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**Islam and Multiculturalism:
The Challenge of Integrating Islamic and Traditional Teachings in the 19th
Century Bone Kingdom**

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Abstrak. This article explores the interplay between Islamic teachings and local culture within the Bone Kingdom during the 19th century. It specifically investigates the challenges involved in integrating Islamic principles with indigenous customs. Employing a descriptive-analytical method and a qualitative approach, the study reveals a reciprocal relationship between Islam and local traditions in the kingdom's social and political spheres. The inherently tolerant and adaptable nature of Islamic teachings facilitated their integration into the existing cultural framework. Religious scholars played a pivotal role in contextualizing Islamic doctrines within the Bone society, while customary and royal institutions were instrumental in aligning local norms and social practices with Islamic values. This synergy fostered a harmonious social order, positioning the Bone Kingdom as a model of multicultural coexistence. The findings suggest that the integration of Islam and indigenous customs was not merely a process of adaptation, but rather a dynamic formation of a distinct and enduring cultural identity.

Keywords: Multiculturalism, Islam, Culture, Norms, The Bone Kingdom

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Abstrak. Artikel ini membahas hubungan antara ajaran Islam dan budaya lokal dalam konteks Kerajaan Bone pada abad ke-19. Fokus penelitian diarahkan pada tantangan integrasi ajaran Islam dengan adat setempat. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif-analisis dengan pendekatan kualitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya hubungan timbal balik antara Islam dan adat dalam kehidupan sosial dan politik kerajaan. Ajaran Islam yang bersifat toleran dan fleksibel memungkinkan terjadinya proses integrasi dengan budaya lokal. Peran ulama sangat penting dalam mengakomodasi ajaran Islam ke dalam tradisi masyarakat Bone, sementara perangkat adat dan kerajaan berperan dominan dalam mengakulturasi norma serta tata pergaulan dengan nilai-nilai Islam. Sinergi antara keduanya menciptakan tatanan sosial yang harmonis, sehingga Kerajaan Bone dapat dipandang sebagai kerajaan multikultural. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa integrasi Islam dan adat di Kerajaan Bone bukan sekadar proses adaptasi, melainkan juga pembentukan identitas budaya yang unik dan berkelanjutan.

Kata Kunci: Multikulturalisme, Islam, Adat, Norma, Kerajaan Bone

Introduction

Religion and culture (or custom) are two fundamental elements of human life that frequently interact and exert mutual influence. Both play a significant role in shaping individual identities and collective social frameworks. Although they are distinct in nature, religion and culture are deeply intertwined and cannot be completely separated, as they often develop in tandem within a given community.

The interplay between religion and culture constitutes a central theme in socio-religious studies. Historically and in everyday life, religion and culture influence one another continuously. Religion provides moral frameworks and belief systems that serve as ethical foundations for life, while culture offers the mediums through which these values are expressed and enacted. The dissemination of religious teachings rarely occurs in isolation; rather, it often takes place through engagement with existing local cultural forms. This process of acculturation allows religious teachings to be adapted and internalized within culturally specific practices. For instance, in the case of *Islam Nusantara*, Islamic teachings are communicated through local artistic and oral traditions such as *wayang* (shadow puppetry), *tembang* (traditional songs), and other narrative forms. These examples demonstrate how local cultures can serve as an effective vehicle for transmitting and embedding religious values within a society.¹

¹Azyumardi Azra, *Islam Nusantara: Sejarah Sosial Intelektual Islam Di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2019), p. 45–47; M. Afif Anshori, Zaenuddin Hudi Prasajo, and Lailial Muhtifah, “Contribution of Sufism to the Development of Moderate Islam in Nusantara,” *International Journal of Islamic Thought* 19, no. 1 (2021); David Eko Setiawan and Kalis

However, the relationship between religion and culture is not always harmonious. Tensions may arise when certain cultural practices are perceived to conflict with religious doctrines. In such cases, ongoing negotiation and reinterpretation often occur between religious texts and evolving cultural expressions. For example, some scholars critique traditional practices they view as *shirk* (polytheistic) or incompatible with the principles of monotheism. Conversely, many communities continue to uphold these traditions as vital aspects of their cultural identity. Consequently, the study of religion and culture necessitates an interdisciplinary approach, one that not only incorporates theological perspectives but also takes into account the historical, social, and anthropological contexts in which religious practices occur.²

Culture or custom encompasses the entire way of life of a society, including its values, norms, beliefs, languages, arts, customs, and other forms of social behavior transmitted across generations. Culture reflects the collective identity of a community and provides a framework for thinking, acting, and relating to both the social and natural worlds. From a classical anthropological perspective, Edward B. Tylor defined culture as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and all other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of the society.”³ Thus, culture does not merely consist of the external manifestations of human activity; it also embodies deep symbolic meanings that shape collective cognition and social behavior.

In this context, religion can be understood as a component of culture, albeit one that occupies a unique and elevated position due to its incorporation of transcendent belief systems and sacred values that regulate humanity's relationship with the divine. The interaction between religion and custom is dynamic and reciprocal. On the one hand, religion informs and shapes moral values embedded within local customs; on the other, customs influence the interpretation and expression of religious teachings within specific communities. This reciprocal relationship is evident in the process of cultural and religious acculturation observed across various societies, including Islam Nusantara, African Christianity, and Japanese Buddhism. These examples underscore that

Stevanus, “Significance of Islam Nusantara Values in an Indonesian Multicultural Society,” *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 18, no. 1 (2023).

