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Islamic Syncretism and Barodak Customs: A Study of Cultural Accommodation Theory in Islamic Anthropology

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Abstract	
Keywords: barodak tradition, Islamic values, ritual, ethnography, culture-religion interaction	The barodak tradition practiced by the Tau Samawa community in Sumbawa, West Nusa Tenggara, is a ritual performed before a wedding procession or circumcision, involving the stretching of the bride-to-be's body using a traditional herb called odak. Although it appears as a physical ceremony, barodak carries deep symbolic and spiritual dimensions, and in local belief, neglecting the ritual may lead to physical or metaphysical disturbances. The problem addressed in this study is the tension perceived between the preservation of local cultural rituals and the internalization of Islamic values within contemporary Samawa society. The purpose of this research is to analyze how the Sumbawa community negotiates the relationship between customary practices and Islamic teachings. Using an ethnographic qualitative method, this study employs direct observation, in-depth interviews, and indigenous documentation to explore culture-religion interaction in the barodak ritual. The findings reveal that the community does not reject Islam; instead, they integrate religious principles into customary practices in a harmonious and adaptive manner. The barodak tradition reflects the community's capacity to maintain cultural continuity while upholding spiritual norms. The

	contribution of this research lies in offering a contextual understanding of how local rituals function as a medium for expressing collective cultural and religious identity. It highlights the importance of safeguarding local traditions such as barodak as part of cultural preservation efforts that remain aligned with spiritual and communal values.
	Abstrak
Kata Kunci: barodak tradition, Islamic values, ritual, ethnography, culture–religion interaction	Tradisi barodak pada masyarakat Tau Samawa di Sumbawa, Nusa Tenggara Barat, merupakan ritual adat yang dilakukan sebelum prosesi pernikahan atau khitanan, dengan cara meregangkan tubuh calon pengantin menggunakan ramuan tradisional bernama odak. Meskipun tampak sebagai upacara fisik, barodak sarat dengan makna simbolis dan spiritual, dan dalam kepercayaan lokal, mengabaikan ritual ini dapat memicu gangguan fisik maupun metafisik. Masalah utama yang diangkat dalam penelitian ini adalah dinamika antara pelestarian tradisi lokal dengan pengamalan nilai-nilai Islam dalam masyarakat Samawa kontemporer. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah menganalisis bagaimana masyarakat Sumbawa merespons dan menegosiasikan hubungan antara adat dan ajaran agama. Menggunakan metode kualitatif etnografi, penelitian ini memanfaatkan observasi langsung, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi lokal untuk menggali interaksi budaya-agama dalam pelaksanaan ritual barodak. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa masyarakat tidak menolak nilai-nilai Islam, tetapi justru mengakomodasinya secara harmonis dalam praktik adat. Tradisi barodak mencerminkan kemampuan komunitas dalam menjaga kesinambungan budaya sembari tetap memegang prinsip spiritual. Kontribusi penelitian ini terletak pada pemberian pemahaman kontekstual tentang bagaimana ritual lokal berfungsi sebagai ruang ekspresi identitas budaya dan keagamaan kolektif. Temuan ini menegaskan pentingnya upaya pelestarian tradisi seperti barodak sebagai bagian dari warisan budaya yang tetap selaras dengan nilai-nilai spiritual dan kebersamaan masyarakat.
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Introduction

Indonesia is known as a country that has a very rich diversity of ethnicities, cultures, and traditions. One of these cultural riches is the barodak tradition that originated from the Samawa tribe on Sumbawa Island, West Nusa Tenggara Province (NTB). In the customs of the Tau Samawa (Sumbawa people), there are a series of processions that must be carried out before the wedding, one of which is the barodak ceremony, which is an important part of the life cycle of the local community.

