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Research Article

Islamic Legal Review of the Tradition of *Laylat al-Henna* in Wedding Ceremonies in Arab-Indonesia Descendant Families in Palu City

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Abstract: One tradition that is currently still in effect and practiced by the community is the tradition of using henna in wedding ceremonies. The issue that arises in this henna usage tradition is that, with the advancement of technology, various types of henna have proliferated in the market, some of which are mixed with chemicals that can form a waterproof layer, thus making the color of the henna more intense and accelerating absorption. The diversity of henna types has led many people to doubt the naturalness of the ingredients contained in henna paste and may impede purity in worship. The purpose of this research is to analyze the issues related to the use of henna in the context of Islamic law, using empirical legal research methods and a sociology of Islamic law approach. This research then produces several conclusions: first, there are two types in the categorization of henna paste, namely natural henna with a reddish-brown color and black henna, which is the result of mixing natural henna with chemical substances. In the community's view, black henna should not be used. Second, the tradition of using henna in the Arab-Indonesian community in Palu is referred to as *Laylat al-Henna*, which has symbolic

meaning, such as the hope that the prospective bride will soon have offspring, bringing happiness to the family that will be established. The Laylat al-Henna tradition falls into the category of 'urf shahih because it does not contradict Sharia, both in the text and other legal sources.

Keywords: Palu; Henna; Islamic Law; Laylat al-Henna; wedding ceremony

Abstrak: Penggunaan henna dalam upacara pernikahan masih menjadi tradisi yang umum di masyarakat. Masalah yang muncul dalam tradisi penggunaan henna ini adalah, dengan kemajuan teknologi, berbagai jenis henna telah banyak beredar di pasaran, beberapa di antaranya dicampur dengan bahan kimia yang dapat membentuk lapisan tahan air sehingga membuat warna henna lebih pekat dan mempercepat penyerapan. Keberagaman jenis henna ini membuat banyak orang meragukan kealamian bahan yang terkandung dalam pasta henna dan dapat menghambat kesucian dalam beribadah. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis permasalahan terkait penggunaan henna dalam konteks hukum Islam, dengan menggunakan metode penelitian hukum empiris dan pendekatan sosiologi hukum Islam. Penelitian ini menghasilkan beberapa kesimpulan: pertama, terdapat dua jenis dalam klasifikasi pasta henna, yaitu henna alami dengan warna merah kecoklatan dan henna hitam yang merupakan hasil campuran henna alami dengan bahan kimia. Dalam pandangan masyarakat, henna hitam sebaiknya tidak digunakan. Kedua, tradisi penggunaan henna di kalangan masyarakat Arab-Indonesia di Palu disebut dengan Laylat al-Henna, yang memiliki makna simbolis, seperti harapan agar calon pengantin segera mendapatkan keturunan, membawa kebahagiaan bagi keluarga yang akan dibentuk. Tradisi Laylat al-Henna termasuk dalam kategori 'urf shahih karena tidak bertentangan dengan syariat, baik dalam teks maupun sumber hukum lainnya.

Kata kunci: Palu; Henna; Hukum Islam; Laylat al-Henna; upacara pernikahan

INTRODUCTION

Society is shaped by customs, norms, and practices in the form of culturally ingrained traditions, as a result of collectively creative thinking that forms a continuous living system. Tradition refers to a custom such as customs, beliefs, teaching practices, and so on that are passed down from ancestors and preserved as a reflection of the life of a cultured society. Stemming from the ethnic, cultural, customary, and religious diversity present in Indonesia, in this context, it is inevitable that marriage practices are also influenced by these traditions.¹

The introduction of henna art used on prospective brides is considered an alternative to the traditional "mokolontigi/mapaci" custom, characterized by the reddish color on the fingers and toes of the prospective bride. Henna is another name for the *Lawsonia Inermis* plant, known as "Hinna" in Arabic. The henna plant can reach a height of 4 to 6 feet and can be found in countries such as Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, Egypt, Syria, Yemen, Morocco,

¹ A. Suryaman Mustari, *Hukum Adat Dulu, Kini Dan Akan Datang* (Makassar: Pelita Pustaka, 2009).

