SYNCRETISM OF ISLAM AND LOCAL CULTURE IN THE *MAKKULIWA LOPI* RITUAL IN SABANG SUBIK POLEWALI MANDAR

Muliadi
State Islamic College of Majene
Balai Latihan Kerja Street, Totoli, Banggae, Majene, Indonesia
Email: mulqi1973@gmail.com

Nirwan Wahyudi AR
State Islamic College of Majene
Balai Latihan Kerja Street, Totoli, Banggae, Majene, Indonesia
Email: nirwanwahyudi.ar@stainmajene.ac.id

Ahmad Dhiyaul Haq bin Mahsyar
Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakif University
Zeyrek, Büyük Karaman Cd. No: 53, 34080 Fatih/İstanbul, Turki
Email: ahmad.mahsyar@stu.fsm.edu.tr

Abstract

This article presents the research findings of a qualitative phenomenological approach, focusing on the syncretism of Islam and local culture in the makkuliwa lopi ritual in Sabang Subik Polewali Mandar. The syncretism of religion and local culture in the makkuliwa lopi ritual is manifested in two processes. The first process is the syncretization of motives, goals, or intentions. For example, the fishermen's habit of serving traditional food was originally related to ceremonies for worshipping supernatural beings. This habit is maintained without undergoing physical changes, but a shift in orientation towards worship of Allah SWT. This case is a syncretization of the motives/goals/intentions of the makkuliwa lopi ritual. The second is the syncretization of the makkuliwa lopi ritual process. It involves aligning traditional ritual elements with Islamic norms or sharia. Islam influences the adaptation of prayers or mantras, the actors involved in the rituals, and a series of makkoli lopi rituals, which are syncretized according to Islamic principles. The makkuliwa lopi ritual in Sabang Subik Polewali Mandar has a positive impact on the socio-religious dimension, which, among other things, can be observed from the community's moderate religious attitude, close social cohesion, and the potential it offers for the economic development of the people. Thus, the ritual catalyzes the growth in various aspects of local community life.

Keywords: syncretism, Islam and culture, local culture, maritime culture, makkuliwa lopi.

INTRODUCTION

Discourses about religion and culture are always interesting because both are highly important aspects of human life. Religion and culture are interrelated entities that often influence each other and affect social life. Religion refers to a system of beliefs, values, and spiritual practices held by a group. In contrast, culture refers to the way of life, values, norms, traditions, arts, and expressions held by a group of people.

Religion can influence culture in various ways. It can shape social values and norms in society. Religious beliefs and teachings can influence the worldview, ethics, morals, and principles adhered to by society in everyday life. It can also influence social structures, such as relationships between individuals and families, members of society, and gender roles (Meliani et al., 2021).

Religious influence on culture can also be found in art. Religion is often a source of inspiration and themes in society's art and culture. Religious rituals, traditional

ceremonies, and artistic expressions in culture are closely related to the religious beliefs held by society (Widhyatama, 2012). Culture, on the other hand, can also influence religion. It can shape people's perspective and understanding of their religion. Culture can affect the interpretation and practice of worship in religion (Mahfuz, 2019). Also, culture can influence how religion is integrated into people's daily lives, such as the use of local languages in worship, clothing, and culinary delights related to religious practices.

Religion and culture can be factors that mutually strengthen and influence each other. The two are often likened to two sides of a coin that cannot be separated. Religion cannot be implemented without culture, while cultural development must be guided by religious values. The pattern of relations between religion and local culture can vary greatly and is influenced by various factors, including history, geography, and demography of a region.

Lukman Hakim Saifuddin (2019) proposed three types of relationship patterns between religion and local culture that are often found in society: 1) culture is perceived as conflicting with religion, so that culture is forced to submit to religion; 2) understanding of religious values is forced to comply with the culture that has developed; and 3) substantive religious values are adopted in a culture, causing adjustments and birthing a new culture.

