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DOI : 10.32734/lwsa.v3i4.1121
Electronic ISSN : 2654-7066
Print ISSN : 2654-7058

Volume 3 Issue 4 – 2020 TALENTA Conference Series: Local Wisdom, Social, and Arts (LWSA)



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Marhaban As A Form Of Qasidah Music Continuity In The City Of Binjai, Northern Sumatra Province

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Abstract

This paper describes *Marhaban* as a form of continuity of *Qasidah* music, and also describes the existence of this music in the city of Binjai, as an Islamic art. This paper focuses on the discussion of *Marhaban*, which after being studied in more depth is a form of music that is the same as *Qasidah* music, both in terms of use, text, presentation, and instrumentation. Researcher use functional theory to describe the social musical context. Then use Halliday's semiotic to analyze the text of *Marhaban*. To analyze the musical and instrumentation, I use ethnomusicological structure theory. This paper is a qualitative descriptive study using data collection techniques and methods of literature study and observation, which is used to explain how *Marhaban* is also a form of music that emerged as a continuity of early *Qasidah* music in Indonesia. The results are: *Marhaban* always used in Islamic ceremony, as marriage, circumscition, birthday, and so on. The text of *Marhaban* in Arabaic, with it's theme about the histpry of Prophet Muhammad and way of life muslim. The intruments are: *rebana* (frame drum), and human vocal. The structure of melody used Near East system *maqamat* plus Malay melody improvisation (called *cengkok*).

Keywords: *Marhaban*; *Qasidah*; continuity; function; structure.

1. Introduction

Marhaban is a tradition of Islamic music that has emerged since the time of the Prophet Muhammad. In language, *Marhaban* comes from Arabic which means welcome, and is the same as the word *ahlan wa sahan*. Meanwhile, the term *Marhaban* is a form of Islamic art performance used in welcoming something that has just come to a certain event. The *Marhaban* reading sentence uses Arabic which means welcome. Then before the chanting of the text, it is preceded by the recitation of praises in the form of prayers addressed to the Prophet Muhammad, which is quoted from the book *Al Barzanji*. Sentences such as: "Shallallahu a'la Muhammad, Muhammad, Muhammad. Shallallahu 'alaihi wasallam, wasallam, wasalam;" and also, "Marhaban ayya ya umar haban marhabayya ya umar haban, angry ya ya umar aba am Marhaban ya ya umar haa baa aa aa," are the hallmarks of this *Marhaban* art.

Marhaban in the form of art, is generally presented in groups, with an undetermined number of members and has one leader (*imam*) chosen from one of the group members, while the others act as followers (*makmum*) who welcome the chanting of the imam. This *Marhaban* group, in the beginning was only limited to men, but nowadays women are allowed to present or present it at certain events, provided that all members are of the same gender. In general, *Marhaban* is shown at events. special occasions related to Muslims, such as at a wedding ceremony (marriage), thanksgiving for births and naming children, circumcision parties, and also at competitions.

The presentation of *Marhaban* is generally done by sitting in a circle in groups, and starting when the priest recites the rawi, then it is continued by standing followed by the guests and the invitees who were present at that time, as a sign of respect. To add to the excitement of the atmosphere, usually the invited guests also follow the *Marhaban* chant. Soon the guests were invited to sit down and the *Marhaban* bearer continued to sing the *Marhaban* song until it was finished, and closed with a prayer reading.

2. Description

Marhaban has existed since the time of the Prophet Muhammad, as a form of respect for someone. It is recorded in history that Marhaban was first performed by the Ansors, who welcomed the arrival of the Prophet when he moved from the city of Mecca. (Elydawati, 1993: 25). Along with the times, the art of Marhaban has had many additions and variations, and today Marhaban has started with a reading of rawi which can be interpreted as history. Rawi contains the history of the Prophet's birth, the Prophet's childhood and the people who have been in the Prophet's life, and is read in a distinctive tone. Rawi is the initial part of the implementation of Marhaban, which can be likened to the opening song, which is sung over several bars. At the beginning of the emergence of Marhaban, rawi was not used by the Ansor because it was just created by someone named Al-Barzanji in his book entitled *Barzanji*, this book is the guide for today's society who wants to learn Marhaban or Barzanji (Wiwid, 2003: 32).

At a party or thanksgiving activity, Marhaban is shown to welcome the guests who come, and especially at the wedding party, the guests who are welcomed are groups of families from the groom's party who come together. Marhaban's appearance is a form of respect for the host for the arrival of the guests, so that the presence of this art represents a welcome that the party organizers deem appropriate, but is still in the corridor of Islam. This makes Marhaban considered important in his presence, and is also something important to do in party activities for people who embrace Islam. Meanwhile, in competitions or to celebrate major holidays in Islam, Marhaban is displayed according to the concept of the match or commemoration event. This is because Marhaban is positioned for different interests from the two activities even though in essence it cannot be separated from the concept of presenting entertainment for the audience or people who enjoy it.