Senegal, Tanzania, Kenya, Iran, and Palestine. Henna is one of the oldest plants used in cosmetics, as it is safe and rarely causes problems for users. The plant is also known for its healing and therapeutic properties. Throughout history, henna has been used as a good hair conditioner for the scalp. Additionally, henna can be used as an ornament for women in special events known as "mehndi."²

In India, mehndi can be worn on a daily basis and is also a tradition that plays a significant role in wedding ceremonies, believed to ward off evil spirits. Indians believe that the darker the mehndi color, the stronger the bond of marriage. Mehndi is applied 2 or 3 days before the wedding ceremony. The bride attends a mehndi party organized with family and close friends. The bride's hands are adorned with mehndi from the fingertips to the elbows and from the toes to the knees. The groom's name is written among the beautiful mehndi designs in a hidden manner and becomes a name-finding quiz game for the bride-to-be. Before the wedding begins, a game is held where the groom must find where his name is hidden first. Sometimes, the hands and feet of the groom are also decorated with mehndi. As mentioned earlier, the author believes that this tradition is one of the important parts of the ceremony and holds a special meaning for the Indian community.³

In the Arab culture, the henna night tradition is a time to prepare for all wedding needs. The henna night is a small family celebration for both prospective spouses. The essence of this tradition is that the hands of the bride-to-be are adorned with henna to enhance their beauty. Typically, those attending the henna night or engagement night are entirely women and young children around the age of five, as during this event, all women before entering the building will appear neat and covered, wearing abayas. In Indonesia, henna is usually made with natural ingredients, specifically crushed henna leaves that produce a distinctive red color. Some henna usage traditions in Indonesia share the same symbolic meaning of purifying oneself by applying crushed henna leaves to the hands of the prospective couple by relatives. Relatives who are asked to apply the crushed leaves are those who have a lasting and happy married life. It is hoped that the prospective bride and groom can also realize a happy married life. In the Bohgaca tradition during weddings in Acehese society, henna or inai leaves symbolize the wife as a soothing remedy and adornment for the household. The detached henna leaves are then placed in a large plate and pounded. These henna leaves are applied several times until they produce a natural reddish color that looks natural.⁴

The phenomenon of the henna art trend has found its own place among the people of Palu City, especially. Henna art, used as an alternative, has garnered various perspectives among the residents of Palu. For those who do not support henna art, they argue that henna resembles nail polish and cannot be used during prayer. On the other hand, those who support the use of henna argue that it is permissible since there is no prohibition unless the substances in the henna hinder the absorption of ablution water on the skin surface. As time passes, many industries have produced henna paste mixed with

² "Hukum Memakai Henna Dan Pacar Kuku," accessed November 20, 2023, [http://: muslimah.or.id](http://muslimah.or.id).

³ Erika M Nadeak, *MEHENDI (Tradisi Seni Hias Tubuh Dalam Pernikahan Orang India Dan Perkembangannya)* (Medan: Dept. Antropologi Sosial, FISIP, Universitas Sumatera Utara, 2011), hlm. 15.

⁴ Erika M Nadeak, hlm 17.

chemicals that create a waterproof layer, aiming to make the henna color brighter and accelerate absorption. There are two options of henna usually offered by henna artists: natural henna, which has a reddish-brown color, and white henna, made from body painting paint that dries on the skin and leaves no residue.⁵ The diverse types of henna have led many in the community to doubt the naturalness of the ingredients in the henna paste, which may impede purity in worship.

To understand the researcher's position in conducting this study, a literature review was conducted on previous research related to the issue of henna usage in wedding ceremonies. The first study, a thesis by Sylvia titled "Struktur Penyajian Malam bainai Pada Pesta Pernikahan Di Kota Padang" aimed to describe the process of the bainai night in Kubu Dalam Parak Karakah Village, which is a distinctive and culturally preserved feature of the community until now. This research also explained the function of the traditional bainai night ceremony as a means of family communication with the surrounding community.⁶ The similarity between this research and the researcher's study is that both focus on wedding ceremonies. The difference lies in the discussion of the meaning of henna usage, which is redefined by combining both cultures and influenced by the development of time.

Another study, a scientific journal article by Dianti Novia Sari and Drs. H. Muhajir, M.Si titled "Seni Mehendi Pada Komunitas Seniman Henna Art Lamongan (Shalam)," concluded that mehendi art consists of various motifs, both basic and decorative. These motifs are often inspired by magazines or the internet and are developed by individuals creating diverse mehendi decorations. Motifs in mehendi have their own philosophy, and the choice of motifs and depicted objects depends on the preferences of the creator or the client.⁷ The similarity with the current research lies in the discussion of henna art, while the difference is in the data compilation method, where the previous research only described types of henna and their usage, while the current research describes henna in the context of Islamic law.