These three patterns can be simplified into two types: 1) integrative-symbiotic, namely the tendency to combine religion and culture so that they can work together and be mutually beneficial; and 2) segregative-dominative, namely the tendency to separate religion and culture absolutely and dominate one of them (Wahyudi AR et al., 2023). When referring to the history of Islamic da'wah, the tendency is more towards an integrative-symbiotic pattern, where Islam is preached in such a way, and the developed culture is maintained if the principles or substance do not conflict with Islamic values.

One of the success factors of previous preachers in spreading Islam in the archipelago was their ability to preach with a cultural approach rooted in the local community, as *Wali Sanga* (Islam Saints) advocated. *Wali Sanga* used various methods to spread Islamic teachings integrated with the community's local culture (Arifin & Arifatun, 2021).

Indonesia, as a country with diverse ethnicities, tribes, and religions, is a rich laboratory for religious and cultural syncretism (Muchtar et al., 2013). In this context, the syncretism of Islam and local culture is an interesting phenomenon worthy of deeper study. The combination of Islamic values with local traditions and culture has provided a unique color to Indonesian society's religious and social life.

Syncretism is generally understood as combining and adapting elements from various belief systems or religious traditions (Rudolph, 2016). Syncretism in the context of the Islamic religion can mean combining local elements or pre-Islamic traditions with Islamic teachings. This also indicates Islam's flexibility in creating harmony with culture.

Syncretism between Islam and local culture manifests in various regions of Indonesia. Islamic elements are often seen in various rituals, customs, and ceremonies that are still preserved and respected by the community (Rofiqoh et al., 2021). Local customs and culture are also an integral part of implementing religious practices in a unique and different form in each region.

One example of this syncretism phenomenon is the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual. This ritual combines Islamic values with local culture in the Mandar tribe community, especially in Sabang Subik Village, which is in Balanipa District, Polewali Mandar Regency, West Sulawesi Province. The *makkuliwa lopi* ritual is an interesting research object because it reflects the harmony and unity between the Islamic religion and local culture. It creates unique religious rituals and provides a strong cultural identity for the local community.

The selection of Sabang Subik Village as a research location was based on several strategic reasons. First, Sabang Subik Village is a center for fishing activities and has a rich maritime tradition. Second, the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual is an integral part of community life in this village, a depiction of the strong connection among religious, social, and cultural values. Third, the creativity and progressiveness of the community to strengthen the Islamic content of the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual, including the reading of Islamic laudation/*selawat (diba'an)*, which later became a new specialty of the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual in Sabang Subik.

Based on these considerations, Sabang Subik Village can become a research locus capable of presenting an in-depth exploration of religious and cultural syncretism in the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual.

Research on the syncretism of Islam and local culture in the context of the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual has essential significance and objectives. Through this research, it can be understood more deeply how syncretization between Islamic values and local cultural elements occurs in implementing these rituals. This research will also examine the socio-religious impact of the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual on the Polewali Mandar community, especially in Sabang Subik Village.

Literature Review

The researcher used the Publish or Perish (PoP) application to search for references related to this research, using the keyword "religious and cultural syncretism" in the Google Scholar (GS) database. There were 998 literature titles published from 1989 to 2023 (as of August 2023). However, of all these titles, there has yet to be any research that has used Polewali Mandar Regency or West Sulawesi Province as the research locus, nor has anyone studied the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual specifically or made it the focus. It shows that the novelty of this research includes locations and rituals that have never been studied before regarding the phenomenon of religious and cultural syncretism.

As for literature searches using the Publish or Perish (PoP) application with the keyword "makkuliwa" in the GS database, four (4) previous studies were found relevant to this research topic. Below is the comparison.