The barodak tradition is a ceremony to lay the body of the bride-to-be using a traditional herb called odak, which is made from natural ingredients typical of Sumbawa and specially processed. This ritual is carried out on the night before the marriage contract or before the circumcision procession. During the implementation, the role of *ina odak* (scrubber) is very important because she is in charge of covering the body of the bride-to-be. This event is also usually accompanied by old songs, which are traditional songs typical of Sumbawa, which enrich the sacred atmosphere in the ritual.

Some people in Sumbawa believe that if this tradition is not carried out, there will be a disease called *rabuya* – such as a lump on the head, itching, trance, bleeding from the eyes when crying, to the condition of the ribs that protrude unnaturally. This belief is related to the spiritual consequences of violating the stages in the customary life cycle.

Studies on the interaction between Islam and local customs have been widely conducted in various regions of Indonesia such as slametan in Java, Hindu-Islamic customs in Bali, and Sasak traditions in Lombok and Minangkabau in Sumatra. However, a special study of barodak customs and their interaction with Islamic teachings in Sumbawa is still very limited. In fact, barodak is a local practice that is full of spiritual and cultural meaning. In this context, syncretism is an important issue to study because it shows how society processes the relationship between religion and tradition in a creative and harmonious way.

Several studies have tried to raise the barodak tradition, such as those conducted by Wardi (2019), Syaiful (2021), and an initial study by Geertz (1960) on syncretism in Java. However, the study has not in-depth used cultural accommodation theory as an analytical approach, and most of it is still descriptive. Therefore, a sharper theoretical approach is needed to understand the dynamics between barodak and Islamic customs in the context of Sumbawa society.

This research is relevant because it offers a new perspective that can broaden the horizon of the study of Islamic syncretism in the archipelago, especially in areas that have not been explored academically such as Sumbawa. More than just cultural preservation, this study also aims to understand how Islam can interact flexibly with local traditions without creating a conflict of values.

In particular, it is important to answer how the people of Sumbawa maintain their cultural identity in the midst of the current of Islamization. The barodak tradition not only serves as a cultural symbol, but also becomes a complex space for religious expression. Some conservative Muslim groups may view some elements of these customs as contrary to the sharia, leading to debate about the tradition's position in Islam. The question of the form of interaction between Islam and barodak—whether in the form of accommodation, adaptation, or conflict—needs to be answered systematically.

The context of Sumbawa has not been used as much as an object of Islamic anthropological study like other regions in Indonesia. The barodak tradition can be an important case in applying the theory of cultural accommodation (Gibb, 1957; Woodward, 1989) which describes the negotiation process between religious values and traditions. This theory allows for a more proportionate understanding without prioritizing any one element as dominant. That way, this study will add theoretical treasures to the study of Islam in the archipelago, which is often focused on Java and Sumatra.

From a practical perspective, understanding of Islamic syncretism and local customs such as *barodak* is important in the midst of modernization trends that have the potential to erode local culture. Without proper understanding, there is a dualistic risk: local culture is marginalized, or Islamic teachings are perceived as repressive to tradition. In Islam's own view, there is no teaching that absolutely rejects culture as long as it does not contradict the sharia. The principle of Islam as a religion that is relevant throughout time and place (*al-Islām ṣāliḥ li-kulli zamān wa makān*) is the basis for this integration.

The results of this research are expected to be a guide for local governments, customary institutions, and religious institutions in designing cultural preservation policies that are synergistic with Islamic values. For the young generation of Sumbawa, this research is also important to build awareness that traditional heritage can live in harmony within the framework of Islam.

Method

Methodologically, this study uses a qualitative approach with ethnographic methods, as it allows researchers to make direct observations of *barodak practices* and their meaning for local communities (Spradley, 1979; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). The research is qualitative descriptive with an Islamic anthropological style, which focuses on the reciprocal relationship between Islamic teachings and local cultural practices. The ethnographic approach is used to understand *barodak* not only as a traditional ritual, but also as a social text that represents the dynamics of the religious and cultural values of the Samawa people.

