

Traditional Marriage in Lombok: A Study of the Acculturation of Hindu and Islamic Cultures on the Meaning of Begawe Merariq for the Muslim Sasak Community of Lombok

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is basically to provide a clear picture of the acculturation of Hindu and Islamic culture occurring in the tradition of *begawe merariq* (traditional elopement ceremony) in the Islamic Sasak Lombok community, as well as the typology of the Sasak people in interpreting *begawe merariq*, because there is a lot of Hindu cultural acculturation. In this research, the author uses a qualitative approach that emphasizes the importance of developing and compiling theories that are always rooted in inductive-empirical thinking. Regarding data collection techniques, participant observation, interviews, and secondary data searches were used. The *begawe merariq* culture is a tradition that has been passed down and preserved because at this time the people of Lombok can gather and stay in touch with each other. Apart from being a family reunion, it is also a momentum to build the bond of an extended family (*kadangjari, semeton jari*). However, the meaning of *kadangjari* is now starting to be less understood, lived, and implemented because it is eroded by the insistence of materialism, individualism. Regarding the acculturation of Hindu culture in the Sasak community, the majority is not related to the main teachings of Islam, but is only seen in matters of customs that are *Furu'iyah*. It also applies only to some Sasak people who still use old traditions, while others carry out *begawe* in a modern way.

Keywords: Customs, *Begawe*, *Merariq*, Marriage

Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini pada dasarnya memberikan gambaran secara jelas mengenai akulturasi budaya Hindu dan Islam terjadi pada tradisi *begawe merariq* (upacara adat kawin lari) dalam masyarakat Islam Sasak Lombok, serta tipologi masyarakat Sasak dalam memaknai *begawe merariq*, karena banyak terdapat akulturasi budaya Hindu. Dalam penelitian ini, penulis menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif yang menekankan pentingnya pengembangan dan penyusunan teori yang senantiasa berakar dari cara berpikir induktif-empiris. Mengenai teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan metode observasi partisipasi (*participant observation*), wawancara, dan penelusuran data sekunder. Budaya *begawe merariq* merupakan tradisi yang turun temurun dijaga dan dilestarikan karena pada saat seperti ini masyarakat Lombok dapat berkumpul dan bersilaturahmi antara satu sama lain. Selain sebagai reuni keluarga, sekaligus momentum membangun ikatan sebuah keluarga besar (*kadangjari, semeton jari*). Namun, makna *kadangjari* kini mulai kurang dipahami, dihayati, dan dilaksanakan karena terkikis oleh desakan materialisme, individualisme. Mengenai akulturasi budaya Hindu di dalam masyarakat sasak secara mayoritas tidak berkaitan dengan ajaran Islam yang pokok, melainkan hanya terlihat dalam masalah adat istiadat yang bersifat *Furu'iyah*. Itu pun berlaku hanya pada sebagian masyarakat sasak yang masih menggunakan tradisi lama, sebagian yang lain melaksanakan *begawe* dengan cara yang modern.

Kata kunci: Adat Istiadat, *Begawe*, *Merariq*, Perkawinan

INTRODUCTION

Lombok is the name of an island in the West Nusa Tenggara province, located in the far west. Geographically, Lombok is surrounded by ocean (Supriatna & Margules, 2025). To the north is the sea off

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the north coast of Lombok, to the south is the Indian Ocean, to the east is the Alas Strait, and to the west is the Lombok Strait. Compared to other regencies in West Nusa Tenggara, Lombok is the most densely populated island, with over three million people, as it serves as the administrative center of West Nusa Tenggara Province. Lombok itself is divided into four regencies: West Lombok Regency, Central Lombok Regency, East Lombok Regency, and North Lombok Regency, with one city, Mataram City.

The population of Lombok is very diverse, as residents come from almost all regions of Indonesia. The indigenous people of Lombok are the Sasak people. Other ethnic groups inhabiting the island include the Samawa, Balinese, Javanese, Arab, Chinese, Bugis, and Banjar people. Each of these tribes has its own distinct culture. Some are fanatical and adhere to their own culture and customs, while others are more lenient, even blending in with the local community and following the customs that have developed within their communities. Among these tribes, the Sasak are considered the indigenous population, while the others are immigrants.

Islam arrived on the island of Lombok in the early 16th century, spread by missionaries from Java, such as Sunan Prapen, son of Sunan Giri, Alfadhal, Sangupati, and others. The Lombok chronicle explains that Sunan Giri had several disciples and instructed three of them: Lembu Mangkurat to convert Banjarmasin to Islam, and Dato' Bandan to convert Makassar, Seram, Tidore, and Selayar to Islam. Sunan Prapen, son of Sunan Giri, converted Lombok, Sumbawa, and Bali to Islam. After the spread of Islam, the Balinese Karang Asem kingdom came to power and ruled Lombok for approximately 150 years. During this time, the Karang Asem kingdom ruled Lombok as an external kingdom, dominating the Lombok community (Surjo 2001).