Table. 1. Comparison of Previous Research on the *Makkuliwa* Tradition

Short Description	Comparison
Isna Arliana Goncing (2017), in her thesis, reveals the purpose or motive underlying the implementation of the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual. This research examines the *makkuliwa lopi* tradition's historical development, implementation stages, and impact on people's lives in the Majene Regency.	The relation between the research conducted by Goncing and this research focuses on the same topic, namely the *makkuliwa lopi* tradition. However, there are differences in the following matters: 1) The scope of Goncing's research subjects was the people of Majene Regency, while this research focused on the Polewali Mandar people; 2) Goncing used a philosophical approach, while this research used a sociological approach.
Kusnadi (2021), through his thesis, describes the implementation of the *makkuliwa* tradition in the Mosso Dhua community of Majene Regency and the values of Islamic education implicit in it.	Kusnadi and this research focus on the same topic, the *makkuliwa* tradition. However, there are differences as follows: 1) Kusnadi observed the *makkuliwa* tradition in general, while this research specifically explored the *makkuliwa lopi* tradition; 2) Kusnadi's research area was the people of Majene Regency, while this research focused on the Polewali Mandar community; 3) The focus of Kusnadi's research was on expressing the values of Islamic education in the *makkuliwa* tradition, while this research was concerned with revealing the phenomenon of syncretism between Islam and the *makkuliwa lopi* tradition.
Muh. Alwi (2021), in his thesis, explains the acculturation process between Islam and the *makkuliwa* tradition in the Lombo'na community, Majene Regency, and identifies the noble values contained in the *makkuliwa* ritual, both from religious and social aspects.	Alwi and this research focused on the *makkuliwa* tradition and explored the relationship between Islam and culture. Meanwhile, the differences between the two include: 1) Alwi researched the *makkuliwa* tradition in general, while this research specifically focused on the *makkuliwa lopi* tradition; 2) Alwi researched communities in Majene Regency, while this research focused on the Polewali Mandar community; 3) Alwi's research approach used the concept of acculturation in observing the relationship between religion and culture, while this research used the concept of syncretism.
Arhamarrahimin and Kasjim Salenda (2022), in their scientific article, explain the history, process and perspective of Islamic law towards the *makkuliwa lopi* tradition in the people of Balanipa District, Polewali Mandar Regency.	The relation between the research conducted by Arhamarrahimin and Salenda and this research focused on the same topic, the *makkuliwa lopi* tradition. However, there are significant differences, including: 1) Arhamarrahimin and Salenda's research was in the Polewali Mandar

| | community in Balanipa District, while this research focused on Pambusuang District; 2) Arhamarrahimin and Salenda's research used a theological approach, while this research used a sociological approach. |

Source: Data analysis, 2023.

Conceptual Framework

Some individuals, when absorbing and applying the teachings of their religion, place special emphasis on certain aspects of their beliefs, including syncretism (Hasrianti, 2016). The term "syncretism" comes from ancient Greek, namely "syncretismos" (συγκρητισμός), which in English is translated as "syncretism". Etymologically, syncretism can be interpreted as unification, merging, or mingling (Harper, 2023). The word "syncretism" in the Indonesian Dictionary is defined as a new understanding (school), which is a combination of several different understandings (schools) to find harmony, balance, and so on (Indonesian Language Development and Cultivation Agency, 2023).

The historian named Plutarch or Plutarchus first used the term "syncretismos" in his book entitled Moralia around the 10th century AD. As written by Mokhtar and Sa'ari, Plutarch used the term to describe the Cretan people who united and stopped hostilities between them to face a common enemy (Mokhtar & Sa'ari, 2016). Even though there is potential for disagreement, the Cretan people prefer to work together and unite to face common dangers rather than establish good relations with enemies. These kinds of principles and customs have become a characteristic feature of Cretan society (Leopold & Jensen, 2016). Thus, it can be stated that initially, the term syncretism tended to be used in the political field, but later, it was also used in the fields of philosophy and religion.