Data is collected through three main methods: **Observation of participants**, to observe firsthand the symbolism, procession, and narrative that arises in the implementation of *barodak*. **In-depth interviews**, with traditional leaders, religious leaders, and ceremonial actors (*ina odak* and the bride's family), in order to explore the symbolic and theological meaning of this tradition. **Documentation study**, by examining written sources such as traditional

manuscripts, local government archives, and academic literature on Islam and local culture.

Data analysis was carried out with a thematic approach, to identify key themes such as *Islamization*, *cultural accommodation*, and *value syncretism*. The interpretation of symbols is carried out using an interpretive hermeneutic approach (Geertz, 1973), which interprets each customary element as part of the spiritual and social discourse of the community. The validity of the research results is strengthened through triangulation of data, researchers, and theories (Denzin, 1978). This technique ensures that interpretation is not subjective, but based on strong empirical data and verified theoretical analysis.

Results and Discussion

History and Context of Barodak Customs.

Barodak customs are one of the important traditions of the Sumbawa people which have become an inseparable part of their cultural identity. Historically, the barodak custom has its roots in the traditional social system of Sumbawa which is very thick with the values of mutual cooperation and respect for ancestors (Koentjaraningrat, 2009). This practice emerged as a form of gratitude, a plea for safety, and an effort to maintain harmony between humans, nature, and the transcendent power that the community trusts. Wardi (2019) noted that barodak customs have deep symbolism related to the life cycle of human life, such as birth, marriage, and death. The basic values carried out in the barodak custom include communal solidarity, respect for ancestral traditions (pabisen), and cosmic balance, which are the principles of life of the Sumbawa people.

Barodak customs have undergone a shift in form and meaning over time. In the past, this procession was carried out behind closed doors on the attic of the house and was only attended by close family. Ina Odak – a trusted old woman – was in charge of scrubbing the bride-to-be with odak potion, a few weeks before the wedding. However, modernization has turned the implementation into an

open event on stage, involving the participation of the wider community. In fact, the procession is now not only carried out by Ina Odak, but also by respected figures. In addition, the influence of Islam also influences the form of its implementation, such as the obligation to wear closed clothes to maintain the aurah (Interview with Enong, June 13, 2025). These changes show the flexibility of culture in responding to the dynamics of the times while maintaining the core values of tradition (Woodward, 1989).

Aspects	Traditional Barodak (Past)	Modern Barodak (Current)
Place of Execution	Done in a closed manner above the attic of the house	Held openly on the public stage
Participant/Participant	Only attended by close family	Involving the wider community
Perpetrators of Sweep	Performed by <i>Ina Odak</i> (trusted old woman)	It can be done by traditional leaders or respected religious leaders
Implementation Time	A few weeks before the wedding	Generally close to the day of the contract, even the day before
Clothing	Not too bound by formal rules	Following Islamic norms: closed clothes to maintain the aurat
Meaning and Value	Focus on spiritual purification and the inner readiness of the bride-to-be	It still contains spiritual meaning, but it also becomes a symbol of public culture
External Influences	Thick with local customs and beliefs	Influenced by Islamic values and cultural modernization
Social Function	As part of the sacred family rites	Becoming a place for community participation and preservation of local culture

Table 1. Summarize the process of shifting barodak customs in Sumbawa.

Philosophically, the barodak custom is interpreted as a form of self-purification, both physically and spiritually. Through the distribution of traditional herbs on the face and body, people believe in the cleansing of physical impurities and symbolizing inner cleansing. Agus Irawan Sahmi, a local traditional leader, stated that the barodak procession is in harmony with Islamic teachings on the importance of self-purification. He refers to the words of Allah in QS. Al-Baqarah: 222:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

"Indeed, Allah loves those who repent and loves those who purify themselves". (Interview with Agus Irawan Sahmi, June 11, 2025). Thus, this custom represents the integration of local values and Islamic values in the religious practices of the people of Sumbawa.

