

ISLAM AND CULTURAL ACCULTURATION IN THE BARONG
TRADITION OF THE OSING BANYUWANGI COMMUNITYRachel Nazla^{1*} & Rozaqul Arif²^{1,2}UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, Indonesia*rachelnazlaa@gmail.com**Abstract**

This study explains the form of acculturation of Islamic values in the Barong Ider Bumi tradition in Kemiren Village, Banyuwangi. The Barong tradition was initially strong with animistic values, but Islam is dialectic which makes this tradition undergo an adjustment in meaning and value. This study uses a descriptive qualitative method with an ethnographic approach. The results of the research show that the acculturation of Islamic values in the Barong tradition can be seen in its rituals with Islamic nuances, the transformation of the meaning of earth alms as a pious deed, and Barong as a mystical symbol to be religious. The values of cultural da'wah are manifested through the involvement of religious leaders in directing the spirituality of the community to remain in accordance with the teachings of monotheism.

Keywords: Islam, Cultural Acculturation, Da'wah, Barong Tradition.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini menjelaskan bentuk akulturasi nilai Islam dalam tradisi Barong Ider Bumi di Desa Kemiren, Banyuwangi. Tradisi Barong awalnya kuat dengan nilai animistik, namun Islam berdialektika yang menjadikan tradisi ini mengalami penyesuaian makna dan nilai. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dengan pendekatan etnografi. Hasil penelitian bahwa akulturasi nilai Islam dalam tradisi Barong tampak pada ritualnya yang bernuansa Islam, transformasi makna sedekah bumi sebagai amal saleh, dan Barong sebagai simbol mistis menjadi religius. Nilai-nilai dakwah kultural terwujud melalui keterlibatan tokoh agama dalam mengarahkan spiritualitas masyarakat agar tetap sesuai dengan ajaran tauhid.

Kata Kunci: Islam, Akulturasi Budaya, Dakwah, Tradisi Barong.



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A. INTRODUCTION

The relationship between Islam and local culture in the context of Indonesia's Muslim community has long been a field of intense academic debate, especially between the religious purification approach and the cultural accommodation approach.¹ The purification approach views local cultural practices as remnants of pre-Islamic beliefs that have the potential to harm the purity of monotheism and risk perpetuating mystical elements that are not in line with normative Islamic teachings.² In this perspective, local traditions are often positioned as theological challenges that must be reformulated or even abandoned in order to maintain the purity of the people's faith.

On the contrary, a number of scholars assert that Islam has developed historically through a dynamic process of dialogue with local cultures.³ Islam does not exist in an empty social space, but interacts with a system of symbols, values, and traditions that have been rooted in people's lives.⁴ This view places local culture not as an opponent of religion, but as a social medium that allows Islamic values to be accepted, interpreted, and internalized contextually. These differences in perspectives suggest that the relationship between religion and culture is not singular or black-and-white, but rather is within a complex spectrum of negotiations, influenced by social, historical, and local authority structures.

The debate reflects that the relationship between religion and local culture does not always run in a linear and harmonious manner. At the normative level,⁵ Islam carries a set of theological values that emphasize the purity of monotheism as well as caution against symbolic practices that potentially contain mystical elements and pre-Islamic rituals.⁶ However, in social reality, local traditions rooted in old belief systems are still alive, practiced, and reinterpreted by Muslim

¹ Ahmadi, Mubarak, & Tri Tami Gunarti, "Pola Komunikasi Dakwah Inklusif Untuk Masyarakat Multikultural: Perspektif Manajemen Dakwah Modern." *MIYAH: Jurnal Studi Islam*, vol. 20, no. 02, Desember 2024, 287–304.

² Hasbullah, Moeflich. *Islam & Transformasi Masyarakat Nusantara*. Prenada Media, 2017.

³ Pratama, Zacky Fajar, et.al. "DIALEKTIKA ISLAM DAN BUDAYA LOKAL: Basis Sosio-Kultural Pembentukan Islam Nusantara." *Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Sosial*, vol. 8, no. 2, Desember 2025, 222–42.

⁴ Shorfana, Muhammad Rizky, & Ahmad Muhctar Luthfi. "Pelestarian Nilai Dan Simbol Islam-Jawa Dalam Ruang Keagamaan Masjid Menara Kudus Perspektif Pierre Bourdieu." *Batuthah: Jurnal Sejarah Padaban Islam*, vol. 4, no. 2, September 2025, 149–60.

⁵ Marquard, Odo. lichen Teil überhaupt des Hegelschen Textes aus schon das ist ein Grand, sich mit ihm zu befassen. Aber erst der zweite Grund ist entscheidend : nämlich der gegenwärtige Kurs gewinn diesesHegelschen Arguments.

