Hari Raya Qurban*), which are celebrated with immense enthusiasm and joy.

**Eid Al-Adha.** The Sundanese people celebrate Eid al-Adha as a means to express their local traditional beliefs and values, intertwining them with the Islamic teachings of struggle and sacrifice. This ritual involves the use of a goat or a cow as a symbolic medium of communication, representing the sacrificial animal. The meat from the sacrifice is then distributed among those who are experiencing poverty (Ridwan et al., 2020). The celebration of Eid al-Adha serves various functions across different domains. In the religious realm, it allows individuals to demonstrate their obedience and devotion to God's commands. Culturally and historically, it contributes to the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage. Socially, it fosters the creation and strengthening of social bonds. Furthermore, it serves as a means of expressing and constructing the Muslim identity (culturally). Psychologically, it can evoke mystical or religious experiences and foster feelings of solidarity and humanity. Additionally, it accompanies significant life cycle events and other significant rituals (Aminah et al., 2020; Sels, 2014).

The term Eid al-Adha originates from Arabic, which has been adopted to Indonesian as *Iduladha*. The term *Iduladha* has become integrated into the Indonesian language, and it shares similarities with another Indonesian word, *idulkurban* (Supianudin, 2020), as stated in the Indonesian dictionary.

The Sundanese people commonly refer to this festive occasion as *Lebaran Haji*. The origin of the word *lebaran* has not been established yet. According to various opinions, it is believed that the word *lebaran* most likely originated from regional languages, as four regional languages contain the term *lebar*. In Javanese, *lebar* means 'finished,' while in Sundanese, it signifies 'abundant.' In Betawi, it denotes 'wide,' and in Madurese, *lober* means 'completed.' Despite this, the language center has not officially determined the etymology of the word *lebaran*. The language merely acknowledges that it serves as a base word. It is important to note that the term *lebaran* is only used in Indonesia (Ellyvon, 2022).

**Eid Al-Fitr.** Celebrating religious festivals serves as a public manifestation of one's faith, reinforcing the bond between the believer and their relationship with God. Within Islam, the act of celebration is considered an obligatory or highly encouraged practice for believers. These religious festivities have the potential to enhance the spiritual connection among followers of the faith.

The celebration of Eid-al-Fitr signifies the culmination of a month-long period during which Muslims celebrate a successful Ramadan of fasting and worship. Also referred to as the "Festival of Breaking the Fast," Eid-al-Fitr holds religious significance for Muslims worldwide. This occasion serves as a special family gathering that brings together millions of individuals, families, and communities each year. The significance of celebrating Eid-al-Fitr as a cohesive unit is explored through a series of case studies examining various ways in which families and communities celebrate this auspicious event (Idris et al., 2022). The celebration of Eid al-Fitr holds sociocultural, economic, and religious implications within local communities. Economically, the practice of zakat exemplifies the spirit of solidarity among individuals, where the affluent are obligated to contribute a portion of their wealth in the form of zakat, which is then distributed to those in need. In this context, zakat serves as a means of promoting economic recovery (Haris, 2021). Another significant aspect associated with Eid al-Fitr is the tradition of *Mudik* or homecoming, which carries various religious connotations. It involves urban dwellers returning to their hometowns during the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr. *Mudik* holds sociocultural significance in terms of fostering religious connections, engaging in acts of kindness, and reinforcing social bonds. It also symbolizes the success of the homecomers and leaves a collective impression within the community (Yusuf et al., 2020).

The celebration of local values and distinctiveness was evident in these religious festivals. The local community considers these festivals as part of their community identity and as offering impetus for annual family and community reunions (Nair & Babu, 2022).

Eid Al-Fitr, the heortonym associated with Islam and the second most important holiday, derives its name from the Arabic term *fithr*, which means 'eating' or 'food.' Consequently, Eid al-Fitr means a feast of eating because after a whole month of fasting on *Eid al-Fitr*, it is obligatory to eat and it is forbidden to fast (Yusuf, 2020). Religious celebrations can strengthen cultural heritage and become more focused on cultural goals (Munshi, 2022).