Barodak customs not only function as cultural rituals, but also have a significant social role in strengthening community cohesion. In the framework of cultural anthropology, Koentjaraningrat (2009) explained that traditions like this function as a vehicle for the formation of collective solidarity and the preservation of social identity. The collective involvement of the community in the implementation of barodak creates strong social bonds between individuals and between generations, strengthens the feeling of togetherness and strengthens the social structure of the Sumbawa community.

The social structure of the Sumbawa community is also reflected in the implementation of the barodak custom, where the roles of traditional leaders, elders, and ordinary citizens are regulated in a hierarchical but harmonious manner. Traditional leaders play an important role as guardians of traditions, spiritual guides, and resolvers of internal conflicts in the community. In this context, Geertz (1973) assesses that indigenous figures function as "interpreters" of symbolic values that govern the social and religious life of local communities. In addition, the barodak custom is also a mechanism for reproducing social and religious values that are constantly updated in the implementation of rituals.

Furthermore, the barodak custom is also a symbol of the expression of social and spiritual values that are inherited from generation to generation. Wardi (2019) emphasized that the people of Sumbawa interpret barodak as a vehicle for social unification and an expression of respect for ancestral heritage values. The values of mutual cooperation, respect for elders, and respect for spiritual power are maintained in every stage of the ceremony. In line with that, Koentjaraningrat (2009) said that local cultural practices such as barodak are a real manifestation of the worldview or people's view of life that combines mythological, social, and spiritual elements.

However, a change in views on barodak also emerged from the younger generation. The results of an interview with M. Iqbal (30 years old), one of the newly married young couples, show that this custom is beginning to lose its spiritual meaning. He said, "Actually, I do barodak just following what my parents say. The spiritual and other impacts are ordinary." (Interview with M. Iqbal, June 11, 2025). This statement describes the process of secularization of cultural meaning in the modern context, as stated by Hefner (2000) in a study of Islamic cultural changes in Indonesia.

Unlike M. Iqbal, Rahman Jamil (32 years old), who was also only married three years ago, actually had a positive experience with barodak. He stated, "The experience was very interesting, because all eyes were on us, as if we were like kings and queens" (Interview with Rahman Jamil, June 11, 2025). However, he also criticized aspects of the implementation of the custom which were considered not in accordance with sharia values, such as physical contact between Ina Odak and the groom. This reflects the existence of a dialectic between cultural preservation and religious commitment, an issue commonly found in local Islamic studies (Geertz, 1960; Woodward, 1989).

Finally, the barodak custom continues to play a vital role in maintaining the cultural identity of the people of Sumbawa. It is not only a representation of traditional values, but also a medium of historical articulation and collective identity. As explained by Geertz (1973), symbolic practices such as barodak are a

"model of reality" and a "model for reality" for the people who live them. Thus, barodak not only connects the past and the present, but also becomes a means for the people of Sumbawa to face the future without losing their cultural roots.

Syncretism Tactics and Cultural Accommodation Processes.

In the course of syncretism between barodak customs and Islamic teachings, there is an identification of customary elements that remain as symbols of cultural identity, in addition to elements that have undergone adjustments in accordance with Islamic values. The elements of barodak customs that have survived are generally aspects that are closely related to local wisdom and the values of mutual cooperation, such as deliberation (*begundem*) which is an important part of decision-making for the implementation of rituals, the use of traditional offerings or food ingredients such as local side dishes, the use of Sumbawa ingredients in the concoction of scrub ingredients for barodak, the use of traditional musical instruments to accompany the event and the pattern of division of roles in the Traditional Social Structure (Koentjaraningrat, 2009). Communal values, respect for ancestors (*pabisen*), and togetherness are the characteristics of barodak customs that are consistently maintained, because they have a deep meaning for the social cohesion of the Sumbawa people (Wardi, 2019).