From the literature review, several studies on the tradition of henna usage in weddings were found. However, the researcher only presented two studies that closely aligned with the current discussion. It is evident that there is no specific study discussing the Laylat al-Henna tradition among Arab-Indonesian descendants in Palu City who still maintain their traditions amidst the onslaught of industrial technological developments and varied societal perspectives today, viewed from the perspective of Islamic law. Thus, based on the background description, the researcher considers it important to understand the community's opinion on henna usage in wedding ceremonies and to analyze the use of henna in the wedding procession using a sociology of Islamic law approach.

⁵ Najla Mulachela, Peracik Henna "Wawancara," (Palu, 24 Januari 2022).

⁶ Sylvia, "Struktur Penyajian Malam Bainai Pada Pesta Pernikahan Di Kelurahan Kubu Dalam Parak Karakah Kecamatan Padang Timur Kota Padang" (Universitas Negeri Padang, Padang, 2014).

⁷ Dianti Novia Sari dan Muhajir, "Seni Mehendi Pada Komunitas Seniman Henna Art Lamongan (Shalam)," *Jurnal Seni Rupa* 9, no. 2 (2021).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Tradition of Using *Henna* in Weddings

1. History of the Use of *Henna* in Weddings

Henna is a flowering plant that has been used since ancient times to color the skin, hair, nails, and wool. Henna belongs to the shrub category, with white-colored flowers and small brown fruits resembling capsules. Inside these fruits, there are numerous seeds and leaves from the henna plant, believed to symbolize fertility, prosperity, and love. In Indonesia, henna is one of the ways to enhance one's appearance, alongside using makeup or daily accessories. Henna also plays a crucial role in various special occasions such as weddings, pre and post-birth ceremonies, as well as on festive days or other special celebrations. When applied to the body, particularly on a woman's hands, henna is adorned from the fingertips to the elbows and on the feet from the toes to the knees, with some opting for half of that coverage. Henna comes from the Arabic word for the *Lawsonia inermis* plant, or the hina tree. Henna has the Latin name "*Alkanna/Lawsonia inermis*." In Indonesia, henna is known by other names such as inai, paci, and pacar, which are made from the natural leaves of the henna plant. Despite its temporary nature, henna can last up to a month. The brown color produced by henna gradually fades and disappears from the skin's surface over time.⁸

The use of henna dates back around 5000 years. Some historians suggest that the Mughal people brought henna to India. Initially, henna was used to adorn the body and enhance skin beauty, a practice known in various countries such as Africa, the Mediterranean Peninsula, the Middle East, and India. In some countries, henna plays a crucial role in wedding ceremonies, where the bride is adorned with various decorative motifs that represent the distinctive characteristics of that particular country. Aside from its aesthetic purposes, applying henna on the body is also believed to have symbolic meanings, such as warding off evil and disturbances, as well as bringing good luck to the wearer. This belief has given rise to a tradition known as Henna Belly, where pregnant women receive henna paintings on their stomachs a few days before giving birth to protect the unborn baby. The popularization of henna art, also known as mehndi, is largely attributed to India. In India, henna is frequently used as a medium for enhancing beauty, alongside makeup and jewelry, making henna a common sight in daily life in India.⁹

Apart from India, countries such as the Arabian Peninsula, the Middle East, North Africa, Eastern Europe, and Southeast Asia have also embraced the practice of henna art as part of their traditions and complementary accessories for important events. In Arab countries, including Yemen, applying henna on the bride's hands is believed to be a symbol of fertility. The darker the color, the better it is considered for the bride's fertility. In the

⁸ Erika M Nadeak, *MEHENDI (Tradisi Seni Hias Tubuh Dalam Pernikahan Orang India Dan Perkembangannya)*, hlm. 16.

⁹ Morief Akbar, *Henna Design Untuk Pernikahan, Life Style, Dan Special Events* (Jakarta: PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2019), hlm. 8.

Arab world, the tradition of the henna night is a bachelor party tradition, when compared to Western culture. During this mini celebration, the entire family, friends, and relatives gather at the homes of the couple to celebrate before the wedding takes place. The patterns of henna in weddings also depend on the occasion, with henna for the night and henna for the day. Guests participating in the wedding henna event use henna as a visible symbol of their participation in the celebration.¹⁰

Most traditional wedding ceremonies in various regions incorporate the use of henna leaves as part of the customary wedding rituals, each with its own unique meaning and significance. Some traditional wedding ceremonies that use henna or inai as an integral part of their rituals include the Bohgaca night in Aceh, Mokolontigi in Central Sulawesi, Malam Bainai in Minangkabau, and Mapacci in Makassar.