### B. Heortonyms Related to Ramadan Fasting

The month of fasting for Muslims is a holy month. In that month, there are many heortonyms commemorated by Muslims. Some of the examples are as follows:

**Kunut.** This tradition is carried out every 15th of Ramadan by giving alms of food such as *ketupat* (rice cake boiled in a rhombus-shaped packet) to the nearest mosque. This tradition is carried out in the context of thanksgiving and welcoming the half month of fasting.

**Nujulul Qur'an.** This tradition is carried out when the 17th night of fasting coincides with the night when the Qur'an was revealed. The community congregates in the mosque to engage in collective recitation of the Qur'an, known as *tadarus*. It is customary to bring along the Al-Qur'an passed down from their ancestors (*Kuran kabuyutan*). For those doing *tadarus* at home, it provides an opportunity for children and parents to gather, fostering family unity. The occasion commemorates the momentous event of the Qur'an's revelation to the Prophet Muhammad SAW.

**Mamaleman/Tanggal Gangsal/Hajat Jajabur** (*Salikur, Tilu likur, lima likur/salaw é tujuh likur, salapan likur*). This tradition is carried out during the period from the 21<sup>st</sup> to the 29<sup>th</sup> of Ramadan, specifically on odd-numbered dates. During these nights, all the houses are brightly lit. People will wake up all night to welcome the night of *Lailatul Qadar*.

In the *Hajat Jajabur* tradition, residents usually provide delectable food to share with their neighbors. Additionally, some take advantage of this moment to clean the heirlooms left by their ancestors.

**Hajat Walilat/Malam Takbiran.** During *Hajat Lebaran*, residents will visit each other's relatives and neighbors after the sunnah Eid prayer as a gesture of maintaining connections and seeking forgiveness. Additionally, it is customary for the local community to pay respects to the graves of their ancestors.

### C. Heortonyms Related to Sacred Historical Events

**Rajaban (27 Rajab) or Isra Mi'raj.** The account of Muhammad's Night Journey and Ascension to the Heavenly Spheres is arguably the most extraordinary episode in the Prophet's life, and its remarkable aspects became widely accepted as historical facts (Webb, 2012). The heortonym *Rajaban (27 Rajab)* or *Isra Mi'raj* holds immense significance for all Muslims, as it marks the occasion when the Prophet Muhammad SAW received an order to pray five times daily. To commemorate this event, the Sundanese refer to it as *Rajaban*. The term *rajaban* is derived from the Arabic month name, *Rajab*, which means majesty or glory. In the Sundanese language, the suffix *-an* is added to denote repeated events (Interview with Teddi Muhtadin).

**Muludan.** Muslims actively participate in the celebration of *Mawlid*, the Prophet's birthday, as it holds significance importance in shaping their collective identity. The heortonym *Muludan* is held on the 11th day of the twelfth night of *Rabiul Awal* to commemorate the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. The term *Muludan* is derived from the word *Mulud*, which means 'to be born' in Arabic. In Sundanese, it is formed by combining *mulud* with the suffix *-an*, indicating recurring celebrations (interview with Teddi Muhtadin). *Muludan* or *Mudling (Muludan Keliling)* in Mirat Village (Majalengka) involves visiting homes within the community, known as *Dusun* or village, to collectively pray and send *Salawat to Rosulullah Muhammad SAW*.

**Rowahan.** The *Rowahan* tradition in Cirebon or *Rewahan* tradition in Bandung is an ongoing Islamic practice. *Rewahan* is derived from *rewah*, which means 'month of *Sa'ban*,' and is combined with the suffix *-an*. The *Rewahan* tradition takes place on the 15th of *Sya'ban*, also known as the *Nisfu Sya'ban* night. According to Muslim belief, this night signifies the closing and opening of a book containing the record of human deeds for one year. The word *Rewahan* is used in Bandung, while the word *Rowahan* is used in Cirebon, with a variation in sound from [e] to [o] due to regional dialects.