²J. Milton Yinger, Clifford Geertz, and Douglas Oliver, “The Religion of Java,” *American Sociological Review* 26, no. 3 (1961); Sister Mary William and Clifford Geertz, “The Religion of Java,” *The American Catholic Sociological Review* 22, no. 1 (1961); Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 12–20.

³Donald F. Duclow, “Religion in Primitive Cultures,” *International Philosophical Quarterly* 18, no. 2 (1978); Edward B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture, Vol. 1* (London: John Murray, 1871), 1; James A. Russell, “Culture and the Categorization of Emotions,” *Psychological Bulletin* 110, no. 3 (1991).

religion does not exist in a cultural vacuum, but is always embedded within specific socio-cultural contexts.⁴

Local customs exert a significant influence on how religion is practiced, as exemplified by the Indonesian religious landscape. Foreign religious traditions such as Islam, Christianity, and Hinduism were not passively accepted by local communities; instead, they were selectively adapted and integrated into pre-existing cultural frameworks and values. During the spread of Islam throughout the Indonesian archipelago, for instance, early Islamic preachers (often referred to as *wali*) adopted culturally sensitive approaches, utilizing traditional art forms such as *wayang* (shadow puppetry), *gamelan* (traditional music), and oral storytelling to communicate Islamic teachings to the Javanese population, many of whom adhered to indigenous belief systems.⁵ Rituals such as *slametan* (communal prayer gatherings), *tahlilan* (collective remembrance gatherings), and *nyadran* (ancestral pilgrimage and offerings) exemplify Islamic practices that have been blended with local cultural traditions. These syncretic practices are often referred to as expressions of “cultural Islam” or “indigenous Islam.”⁶

This phenomenon aligns with the insights of Koentjaraningrat, a prominent Indonesian anthropologist, who asserted that religion constitutes one of the essential elements of culture, and in practice, is frequently integrated with other cultural components, including customs and social structures.⁷ Similarly, Nurcholish Madjid emphasized that cultural adaptation within religion should not be viewed as a deviation, but rather as a natural and necessary process of contextualizing religious teachings in a pluralistic society such as Indonesia.⁸ Consequently, religious practice cannot be divorced from the cultural context in which it is embedded. In many cases, local customs serve as effective instruments for enhancing the accessibility, comprehension, and acceptance of religious teachings.

Both religion and custom make extensive use of symbolic systems imbued with deep meaning. In religious traditions, symbols such as the cross in Christianity, the crescent moon in Islam, and the mandala in Buddhism serve as powerful representations of spiritual truths. In customary traditions, symbols may take the form of specific objects, animals, or colors believed to possess spiritual significance or to embody traditional cultural values. These symbols

⁴Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), p. 87–125.

⁵Agus Sunyoto, *Atlas Wali Songo: Buku Pertama Yang Mengungkap Wali Songo Sebagai Fakta Sejarah* (Depok: Pustaka IIMaN, 2013), p. 120–40.

⁶Zamakhsyari Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi Tentang Pandangan Hidup Kyai* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 2011), p. 89–102.

⁷Koentjaraningrat, *Pengantar Ilmu Antropologi* (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2009), 180–82.

⁸Nurcholish Madjid, *Islam Doktrin Dan Peradaban: Sebuah Telaah Kritis Tentang Masalah Keimanan, Kemanusiaan Dan Kemodernan* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2000), 275–80.

function as communicative tools, conveying complex layers of meaning and reinforcing communal identities through shared visual and ritual practices.

In many instances, religion adapts to local customs in order to facilitate acceptance within a given community. A notable example is the spread of Islam in the Indonesian archipelago, where religious propagators, particularly the Wali Songo, figures closely associated with the Nahdlatul Ulama tradition, employed culturally resonant media such as *wayang* (shadow puppetry) and *gamelan* (traditional music) to communicate Islamic teachings. This approach enabled Islam to be embraced without displacing indigenous cultural traditions. Many local customs were thus harmonized with Islamic principles while retaining their traditional essence. For instance, traditional rituals rooted in animistic beliefs were reinterpreted to incorporate Islamic elements, such as the *selamatan*, a communal feast that combines Javanese customary practices with Islamic prayers.