2. Use of Henna

a. Body Carving Art

Henna is part of a body art form, more commonly known as body painting, where the wearer's body is adorned with a paste, commonly referred to as henna paste, on the skin's surface, leaving stain marks that resemble the drawn or formed motifs. Henna art is a predominantly improvisational, intuitive, and imaginative form of art created by henna artists. In contemporary art, painters can use not only canvases but also various other media, as contemporary art is no longer restricted by medium limitations. Therefore, a woman's body can serve as a canvas for painting. Painting on the body, also known as body painting, is one form of contemporary painting (modern art) that is currently gaining popularity in modern society. Henna is a unique form of painting art, created for hands as a means of expression and also as an expression of love. It involves human touch as a medium of expression. Essentially, humans communicate not only through dialogue but also express their souls through symbols that carry many spiritual messages. Through these symbols, they communicate and get to know each other during henna celebrations. From hand to hand, henna is poured into patterns, each carrying personal meanings and reinforcing its definition as a tradition.¹¹

The use of henna on the feet is placed there for a reason, as henna is known for its cooling properties used to cool the soles of the feet from the heat of desert sands during journeys. This was the initial reason for using henna on the feet. Besides, henna is also a means to beautify the feet and enhance their aesthetics. In Indian wedding traditions, when the bride takes her first steps into the groom's house, it is considered a significant opportunity, indicating that they bring something more important than themselves. This practice blends feminist and masculine principles with a representation of the universe. Henna art is created to accentuate beauty. In the traditional method, painting henna on hands starts from the fingertips, coloring the tips of the fingers with henna, and can also include coloring the nails. The use of henna on fingertips is a way to emphasize feminine qualities.¹²

¹⁰ Morief Akbar, hlm. 12.

¹¹ Morief Akbar.

¹² Morief Akbar.

Image 1 : Henna on Hands and Feet



Source:@fathyahenna

b. Medical Treatment

In the medical world, henna has many benefits because the leaves contain renin and tannin, known as henatanin. The henna flower itself contains oil with a very fragrant aroma. Additionally, henna flowers also contain vitamins A, B, and lonene. Henna plants can heal various diseases, such as:¹³

- 1) Relieving pain from burns by applying finely crushed "henna leaves."
- 2) Accelerating the healing process of wounds, especially chronic wounds and ulcers.
- 3) Treating nosebleeds from Arterial blood vessels (front of the small area) by applying henna powder to the bleeding area using a cotton bud.
- 4) Treating boils or hot stabbing swellings by applying finely crushed "henna leaves."
- 5) Promoting, nourishing, and beautifying hair.
- 6) Treating varicose veins, especially for closing wounds, as it contains hanatanin substance that quickly adheres when using henna leaf powder processed into a thick paste.
- 7) Improving skin texture to appear healthy and soft.

Ibnul Qoyyim explained that there are 20 types of headaches. Henna leaves are a remedy for one of the various types of headaches, namely headaches caused by heat. In such conditions, henna leaves are very useful when ground and mixed with vinegar, then applied to the forehead.¹⁴

3. Types of Henna

¹³ Husain Abdul Hamid, *Keajaiban Pengobatan Herbal* (Jakarta: Pustaka Al-Kautsar, 2009), hlm, 99.

¹⁴ Abdul Basith Muhammad Sayyid, *Terapi Herbal Dan Pengobatan Nabi Muhammad Shallallaahu "alaihi Wasallam* (Jakarta: Penebar Plus, 2008), hlm, 277.

There are three types of henna: Natural fresh henna is reddish-brown or maroon and does not have colors other than brown and red. Instant henna made from natural henna powder and black henna, which is henna mixed with chemical dyes. The one often referred to as white henna is a body painting paint commonly chosen to enhance the appearance of a bride's hands. It has the same type as nail polish on the nails, only lasting one to two days if not removed.

Image 2: Natural Henna, Instant/Black Henna, and White Henna



Source: @fathyahenna

The following are ways to distinguish natural henna from instant henna and black henna:

Table 1: Comparison of Henna Types

Comparator	Natural Henna	Black Henna	White Henna
Shape	In the form of powder, so it needs to be mixed first, and in the form of henna paste in a cone or ready-to-use henna container with the application technique of drawing or painting.	In the form of liquid, black in color, not thick like paste, and can be directly used with the painting technique.	In the form of a liquid, white in color with a paste-like texture, can be directly used with the painting technique.
Material	Made using herbal ingredients such as henna powder (<i>Lawsonia inermis</i>) mixed with squeezed lemon juice, essential oil (lavender oil), and sugar.	Made with a mixture of chemicals such as gel with a smaller composition of natural henna, then mixed with chemical dyes called para-phenylenediamine (PPD).	Made with the chemical composition of body painting.