### D. Traditions Related to Human Life

**Ekah (Akekahan).** The Islamic tradition of performing a haircut for newborn babies is known as *Aqiqah* (Subki, 2022), or *ekah/akekah* in Indonesian. *Aqiqah* refers to the act of cutting derived from the Arabic word "*al-qat'u*". In Indonesian, this word is borrowed and transformed into "*aqiqah*". On the other hand, *Ekah (Akekahan)* is a distinct Sundanese tradition where the baby's hair is cut when they are 7, 14, or 21 days old. In this tradition, the parents must sacrifice a goat as an offering to seek redemption for the baby's soul from God Almighty. If the baby is a girl, one goat is sacrificed, while if the baby is a boy, two goats are sacrificed. This cultural practice aims to purify the baby's physical and mental soul, expressing gratitude to God Almighty for blessing the parents with a child.

**Khitanan.** The practice of *khitanan*, or circumcision, is primarily carried out on boys. It involves the removal of the skin covering the penis to ensure cleanliness. This tradition is considered obligatory for Muslim boys, typically performed when they are between the ages of 4 and 7. In contrast, circumcision for girls is *sunnah*. Novik explains that although this tradition is not explicitly mentioned in the sacred text of the Quran, it has become widely regarded as practically mandatory. Within the context of rites of passage, circumcision holds significant importance for Muslims as it symbolizes the transition from childhood to adulthood, granting individuals the rights and responsibilities of a "full-fledged" man (Novik, 2020).

### E. Traditions Related to Death

**Tahlil.** *Tahlilan* is a ceremonial gathering observed in Indonesia to commemorate the day of death. Typically, it takes place after the burial process has been completed. The whole family, neighbors, and the surrounding community gathered at the deceased's family's house. The ceremony includes the recitation of several verses from the Qur'an, *dhikr*, and prayers for the departed. These prayers are offered on specific days: the first day (*poena*) to the third day (*tiluna*), the seventh day (*tujuhna*), the fortieth day (*matangpuluh*), the hundredth day (*natus*), and the thousandth day (*newu*). It is important to note that most people engage in the *tahlilan* willingly and sincerely, without any external pressure. Therefore, the practice of *tahlilan* is considered permissible under the law (Fajrussalam et al., 2022).

### F. Activities Related to Agriculture

The Sundanese mainly practices heortonyms related to agriculture. The following are examples of these heortonyms.

**Rice ceremony for Dewi Padi (Nyi Pohaci Sanghiyang Sri).** Before planting and harvesting rice, the Sundanese people perform a traditional religious and magical ceremony that serves to pay homage and offer reverence to the rice goddess, *Nyi Pohaci Sanghiyang Sri*. Rice, which is believed to be the embodiment of *Nyi Pohaci Sanghiyang Sri*, the daughter of *Déwa Anta*, should be treated with utmost care and respect. This reverence extends to every step of the rice cultivation process, including planting the seeds, nurturing the plants, harvesting the stalks, and storing the rice in barns. The rice is treated as if it were an esteemed princess, deserving the utmost care and attention.

**Ngalaksa.** This tradition shares similarities with the practice of honoring the rice goddess, *Nyi Pohaci Sanghiyang Sri*, as an expression of gratitude to God for the successful harvest of the community. The *Ngalaksa* traditional ceremonies have been passed down through generations, inherited from the local community's ancestors, and preserved to this day. This tradition is carried out once a year, serving as a way to give thanks to God for the year's harvest. The central aspect of the *ngalaksa* tradition involves preparing food made from rice flour wrapped in leaves, commonly known as *Rancakalong laksa* by the community. Alongside this ongoing tradition, the *Ngalaksa* event features the accompaniment of two musical instruments called *tarawangsa* (Sahroni et al., 2023).

**Seren Taun Tradition.** The *Seren Taun* tradition is a ceremonial practice that involves the transportation of harvested rice from the fields to the granary using a *rengkong*, a bamboo-carrying pole. Traditional music, known as *tetabuhan*, accompanies this procession. The purpose of the *Seren Taun* tradition is to express gratitude to God Almighty for the successful harvest and to seek blessings for future agricultural endeavors. A notable feature of this ceremony is the procession of reports detailing the agricultural outcomes to the officials attending the event, which is referred to as *Seba* by the local community. The *Seren Taun* ceremony serves the purpose of preserving and passing down the values contained in the local culture, contributing to the national identity, while also serving as an expression of gratitude and prayers for the Sundanese people's journey through the ups and downs, especially in agriculture (Suhaedi & Nurjanah, 2023).