However, tensions frequently arise when religious teachings are perceived to conflict with deeply entrenched cultural practices. Religion often introduces a normative value system that is considered universal and transcendent, whereas local culture evolves from a society's historical, environmental, and social context. When religion enters a new cultural milieu, it may provoke criticism of local traditions that are seen as inconsistent with religious doctrine. In the case of Islam in Indonesia, practices such as *selamatan*, *nyadran* (ancestral pilgrimages), and *tahlilan* (communal remembrance rituals) have been criticized by some Islamic groups as un-Islamic or even polytheistic, due to their lack of explicit foundation in the Qur'an or Hadith.⁹ Nevertheless, these traditions serve important social and symbolic roles within the community, fostering solidarity, preserving social harmony, and honoring ancestral heritage.¹⁰

Such tensions are further exacerbated in the context of modernization and religious purification movements, which often reject traditional cultural expressions as contaminants of religious purity. These movements are typically influenced by textualist and scripturalist interpretations that emphasize a return to the foundational texts of religion (the Qur'an and Sunnah), and tend to regard local cultural practices as remnants of *jahiliyyah* (ignorance or pre-Islamic paganism). This ideological stance has led to conflicts between reformist religious groups and local communities committed to preserving their cultural heritage. As Martin van Bruinessen has noted, this phenomenon contributes to the fragmentation of religious communities, dividing those who emphasize normative, doctrinal Islam from those who embrace a culturally embedded form

⁹Jalaluddin Rakhmat, *Islam Aktual: Refleksi Sosial Seorang Cendekiawan Muslim* (Bandung: Mizan, 1991), p. 134–37.

¹⁰Geertz, *The Religion of Java*, p. 122–30.

of Islam.¹¹ Thus, understanding these tensions requires not only a theological perspective but also sociological and anthropological approaches. Such a multidisciplinary framework helps avoid reductionist or one-sided judgments and instead promotes constructive dialogue between universal religious values and local indigenous wisdom.

In the contemporary era of globalization, the interaction between religions and local customs has become increasingly complex. Modern culture, shaped by technology, mass media, and the global flow of information—poses new challenges for traditional religious systems, compelling them to respond to rapid cultural transformation. Some religious groups resist these changes, perceiving them as threats to moral integrity and religious tradition. Others, however, have embraced reform, seeking to reinterpret religious teachings in light of contemporary values such as human rights, democracy, and gender equality.

This study focuses on the integration of Islam with local customs in the Gowa-Tallo Kingdom of South Sulawesi, where Islamic teachings were strategically employed to consolidate political authority and expand influence, while simultaneously accommodating indigenous cultural practices in an Islamic framework. The research was conducted through a literature review and analyzed using a qualitative, descriptive approach. The findings were synthesized to draw conclusions regarding the dynamic interaction between Islam and local custom in this historical context.

Multiculturalism and Local Customs or Culture from a Theoretical Perspective

Multiculturalism is a conceptual framework or policy that acknowledges, embraces, and values cultural diversity within a society. Within this framework, differences in ethnicity, religion, race, language, tradition, and lifestyle are not regarded as threats but rather as social assets that warrant protection and preservation. Multiculturalism underscores the importance of peaceful coexistence amid diverse identities and explicitly rejects the forced assimilation of minority groups into the dominant culture.¹²

Cultural and religious diversity should not be construed as a source of division; instead, it should be recognized as a foundation for constructing a

¹¹Martin van Bruinessen, “Ghazwul Fikri Atau Benturan Budaya? Wacana Internasionalisasi Islam Di Indonesia,” in *Islam Indonesia Dan Pluralitas Budaya* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2002), p. 45–50.

¹²Bhikhu Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory* (New York: Harvard University Press, 2000), p. 6–9;

shared civilization grounded in dialogue, inclusivity, and tolerance.¹³ In the context of Indonesia, multiculturalism is institutionalized through the Pancasila philosophy, particularly the third principle, “Indonesian Unity,” which epitomizes the ideal of harmonious coexistence in diversity. However, the implementation of multiculturalism continues to confront challenges such as discrimination, religious intolerance, and the hegemonic influence of majority cultures over minority populations. A genuinely multicultural approach necessitates not only the formal acknowledgment of diversity but also the pursuit of cultural justice, which entails providing equitable opportunities for all groups to express and maintain their identities.

In multicultural societies, various ethnic and indigenous groups coexist, each preserving distinct traditional identities encompassing language, customs, cuisine, attire, and values. The defining features of multiculturalism include: (1) recognition of cultural plurality, wherein every cultural group possesses the right to exist, develop, and receive equal valuation within the broader society.¹⁴ (2) protection of minority rights, wherein the state or social institutions offer specific safeguards to prevent political, economic, or cultural marginalization.¹⁵; (3) non-discrimination and equal rights, which reject prejudices based on race, religion, ethnicity, or origin and ensure equal treatment for all citizens; and.¹⁶ (4) promotion of intercultural dialogue and tolerance, encouraging interaction and communication among diverse cultural groups to foster mutual understanding and respect.¹⁷

Policies in a multicultural society are inclusive, not favoring the majority culture alone, but involving all cultural elements in collective decision-making.

Multiculturalism offers strategic advantages in reinforcing social cohesion and peace within pluralistic societies. By acknowledging diverse cultural and ethnic identities, multiculturalism mitigates the dominance of any

¹³Kuntowijoyo, *Islam Sebagai Ilmu: Epistemologi, Metodologi, Dan Etika Keilmuan Islam* (Yogyakarta: Teraju, 2004), p. 214–18.

¹⁴Marinus Chijioke Iwuchukwu, “Inclusive Cultural and Religious Pluralism as an Indispensable Worldview for Peace in Africa How the Bible, the Qura’n, and African Traditional Religions Honor This Worldview,” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 54, no. 1 (2023).