⁶ Tamam, Abas Mansur. *ISLAMIC WORLD VIEW Paradigma Intelektual Muslim*. Spirit Media Press, 2017.

communities as part of their religious expression and cultural identity.⁷ The tension between the ideals of religious teachings and the reality of cultural practices is a crucial issue in the study of Islamic acculturation in Indonesia, as well as opening up space for analysis of how Islamic values are negotiated and internalized through local traditions.

One of the traditions that represents this tension is the Barong Ider Bumi tradition in Kemiren Village, Banyuwangi. Historically, Barong is a cultural symbol of the Osing people related to animistic beliefs, especially as a representation of the forces of repelling reinforcements and village safety guards.⁸ In the normative Islamic perspective, these kinds of symbols are often positioned as problematic because they are considered close to supernatural elements and mysticism. However, in reality, the tradition of Barong Ider Bumi not only survives, but also continues to be carried out by the Osing community, who are mostly Muslim, even carried out in the post-Eid al-Fitr momentum, which is the second day of Shawwal.⁹ This fact shows that there is a gap between what is "*supposed*" according to the normative construction of religion and what "*happens*" in the social practices of society.

This condition raises the fundamental question "why are traditions rooted in pre-Islamic beliefs not abandoned by the Muslim community of Osing? How do people negotiate the meaning of the Barong tradition to remain in harmony with Islamic teachings? And to what extent does the acculturation process really change the structure of meaning, not just attach Islamic symbols to old rituals?" These questions are important to ask so that the study of Barong does not stop at the level of cultural description or romanticization of religious harmony and tradition.

In practice, the people of Kemiren Village show a process of adjustment and reinterpretation of the Barong Ider Bumi tradition.¹⁰ Old ritual elements such as Barong processions and traditional symbols are still maintained as cultural identities, while Islamic elements such as prayer, tahlil, and alms are included as a framework for new meanings.¹¹ This process marks the occurrence of

⁷ Pusvisasari, Lina, et.al. "Islam Nusantara: The Local Expression of Islam within the Context of Tradition and Modernity." *Lentera Peradaban: Journal on Islamic Studies*, vol. 1, no. 2, Juni 2025, 40–47.

⁸ Indiarti, Wiwin. *Kajian mengenai Desa Kemiren sebagai Penyangga Tradisi dan Kearifan Lokal Masyarakat Osing*.

⁹ Ratnawati, Nurul, & Ali Imron. *Desain Baru Pembelajaran Antropologi Budaya Berbasis Team Based Project*. Media Nusa Creative (MNC Publishing), 2025.

¹⁰ Isnaeni, Adisty Noor. *Nilai-nilai dan makna simbolik tradisi sedekah laut di desa tratebang kecamatan wonokerto kabupaten pekalongan*. 2020. Fakultas Ilmu Budaya.

¹¹ Khaini, Muhamamad Nabil. *Fungsi Ondel-Ondel Betawi di Masa Kini (Studi Kasus Kampung Betawi Setu Babakan, Jagakarsa, Jakarta Selatan)*. 2025. Universitas Andalas

acculturation, which is the encounter between Islamic values and local culture that is not confrontational, but dialogical. However, this acculturation is not neutral. It involves power relations, religious authority, and the role of traditional and religious leaders in determining the boundaries between preserved culture and purified religion.¹²

Studies on Islamic acculturation and local culture have actually been carried out by many previous researchers. Rahmawati's research on the Grebeg tradition in Yogyakarta shows that Javanese cultural symbols can function as a medium for Islamic da'wah without eliminating traditional identity.¹³ Meanwhile, Isnaeni in her research on the tradition of sea alms in Cilacap found a shift in meaning from the practice of offering to an expression of gratitude to God in the framework of Islam.¹⁴ These studies confirm that Islam in Indonesia developed through a relatively peaceful process of cultural and symbolic adaptation.

However, most previous research has tended to place acculturation as a completed and harmonious process, focusing on the symbolic meaning or function of the ritual alone. These studies have not critically examined how the tension between normative Islamic teachings and local cultural practices is negotiated in people's daily lives, as well as how cultural da'wah works as a strategy to bridge these tensions. In addition, studies that specifically place the Barong Ider Bumi tradition in Banyuwangi as a cultural da'wah arena for the Osing people are still very limited, even barely touched deeply.

This is where the research gap that this study wants to fill. This research not only seeks to explain the form of acculturation of Islamic values in the Barong Ider Bumi tradition, but also analyzes the process of negotiation of meaning that occurs behind the practice. The main focus of the research is directed at how the Osing people understand, interpret, and manage the Barong tradition in the midst of the demands of Islamic teachings, as well as how the role of religious leaders and traditional leaders shapes this tradition as a socially and religiously acceptable cultural da'wah medium.