**Ngarot Tradition.** In the Indramayu region, the local community usually holds the *Ngarot* ceremony. This customary practice occurs during the onset of the planting or rainy season. One aspect of this involves a procession towards the village hall. The purpose of this tradition is to express gratitude to God and seek blessings for agricultural yields. The implementation of the *Ngarot* traditional ceremony yields several values, such as fostering the spirit of cooperation among community members, serving as exemplary symbols for the youth by community leaders, and nurturing enthusiasm for maintaining the rice fields in *Lelea* Village as vital rice granaries within Indramayu Regency (Winoto et al., 2021).

**Hajat Lembur Tradition.** The tradition of *Hajat Lembur* revolves around expressing gratitude for a bountiful harvest. It is a well-attended ritual of thanksgiving that serves as a platform for social interaction and consultation to address various issues. Through this event, the people demonstrate their care for one another, as well as their concern for nature and the environment. The *Hajat Lembur* tradition not only serves as a means of expressing gratitude but also as a way to foster relationships among people, between humans and nature, and between humans and God (Damayani et al., 2020).

**Ngaruwat Bumi Tradition.** *Ngaruwat Bumi* is a tradition that is still sustainable in the Sundanese tradition. The phrase *Ngaruwat Bumi* comes from the Sundanese word *Rawat* or *Ngarawat*, which means 'to collect or maintain.' The term means gathering all community members and collecting all crops, raw, semi-processed, and ready-made/cooked materials. This tradition is carried out to thank God Almighty for abundant produce.

#### G. Heortonyms Related to Avoiding Calamities

**Sea Feast Tradition.** Maritime festival ceremonies are frequently held in West Java province, including Pangandaran, Ciamis, and Pelabuhan Ratu in Sukabumi, as well as in other coastal regions like Indramayu and Cirebon. During these festivities, fishing boats are adorned with vibrant decorations, creating a visually appealing spectacle. As part of the tradition, a buffalo head, wrapped in cloth, is brought as an offering and thrown into the sea. This act symbolizes presenting a gift to the ruler of the sea and is believed to ward off misfortunes. This annual custom serves as a means to express gratitude and seek safety while at sea.

**Rebo Wekasan** (last Wednesday in the month of *Safar*). The *Rebo Wekasan* tradition serves as a precautionary measure against disasters. According to Sundanese belief, the month of *Safar* is associated with the occurrence of diseases and accidents sent by God. To counteract these potential calamities, *Rebo Wekasan* is conducted. *Rebo*, meaning 'Wednesday,' and *wekasan*, meaning 'the last,' symbolize its occurrence on the final Wednesday of the month of *Safar*. During this time, people traditionally bathe using blessed water known as *cai anu dijampean* in Sundanese, which means 'water that has been given a blessing'.

All Sundanese ethnic heortonyms are formed from the Sundanese language, either verb, noun, or verbal, and nominal phrases. These heortonym activities are conducted using Sundanese. While some heortonyms have their origins in Arabic or Javanese, they have been adopted by the Sundanese, resulting in the inclusion of loanwords and phrases from other languages, primarily Arabic and other regional languages, particularly Javanese.

The analysis of heortonymic data reveals the reflection of Sundanese identity and ethnicity. The identity of the Sundanese is evident in their strong commitment to practicing their religion, as indicated by their practice of religious rituals such as fasting and prayers in various circumstances. They demonstrate their gratitude for a fulfilling life through regular worship and engage in agricultural activities that are integral to their culture. Additionally, they honor their ancestors through visits to graves and preserve ancestral heritage objects. These activities collectively contribute to shaping an inherent identity that characterizes the Sundanese people.

Sundanese ethnic groups enrich their cultural heritage through their cultural diversity. Their religious life is reflected in the rich traditions of its people, among whom rituals and festivals are held annually, adding a colorful dimension to their cultural existence. The unique rituals and festivals of the traditions, beliefs, sorrows, and philosophies that together shape and animate this ethnic religion have come down from ancient times and have been preserved to this day. Every

dimension of their lives, which includes activities throughout the year, is closely related to religion and worldview. These aspects of their culture give meaning and depth to their lives and create solidarity with their social structure, thus forming Sundanese ethnic identity (Padhi, 2020).