¹⁵Dedy Sumardi, Ratno Lukito, and Moch Nur Ichwan, “Legal Pluralism within the Space of Sharia: Interlegality of Criminal Law Traditions in Aceh, Indonesia,” *Samarah* 5, no. 1 (2021): 426–49; Dedy Sumardi, “Islam , Pluralisme Hukum Dan Refleksi Masyarakat Homogen,” *Asy-Syirah Jurnal Ilmu Syaria’ah Dan Hukum* 50, no. 2 (2016); J. S. Furnivall, *Colonial Policy and Practice: A Comparative Study of Burma and Netherlands India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948), p. 304.

¹⁶Rahmat Bin Mohamad and I Wayan Rideng, “The Legal Pluralism in Law Education in Indonesia,” *Sociological Jurisprudence Journal* 4, no. 1 (2021).

¹⁷Linda P. Juang and Maja K. Schachner, “Cultural Diversity, Migration and Education,” *International Journal of Psychology* 55, no. 5 (2020); James A. Banks, *Cultural Diversity and Education: Foundations, Curriculum, and Teaching* (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2006), p. 12–15.

single group over others and reduces the potential for social conflict rooted in identity differences.¹⁸ In the context of the Indonesian society, characterized by its rich ethnic, religious, and cultural plurality, multicultural values are essential for fostering mutual respect and strengthening national solidarity.¹⁹

Beyond maintaining social harmony, multiculturalism broadens societal perspectives, enabling the recognition of diversity as a source of intellectual and social enrichment. Positive intercultural interactions can foster creativity and innovation across multiple domains, including education, the arts, and technology. As articulated by Homi K. Bhabha, the intercultural “third space” within multiculturalism facilitates the emergence of dynamic and productive hybrid identities, which are vital for navigating the complexities of globalization.²⁰ This conceptual space is a crucial asset in cultivating an inclusive, open, and resilient society capable of adapting to change.

Multiculturalism also serves an important political function by ensuring the equitable distribution of resources and recognition among all citizen groups. Charles Taylor posits that a collective identity can only flourish if it is accorded equal respect within the public sphere.²¹ On this basis, multiculturalism demands state policies that are impartial toward dominant cultures and advocate for culturally just legal and educational frameworks. Consequently, multiculturalism transcends mere tolerance; it constitutes an active strategy for constructing a democratic civilization grounded in equal rights and the recognition of diverse identities.

As both an ideological framework and public policy, multiculturalism has been adopted by numerous countries as a mechanism for managing ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity. However, such diversity also presents significant challenges. In practice, multiculturalism often encounters issues such as social segregation, discrimination, and policies that fail to accommodate the equitable needs of all societal groups. Within this context, multiculturalism entails not only the recognition of differences but also the pursuit of equitable integration without compromising cultural identity.²²

A major challenge facing multiculturalism is the phenomenon of ghettoization, wherein minority groups become isolated within insular communities. This tendency, whereby certain ethnic or religious groups create

¹⁸Surya Jatmika, *Multikulturalisme Dan Konflik Sosial Di Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: Kreasi Wacana, 2012), p. 23–25.

¹⁹Winarno Surakhmad, *Pendidikan Multikultural: Teori dan Praktik* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2011), p. 33–36.

²⁰Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 53–56.

²¹Charles Taylor, *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 25–27.

²²Muhammad Hendri Nuryadi, Zamroni, and Suharno, “The Pattern of the Teaching of Multiculturalism-Based Civics Education: A Case Study at Higher Education Institutions,” *European Journal of Educational Research* 9, no. 2 (2020).

closed communities, exacerbates social fragmentation and undermines national cohesion. Parekh (year) warns that “without intensive cross-cultural interaction, multiculturalism can actually create a fragmented society,” potentially leading to social conflict, prejudice, and radicalization if not carefully managed. Structural inequality experienced by minority groups represents another significant obstacle. Often, multiculturalism remains a political ideal rather than a reality, lacking substantive policies that address discrimination in education, employment, and access to public services. Kymlicka (year) emphasizes that without distributive justice, the recognition of cultural identity becomes superficial and ineffective.²³ Such persistent inequalities reinforce perceptions of injustice and may fuel anti-state sentiments among marginalized populations.

Another significant challenge arises from resistance by majority groups toward multicultural policies, particularly when such policies are perceived as threats to dominant cultural values. In several European countries, for instance, lenient integration policies have been criticized for failing to restrict the entry of cultural practices deemed incompatible with liberal principles. The controversies surrounding the headscarf ban in France and migrant policies in Germany exemplify the tensions between the universality of state values and the cultural rights of minority groups.²⁴ These tensions can foster populist sentiments and the rise of exclusive identity politics.

Another emerging issue is the resistance of majority groups to multiculturalism policies, particularly when these policies are perceived as threatening dominant societal values. In some European countries, for instance, lenient integration strategies have been criticized as failures for not adequately addressing the influx of cultural values seen as incompatible with liberal democratic principles.²⁵ The debates surrounding the headscarf ban in France or migration policies in Germany illustrate the ongoing tension between the universal values upheld by the state and the cultural rights of minority groups. This tension can fuel populist movements and the rise of exclusionary identity politics

In response to these challenges, states must develop models of multiculturalism that balance the recognition of diverse identities with the pursuit of social justice. Inclusive and participatory policies, alongside cross-cultural forums, are essential to facilitate constructive dialogue between groups. Multiculturalism cannot flourish without comprehensive education promoting

²³Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory*.