Meanwhile, traditional elements adapted to Islamic teachings are mainly related to spiritual and ritualistic aspects that previously contained animistic elements. For example, traditional mantras that used to be often said as a form of supplication to subtle spirits or supernatural powers are now replaced by Islamic prayers, such as the recitation of Qur'anic verses or the prayer of the Prophet (Woodward, 2011). In addition, religious leaders (*ulama*) are now actively involved in the barodak procession as prayer leaders or spiritual advisors, which previously was only the responsibility of traditional leaders. This accommodation process shows how the people of Sumbawa are able to combine

customs and Islam without sacrificing cultural identity that has been inherited from generation to generation.

Category	Preserved Customary Elements	Customary Elements Adapted to Islam
Social & Cultural Values	Deliberation (<i>begundem</i>) in ritual decision-making	Religious leaders (ulama) are involved in the procession as spiritual advisors
Cultural Materials	The use of local side dishes typical of Sumbawa	Offerings are no longer mystical in content, but rather a symbol of gratitude and alms
Tradition & Symbolism	Odak herb from local natural ingredients	Traditional mantras were replaced with Islamic prayers, Qur'anic verses, and prayers
Music & Ritual Aesthetics	Traditional musical instruments are still used as an accompaniment to the procession	Old song lyrics or songs are cleaned of animism elements and directed to Islamic spiritual nuances
Social Structure & Gender Roles	The division of customary roles is maintained in the social structure (e.g. <i>Ina Odak</i> , the traditional elder)	The spiritual function that was once held by traditional leaders now shares a role with religious leaders in the Islamic context
Cultural Core Values	Respect for ancestors (<i>pabisen</i>), the value of togetherness, and mutual cooperation	Ancestor veneration is reinterpreted as a form of historical appreciation, not supernatural worship

Table 2. Summary of the process of syncretism of barodak and islamic culture

The process of cultural accommodation between barodak customs and Islamic values in Sumbawa is a phenomenon rich in social and symbolic dynamics, which occurs through several important stages: negotiation, reinterpretation of symbols, and transformation of values. Negotiations are the initial stage where traditional leaders and scholars conduct intensive discussions to reach a consensus on customary elements that can be adapted to Islamic principles. In many cases, traditional leaders play the role of guardians of traditional values, while scholars function as directors of religious norms that are the basis for customary adjustment (Woodward, 2011). This process is not one-sided, but rather a social dialogue that respects differences in values and views, resulting in a compromise that combines the two value systems.

Furthermore, the reinterpretation of symbols occurred as a concrete step to reinterpret the elements of the barodak custom to be in harmony with Islamic teachings. An example is the replacement of traditional mantras that are considered contrary to monotheism into prayers that are in accordance with Islamic law (Wardi, 2019). This reinterpretation shows the cultural flexibility of the Sumbawa people in maintaining their traditional roots while accommodating religious beliefs.

The last stage is the transformation of values, in which traditional values that are considered irrelevant or contrary to Islam undergo a shift in meaning or even eliminated. On the other hand, values that support the spirit of togetherness, mutual cooperation, and respect for others are maintained as the social foundation of society (Geertz, 1973). This accommodation process confirms that the people of Sumbawa do not view Islam as a threat to customs, but as a means of refining local cultural values that continue to develop.

Accommodation Stages	Process Description	Implementation Examples
Negotiation	Social dialogue between traditional leaders and	Deliberation between traditional leaders and

Accommodation Stages	Process Description	Implementation Examples
	scholars to agree on customary elements that can be accommodated according to Islamic principles.	scholars about the limits of the implementation of Barodak.
Reinterpretation of Symbols	Reinterpretation of traditional symbols so as not to contradict the teachings of monotheism and Islamic law.	Replacement of traditional mantras with Islamic prayers (Al-Qur'an and shalawat).
Value Transformation	Customary values that are contrary to Islam are eliminated or replaced, while relevant values are maintained and strengthened.	Loss of elements of animism; strengthening the value of mutual cooperation and respect for others in the form of Islam.