Final Color after Drying	The color produced after application is orange-yellow on the skin, and the color will darken to reddish-brown within 24 hours depending on the amount of henna applied.	The color produced will remain black both when applied and after removal.	Does not produce color.
Odor	Smells like traditional herbal medicine and plants.	Smells like chemicals.	Smells like chemical paint.
Color	Reddish-brown.	Black	White or another color
Skin Test	Does not cause irritation.	Possibly can cause irritation.	Sometimes cause irritation.

4. The Tradition of *Laylat al-Henna* in Weddings of Arab-Indonesian Descendants

Indonesia is a country rich in culture and traditions, with diverse ethnicities and tribes. One aspect of this diversity, when viewed horizontally based on cultural and ethnic affiliations, is the population in Indonesia with Arab descent. Typically, these Arab descendants trace their roots back to Yemen, particularly Hadramout. The Arab-descendant population constitutes a minority group in Indonesia. Their ancestors embarked on journeys to various regions, aiming primarily for trade and following the west and eastward directions of the wind. Arab traders have been present in Indonesia since the time of the Srivijaya Kingdom around the 7th century AD, dominating trade routes in the western part of Indonesia, including the Malacca Strait during that era.¹⁵ This forced them to wait for quite a while before returning to their home country.

During this waiting period, interactions occurred between the native Arab population and the indigenous Indonesian population. Some traders engaged in missionary activities and also married native girls. Eventually, many of the native Arab residents settled in Indonesia and, through their marriages with indigenous girls, brought the culture of their home country, Arabia, to their surroundings. This encompassed aspects such as clothing, religion, music and musical instruments, food, and various traditions like the tradition of fragranting rooms with incense or bakhour, the tradition of arranged marriages or *ta'aruf*, and wedding traditions. In the wedding tradition, there is an interesting

¹⁵ Badri Yatim, *Sejarah Peradaban Islam* (Jakarta: Grafindo Persada, 1993), hlm. 221.

ceremony performed by the bride-to-be, which is still maintained in Indonesia today and is known as the tradition of the engagement night or *laylat al-henna*.¹⁶

The *Laylat al-Henna* tradition, preserved by women of Arab-Indonesian descent, has undergone adaptations to suit Indonesian culture. Some Indonesians are only aware of the engagement night and assume that this tradition is similar to engagement nights such as *widodareni* in Java, *mokolontigi* in Kaili, and *ba inai* in Minang. The engagement night tradition in Indonesia is well-known, but the *Laylat al-Henna* tradition has its own uniqueness in the arrangement of its ceremonies.

Laylat al-Henna is a tradition from Arab countries and some South Asian countries. The term originates from Arabic, where "Laila" means night, and "al-henna" means henna or engagement. *Laylat al-henna* is a ceremony performed by women of Arab descent to celebrate the transition from singlehood. *Laylat al-Henna* is also known as the engagement night, *rahatan*, henna night, or Arabian night. This tradition is marked by the application of henna or inai designs one or two days before the event. This tradition is almost exclusively practiced by women of Arab descent and some South Asian countries residing worldwide. The *Laylat al-Henna* event is attended only by women, including friends and family of the bride-to-be and the groom's family. Unlike Indonesian culture, Arabs, with 22 states, share similarities in carrying out pre-wedding traditions like *Laylat al-Henna*. Although each country has its unique characteristics in the ceremony, the tradition is still observed as a necessary part of the pre-wedding process. The sequence of activities in the Arab wedding culture involves four phases: *ta'aruf* (acquaintance), proposal and dowry, *Laylat al-Henna*, and the marriage contract and wedding reception.¹⁷

As explained by Najla Muchela in the interview results, *Laylat al-Henna* is held at night. Before *Laylat al-Henna*, henna is applied to the hands and feet. In contrast, in Saudi Arabia, henna is used during the *Laylat al-Henna* ceremony. The henna used by the bride-to-be signifies her fertility and the transition from singlehood. To celebrate the end of her single life, *Laylat al-Henna* is organized. The *Laylat al-Henna* ceremony takes place after the gathering of family, friends, and even those not of Arab descent is allowed to attend this celebration. Usually, the family of the prospective groom will arrive once the guests have filled the residence of the prospective bride. If the groom's family has arrived, the prospective bride will come out of her room and sit on the decorated throne. When the prospective bride comes out of her room, there will be shouts of blessings (*shalawat*) from the family joyfully welcoming the end of the single life of the prospective bride. Some may greet the prospective bride with belly dance, escorting her to her seat, which is usually performed by unmarried friends or siblings. In the Arab descendant community in Palu city, they typically use *hadroh* percussion to accompany the prospective bride.¹⁸