²⁴W. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

²⁵Saltanat Liebert, Mona H. Siddiqui, and Carolin Goerzig, “Integration of Muslim Immigrants in Europe and North America: A Transatlantic Comparison,” *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 40, no. 2 (2020); Steven Vertovec, “Transnationalism and Identity,” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 27, no. 4 (2001).

tolerance and equal rights. Hence, addressing the complexities of multiculturalism requires political courage and social intelligence to effectively manage diversity within a unified framework.²⁶

Local customs constitute a vital component of group or community identity and play a critical role in maintaining social cohesion and solidarity. In addition, local customs serve as historical markers and ancestral heritage that enrich human civilization. In the context of globalization, a pressing challenge is to preserve and sustain these customs so they remain vibrant and relevant amidst external cultural influences.

Integration of Customs and Islamic Teachings in Indonesia

The integration of customs and religion presents complex challenges, as both embody distinct values, norms, and practices that may not always align seamlessly. This integration is crucial for fostering social harmony, particularly within multicultural and multireligious societies.

In certain instances, some religious groups may reject or attempt to suppress local traditions perceived as incompatible with religious doctrines. Such actions can provoke resistance from communities who regard their customs as integral to their identity, thereby exacerbating tensions between religious adherents and custodians of customary practices.

Religion is frequently employed as a catalyst for modernization and social change; however, this process can sometimes conflict with deeply rooted local traditions. This friction can give rise to conflict, especially when communities feel that their customary identities are marginalized or subordinated. Furthermore, within multicultural societies, the integration of customs and religion is often challenged by intolerance toward differences. Some religious groups may refuse to accept certain customary practices observed by others, resulting in prejudice and discrimination.

Since their inception, religions such as Islam and Christianity have often incorporated elements of local customs to facilitate their acceptance within diverse societies. For instance, Islamization in Indonesia frequently blends indigenous traditions with Islamic teachings, as exemplified by the Javanese *slametan* (a communal feast) and the celebration of the Prophet's Birthday (Maulid Nabi), both of which integrate local customs. However, this syncretic process faces challenges from more conservative religious factions that reject these traditional elements as inconsistent with orthodox teachings.

The integration of local customs and Islam in Indonesia represents a complex and dynamic historical process. The arrival of Islam did not immediately eradicate pre-existing customs; rather, it initiated a process of

²⁶Vertovec, "Towards Post-Multiculturalism? Changing Communities, Conditions and Contexts of Diversity."

adaptation and accommodation. Islamic missionaries in the archipelago employed cultural strategies, such as incorporating local art forms, languages, and social structures to communicate Islamic teachings. This culturally sensitive approach contributed to a relatively peaceful Islamization with minimal conflict.²⁷

One manifestation of this integration is observed in communal religious practices such as slametan, tahlilan (religious gatherings for prayer), and *Maulid Nabi*. These practices, while not explicitly prescribed in normative Islam, persist through Islamic reinterpretation in local contexts. From a sociological perspective, this illustrates how Islamic values both shape and are shaped by indigenous customs. Empirical studies indicate that such integration enhances social cohesion and fosters contextual religious identities.²⁸

Nevertheless, this synthesis faces opposition, particularly from puritanical and scripturalist groups who reject local cultural expressions within Islam, arguing that these practices contradict the teachings of the *Salaf* (early Muslim predecessors). This opposition generates tensions between localized Islamic traditions and transnational Islamic ideologies. Wahid's research attributes this conflict to a lack of constructive dialogue between local customary practices and textualist global Islamic thought.²⁹

Conversely, the integration of Islam and local culture constitutes a significant strength in promoting social harmony in multicultural societies like Indonesia. Research by Maryani and Suharto demonstrates that communities effectively integrating cultural and religious values exhibit greater resilience to social conflict and intolerance. Indigenous values such as mutual cooperation, harmony, and tolerance coexist synergistically with universal Islamic principles such as brotherhood and compassion.³⁰

Therefore, the ongoing reinforcement of the integration between Islamic culture and religion in Indonesia necessitates sustained educational and dialogical efforts. The government, educational institutions, and religious leaders play pivotal roles in ensuring the sustainability of this integration. A model of Islam deeply rooted in local culture has proven effective in fostering an open, peaceful, and tolerant religious society. Consequently, Islam in

²⁷Amelia Fauzia, "Islamic Philanthropy in Indonesia: Modernization, Islamization, and Social Justice," *Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies* 10, no. 2 (2017).

²⁸Muhamad Ali, "Muslim Diversity: Islam and Local Tradition in Java and Sulawesi, Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 1, no. 1 (2011).

²⁹Enkin Asrawijaya, "Harmonization Between Customs And Islam In The Jalawastu Community," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 16, no. 2 (2022).

³⁰Carlos Alberto Torres and Massimiliano Tarozzi, "Multiculturalism in the World System: Towards a Social Justice Model of Inter/Multicultural Education," *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 18, no. 1 (2020).