The presentation procedure of Marhaban at circumcision party activities, wedding parties, and thanksgiving for the birth and naming of the baby, is generally divided into several parts, namely preceded by chanting Rawi then Marhaban, and closed with a prayer and the last part of the bridal offering ceremony. which is accompanied by songs that breathe Islam. Rawi is presented with unaccompanied vowels by the person who is the priest in the group, who will be followed by other members who play the role of the congregation, by saying the word Allah at the end of each phrase. So, the technique used to perform this Rawi is included in the response. This presentation continues until Rawi is finished chanting and is continued by singing Marhaban until it's finished, using the Unisono technique. In this case, the priest continues to act as the leader of the group, until the presentation is complete, and as explained in the previous section, there are differences between the male and female groups in the presentation of Marhaban. Furthermore, the presentation of Marhaban is complete, and will be closed with a prayer, which is then followed by an event of plain flour for the bride and groom. This plain flour event will be accompanied by a song of advice.

In language, performance can be interpreted as showing something to others and when you add the word art in front of or behind it (performing arts or cultural performance) it will have a different meaning. According to Murgiyanto (1995) scholarly studies of art are divided into art clusters: (a) performing arts, b) visual arts or fine arts, (c) recording media art. The elements of the show itself, he said, that a show must have three main elements, namely the presenter (performer), the audience (audience), and the art presented, of which the three elements cannot be separated, because if one element is not there, then the show won't happen.

Marhaban served at weddings in Islam can be said to be a show, because it has these three elements. A presenter is a person or group who presents a series of Marhaban chants from start to finish, which is done in groups (male or female). Then the music that is presented is the chanting of Rawi and Marhaban in sequence, and the audience is the people or invited guests who are present at one event.

Marhaban as an Islamic art, appears in society not only for entertainment needs of art, but also has several interests that are closely related to the teachings of Islam. The emergence and existence of this Islamic art in the beginning, of course, cannot be separated from the importance of spreading Islam to society. Many residents in Indonesia who did not have a religion in the past are invited to embrace Islam. The role of the ulama in delivering da'wah and using it as a medium for da'wah is of course very influential on society. And Marhaban is used as a medium for religious da'wah to spread Islam. This meaning continues to emerge today, along with the presentation of Marhaban art in several activities in the community.

Discussing the performers, there are slight fundamental differences in the presentation of this Marhaban by male and female groups, where the difference lies in the use of musical instruments. Marhaban, which is presented by the male group, does not use musical instruments, in other words, only vocal music, while in the female group, Marhaban is presented using accompaniment instruments, namely tambourines of various sizes and tambourines.

Marhaban which is served at the wedding party has a very deep meaning of respect and appreciation for the guests who come, especially guests who come from the groom's family group. The host party, as the organizer of the celebration, welcomed them with prayers and advice and examples that were told to Al Barzanji, which was sung before Marhaban, because the presence of the guests who came was considered to be able to bring blessings to the host. So all the expectations from the host for the guests, are met with the presentation of Marhaban in which there are prayers and examples of the Prophet Muhammad.

3. *Marhaban as Continuity of Qasidah*

Judging from the presentation and content of the Marhaban song's text, the writer sees that this music art has a similar relationship with Qasidah music. Qasidah is also one of the Islamic music arts in the city of Binjai. Music that has undergone development and changes, both from the form of the show and from the musical side, especially the instrument. Qasidah, which was originally only known as music used in Islamic boarding schools and served primarily as a means of praising Allah SWT and the Prophet Muhammad SAW, has transformed its form into popular performance music and functions as entertainment, as was done by the Nasida Ria group from Semarang in the 70th era. -an.

Qasidah, which is actually a form of Arabic music, entered Indonesia and continues to grow and spread to various regions of the archipelago, including North Sumatra, through Muslim traders who also spread Islamic teachings. Music, which is also used as a means of preaching to spread Islam, is slowly being accepted by the people in Indonesia, and gradually it becomes Islamic music, which then mixes with various cultures of the local community and forms several new forms of music with different names, for example are Nasyid, Marhaban, and Qasidah itself.

The poetry of thola'al badru 'alaina and so on, which is now often sung by the Qasidah team or the ta'lim assembly, is a poem sung by the Muslims in the city of Medina when welcoming the Prophet Muhammad when he first moved to Medina. Qasidah itself comes from Arabic which means "song" or singing. But the meaning of Qasidah then refers to songs and music with its own characteristics, namely songs with Islamic themes or Islamic da'wah. Qasidah also shows an artistic group with tools. The main music is tambourine and tambourine, and a Qasidah art group consists of five to six people playing tambourines of various sizes, from the smallest to the largest tambourine, and added with a kecrek (such as tambourine) instrument.

From the above explanation, it can be seen that there are similarities in instrumentation and musicality between Marhaban and Qasidah. It can be said that Marhaban is another form of Qasidah music that has already emerged and developed in Indonesia. This can be seen from the form of presenting music in groups and using a tambourine musical instrument, rhymes or song sentences that are used which have the meaning of a welcome greeting, and also the purpose of the music being served is to welcome guests who come. Marhaban is another form of Qasidah music, which has adapted to local culture, namely the Malay culture in North Sumatra, to form a new art. Thus, it can be concluded that Marhaban is a form of continuity of the early Qasidah music in Indonesia.

4. Conclusion

Marhaban is a form of musical performance in Islam, which puts forward expressions and greetings for invited guests at the inviting person's house, when carrying out a celebration, such as a wedding party, circumcision party, thanksgiving and the naming of new born babies. In its presentation, this music also uses additional lyrics taken from the Al Barzanji book.

This form of musical presentation has a close relationship musically with Qasidah music, such as the use of the tambourine instrument, the use of poetry, and the presentation which is done in groups. This is sufficient to prove that Marhaban is a form of continuity in the early Qasidah music.

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