After the prospective bride reaches her seat, a henna mixture, flower arrangements (*rampai*), and tissues are prepared in front of her. Then, Arabic-themed music and other songs, often of Malay *dangdut* genre, are played. The initial part of the *Laylat al-Henna*

¹⁶ Wafa Nasir Alwini, "Pemertahanan Tradisi Laylat Al-Henna Oleh Perempuan Keturunan Arab Indonesia Di Otista" (Universitas Indonesia, 2015), hlm. 35.

¹⁷ Wafa Nasir Alwini, hlm. 40.

¹⁸ Najla Mulachela, Peracik Henna "Wawancara," (Palu, 24 Januari 2022).

process involves applying a little henna on the palm of the prospective bride, followed by the gift of a gold bracelet as a symbol to navigate the ship of marriage from the mother of the prospective bride. Next, the henna application is continued by the family of the prospective bride, consisting of siblings, aunts, grandmothers, and cousins. This is followed by the henna application by the mother of the prospective groom, accompanied by the gift of a gold ring as a symbol of binding the status of the prospective bride to her son. All henna applications are then removed, and each family member who applied henna to the hands of the prospective bride is given a small bag of flower arrangements. The Arab community in Palu believes that if a young girl keeps the scented flower arrangements given by the prospective bride in her room, the prospective bride will soon follow to get married.

The event continues with a dinner provided for the guests and both families. Usually, the dinner event during the Laylat al-Henna celebration is served in a buffet style. The mother of the prospective groom will take photos with her future daughter-in-law before leaving the Laylat al-Henna ceremony, cheered on by the attending guests. *The Laylat al-Henna* ceremony continues even after the family of the prospective groom has left. The friends of the prospective bride will engage in dance competitions, an event eagerly anticipated by the guests, and the prospective bride also joins in the dance with her friends. In Palu city, Laylat al-Henna is also enlivened with the recitation of hadrah accompanied by pantun (rhymes) performed by the family and friends of the prospective bride.

This is symbolic of the fact that the prospective bride will soon embark on married life, focusing on her new family, and will have fewer opportunities to meet with her family and friends. Therefore, this dance marks the beginning of the end of the enjoyment of a girl's time with her friends. However, this does not mean that after marriage, she cannot meet with her friends; it just means that there will be less time spent with friends compared to her unmarried days. The dance event carries a slightly emotional and joyful atmosphere. After this, the Laylat al-Henna ceremony comes to an end. The purpose of conducting the Laylat al-Henna tradition in some families of the Arab-Indonesian community, among other things, is to demonstrate social status and strengthen their position in the hierarchy. The Arab-Indonesian community believes in organizing the Laylat al-Henna ceremony to ensure that the prospective bride becomes pregnant soon after marriage and gives birth to the firstborn, preferably a male who will dominate the household. Additionally, it serves to indicate that their marriage will be a happy one.¹⁹

Analysis of the Review of 'Urf in the Tradition of Henna Usage in Arab-Indonesian Wedding Customs in Palu City

1. The use of henna in Islamic Law

Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, recommended women to use henna. According to Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, she said:

¹⁹ Sarihan Al-Habsyi, Pelaksana Tradisi *Laylat al-Henna* "Wawancara," (Palu, 26 Januari 2022).

أَوْمَأَتْ امْرَأَةٌ مِنْ وَرَاءِ سِتْرٍ بِيَدِهَا كِتَابٌ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَفَبَضَّ يَدَهُ فَقَالَ: مَا أَدْرِي أَيُّدُ رَجُلٍ أَمْ يَدُ امْرَأَةٍ؟ قَالَتْ: بَلْ امْرَأَةٌ. قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَوْ كَانَتْ امْرَأَةً لَغَيَّرْتُ أَظْفَارَكَ يَعْني بِالْحِنَاءِ

"A woman extended her hand from behind the curtain. In her hand was a written message for the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. It turned out that the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, held her hand and said, 'I do not know whether this is the hand of a man or the hand of a woman.' The woman replied, 'This is the hand of a woman.' So the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said, 'If you are a woman, you should color your fingers with henna.' (Reported by Abu Dawud 4166, classified as sahih by Al-Albani in Sahih Abi Dawud)."²⁰

The permissible use of henna as allowed by Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is currently causing problems because some henna products on the market are mixed with chemicals, resulting in a texture similar to temporary tattoos. This has led to uncertainty among prospective brides regarding the religious ruling on the use of henna, whether it is natural henna, instant henna, or white henna, in the art of henna painting during weddings. Many are unaware of the purposes behind the traditions of using henna in weddings. This study focuses on the henna tradition, specifically the laylat al-henna tradition, among the Arab-Indonesian community in the city of Palu.