Indonesia functions not only as the majority religion but also as a cultural force that integrates the nation.³¹

Culture often serves as a symbol of ethnic identity, particularly within political struggles or resistance against the dominance of majority religions. Such dynamics can provoke conflict between religious and ethnic groups. The challenges of integrating customs and religion largely revolve around divergent values, interpretations, and identities embedded within these two spheres. While tensions persist, this integration also presents opportunities to enrich society through dialogue, tolerance, and mutually beneficial adaptation. With prudent and inclusive approaches, these challenges can be overcome, enabling the integration of customs and religion to contribute significantly to social harmony and community cohesion.

The Challenge of Integrating Islam and Local Customs in the Bone Kingdom

The integration of Islamic teachings with local customs is a process whereby Islamic values and doctrines are adapted and harmonized with indigenous traditions without compromising the core principles of the religion. This phenomenon is particularly prominent in Indonesia, where the majority Muslim population coexists with a rich and diverse cultural heritage.

Islam has exerted a profound influence on the historical and sociopolitical development of the kingdoms in South Sulawesi, especially in the realms of politics, customary law, and religion. The Islamization of this region commenced in the sixteenth century and notably impacted significant polities such as the Gowa, Tallo, Bone, and Wajo Kingdoms.

The integration of Islam and local customs in South Sulawesi is the result of a prolonged and peaceful process of acculturation that has persisted since the sixteenth century. The introduction of Islam did not eradicate entrenched local customs, such as the Bugis-Makassar social system, which emphasizes the values of *siri' na pacce*—self-respect and social solidarity. Rather, Islam served to reinforce and expand the meaning of these values by imbuing them with Islamic moral and spiritual teachings. This synthesis was facilitated through the instrumental roles played by kings, nobles, and local ulama who endeavored to harmonize Islamic doctrines with indigenous customs.³²

A critical milestone in this process was the conversion of the Gowa and Tallo Kingdoms in the early seventeenth century. Sultan Alauddin of Gowa

³¹Ibrahim Ibrahim, "Contiguity of Islam and Local Tradition on the Hinterland Malays of West Kalimantan," *Ulumuna* 22, no. 2 (2018).

³²Mustaqim Pabbajah et al., "Pilgrimage to Bawakaraeng Mountain among the Bugis-Makassar in Indonesia: A Contestation between Islamic Identity and Local Tradition," *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage*, 2021.

spearheaded the incorporation of Islam into both the governance system and customary law. The dissemination of Islam occurred through a dual approach: structurally, via royal authority, and culturally, through literary works such as the Sureq La Galigo, traditional oratory (*ammatoa*), and local value systems. Empirical research indicates that Islamic symbols were seamlessly incorporated into traditional rituals with minimal resistance from local communities.³³

The cultural value of *siri' na pacce* exemplifies the success of this integration. From an Islamic perspective, *siri'* (dignity) corresponds to self-respect as a divine trust, while *pacce* (empathy and social solidarity) resonates with Islamic teachings on brotherhood and social justice. Syarif's (2019) study highlights the internalization of Islamic ethics within the work ethic, communal solidarity, and leadership norms of the Bugis-Makassar people.³⁴ demonstrating a mutually reinforcing syncretism between Islamic values and local traditions.

Nonetheless, challenges persist. Contemporary waves of scripturalist *da'wah* often reject the syncretic Islamic practices that incorporate local customs, such as the *maccera tasi* (sea ritual), *accera' doang* (sacrificial offerings), and *mappalili'* (ritual purification). These groups frequently characterize such practices as heretical, sparking ongoing discourse concerning the boundaries between normative Islam and culturally embedded Islam in a multicultural society like South Sulawesi.³⁵ Addressing these tensions necessitates sustained dialogue among traditional leaders, religious scholars, and community stakeholders.

Overall, the integration of Islam and local culture in South Sulawesi serves as a prominent model for harmonizing religious principles with indigenous wisdom. The Bugis-Makassar culture, which deeply upholds traditional values, has not impeded the development of Islam; rather, it has provided a robust social foundation that facilitates the acceptance and internalization of Islamic values. This successful synthesis demonstrates that Islam can flourish without eradicating local culture, ultimately becoming an integral part of the collective identity of the South Sulawesi community.³⁶

The integration of indigenous religions and traditions with newly introduced faiths often referred to as syncretism, presents its own set of challenges. Historically, many kingdoms have navigated these challenges by merging elements of new religions with preexisting local customs. For instance,

³³Hot Marangkup Tumpal Sianipar, "The Islamization of Bugis Kingdoms By Gowa-Tallo Kingdom Through Musu Selleng on 16th Century," *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Sejarah* 5, no. 4 (2020).

³⁴Andika Wahyudi Gani and Hamsu Abdul Gani, "Culture of Siri' Na Pacce As Part of Legal Awareness of the Bugis-Makassar Community," *KnE Social Sciences*, 2024.

³⁵Rasyid, "Tradisi Keagamaan Dan Pengaruh Salafisme Di Sulawesi Selatan: Studi Kasus Di Bone Dan Gowa," *Jurnal Studia Islamika* 27, no. 2 (2020), p. 271–296.