Around the 15th century, Cardinal Bessarion used the term syncretism in an attempt to harmonize the philosophies of Plato and Aristoteles (Talan, 2020). In the religious context, Utomo noted that around the 17th century, syncretism was practiced by Calextus, a follower of Luther who was known as a syncretist because of his efforts to reconcile and unite various Protestant theologies. Some theologians such as Bultmann, Gunkel, and Harnadc use the term syncretism to represent Christianity as a syncretic religion because it combines concepts from Judaism, Hellenism, and Gnosticism. Russell Chandran even argues that all Christian theological formulations are forced and required to be syncretic (Utomo, 2023).

Iwan Satiri (2021) argued that the term syncretism, which was originally used specifically to refer to efforts to unite different Christian sects, in its development, experienced an expansion of its meaning to include the mingling of religion with other religions, religion with philosophy, or religion with culture. This means that syncretism is also relevant in the context of Islam and other religions.

This view was reinforced by Marinsah and Ramli (2017) who wrote that in the early days of Islam, before the 16th and 17th centuries, the term syncretism often had a negative connotation. These connotations include practices such as shirk (idol worship), heresy (religious practices that have no basis in Islamic teachings), and *khurafat* (beliefs that are not based on common sense or valid religious teachings).

Based on the explanation above, syncretism can be defined as a concept that requires the combination of various elements (religions, beliefs, understandings, cultures) that are different and even contradictory, then integrated into a new entity that is unique and harmonious. This entity can manifest in the form of thoughts or ritual practices.

Several terms are synonymous with syncretism, including acculturation, eclecticism, and enculturation. In general, these terms have the same meaning etymologically, namely unification, merging, or mingling. However, terminologically, each can be distinguished. Acculturation includes the combination of two or more cultures that meet and influence each other (Indonesian Language Development and Cultivation Agency, 2023), while syncretism (as previously explained) does not only include culture but also religion, belief, and/or understanding. In this case, the scope of syncretism is wider than acculturation.

Eclecticism tends to refer to a philosophical context, namely combining the best of various thoughts or theories. In the Philosophical Dictionary, eclecticism is defined as a philosophical approach that involves comparing and combining theories with the

aim of selecting and coming up with the best theory (Bagus, 2000). Syncretism is not only used in the context of philosophy but also includes combining elements in one religion with another religion, religion with philosophy, or religion with culture.

Inculturation is usually used specifically in Christianity. As stated by Schineller, the term inculturation emerged as an alternative to the term syncretism. Schineller (1992) stated that the term syncretism has been the subject of debate and controversy in the development of anthropological and theological studies. There are opinions for and against this term. Therefore, the Catholic Church proposed using the term inculturation as a replacement for the term syncretism, which was considered to have a negative connotation. The term syncretism has become commonly used in all religious contexts.

The phenomenon of syncretism can be grouped into three main categories, as stated by Mokhtar and Sa'ari (2015), namely syncretism between religion and religion, syncretism between religion and philosophy, and syncretism between religion and culture. Each is described as follows.

Syncretism between religion and religion is a process of combining one religion with another religion, which can produce new beliefs or religions (Brown, 2006). One example of syncretism between religions is the Sikh religion, which is often said to be the result of syncretism between Hinduism and Islam. The Sikh religion emerged in the 15th century AD and was introduced by Guru Nanak in India (Esha, 2006).

Syncretism between religion and philosophy. Philosophy in Islam involves a variety of views, including pros and cons. The issue of harmonization between philosophy and Islam is the subject of ongoing debate. Some clerics and scholars argue that Islam and philosophy have fundamental differences, so these two domains are difficult to unite (Surya, 2020). However, quite a few also tried to syncretize the two harmoniously, such as Al-Kindi, continued by Al-Farabi, and further developed by Ibnu Sina and Ibn Rushd. Al-Kindi views philosophy as a means of uncovering the true nature of things through causal explanation. He also connected religion (Islam) with philosophy, stating that both were sciences of truth. Meanwhile, Al-Farabi succeeded in combining political philosophy

from classical Greece with an understanding of Islam in the context of revealed religions. Then, Ibn Sina presented his argument that Allah created the world through the concept of emanation (Masang, 2020). These are examples of syncretism between religion and philosophy. Satiri describes examples of philosophical syncretism with religions other than Islam more comprehensively (Satiri, 2021).