The Balinese Karang Asem Kingdom ruled the island of Lombok for a long time, thus Hindu traditions influenced the implementation of Islamic teachings in the predominantly Muslim Sasak community (Harnish, 2014). The acculturation of Hindu culture in the Sasak community in Lombok is still evident today, especially in its correlation with culture and religious teachings. Therefore, whenever sacred religious rituals are held, such as weddings in the Sasak community (begawe), or during begawe celebrations, the community usually accompanies the communal work, from cooking to the following activities, always accompanied by gamelan music, identical to the music that accompanies Hindus in religious rituals. Likewise, during the next process, such as nyongkol (nyongkol), the attire worn resembles traditional Balinese attire, accompanied by the music of the belek drum. The acculturation of Hindu culture in the Sasak community is largely unrelated to the core teachings of Islam, but is only visible in matters of Furu'iyah customs. This only applies to some Sasak people who still use old traditions, while others carry out begawe in a modern way (Kuntowijoyo 2006).

From an Islamic religious perspective in Lombok, the Sasak people can be divided into two groups: the Five Time Islam and the Wetu Telu Islam. Although the majority of the Sasak community adheres to the Five Time Islam, in implementing Islamic teachings, some still cannot differentiate between Islamic teachings and the beliefs of their ancestors before converting to Islam. Thus, an indirect acculturation of Hindu culture into Islam occurred. In addition to the arrival of Islam to Lombok peacefully, respecting local culture, the Karang Asem Bali kingdom held power in Lombok for 150 years, this led to interfaith acculturation. Lombok Island, known as the island of a thousand mosques, where the majority of the population is Muslim, in implementing religious teachings, especially those related to socio-religious matters, is still acculturated from Hindu culture. Therefore, when viewed from the perspective of social facts, several religious rituals are still identical to Hindu teachings. Communities that embrace Hinduism in Lombok are found in Mataram, West Lombok, North Lombok, and a small portion in Central Lombok. Meanwhile, in East Lombok Regency, there is definitely no Hindu community (Fadly 2008). Among these

cultural acculturations is the requirement that wedding ceremonies (*begawe merariq*) in some parts of Mataram be accompanied by gamelan music, either live or on a tape recorder. Similarly, *nyongkolan* ceremonies must be accompanied by gamelan, but there has been a change in the music that accompanies the bride and groom. Recently, the *gendang belek* has been replaced by *rudat* and *kecimol* (Budiwanti 2000a).

The acculturation to be discussed in this paper is the acculturation of *Begawe Merariq* that occurs in the Sasak community. *Begawe Merariq* is actually not the only *begawe* in the Sasak community in Lombok; rather, there are many types of *begawe* that have become hereditary traditions among the Sasak people. Abdus Syakur writes about customary ceremonies (*begawe*) in the Sasak community, namely *begawe* for marriage and pregnancy, *begawe* for birth and circumcision, and *begawe* for death. The author is interested in discussing the views of *Tuan Guru* in *Begawe Merariq* among the Sasak people, because there is much acculturation of Hindu culture into *Begawe Merariq*.

For example, in the process before marriage, a *krame gubuk* is first held—where the groom-to-be is asked to provide money for the bride because she has to leave her home village—something not far removed from Hindu traditions today. Likewise, during the main event of *Begawe Merariq*, in the evening it is carried out with the participation of the entire community; while working, the event is usually accompanied by gamelan music and *epen gawe* (the event host).

The novelty of the research on *Traditional Marriage in Lombok (A Study of Hindu–Islamic Cultural Acculturation on the Meaning of Begawe Merariq for the Sasak Muslim Community of Lombok)* lies in its focus on the process of acculturation between two major religions, Hinduism and Islam, in the practice of local culture. Instead of viewing the *Merariq* tradition solely as a customary ritual, this research explores the symbolic meaning behind *Begawe* as a manifestation of the blending of religious and cultural values. This approach provides a deeper perspective on how the Sasak people form a unique cultural identity through the integration of spiritual elements from two religious traditions.

In addition, the research also offers methodological novelty through an interpretive–qualitative approach that positions cultural actors as active subjects in meaning-making. By focusing on the meanings constructed by the local community toward the *Begawe* procession, this study not only enriches the literature on traditional marriage in Indonesia but also opens space for interfaith dialogue within the context of local culture. This makes the research relevant in contemporary discourse on diversity and social integration amid changing times.

RESEARCH METHOD

Methodology is a crucial element in research, where the author applies the steps or methods for approaching the subject to obtain the necessary data and information. In this research, the author uses a qualitative approach that emphasizes the importance of developing and constructing theories that are always rooted in inductive-empirical thinking (Arikunto 1997). To study this religious culture in more depth, the researcher also used an ethnographic design with the most important method being participatory observation, which requires more intensive fieldwork. Ethnography was used by the researcher because it was intended to emphasize the principle of cultural relativism: each human group will develop its own culture, and that culture is appreciated as it is without bringing the researcher's prejudices towards the subjects being studied by allowing them to behave according to common sense in their society (Muhajir 2000).