With this approach, the Barong Ider Bumi tradition is not positioned simply as a cultural heritage or ritual artifact, but as a dialectical space between social reality and Islamic normative ideals. This research is expected to make a conceptual contribution to the development of cultural da'wah studies, as well as offer a new perspective that da'wah is not always present in the form of formal

¹² Mustopa, Serat Wulangreh: Akulturasi Agama dan Budaya Lokal. *zakimu.com*, 2021.

¹³ Herianti, Alya Fitri, et.al. "Kearifan Lokal Sebagai Daya Tarik Pariwisata Di Keraton Yogyakarta." *Jurnal Pendidikan Sosial dan Humaniora*, vol. 5, no. 1, 2026, 1670–76.

¹⁴ Isnaeni, Adisty Noor. *Nilai-nilai dan makna simbolik tradisi sedekah laut di desa tratebang kecamatan wonokerto kabupaten pekalongan*. 2020.

lectures, but also works subtly through the process of cultural acculturation that lives in people's daily lives.

Furthermore, this study becomes relevant because the practice of da'wah in a multicultural society like Osing cannot be separated from the historical socio-historical context and cultural structure that surrounds it. Da'wah that is purely textual and normative often faces cultural resistance if it is not able to read the social reality of the target community.¹⁵ In the context of Kemiren Village, the Barong Ider Bumi tradition not only functions as a traditional ritual, but also as a social space where solidarity, social cohesion, and the collective identity of the Osing people are built.¹⁶ Therefore, da'wah efforts that ignore the local cultural dimension have the potential to cause symbolic conflicts between religion and tradition.

From the perspective of da'wah communication, this phenomenon shows that Islamic messages are not always conveyed through verbal or institutional mediums, but also through symbols, rites, and cultural practices that have been firmly rooted in people's lives.¹⁷ The Barong Ider Bumi tradition can be understood as a medium of cultural communication that allows the internalization of Islamic values gradually and contextually. The values of togetherness, gratitude, prayer for safety, and social concern that accompany these traditions are a means of conveying da'wah messages that are easier to accept because they do not conflict frontally with the cultural identity of the community.¹⁸

In addition, the dynamics of acculturation in the Barong Ider Bumi tradition also reflect the plurality of religious understanding at the local level.¹⁹ Not all Osing people interpret this tradition in the same way, some understand it as a mere cultural expression, while others see it as a form of social worship

¹⁵ Subhan, Arief, et.al. Membaca ulang dakwah: Perspektif filsafat, sejarah, dan antropologi di era kontemporer. *Star Digital Publishing*, 2025.

¹⁶ Safitri, Silviana. "Analisis Nilai Persatuan dalam Tradisi Barong Ider Bumi di Desa Kemiren Kecamatan Glagah Banyuwangi." *Journal of Multidisciplinary Inquiry in Science, Technology and Educational Research*, vol. 2, no. 3, 2025, 4144–60.

¹⁷ Matondang, Abdul Rahman, dan Syukur Kholil. "Distorsi Nilai Islam dalam Simulakra: Komunikasi Keagamaan di Lingkungan Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara." *MUKADIMAH: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sejarah, dan Ilmu-ilmu Sosial*, vol. 9, no. 1, 2025, 342–55.

¹⁸ Fannani, Bakhrudin, & A. Samsul Ma'arif. *Integrasi pendidikan Islam dengan budaya awig-awig pawongan sebagai pijakan pendidikan yang toleran: Studi Kasus di Pondok Pesantren Bali Bina Insani, Melingling Tabanan Bali*. LP2M, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, 2021,

¹⁹ Isnaini, Iin, & Bella Riskika Taufik. "Tradisi Barong Ider Bumi di Desa Kemiren, Banyuwangi: Dari Ritual Sakral ke Festival Kultural." *Santhet (Jurnal Sejarah Pendidikan Dan Humaniora)*, vol. 9, no. 3, 2025, 1006–16.

that has been Islamized.²⁰ These differences in interpretation show that acculturation is not a single and uniform process, but an ongoing arena of contestation of meaning. This is where the role of religious leaders and traditional leaders becomes significant as mediators of meaning that bridges the importance of cultural preservation and the demands of the purity of Islamic teachings.