An overview of the syncretism of religion and culture can be based on the trichotomy theory by Clifford Geertz. In this theory, Geertz (1976) identified three community groups: the *abangan* group, the *santri* group, and the *priyai* group. Of the three groups, the *abangan* and *priyai* groups are often seen as being involved in syncretistic ritual practices. The form of syncretism that occurs in these two groups is an example of religious and cultural syncretism, namely the combination of Islamic elements with local Javanese culture. This concept of religious syncretism with local culture is also used by the author in observing the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual in the Polewali Mandar community.

Apart from these three forms of syncretism, there are also other groupings based on the way of looking at the phenomenon of syncretism; as stated by Edwin Zenner (2005) that there are two different views on understanding the concept of syncretism. Although they both use the same term, "syncretism," their views on this phenomenon are contradictory. Departing from this conflict, Satiri summarized two perspectives on viewing the phenomenon of syncretism, namely the descriptive perspective and the normative perspective (Satiri, 2021).

Syncretism, from a descriptive perspective, tends to have a positive connotation. This means that syncretism can create harmony between two different religions by reducing conflict between them. Apart from that, syncretism can create a new, more civilized culture, give rise to a global universal language, change traditional culture into an industrial culture with advances in science and technology, and can bring positive changes to the lives of multicultural societies, including those living in religious diversity.

From a normative perspective, syncretism is seen as having many problems and tends to have a negative connotation. In this context, syncretism is considered a mistake in religion because it reduces the traditions and

understanding of existing religions. Syncretism is also considered not paying attention to the truth or falsity of a religion and not questioning the authenticity of religious teachings. Apart from that, syncretism means to create a very exclusive tradition or religion, eliminate the absolute values of religion, embrace relativism as a principle, and become a process of desacralization of a religion.

The various forms of syncretism that have been described illustrate that the assessment of the phenomenon of syncretism can vary greatly depending on the point of view used. This difference in perspective opens opportunities for the emergence of diverse views, including positive and negative views of this phenomenon. There is a view that sees syncretism to achieve harmony and combine various elements of different cultures or religions creatively and productively. On the other hand, there is a view that views syncretism as a threat to the sanctity and authenticity of religious teachings and can damage the essence of pure religious traditions and values. For this reason, the debate and complexity in interpreting the phenomenon of syncretism remains an interesting part to explore in the context of cultural and religious diversity in the world.

RESEARCH METHOD

This is descriptive qualitative research, a type of research based on phenomenological philosophy. The main focus of this research is to appreciate (*verstehen*), understand, and interpret the meaning of interaction events and human behavior in certain situations, according to the researcher's views (Sugiyono, 2013).

Based on the research location, it can be categorized as field research, where most of the research stages are carried out in a living social context and interacting with the community. Based on the nature of the problem faced, objectives, and level of analysis, this research is included in the type of descriptive research. The aim is to provide a detailed description of a particular society or group and describe a phenomenon (Sangadji & Sopiah, 2010).

Research data was collected through interviews, observation, and documentation. The process of determining informants was carried out using an emergent sampling design, which means that informants were selected as

the researcher entered the field stage and the research progressed. The steps are as follows: The researcher selects certain individuals who are considered to have the potential to provide relevant information. Furthermore, based on the data obtained from previous informants, researchers can determine additional informants who are considered capable of providing more comprehensive and in-depth information.

DISCUSSION

Manifestation of Syncretism of Islam and Local Culture in the *Makkuliwa Lopi* Ritual in Sabang Subik Polewali Mandar

Islam arrived in Mandar and interacted with the social situation of the local community, which already had a system of traditional values, knowledge, and beliefs that had been adhered to since ancient times. A similar phenomenon occurs in other tribes in Indonesia (Hidayat, 2007).