Islam prohibits the use of tattoos, as mentioned in the hadith of Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him:

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَيْسَى وَعُثْمَانُ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ - الْمَعْنَى - قَالََا حَدَّثَنَا جَرِيرٌ عَنْ مَنْصُورٍ عَنْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ عَلْقَمَةَ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، قَالَ: لَعَنَ اللَّهُ الْوَأَشِمَاتِ وَالْمُسْتَوَشِمَاتِ. قَلَّ مُحَمَّدٌ وَالْوَأَصِلَاتِ وَقَالَ عُثْمَانُ وَالْمَتَنَامِصَاتِ

"Muhammad bin Isa and Utsman bin Abi Syaibah narrated to us in meaning, both of them said: Jarir narrated to us from Manshur from Ibrahim from Alqomah from Abdullah. He said, 'Allah has cursed the woman who tattoos and the woman who seeks to be tattooed'"²¹

Henna painting is different from nail polish and tattoo art, whether contemporary or temporary tattoos. This difference can be observed in the tools used, techniques, materials, meanings, and duration of use. For further clarification, refer to the table:

Table 2: Differences between Henna, Nail Polish, and Tattoos

No	Differences	Henna	Kuteks/nail polish	Tatto
1.	Tools	In the form of a tool made of plastic material	Instant brush contained within the nail polish container.	Sharp tools such as needles, animal bones, and also using machine

²⁰ Muhammad Nashiruddin al-Albani, *Shahih Sunan Abu Daud, Kitab Al-Tarajul Bab Fi Silati Al-Sya'ri*, no. 3638 (Jakarta: Pustaka Azam, 2006), hlm, 518.

²¹ Muhammad Nashiruddin al-Albani, hlm, 581.

		commonly known as a henna cone		tools made of plastic material.
2.	Techniques	Henna paste is applied to the skin and nails, leaving marks resembling the drawn motifs	Applying nail polish to the nail surface. Can only be used on the nail surface.	Tattooing tools are inserted into the body, then drawn and colored with pigments.
3.	Materials	Henna leaves or henna powder, commonly known in Indonesia as 'daun pacar' or 'daun inai.'	Made from polymer film-forming chemicals dissolved in easily evaporating organic solvents.	Color pigments or colorful pigments in the form of ink.
4.	Meanings	Holds the meaning of a symbol of luck for the wedding couple. Acts as a symbol to have good offspring.	Beautifies nails.	Symbolizes special skills. Used for beautification as an aesthetic purpose. Indicates social status.
5.	Duration	Carved henna on the body usually lasts only three to seven days.	Instant, easy to apply, and easy to remove.	Tattoos engraved on the body are permanent and difficult to remove.
6.	Absorption on the skin	Absorbs with natural ingredients found in henna leaves.	Does not absorb into the nails or skin.	Does not involve an absorption process but a direct injection into the dermis of the skin. In contrast, temporary tattoos only adhere to the surface of the skin.

After observing the differences between henna, nail polish, and tattoos, it can be concluded that henna is distinct from nail polish and tattoos. In certain aspects, especially in terms of absorption on the skin, henna can be used during ablution (wudhu) because it does not create a barrier to the contact of ablution water with the skin. This is unlike nail polish, which covers skin pores, and contemporary tattoos that are permanent and embedded into the skin, as well as temporary tattoos, which are sticker-like and adhere to the skin's surface.

The term 'henna' here refers to natural henna and black henna because there is a natural color absorption process or a mixture of henna into the skin. The original form of henna remaining on the skin's surface does not obstruct the contact of ablution water on body parts; rather, it is a residue from the absorption of natural henna colors. In instant black henna paste, there are chemical substances such as para-phenylenediamine (PPD) to expedite the absorption process of henna color into the skin, resulting in a more intense color. It is this chemical substance that produces residual henna absorption in the form of peel-off stickers, ultimately resembling temporary tattoos. Excessive use of para-phenylenediamine (PPD) in the henna paste mixture can cause irritation, such as peeling scar tissue on the skin. On the other hand, white henna, originally made from body painting paint, cannot be used during ablution because its material is similar to nail polish, adhering only to the skin's surface and hindering the contact of ablution water on body parts.