This research has practical implications for the development of cultural da'wah strategies in Indonesia. A comprehensive understanding of the negotiation process between normative Islam and local culture can be the basis for the formulation of a da'wah model that is more inclusive, adaptive, and sensitive to the social context of society.²¹ Da'wah is no longer positioned as an effort to erase or eliminate traditions, but rather as a process of transformation of meaning that allows Islamic values to exist substantially in the local cultural space.²²

Departing from this academic gap, this research positions the Barong Ider Bumi tradition in Kemiren Village as a dialectical arena between normative Islam and the local culture of the Osing people. This tradition is interesting because it is still preserved by the post-Islamization Muslim community, even carried out in the post-Eid religious momentum which is full of Islamic meaning. The continuity of this tradition shows that the process of Islamization does not always lead to the elimination of cultural symbols, but can take place through the transformation of meaning and the adjustment of social practices. Therefore, this study does not stop at the description of rituals alone, but seeks to analyze how the process of acculturation and cultural da'wah works in shaping changes in symbolic meaning, spiritual orientation, and social practices in a sustainable manner.

Finally, through an in-depth study of the Barong Ider Bumi tradition in Kemiren Village, this research is expected to be able to enrich scientific treasures in the field of Islamic communication and broadcasting, especially related to cultural da'wah based on local wisdom. This study is also expected to be a reference for future studies that examine the relationship between religion and local culture, as well as emphasizing that the face of Islam in Indonesia grows and develops through a dynamic dialogue with the traditions of its people.

²⁰ Ainiyah, Nur. "Islam, Osing Dalam Bingkai Tradisi Dan Kosmologi: Studi Nelayan Kedungrejo-Banyuwangi." *LISAN AL-HAL: Jurnal Pengembangan Pemikiran Dan Kebudayaan*, vol. 10, no. 2, Desember 2016, 205-30.

²¹ Ahmadi, Mubarak, & Tri Tami Gunarti. "Pola Komunikasi Dakwah Inklusif Untuk Masyarakat Multikultural: Perspektif Manajemen Dakwah Modern." *MIYAH: Jurnal Studi Islam*, vol. 20, no. 02, 2024, 287-304.

²² Husna, Atifa Zahra Asmaul. "PARADIGMA DAKWAH ISLAM TERHADAP BUDAYA LOKAL NYADRAN DI DESA GENDINGAN, WIDODAREN, NGAWI." *Wahana Islamika Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, vol. 10, no. 2, Oktober 2024, 197-214.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive-interpretive approach to understand the process of Islamic acculturation in the Barong Ider Bumi tradition in Kemiren Village. The acculturation reading in this study was not carried out ahistorically or only based on the ritual dynamics that appear on the surface. On the contrary, this study places the process of the entry and development of Islam in the midst of the Osing community as an important context in understanding how Islam dialects with the Barong tradition. The affirmation of this limitation is important so that acculturation analysis is not trapped in mere symbolic generalizations, but is able to read the process of changing meaning more fully and unbiasedly.

The conceptual framework of this research rests on the perspective of cultural acculturation and cultural da'wah, which is placed as a conceptual framework in the research method. Acculturation is understood as a social process when a group of people accepts and processes new cultural elements or values without losing its basic cultural identity. In this context, the concept of acculturation as described by Koentjaraningrat is used to read how Islamic values enter, accept, and be reinterpreted in the Barong tradition without completely erasing the structure of Osing culture. This perspective helps researchers distinguish between elements of tradition that are preserved and those that undergo a transformation of meaning.

This research also uses a symbolic approach to understand people's religious expressions, as put forward by Clifford Geertz, who sees religion not only as a system of doctrine, but also as a system of symbols embodied in cultural rituals and practices.²³ This approach allows researchers to read the Barong tradition not only as an art, but as a symbolic space where religious values are negotiated and interpreted by society.

In the context of da'wah, this research is based on the theory of cultural da'wah as stated by Ali Aziz and Syamsul Arifin, which emphasize that effective da'wah is da'wah that is able to adapt the message of Islam to the social and cultural context of society.²⁴ This framework is used to analyze the role of religious leaders and traditional leaders in directing the Barong tradition to remain in line with the principles of monotheism, without causing social resistance or cultural conflict.²⁵

²³ Effendi, Dudy Imanuddin. *The Religion of Jawa"* Karya Clifford Geertz. Monograph. With Dudy Imanuddin effendi, Pusat Perpustakaan UIN SGD Bandung, 2020.

²⁴ Aziz, Moh Ali. *Ilmu Dakwah edisi revisi*. Prenada Media, 2024.

²⁵ Baharuddin, Baharuddin. *Komunikasi Dakwah Tokoh Agama dalam Membangun Masyarakat Multikultural di Kecamatan Tapango Kabupaten Polewali Mandar*. 2021. IAIN Parepare.

Data collection was carried out through three main techniques, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was carried out by directly attending the implementation of the Barong Ider Bumi tradition, both in the context of traditional rituals and community social activities. Through this observation, the researcher seeks to capture social dynamics, changes in the form of rituals, and the integration of Islamic elements in traditional practices after coming into contact with Islamic teachings.