According to Arifuddin Ismail (2012), the belief system of pre-Islamic Mandar society was based on values that resemble Hinduism. One indicator can be found in society's view that the world is structured into three levels: the upper world, the middle world, and the lower world. This view is in line with Hindu cosmology, which divides the universe into three levels: 1) the upper world (*swah loka*), where the gods or sacred entities reside; 2) the middle world (*bwah loka*), inhabited by humans; and 3) the underworld (*bhur loka*), which is the lowest layer inhabited by evil creatures or dark souls (Semara & Slamet, 2022).

The process of integrating Islamic values into the Mandar tradition certainly involves the important role of the Islamic cleric who introduced Islam. These Islamic clerics adopted the right strategy to transfer Islamic teachings into the epistemological framework of traditional Mandar society, which tends to be traditionalist. One strategy used is *da'wah* (Islamic preaching) with a cultural approach, or what is termed cultural *da'wah*.

Cultural *da'wah* is a method commonly used by Indonesian Islamic scholars (*ulama*). For example, the preachers who spread Islam in Java, known as *Wali Sanga*, not only preached the basic teachings of the Islamic religion but also played a role in creating Javanese culture, which was influenced by

Islamic values. According to Nurcholis Madjid (2003), the results of the *da'wah* approach used by bearers of Islam in the archipelago make Islamic teachings, in general, more easily accepted by most people.

Sunan Kalijaga coined the term "*panakawan*" in *wayang* as a symbolic representation of Islamic teachings. This term is not found in the Hindu tradition, which was known as the original producer of Indonesian *wayang* at that time. It shows the bearers of Islam's deep understanding of people's preferences and tastes by utilizing art and culture to explain Islamic teachings (Geertz, 1960).

The Islamic broadcasting clerics who arrived in Mandar, including in the Sappambusuang area, played a central role in realizing the process of integrating Islam into Mandar culture. They are ulama who have experienced the adaptation of Islam in the Gowa Kingdom and bring an Indonesian perspective, not coming directly from Mecca or outside the archipelago. These clerics brought a Sufist perspective, making it easier for them to fit into the Mandar community's framework of thought. The Sufistic approach was a very suitable method, especially considering that many Mandar people at that time still "believed" in supernatural sciences, such as *wayang kaddaro* or immune science, and supernatural objects (Arifuddin, 2012).

The cultural-sufistic approach in *da'wah* is the main key to breaking down the boundaries between religion and culture and creating a unique phenomenon of syncretism. The phenomenon of syncretism can be observed in three main categories, as explained by Mokhtar and Sa'ari (2015). These categories include syncretism between religion and religion, syncretism between religion and philosophy, and syncretism between religion and culture. In the context of the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual, syncretism occurs in the third category, namely syncretism between religion (Islam) and culture (Mandar). Schematically, this syncretism is depicted as follows.

Figure 1. Syncretism in the *Makkuliwa Lopi* Ritual
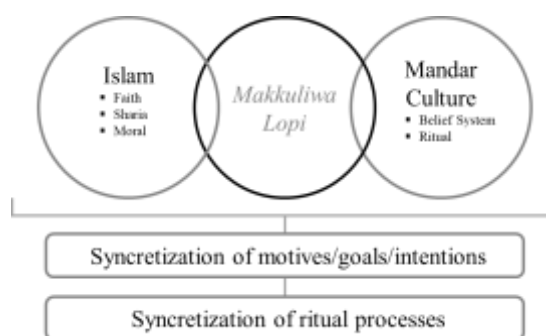
Source: Data analysis, 2023.