2. Analysis of 'Urf in the Usage of Henna Art in the Laylat al-Henna Wedding Tradition

Islamic law recognizes 'urf (customary practices) as one of the methods of legal determination, acknowledging the fact that customs or traditions have played a significant role in regulating human life within the community. In society, there are numerous customs and traditional rules that have been passed down from ancestors and preserved over generations. Traditions have become essential in guiding actions and providing an identity.

In Indonesia, Islam has been considered relatively tolerant towards the implementation of culture in community life. This is done to harmonize the development of Islamic legal values found in the Quran and Hadith with local traditions or customary laws. The aim is to absorb local culture and make it part of Islamic law, bringing it closer to the awareness of the community. Islam regulates every aspect of the life of its followers, even small matters such as women's beauty care are carefully considered. Decorating oneself is seen as one of the duties of a wife towards her husband, and using henna is one way of adorning oneself. The use of henna is considered a muammalah matter, and its original ruling is permissible (mubah). Islam, as a religion of mercy for all creation, does not prohibit the practice of customs or traditions as long as they do not contradict Islamic law, whether from the Quran or Hadith. As long as customs or traditions align with Islamic law, they receive recognition from the Sharia. Customs that can be a legal basis are those that do not conflict with Sharia, provide benefits, and do not damage faith. However, if a custom contradicts Sharia, it is not allowed.

The tradition of laylat al-henna or henna night among the Arab-Indonesian community in Palu holds a significant place in the wedding procession, and in some cases, it is obligatory. The symbolic meaning of using henna is to express hope that the prospective bride will soon have children who can continue the lineage, indicating happiness in the upcoming marital life. This symbolic meaning has made laylat al-henna continue to be practiced even outside the original region where this tradition was first conducted. Based on the data obtained after conducting research, to establish the law based on 'urf, it needs to be examined with three categories of 'urf.

First, in terms of its object, the tradition of laylat al-henna / the use of henna art in weddings is classified as 'urf fi'li because it is a tradition involving actions that have generally been agreed upon and practiced by the Arab-Indonesian community for a long time.

Second, in terms of the scope of its usage, the tradition of laylat al-henna falls under the category of 'urf al-khass because it applies only to specific cultural communities.

Third, in terms of its Sharia validity, the tradition of laylat al-henna, using instant henna that differs from tattoos and does not hinder ablution water on the skin, still has the original ruling of henna, which is permissible (mubah). The tradition of laylat al-henna also has a meaningful aspect of hope and prayers for the prospective bride, which is beneficial for enhancing the appearance of the bride without compromising faith.

Therefore, the tradition of laylat al-henna / the use of henna art in weddings falls under the category of 'urf shahih. This is because the symbolic meaning of the tradition does not contradict Sharia, both from the Quran and Hadith, and the use of henna is deemed permissible due to the recommendation of Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The implementation of the tradition of laylat al-henna is also acceptable by common sense.

CONCLUSION

After presenting the researcher's findings on the tradition of using henna in weddings among the Arab-Indonesian community in the city of Palu from the perspective of Islamic law, based on observations, research, interviews, and analysis, the researcher can draw the following conclusions:

1. There are two types of henna: natural fresh henna or instant henna made from natural henna powder, and black henna, which is henna mixed with chemical dyes. Natural fresh henna has a reddish-brown or maroon color and does not have colors other than brown and red. The so-called white henna is actually body painting, often chosen to enhance the appearance of the hands of prospective brides. It is similar to nail polish on nails and lasts only one to two days if not removed.
2. The tradition of using henna among the Arab-Indonesian community in Palu is called Laylat al-Henna or Henna Night, which is an ancestral tradition practiced by the Arab community. The symbolic meaning of using henna is a hope for the soon-to-be bride to have children who can continue the lineage, indicating happiness in the upcoming marital life. This symbolic meaning has made Laylat al-Henna continue to be practiced even outside the original region where this tradition was first conducted.

3. The tradition of using henna art in weddings/laylat al-henna falls under the category of 'urf shahih. This is because the symbolic meaning of the Laylat al-Henna tradition does not contradict Sharia, both from the Quran and Hadith, and the use of henna is deemed permissible due to the recommendation of Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The implementation of the Laylat al-Henna tradition is also acceptable by common sense. But with the condition that the henna used in this tradition is the natural henna type, which has a reddish-brown color and is not mixed with any chemicals, thus preserving the purity of the henna.

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