Interviews were conducted in a targeted and in-depth manner with traditional leaders, Barong art actors (such as dancers, handlers, and pengrawit), and the people of Kemiren Village. This interview aims to gain an understanding of their perception of the meaning of the Barong tradition, the process of adjusting Islamic values, and their views on the relationship between customs and religious teachings in daily life. Meanwhile, documentation is carried out by examining village archives, photos of activities, cultural records, and relevant literature as supporting data. This documentary data is used to reinforce the results of observations and interviews, as well as to help trace the changing meaning and practices of the Barong tradition over time.

Through this methodological approach, the research is expected to be able to describe the Barong Ider Bumi tradition not only as an art of cultural heritage, but as a result of the process of Islamic acculturation that takes place dialogically. The Barong tradition is understood as a meeting space between religious values and the cultural identity of the Osing people, which not only strengthens the spiritual dimension, but also affirms the social and cultural identity of the people of Kemiren Village.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The Barong Ider Bumi tradition is not solely understood as a traditional ritual of ancestral heritage, but has undergone a shift in meaning to a socio-religious practice that contains moral and religious values. The community interprets this tradition as a form of expression of gratitude to God for the salvation and blessings received throughout the year, as well as a means of strengthening social relations between villagers. In this context, the practice of da'wah is not conveyed through formal lectures or explicit religious teachings, but is implicitly present and integrated in a series of cultural activities that have been collectively accepted by society.

The change in the meaning of the Barong Ider Bumi tradition is part of the process of cultural adjustment in line with changes in people's beliefs. One of the traditional leaders explained that in the past Barong was seen as a symbol of

village protection related to belief in supernatural powers. However, in its development, the meaning is slowly redirected to be in line with the teachings of Islam which is embraced by the majority of people. He emphasized that the Barong tradition is still maintained because it has a strong social function as a means of uniting the community, while ritual elements that are considered incompatible with Islamic teachings are gradually abandoned through joint deliberation between traditional and religious leaders.

According to Suhaimi, as a traditional leader in Kemiren village, "*customs must not be lost, but also must not contradict the beliefs of the people who are now majority Muslim*".²⁶ This statement shows that there is a collective awareness to maintain the sustainability of traditions while adapting them to the religious values embraced by the community.

Before the Barong procession begins, the community first gathers at a predetermined point to carry out prayers together. The prayer is led by religious leaders or village elders who have moral and spiritual authority in the community. In a series of prayers, tahlil, shalawat, and verses of the Qur'an were recited which aimed to ask for protection, safety, peace, and blessings for all residents of Kemiren Village. The prayer procession took place in a solemn and orderly atmosphere, and was attended by various levels of society without coercion, including Barong art actors and the younger generation. The presence of the younger generation in this activity shows that there is a process of inheriting religious values that takes place naturally through cultural traditions.

In addition to joint prayer activities, the researcher also observed the active involvement of the community in the practice of joint alms which is an integral part of the Barong Ider Bumi tradition. Each resident voluntarily brought food, produce, or traditional dishes to be collected and then distributed evenly to all participants after the procession was over. This practice of alms is carried out without being accompanied by certain worship rituals, mantras, or magical symbols, but is based on a collective awareness of the importance of sharing and strengthening a sense of togetherness. The atmosphere created during the alms activity shows the strong value of social solidarity, where all residents participate regardless of their social background, age, or role in the ritual procession. The pattern of collective participation shows that religious and social values have been internalized in cultural practices carried out consciously and voluntarily.

In line with the findings of these observations, Edy, as a Barong art actor, explained that the integration of Islamic elements in the Barong Ider Bumi tradition is the result of mutual agreement. He stated that, "*Joint prayer, tahlil, and prayer are the result of mutual agreement. The goal is for the community to remain*

²⁶ Suhaimi, "Interview," September 21, 2025.

grateful to Allah, not to anyone other than Him. In this way, the community can accept without feeling that their customs are being damaged".²⁷

This statement emphasizes that the inclusion of Islamic prayers in the Barong Ider Bumi tradition is not carried out unilaterally, but through a long process of dialogue between traditional and religious leaders by considering the social and cultural conditions of the local community. This agreement was built through a long dialogue process and considered the socio-cultural conditions of the community. Edy emphasized that the Barong tradition is seen as a strategic means to instill Islamic values, such as monotheism, gratitude, togetherness, and social concern, without having to eliminate cultural forms that have lived and are firmly rooted in society. According to them, the da'wah approach through culture is considered more effective and acceptable to the community than da'wah methods that are normative, formal, and tend to be confrontational. Da'wah conveyed through cultural mediums allows Islamic values to be present contextually, in line with people's life experiences and cultural identities, so that they are not perceived as a threat to local traditions. This approach is different from da'wah methods which are normative, formal, and tend to be confrontational, which in some contexts has the potential to create a distance between religious teachings and the social reality of society.