Figure 1 illustrates the syncretism of religion and local culture in the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual, which is realized in two processes. The first process is syncretizing motives, goals, or intentions. It reflects wisdom in aligning the meaning of the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual with Islamic values, which is reflected in the emphasis of the orientation of the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual on motives, goals, or intentions to express gratitude, hope for safety and blessings of fortune, strengthen social solidarity, respect nature, and inherit cultural identity. Everything shows that in terms of motives/goals/intentions, the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual is syncretic (in accordance) with the principles of faith, sharia, and morals in Islam.

The pattern of Islamization in Mandar reflects the views of Islamists, who believe that local culture can be integrated with Islamic values through syncretization (adjustment) in the interpretation of symbolic meanings of ritual practices. This means that these cultural products (including *makkuliwa lopi*) have undergone transformation or Islamization in terms of their philosophical values.

The local community's view of supernatural things transformed an Islamic perspective, although this did not change the physical aspects of their culture. For example, the fishermen's habit of serving traditional food was originally related to the ceremony of worshipping supernatural beings. This habit is maintained without undergoing physical changes, but the orientation shifts towards worship of Allah SWT. In this case, there is a syncretization of the motives/goals/intentions of the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual.

The second process is syncretizing the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual process. It involves aligning traditional ritual elements with

Islamic norms or sharia. The arrival of Islam influenced the adjustments to prayers or mantras (reading) and the actors involved in the ritual.

The Mandar fishing community, in general, can articulate Islamic idioms as an integral part of their service traditions, for example, prayers recited in Mandar with Islamic meanings juxtaposed with the name of Allah, the names of the prophets, and so on. For example, the mantra or prayer recited before the boat is lowered into the sea: "*Bismillahirrahmanirrahim*. Prophet Nuh in the *uluan* (front). Prophet Ibrahim in the *tangnga* (middle). Prophet Muhammad *nakodau* (skipper), and so on." Prophet Noah symbolizes boat safety, and Prophet Ibrahim represents the Kaaba, the Qibla of Muslims. Meanwhile, the Prophet Muhammad was the leader of the prophets (Ilyas and Nurdin, Interview, 17 October 2023).

The active participation of *annangguru* (Islamic clerics or scholars), Islamic teachers (Islamic clerk or *mubalig*), and *puang imam* (mosque leader) in the ritual processions of the Sabang Subik community has a very significant role. Their existence strengthens and guards the implementation of religious traditions. The *makkuliwa lopi* ritual can only be carried out in the presence of an *annangguru*. If his presence is not possible, at least be replaced by a mosque imam or someone who is considered to understand religious matters, such as an Islamic clerk.

The presence of *the annangguru, ustaz*, and *puang imam* in the fishermen's ritual processions has changed the role of the *sando lopi* (boat shaman) so that some fishermen no longer depend on the *sando lopi* in carrying out the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual. *Annangguru, ustaz*, and *puang imam* replace the role of *sando lopi* in providing psychological support to fishermen before they set sail. However, several fishermen combine the roles of *annangguru/ustaz/puang imam* with *sando lopi* because they consider *sando lopi* to have special knowledge about boats.

Islam has also touched on local perspectives on maritime control without completely changing the community's belief system regarding the sea. Even though Islam is the dominant religion, it does not hinder fishermen's instincts to continue to believe in the supernatural powers in the sea. Islam enhances society's perspective by adding dimensions and interpretations in accordance with Islamic principles.

Apart from that, as a cultural product, society can continue to transform a tradition, such as the Sabang Subik community, which includes reading Islamic laudation/*selawat (diba'an)* in the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual. This creativity further strengthens the Islamic content of the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual.

The syncretism of religion and local culture in the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual illustrates the success of the Mandar Islamists in integrating Islamic values into the local traditions of society and creating a local Islamic tradition without eliminating the formal aspects of a culture. The cognitive dimension is prioritized by aligning Islam's potential with society's cognitive situation. Changes in the cognitive system then impact changes in society's symbol system and action system. As a result, this syncretism creates unique and distinctive rituals and strengthens the idea of a harmonious blend of Islam and local culture.