A real-life case study of cultural accommodation in the barodak tradition in Sumbawa shows how the role of traditional leaders and scholars is key in bridging the values of local traditions and Islamic teachings. For example, at the barodak ceremony held in the context of a wedding, traditional leaders such as *Ina Odak are* in charge of leading the implementation of traditional rituals that are full of mutual cooperation and respect for ancestors, while local scholars lead opening and closing prayers using verses of the Qur'an and the Prophet's prayer (Wardi, 2019). The roles of the two are complementary: traditional leaders maintain the preservation of local cultural heritage, while the ulama ensure that the practice does not deviate from the principles of Islamic law.

According to Mr. Ais, basically the implementation of traditional rituals in Sumbawa is always in accordance with Islamic teachings, considering that the majority of the religion of the Sumbawa population is Muslim. (Interview with

Pak Ais, Via WA in Sumbawa, June 11, 2025). Guided by the view of Kyai Syamsul, a scholar in West Sumbawa who stated that it is true that Islamic and traditional culture influence each other, at first customs were more dominant, because the religious understanding of the local people was not yet complete. Along with the establishment of many Islamic educational institutions in Sumbawa, the spread of Islamic values is widespread and the understanding of Islam is more entrenched. (Interview with K.H Syamsul Islamin Lc at Himmatul Ummah Sapugara Islamic Boarding School, June 10, 2025). So it can be found now that Islamic teachings far dominate traditional customs. This is in line with what was once expressed by Bagus Mulyadi, an Indonesian researcher from one of the universities in the UK who revealed that the people of Sumbawa have a philosophy of life that has shown openness. So that the entry of Islamic influence did not experience rejection from the people of Sumbawa.

A concrete example of a barodak ritual that has been "shari'a" is the replacement of traditional mantras that are animistic in nature with the recitation of Islamic prayers that are delivered together before and after the main event. Mystical symbols such as certain offerings that were previously used to invoke the protection of subtle spirits were also removed, replaced by dishes prepared as a form of gratitude to Allah SWT (Woodward, 2011). Traditional music that used to be thick with magical nuances in accordance with sharia (Azra, 2004). This case study shows that cultural accommodation in the barodak tradition is not only an attempt to compromise between traditional and Islamic, but also as a form of cultural innovation that strengthens the identity of the people of Sumbawa as devout Muslims without having to lose their own cultural roots.

Symbolic Meaning and Community Narrative.

The analysis of symbols in the barodak custom, such as colors, movements, and mantras, shows that there is a shift in meaning and reinterpretation in the Islamic perspective that occurs along with the process of cultural accommodation in Sumbawa. The color used in the barodak ceremony,

starting from the clothes, at the beginning of the development of the barodak custom was white, which was then dipped in water that had been mixed with turmeric powder, so that the color of the colored shirt became turmeric yellow. This procession is used to increase sterility, because of the content of turmeric. According to Pak Ais, there is no specific mystical meaning of this color, it's just that it is used for sterility (Interview with Pak Ais, Via WA. June 11, 2025).

As for the materials used to make odak materials, it is always ensured that they come from materials that are avoided from uncleanness, purity and purification, this is proof that Islamic influencers are very thick, because they pay attention to materials that are not only used for traditional purposes, but also afterwards still maintain purity (Interview with Mr. Ais, Via WA. June 11, 2025).

Meanwhile, traditional mantras that in the past were thought to have magical powers to invoke salvation or well-being have now been completely replaced by Islamic prayers, such as the verses of the Qur'an or the prayer of the Prophet. This shows how Islam emphasizes the concept of *monotheism* and rejects elements of animism, so that old mantras are recontextualized as a means of supplication to Almighty Allah (Woodward, 2011). The transformation of this symbol not only replaces the meaning, but also shows the flexibility of the Sumbawa people in accepting the influence of Islam without sacrificing their cultural identity. As noted by Geertz (1973), traditional symbols in the traditional society of the archipelago tend to undergo "cultural reinterpretation" when dealing with new belief systems, and the barodak in Sumbawa is a clear example of this dynamic. Thus, the reinterpretation of the traditional symbols of barodak in an Islamic perspective not only enriches the understanding of local culture, but also affirms the identity of the people of Sumbawa as part of a strong Muslim community rooted in their traditions.