The performance of identity routines in different contexts allows individuals to form and reconstruct various identities that they then present. Interaction with others plays a crucial role in the development of a person's cultural identity through communication. The initial growth of identity is primarily shaped by interactions within the family, as it serves as a source of stories that connect individuals to the past and provide them with "a sense of identity and connection to this world." These stories also transmit cultural beliefs and values, which become integral parts of one's identity (Samovar & Richard, 2013). Furthermore, identity can be understood as a relationship and membership within a group, where engagement in group activities fosters a sense of identity that is intertwined with the collective. Cultural rituals in adulthood also contribute to the construction and display of identity, aiding adolescents in gaining a heightened self-awareness as they transition into adulthood. In certain developing societies, these rituals may involve painful physical experiences like male and female circumcision. In the Sundanese ethnicity, circumcision ceremonies for boys between the ages of 4 to 7 are accompanied by elaborate celebrations, treating the circumcised child as a king, in a lace-decorated shirt, and seated on a chair resembling a bride and groom. In Sumedang, this celebration includes a *renggong* horse show, where a horse decorated with flowers walks and dances in sync with the music, particularly the drums. This horse is typically used as a riding vehicle during the procession of the circumcised children.

There are various ways to express one's identity, and the Sundanese people exemplify this through their attire, which reflects their religious or spiritual beliefs. Muslim women wear headscarves, while Muslim men sport beards as a means of showcasing their identity. Furthermore, participation in local traditions and celebrations also serves as a marker of identity. The formation of Sundanese cultural identity is deeply rooted in the traditions upheld by the Sundanese ethnicity, which can be categorized according to different stages of human life, such as birth, marriage, and death. These traditions are conducted in accordance with the principles of the Islamic religion. The development of Islam in Sundanese land aligns with the cultural practices of the Sundanese society. Consequently, Islam finds it easier to integrate with the existing value system within the Sundanese community. This is due to the distinctive characteristics of the Islamic religion, which foster a culture that evolves in tandem with its dynamics. As a result, the Sundanese ethnic heortonyms, originating from the Sundanese language, serve as distinctive symbols and identifiers of the Sundanese ethnic group.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

Feasts hold a fundamental and crucial role in cultures worldwide. Specifically, feasts associated with religious rituals have particular social and cultural significance compared to those in any other festivities or celebrations in people's life. These religious feasts demonstrate characteristic features, emphasizing the value of food and feasting in social life and fostering solidarity. They also serve as a means of preserving historical traditions and acting as a continuation of the past (Gopi, 2021).

This article reveals the Islamic celebrations in West Java, encompassing major events like *Eid-Al-Adha*, *Eid-Al-Fitr*, *Maulid*, and *Ramadan*, as well as celebrations closely intertwined with Islam and local traditions. These rituals are commemorated annually and encompass heortonyms linked to sacred historical events, rituals connected to various stages of human life, agricultural activities, and practices aimed at averting calamities. The observance of these rituals plays a significant role in preserving the Sundanese culture and contributes to the formation of traditional cultural identity within the Sundanese ethnic group.

The formation of a Sundanese ethnic heortonym primarily employs the Sundanese language, although there are also heortonyms derived from Arabic and Javanese, which have become integrated into the Sundanese culture. The use of the Sundanese language serves to elucidate the history and progression of these rituals. Additionally, it signifies the connection between current ritual celebrations and the formation of Muslim identity within the region. These rituals align with the dynamic social order, community culture, and religious social system adopted by the Sundanese ethnicity (Sila, 2020).

This article is useful for the younger generation who are currently not familiar with heortonyms in their area, immigrant communities, and residents of West Java, especially those living in big cities, as well as scientists working in the fields of culture, history, language, ethnolinguistics, and anthropology who are interested in the field of onomastic. In addition, this article is one of the efforts to preserve Sundanese culture in the field of heortonyms.

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