³⁶S Mappamiring, "Relasi Islam Dan Budaya Lokal Dalam Tradisi Mappalili Di Sulawesi Selatan," *Jurnal Addin* 15, no. 1 (2021), p. 115–134.

in the Javanese kingdoms, Islamic religious practices frequently blended with earlier Hindu-Buddhist and animist traditions. However, such syncretic processes often met resistance from more orthodox religious factions advocating for a “purer” form of religious practice, free from local cultural influences.

Conservative or fundamentalist religious groups frequently reject syncretism, calling for the discontinuation of local customs perceived as inconsistent with religious doctrines. This dynamic has, at times, generated conflict between communities seeking to preserve traditional practices and those demanding stricter adherence to religious orthodoxy.

In many traditional kingdoms, customary law (*adat*) held a central role in social governance. Yet, when a new religion was adopted as the state religion, pressures often mounted to reform customary law in accordance with religious precepts. For example, in Islamicized kingdoms, customary laws pertaining to marriage, inheritance, and criminal justice were gradually replaced or adapted to align with Islamic jurisprudence. Such changes sometimes provoked resistance from groups intent on preserving customary legal traditions.

The Bone Kingdom offers a significant case study of accommodative Islamization. Islam was formally introduced into Bone in the seventeenth century through the efforts of Islamic scholars and the political initiatives of the Bone rulers, especially following the rise of the Gowa Kingdom as a center of Islamic dissemination in South Sulawesi. Nevertheless, the acceptance of Islam in Bone did not result in the wholesale abandonment of longstanding social and cultural structures; rather, these frameworks were progressively Islamized. Key customary institutions such as *ade'* (customary law), *bicara* (deliberation), and *rapang* (community meetings) underwent reinterpretation through the lens of Islamic values and norms.³⁷

A tangible manifestation of this integration is the incorporation of *Sharia* principles into the customary law of the Bone Kingdom. The concept of *pangadereng*, the customary legal system of the Bugis people, began to incorporate Islamic jurisprudence following Islamization. In matters such as inheritance and marriage, Islamic regulations were applied alongside customary practices, fostering a harmonious coexistence between religious and social norms. This synthesis is well-documented in studies of local history and Islamic law in South Sulawesi, highlighting the region's distinctive approach to religious and cultural integration.³⁸

³⁷A. Mappangara, “Islamisasi Dan Transformasi Budaya Lokal: Studi Kasus Kerajaan Bone Abad Ke-17,” *Jurnal Al-Qalam* 21, no. 2 (2015), p. 233–247.

³⁸Rahmatunnair Rahmatunnair, “Contextualization Of Pangngadereng In The Enforcement Of Islamic Shariah In Bugineese Bone Community,” *Al-Qalam* 17, no. 1 (2011); A. Usman, “Pangadereng Dan Integrasi Hukum Adat-Islam Di Bone,” *Jurnal Al-Ihkam* 13, no. 1 (2018), p. 89–104.

Traditional rituals imbued with spiritual significance in the Bone Kingdom have likewise undergone adaptive transformations. Ceremonies such as *accera doang* (a ritual for cleansing royal heirlooms), *mappalili* (a ritual marking the commencement of the planting season), and *maccera tasi* (sea cleansing) continue to be practiced, now accompanied by the recitation of Islamic prayers and *dhikr* (remembrance of God). These events are collaboratively organized by *imams* and traditional leaders, exemplifying a synergistic relationship between religious scholars and customary authorities.³⁹ This collaboration underscores that Islam is not imposed as a force that eradicates tradition but rather as a value system that imbues existing practices with renewed spiritual meaning.

Local cultural values, particularly *siri' na pacce*, have been incorporated into an Islamic ethical framework. *Siri'*, understood as self-respect, is aligned with Islamic teachings on honor and dignity, while *pacce*, signifying empathy and social solidarity, resonates with Islamic principles of brotherhood and compassion. This integration reinforces the social ethics of the Bone community and exemplifies the successful contextualization of Islam within local cultural paradigms.⁴⁰

Consequently, the Bone Kingdom stands as a prominent example of Islam's integration with indigenous culture proceeding largely without significant conflict. This process reveals that Islamization is not merely the expansion of religious doctrine but also a dynamic adaptation that strengthens local values in consonance with Islamic ideals. This legacy persists in contemporary Bone society through moderate socio-religious practices that respect traditional customs while upholding Islamic principles.⁴¹

During the nineteenth century, the Bone Kingdom underwent social and political developments that further solidified the integration of Islamic teachings with local cultural systems. This era was characterized by the consolidation of royal authority following colonial interventions, alongside the increased involvement of Islamic scholars in social and governmental institutions. Islam, which had been embraced since the seventeenth century, experienced enhanced institutionalization, permeating governance, education, and customary law. Within this context, Islam transcended spiritual acceptance to become a

³⁹A Rauf, "Religi Dan Tradisi: Studi Tentang Ritual Islamisasi Budaya Lokal Di Bone," *Jurnal Addin* 14, no. 2 (2020), p. 215–234.

⁴⁰Wahyudi Gani and Abdul Gani, "Culture of *Siri' Na Pacce* As Part of Legal Awareness of the Bugis-Makassar Community."