The community has a paradigm shift towards the meaning of the traditions they live. Pak Samin stated that their involvement in the Barong procession was no longer based on a belief in magical powers or certain mystical elements, but rather as a form of preservation of local culture and participation in the socio-religious activities of the community. They interpreted participation in this tradition as a means of strengthening togetherness, maintaining Osing cultural identity, and as a form of social service that has spiritual value. Some art performers also emphasized that the procession of prayer and alms that accompany Barong Ider Bumi makes them feel closer to God through collective activities with religious nuances. Such spiritual experiences do not exist individually and exclusively, but rather grow through shared engagement in cultural practices that have been reinterpreted according to Islamic values.

Da'wah in the Barong Ider Bumi tradition takes place in the form of socio-cultural practices that are internalized in community ritual activities, not through verbal delivery or direct religious invitations. Islamic values are present and carried out through tangible actions, cultural symbols, and social interactions that shape the collective consciousness of society. The data from these observations and interviews became a strong empirical basis to understand how

²⁷ Edy, "Interview," September 20, 2025.

cultural da'wah is carried out and lived in the context of the Osing community in Kemiren Village, Banyuwangi.

Discussion

The Barong Ider Bumi tradition in Kemiren Village is a concrete example of the process of acculturation of Islamic culture that takes place gradually, adaptively, and contextually. This process does not occur instantly or through the mechanism of imposing religious values on local culture, but develops through a long social interaction between customs, religion, and the dynamics of the life of the Osing people. The acculturation shows how Islamic values are not present as a force that negates tradition, but instead functions as a value system that reinterprets and gives new meaning to cultural practices that have been firmly rooted in people's lives.

This view is different from the purification approach which views local traditions as a residue of pre-Islamic beliefs that must be eliminated in order to maintain the purity of monotheism, and asserts that the transformation of symbolic meaning can be a more effective Islamization strategy than the confrontational elimination of cultural symbols.²⁸

These findings strengthen the concept of cultural acculturation as stated by Koentjaraningrat, who asserts that acculturation is the process of accepting new cultural elements without eliminating the basic structure of the old culture. In the context of the Barong Ider Bumi tradition, Islam does not operate as a hegemonic force that removes customary symbols, but rather as a system of meaning that redirects the symbolic and spiritual orientation of society. This is in line with the view that Islam in Indonesia develops through an adaptive and dialogical cultural approach to local traditions.²⁹ Thus, the acculturation that occurs in the Barong Ider Bumi tradition cannot be understood as a form of passive syncretism, but rather as an active process of reinterpretation of cultural symbols within the framework of Islamic teachings that are socially negotiated by the supporting communities.

These findings reject the notion that acculturation is synonymous with syncretism that weakens religious authority, as criticized by some normative scholars, and instead show that cultural negotiations can reinforce the internalization of Islamic values in the social structure of society.³⁰ The

²⁸ Ardiansyah, Ardiansyah. *Tradisi dalam Al-Qur'an (Studi Tematik Paradigma Islam Nusantara dan Wahabi)*. 2018. (Tesis: Institut PTIQ Jakarta).

²⁹ Halim, Abdul. "Pendidikan Islam Multikultural dalam Prespektif Azyumardi Azra." *FIKROTUNA: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Manajemen Islam*, vol. 13, no. 01, Oktober 2021, 139-57.

³⁰ Saparudin, Saparudin. "Islamic Education as Ideological Marketing in Contemporary Indonesian Islam." *SSRN Scholarly Paper no. 3741619, Social Science Research Network*, 18 September 2020.

acculturation that occurs in the Barong Ider Bumi tradition can thus be understood as a social process that works in the realm of awareness and religious orientation of the community, not just on changes in the form of rituals. The shift in the symbolic meaning of Barong from a representation of supernatural forces to a symbol of togetherness, salvation, and gratitude shows a gradual transformation of the spiritual orientation of the Osing people. This transformation is not individual, but is formed through a social consensus that involves the role of traditional and religious leaders as value mediators. Within this framework, the Barong Ider Bumi tradition serves as a space for cultural-religious negotiation, where Islamic values are internalized contextually without negating the local cultural identity that has been firmly rooted.

Symbolic reinterpretation is an important aspect in understanding the transformation of the meaning of the Barong Ider Bumi tradition. Barong, which in the old understanding was perceived as a magical entity with supernatural powers protecting the village, is now interpreted as a symbol of togetherness, social harmony, and an expression of gratitude to God. This transformation does not take place through the frontal rejection of the Barong symbol, but through a process of reinterpretation that is collectively agreed upon by traditional leaders, religious leaders, and the community. Thus, the Barong symbol is still maintained as an Osing cultural identity, but it is released from magical beliefs that have the potential to contradict the principles of monotheism in Islam.