The role of the younger generation in preserving the barodak customs that have undergone the Islamization process is very important in maintaining the continuity of Sumbawa's rich local traditions. The younger generation not only plays a role as the heir of traditional values, but also as an agent of cultural

transformation that is able to bridge Islamic traditions and teachings. Wardi's research (2019) shows that the younger generation in Sumbawa is increasingly actively involved in barodak ceremonies, both as participants and as technical implementers such as preparing ceremony equipment, . This involvement is inseparable from the religious and cultural education they receive, both in formal schools and through traditional institutions and Islamic boarding schools which play an important role in the process of internalizing Islamic values (Azra, 2004).

It is hoped that the younger generation will also play a pioneer in innovation in the implementation of barodak rituals, for example by adding elements of Islamic sharia such as the recitation of the holy verses of the Qur'an, Islamic kasidah, or changing the structure of the procession to be simpler and sharia. Thus, the role of the younger generation in preserving barodak is not only to maintain traditions, but also to be a form of integration between cultures and religions that continue to live and develop.

Cultural Accommodation in Islamic Anthropology

A critical discussion of the relevance of cultural accommodation theory in explaining the syncretism of barodak customs in Sumbawa reveals complexities that cannot be fully explained by one approach alone. The theory of cultural accommodation emphasizes the importance of compromise and adjustment between two different value systems—in this case, between barodak customary traditions and Islamic values—by placing religion as a partner in dialogue, not as a force for change (Herskovits, 1955). In the context of Sumbawa, this theory has been proven to be able to capture the dynamics of negotiation between traditional leaders and scholars, as well as produce ritual forms that are more in accordance with Islamic principles, such as the replacement of magical spells with sharia prayers and the reinterpretation of traditional symbols into religious symbols (Woodward, 2011; Wardi, 2019).

However, some experts argue that cultural accommodation theory still has limitations in explaining how cultural elements that have long been

embedded in society can survive, even though religious values have entered and adapted (Geertz, 1973). In the case of barodak, for example, many traditional elements remain symbolically, even though theologically they are no longer the core of the ritual. This suggests that cultural accommodation tends to emphasize the "surface" of compromise, without fully explaining the "inner" or deepest meanings that still live in society (Koentjaraningrat, 2009). Therefore, some researchers such as Azra (2004) propose to complement the cultural accommodation approach with other theories, such as symbolic theory or cultural cognitive theory, in order to capture the complexity of syncretism that occurs not only at the level of practice, but also at the level of meaning and identity of society. Thus, this critical discussion emphasizes that although cultural accommodation theory is quite effective in mapping the framework of compromise between indigenous peoples and Islam, it needs to be complemented by other theoretical approaches in order to understand the overall phenomenon of indigenous syncretism in more depth.

Religious leaders or da'I are also interested in understanding culture for the full acceptance of the Islamic teachings that they bring. K.H Syamsul explained that; "In Sumbawa, if religious leaders cannot defeat or equalize their knowledge with traditional leaders or figures who are considered influential in the midst of the community, then the preacher will be underestimated or even tend not to be heard. Therefore, it is important for the prosecutor to understand how customs, traditions and cultural understandings in the community are to be able to convey and spread religion properly and can be accepted".

Furthermore, the implications of Islamic anthropological theory in the context of barodak customs in Sumbawa provide a deep understanding of the flexibility of Islam in the archipelago, especially in responding to local culture. Islamic anthropology emphasizes that Islam as a religion does not come with a single face, but is present through the process of adaptation and accommodation to existing cultures, thus producing a variety of unique Islamic expressions in various regions (Azra, 2004). In the case of barodak, Islam does not completely

abolish customs, but rather provides space for reinterpretation and adjustment of traditional values to be in line with the principles of monotheism and sharia.