⁴¹A. Syamsuddin, "Kontinuitas Islamisasi Dalam Tradisi Adat Kerajaan Bone," *Jurnal Heritage of Nusantara* 6, no. 1 (2017), p. 1–20.

foundational influence shaping the social and political structures of Bone society.⁴²

The integration of Islam into the royal institutions of the Bone Kingdom was marked by the formal institutionalization of religious roles. The Sultan appointed qadis (Islamic jurists), royal imams, and religious teachers to oversee and guide religious affairs both within the palace and at the community level. Consequently, royal regulations increasingly reflected *Sharia* principles, particularly in areas such as inheritance law, marriage, and dispute resolution. Local historical research indicates that during the nineteenth century, the Pangadereng customary legal system underwent a process of recontextualization through Islamic values, resulting in the emergence of a hybrid legal framework that gained widespread acceptance among the populace.⁴³

Traditional royal rituals, including *accera doang* and *mappalili*, were preserved but infused with stronger Islamic elements. The incorporation of prayer recitations, Arabic language usage, and leadership by religious scholars became essential components of these ceremonies. This exemplifies how traditional practices were maintained, yet Islam provided the overarching spiritual framework for their observance. As noted by Rauf (2020), nineteenth-century Bone traditions not only accommodated Islamic teachings but also served as effective vehicles for *da'wah* (Islamic outreach) within the cultural milieu.⁴⁴

During this period, the role of Islamic educational institutions, particularly *pesantran* (Islamic boarding schools) expanded significantly. Although these institutions in Bone were not as extensive as those found in Java, they emerged as important centers for reinforcing Islamic values within the community. Local religious scholars developed intellectual ties with Islamic centers in Makassar, Wajo, and even the Holy Land, fostering the rise of an Islamic intellectual elite in Bone. This elite played a pivotal role in organically integrating Islamic teachings with local customs, facilitating Islamization without provoking social discord.⁴⁵

Thus, the nineteenth century represents a critical phase in consolidating the integration of Islam and indigenous culture within the Bone Kingdom. Islam evolved beyond a personal faith to become a foundational source of political, legal, and cultural legitimacy. The Bone community's adherence to *siri' na pace*, a principle emphasizing mutual respect and social solidarity—enabled the acceptance of Islam as a religion that enriches, rather than supplants, traditional

⁴²R. Makkulawu, "Islamisasi Dan Kontinuitas Adat Dalam Kerajaan Bone Abad Ke-19," *Jurnal Al-Qalam* 25, no. 2 (2019), p. 221–240.

⁴³Usman, "Pangadereng Dan Integrasi Hukum Adat-Islam Di Bone."

⁴⁴Rauf, "Religi Dan Tradisi: Studi Tentang Ritual Islamisasi Budaya Lokal Di Bone."

⁴⁵H Amin, "Peran Ulama Dalam Pembentukan Identitas Islam Di Sulawesi Selatan Abad XIX," *Jurnal Wardah* 18, no. 2 (2017), p. 153–170.

morality. This harmonious fusion of Islamic and local identities positions Bone as a model for enduring cultural and religious integration in South Sulawesi.⁴⁶

Nonetheless, the interplay between religion and local traditions within the kingdom system remains complex and occasionally fraught with tension among various groups. The successful integration of religious and customary practices necessitates wisdom and adaptability, particularly from royal authorities and religious leaders. While syncretism or cultural adaptation often provides effective resolutions, fundamental differences in values between religious doctrines and local traditions can sometimes provoke conflicts, potentially destabilizing the social and political order of the kingdom.

Conclusion

Local customs frequently shape the practice of religion, as evidenced by celebrations such as the Prophet's birthday, which in certain regions are intertwined with indigenous traditions including processions, dances, and the preparation of traditional foods. Many customary expressions are deeply inspired by religious beliefs, and both religion and custom commonly utilize symbols imbued with significant meaning. Within religious contexts, these symbols may manifest as objects, animals, or colors that are believed to possess spiritual power or represent core traditional values. Religion often adapts to local customs, facilitating greater acceptance within the community. In multicultural societies, however, the convergence of custom and religion may encounter challenges, particularly in the form of intolerance towards diversity. Certain religious groups may reject specific traditional practices upheld by others, resulting in prejudice and discrimination. A notable example of this dynamic occurred in the Bone Kingdom, where Islamic *Sharia* principles were integrated into the existing customary law system. The concept of pangadereng the customary legal framework of the Bugis people began to incorporate Sharia elements following Islamization. This integration is evident in areas such as inheritance and marriage, where Islamic regulations were applied alongside indigenous customary values. Moreover, local religious scholars established intellectual connections with Islamic centers of learning in Makassar, Wajo, and even the Holy Land, fostering the emergence of an Islamic intellectual elite within Bone. This group played a critical role in harmoniously blending Islamic principles with local customs, thereby facilitating an organic Islamization of culture without provoking social discord. The nineteenth century, in particular, marked a significant period in consolidating the integration of Islam and indigenous traditions within the Bone Kingdom.

⁴⁶L. Nur, "Adat Dan Islam Dalam Dinamika Sosial Bone Abad Ke-19," *Jurnal Patanjala* 13, no. 1 (2021), p. 95–112.

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