The internalization of the value of monotheism in the Barong Ider Bumi tradition takes place through persuasive and dialogical cultural channels. The value of God's oneness is not conveyed through normative lectures that are doctrinal in nature, but through ritual practices that are reinterpreted, such as joint prayer, tahlil, and prayer recitation before the Barong procession begins. This shift shows that cultural Islamization in Kemiren Village is not pursued through ideological confrontation, but through a symbolic adaptation strategy that respects the social and cultural structure of the local community. In this way, people can accept Islamic values without experiencing a disconnection with their ancestral traditions.

The change in ritual practices from the use of traditional mantras to Islamic prayers also reflects a gradual and continuous process of cultural Islamization. The shift is not just a technical change in the implementation of rituals, but reflects a change in the spiritual orientation of the community. If previously ritual practices were oriented towards supernatural forces that were impersonal, now this orientation is directed to God as a source of salvation and blessings. This phenomenon is in line with Clifford Geertz's view of religious adaptation, which states that the religion that lives in the local community will

form a distinctive expression of religiosity according to the local social and cultural context.³¹

In the Osing community in Kemiren Village, Islam is not only present in the form of formal worship such as prayer, fasting, or recitation, but also permeates into cultural practices that have social and symbolic meaning. The Barong Ider Bumi tradition is a space where religious values are presented in a grounded and contextual manner, so that they can be accepted by all levels of society. The presence of the younger generation in prayer processions and cultural rituals shows that the process of inheriting religious values takes place naturally through tradition, not solely through formal educational institutions or textual religious teaching.

The integration of Islamic values is also evident in the practice of earth alms that accompany the tradition of Barong Ider Bumi. The shift in meaning from mystical offerings to ancestral spirits to social worship in the form of alms to others shows a significant transformation in values. The practice of sharing food and produce is no longer interpreted as a ritual of worship, but as an expression of gratitude to Allah SWT and a form of social concern for fellow villagers. This transformation reflects the internalization of Islamic values of almsgiving, *ukhuwah*, and social solidarity within the framework of local culture.

Earth alms in the Barong Ider Bumi tradition function as a social mechanism that strengthens the social cohesion of the community. All citizens, regardless of social status, age, or role in the ritual procession, are actively involved in the practice of sharing. This creates an egalitarian social meeting space and reinforces a sense of community. In an Islamic perspective, this practice is in line with the teachings of social care and collective responsibility, where the well-being of the community is seen as a shared responsibility. Thus, local culture not only functions as a means of expression of identity, but also as a medium for internalizing religious values that are social in nature.

Da'wah will be more effective if it is delivered through a cultural approach that is alive and appreciated by the community.³² Within this framework, da'wah does not always have to be manifested in the form of verbal lectures or explicit normative invitations, but can be present through symbols, social practices, and traditions that contain educational and spiritual values. The Barong Ider Bumi

³¹ Hirzi, Muhammad Hilman, et. al. "Makanan Ritual Dan Makna Simboliknya: Analisis Tradisi Kuliner Sego Langgi Di Lamongan, Indonesia: Ritual Meals and Its Symbolic Meaning: Analyses of Culinary Tradition Sego Langgi in Lamongan, Indonesia." *Al-Adabiya: Jurnal Kebudayaan Dan Keagamaan*, vol. 20, no. 2, Oktober 2025, 135–56.

³² Aziz, Moh Ali. *Ilmu Dakwah...*

tradition serves as a symbolic da'wah space, where Islamic values are transmitted through collective experience and meaningful social interaction.

These findings also challenge the dominant assumptions in da'wah practice that position the delivery of religious messages verbally, formally, and instructively as the only legitimate and effective means. The results of the study show that da'wah that works through the medium of culture, symbols, and social practices actually has a more sustainable social transformation power, because Islamic values are not just conveyed as doctrines, but are experienced and internalized in the collective life of the community. The culture-based da'wah approach allows for a gradual process of value habituation and social exemplarity, thus forming religious awareness without giving rise to cultural resistance. These findings strengthen the view of Prof. Ali Aziz and Subhan who affirm that cultural da'wah does not only function as a communication strategy, but as a socio-religious mechanism that is able to transform the religious orientation of society in a contextual and sustainable manner.³³

Cultural da'wah in the Barong Ider Bumi tradition works through habituation mechanisms and social examples. The community is not invited to leave traditions, but is invited to reinterpret these traditions within the framework of Islamic values. This approach has proven to be more effective because it does not cause resistance or cultural conflict. On the contrary, people feel valued for their cultural identity, so they are more open to accepting the religious values conveyed. This shows that the success of da'wah is highly determined by cultural sensitivity and the ability of the dai to read the social context of the community.