Research on cultural accommodation in barodak customs in Sumbawa makes an important contribution to the development of cultural accommodation theory in anthropological studies, especially in the context of interaction between Islam and local culture in the archipelago. Previously, the theory of cultural accommodation has been widely applied to explain the process of compromise and integration between two different value systems, as theorized by Herskovits (1955) and Koentjaraningrat (2009). However, this study expands this understanding by highlighting how cultural accommodation does not only produce a form of compromise, but also gives rise to more substantial value transformations, such as the replacement of animistic elements with Islamic values that strengthen the Muslim identity of the Sumbawa community (Wardi, 2019).

In addition, this study also shows that cultural accommodation is not static, but is a dynamic process that continues through dialogue, symbol reinterpretation, and cultural innovation of the younger generation (Woodward, 2011). Another contribution is to show that cultural accommodation in Sumbawa does not only occur at the symbolic level, but also at the structural level in the social relations between traditional leaders and scholars, who negotiate with each other to produce ritual forms that are in accordance with Islamic sharia values (Azra, 2004). This complements the theory of cultural accommodation with the dimension of "agents of change," i.e. local figures who have cultural and religious authority, so that the accommodation process is not only seen as the result of passive compromise, but also as a creative and proactive effort to integrate customs and religion. Thus, this research makes a valuable theoretical contribution to expanding the scope of cultural accommodation theory, especially in the context of the Islamization of local culture in Indonesia.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the barodak tradition represents a rich form of local cultural expression among the Sumbawa community, laden with symbolic and spiritual meanings. As part of the life-cycle ritual, barodak functions not only as physical preparation before marriage or circumcision but is also believed to offer metaphysical protection against disturbances such as rabuya. Over time, the tradition has undergone significant transformation—from a private ritual to a public cultural performance—while simultaneously adapting to Islamic values through the involvement of religious leaders and the implementation of sharia-based ethical norms. This adaptive process demonstrates the community's cultural accommodation, in which traditional symbols are selected and reinterpreted to align with Islamic teachings.

One of the unexpected findings is that the integration of Islam into the barodak tradition does not occur through the rejection or elimination of local customs, but through a gentle and communicative model of syncretic integration. Figures such as K.H. Syamsul Ismain play a central role in selecting traditional elements deemed compatible with Islamic principles, using an inclusive and non-confrontational Sufi-oriented approach. The study also reveals a significant generational divide: the older generation still views barodak as a sacred ritual with spiritual efficacy, whereas younger people tend to see it merely as a symbolic cultural heritage. This intergenerational tension highlights internal cultural dynamics that have been largely overlooked in previous studies on Sumbawa's local traditions.

This research faces several limitations. First, the scarcity of academic literature specifically discussing the barodak tradition requires a strong reliance on primary data through observation and in-depth interviews. Second, initial resistance from several informants, who perceived the researcher as an outsider, necessitated an ethical and empathetic ethnographic approach to build trust. Third, the contrasting perceptions between older and younger generations made it challenging to obtain a consistent narrative. Given these limitations, future

studies are encouraged to conduct comparative research with similar rituals in other Indonesian regions and to explore gender aspects – particularly the role of *ina odak* – to further enrich Islamic anthropological studies and efforts to preserve local cultural heritage.

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Authors' Contribution Statement

Rifky Ramdhani led the conceptualization, field data collection, and initial drafting of the manuscript. Thobib Al-Asyhar contributed to the theoretical framework, data analysis, and refinement of the argumentation related to cultural accommodation theory. Yon Machmudi provided critical revisions, supervised the overall research direction, and ensured the academic coherence of the final manuscript. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the paper, and each contributed substantially to the study's intellectual content.

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