Socioreligious Impact of the *Makkuliwa Lopi* Ritual in Sabang Subik Polewali Mandar

Every cultural entity or societal tradition has an impact on the socioreligious dimension. This is in line with Émile Durkheim's views (2023) described in the book "The Elementary Forms of Religious Life". In principle, Durkheim saw that religious traditions were not just a spiritual phenomenon but also a social phenomenon that reflected and strengthened social ties. In other words, religious traditions are important in maintaining societal stability. Such is the case with the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual in Sabang Subik Polewali Mandar. Its socioreligious implications can be highlighted in terms of religious attitudes, social cohesion, and the potential it offers for the economic development of the people.

Community participation in the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual in Sabang Subik has positively influenced moderate religious attitudes. Both directly and indirectly, community involvement in these rituals can contribute to forming a deeper and more concrete understanding of moderate attitudes toward living a religious life. This is in accordance with one of the indicators of religious moderation defined by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, namely

the acceptance of traditions in religious practice if they do not conflict with the basic principles of religious teachings. Acceptance of local traditions or culture reflects an inclusive attitude towards traditional values and practices that exist in society.

Figure 2. The *Makkuliwa lopi* Ritual in Sabang Subik

Source: Researchers document, 2023.

The direct involvement of the *annangguru*, *ustaz*, and *puang imam* in the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual also plays an important role in guiding the community to understand tradition as a wealth that strengthens unity, not as a source of conflict. It has never been recorded in the history of Sabang Subik that *annangguru, ustaz*, or *puang imam*, for example, forbade *makkuliwa lopi* because they were involved as the main actors in implementing the ritual. In this context, the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual strengthens the social cohesion of the Sabang Subik community.

The *makkuliwa lopi* ritual also opens opportunities for developing marine culture-based ecotourism, in line with public attention from academics, cultural observers, tourists and the public towards this ritual. The government and related parties can use maritime cultural attractions such as *makkuliwa lopi* to develop ecotourism programs, especially in the Sabang Subik area. Traditional foods can add value to marketing this unique religious tourist destination. In this way, the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual can catalyze growth in various aspects of local community life.

Considering the process of religious and cultural syncretism in the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual, ongoing efforts must be made to align the ritual elements with Islamic values without reducing the meaning and authenticity of local traditions. In this case, synergy is needed between religious leaders, traditional leaders, and academics to formulate wise guidelines for syncretizing this ritual. These steps help maintain the integrity of local culture while ensuring its conformity with the principles of Islamic teachings.

Besides, taking into account the public's attention from academics, cultural observers, tourists, and the public towards service traditions such as *makkuliwa lopi*, the government and related parties can develop a marine culture-based ecotourism program. This program can also be paired with the development of the creative economy, such as marketing local products or traditional crafts. This effort can make a real contribution to the economic growth of local communities while strengthening positive socio-religious values.

CLOSING

The syncretism of religion and local culture in the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual is manifested in two processes. The first process is the syncretization of motives, goals, or intentions. For example, the fishermen's habit of serving traditional food was originally related to ceremonies for worshipping supernatural beings. This habit is maintained without undergoing physical changes, but a shift in orientation towards worship of Allah SWT. This case is a syncretization of the motives/goals/intentions of the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual. The second process is the syncretization of the *makkuliwa lopi* ritual process. It involves aligning traditional ritual elements with Islamic norms or sharia. Islam influences the adaptation of prayers or mantras, the actors involved in the rituals, and a series of *makkuliwa lopi* rituals, which are syncretized according to Islamic principles.

The *makkuliwa lopi* ritual in Sabang Subik Polewali Mandar has a positive impact on the socioreligious dimension, which among other things, can be observed from the community's moderate religious attitude, close social cohesion, and the potential it offers for the economic development of the people. Thus, the ritual catalyzes the growth in various aspects of local community life.

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