The role of traditional leaders and religious leaders is a key factor in the success of this acculturation process. Both function as cultural mediators who manage dialogue between customs and religions. Traditional leaders play a role in maintaining the sustainability of Osing traditions and cultural identity, while religious leaders play a role in ensuring that the cultural practices carried out do not conflict with the principles of the Islamic faith. The collaboration between the two creates a deliberation space that allows for continuous negotiation of meaning. This process shows that cultural acculturation requires social actors who have authority and legitimacy in society.

The acculturation process in the Barong Ider Bumi tradition is not final or complete. Acculturation is a dynamic social process that continues to take place along with social changes, the level of public education, and the intensity of

³³ Subhan, Mohammad, et.al. "Exploring the Role of Islamic Finance in Sustainable Economic Development: A Comprehensive Literature Review Study (Economic Islam in the Last 2 Years in East Java)." *Interdisciplinary Journal of Global and Multidisciplinary*, vol. 1, no. 2, 2025, 260–66.

interaction with broader religious discourse. Increasing public access to religious information through digital media and formal educational institutions has the potential to influence people's perceptions of local traditions. Therefore, the tradition of Barong Ider Bumi needs to be understood as a negotiation space that is always open to change.

In this context, this study does not position acculturation as a final or completed process, but as an arena for the contestation of meaning that continues and is constantly being negotiated. The acculturation process is influenced by changes in religious authority at the local level, increasing public access to Islamic sources of knowledge through formal education and digital media, and social dynamics that continue to move with the times. This condition causes the meaning of symbols, ritual practices, and religious orientations in local traditions to be not static, but open to reinterpretation and contextual adjustment.

This perspective is in line with the analysis in the historical study of Islamization in Java, which shows that Islamization is a long and multi-layered process, characterized by a continuous dialogue between Islamic normative teachings and local cultural structures, and influenced by power relations, religious authority, and social changes in society.³⁴ Acculturation in the Barong Ider Bumi tradition can be understood as a historical and social process that continues to live, not as a form of momentary compromise or permanent harmony.

This discussion is not intended to conclude that all elements of the Barong Ider Bumi tradition have been fully Islamized or free from debate. On the contrary, this tradition shows the existence of a dynamic between cultural preservation and the purification of religious teachings. These dynamics are part of the social reality of the Indonesian Muslim community living in the context of cultural plurality. By understanding these dynamics, this research makes an important contribution in enriching the discourse on the relationship between Islam and local culture.

Overall, the Barong Ider Bumi tradition in Kemiren Village shows that the relationship between Islam and local culture is not antagonistic, but dialogical and mutually enriching. Islam is not here to erase culture, but to orient values that allow culture to remain alive and relevant to people's beliefs. On the contrary, local culture functions as an effective medium to ground Islamic teachings in people's daily lives. These findings confirm that the cultural approach is an important strategy in the development of Islamic da'wah in societies that have strong cultural roots.

³⁴ Zulfadli, et. al. "Pendekatan Historis Dalam Studi Islam: Menelusuri Peran Ulama Lokal Dalam Islamisasi Nusantara." *Formatif: Jurnal Pendidikan Sosial Dan Humaniora*, vol. 1, no. 02, 2025.

This study provides an overview that the success of the integration of Islamic values in the local community is highly determined by the da'wah approach that respects the traditions, symbols, and social identity of the local community. The Barong Ider Bumi tradition is not only a cultural heritage, but also a socio-religious space that allows for a continuous dialogue between customs and religions. This discussion is expected to be a reference for the development of cultural da'wah strategies and studies on Islamic acculturation in various local cultural contexts in Indonesia.

D. CONCLUSION

The Barong Ider Bumi tradition in Kemiren Village is the result of the process of acculturation of Islamic values with the local culture of the Osing people which takes place dialogically and contextually. Traditions that were initially rooted in animistic beliefs underwent a shift in meaning through the reinterpretation of symbols and ritual practices, in line with Islamic principles. The acculturation can be seen in the use of Islamic prayers, tahlil, and shalawat in a series of rituals, as well as the change in the meaning of earth alms from mystical offerings to social charity as an expression of gratitude to Allah SWT.

On the other hand, the Barong Ider Bumi tradition functions as a cultural da'wah medium. Islamic values are conveyed through cultural symbols, collective practices, and social interactions that have taken root in people's lives. The role of traditional leaders and figures is very significant in preserving culture and religious teachings. Da'wah works through the mechanism of symbolic persuasion, social habituation, and the gradual internalization of values.

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