There are several reasons why a qualitative model is used in this research. First, this research examines the meaning of an action or what lies behind an individual's actions (Ritzer 2004). second, in

dealing with the social environment, individuals have strategies for taking appropriate action for themselves, which requires in-depth study (Geerts 1996). In this case, qualitative research provides an opportunity for an in-depth study of a symbolic phenomenon holistically. This means that the phenomenon studied in the field is an inseparable whole because the actions that occur in society are not actions caused by just one or two factors, but rather involve many interrelated factors. Fifth, qualitative research provides an opportunity to understand phenomena from an emic view, or the perspective of actors in the field. In this case, the researcher is simply learning from the people, especially regarding the meaning of customary practices carried out by the community (Faisal 1990). Regarding data collection techniques, the methods used were participant observation, interviews, and secondary data collection.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Comparison of Previous Research

Based on the focus of the study outlined above, the author attempted to compare previous research on Islam in Sasak society and related issues. Among the studies conducted are:

1. Erni Budiwanti, researched the Islam of *Sasak Wetu Telu versus Wetu Lima*, which took the research location in Bayan, West Lombok. In her research, she only focused on the issue of Islam Wetu Telu and then compared it with Islam Wetu Lima. (Budiwanti 2000b).
2. M. Ahyar Fadly, writing about Local Islam, Islamic Acculturation in Bumi Sasak, in this article, the focus of his study is the process of change in the traditional social and religious values of *Wetu Telu Islam* adherents and changes in Wetu Telu Islamic society. The difference with the author is, the author does not study *Wetu Telu Islam* but rather the influence of Hindu culture that exists in the majority of Sasak society or the five-year period (Fadly 2008).
3. Syamsuddin Abdullah, wrote about Islam Wetu Telu, the focus of his study was on preaching to *Islam Wetu Telu* (Abdullah 2008).
4. M. Harfin Zuhdi, writing about the practice of *Merariq*, focuses on the social aspect of this book, namely the social stratification of the Sasak people in the implementation of *Merariq* itself. This book discusses the *Merariq* process until the completion of the *begawenya* process. This book does not use an Islamic legal perspective as a reference for its discussion, but rather a sociological one (Zuhdi 2012).
5. H. Ahmad Syakur, wrote a book about Islam and Culture Acculturation of Islamic Values in Sasak Culture TGKH. M. Zainuddin Abdul Madjid Agent of Sasak Cultural Renewal 1904-1997 M. in his writing Abdus Syakur examines the acculturation of culture into Sasak Islam from marriage and pregnancy ceremonies, birth and circumcision ceremonies, death ceremonies and *begawe* events (Abd. Syukur 2006).
6. NTB Department of Education and Culture, NTB Regional Customs and Wedding Ceremonies (NTB 1997a) The core discussion in this book is the forms of customs that exist in NTB in general, starting from livelihoods, technological systems and living equipment, religious systems and knowledge systems, social systems and expressions of the Sasak people. The difference with the author is that the author focuses on the study of acculturation.
7. NTB Department of Education and Culture, NTB Regional Customs and Traditions, (NTB 1997b) in this book discusses the customs and marriage ceremonies of the Sasak tribe which reveal: identification, customs before marriage, marriage ceremonies, customs after marriage, and several analyses.

The study "*Traditional Marriage in Lombok*" (A Study of Hindu and Islamic Cultural Acculturation on the Meaning of *Begawe Merariq* for the Sasak Muslim Community of Lombok) examines how the *Merariq* tradition—an integral part of Sasak marriage customs—embodies an acculturation of Hindu and Islamic values. It emphasizes that the *Begawe* procession, as part of *Merariq*, carries not only social and spiritual significance but also functions as a vehicle for preserving cultural identity amid the interplay of religious influences. Employing a qualitative approach, the research focuses on the symbolic meanings and enduring cultural practices that continue to shape Lombok society today.

In contrast to earlier studies, which predominantly explored customary law, gender roles, or the tensions between tradition and state law in *Merariq* practices, this study introduces a fresh perspective by foregrounding the dynamics of religious and cultural acculturation. Whereas some prior works have framed *Merariq* as a source of potential legal dispute, this study interprets it as the outcome of a long-standing harmonization between Hindu and Islamic values. Consequently, the research contributes to the discourse on customary marriage through a more interdisciplinary and context-sensitive lens.

The meaning of *begawe merariq* for the Sasak Muslim community

When discussing the tradition of *begawe*, one cannot separate it from culture. According to Koentjaraningrat, culture comes from the Sanskrit word "buddayah," which is the plural form of the word "buddhi," meaning mind or eternal. Terminologically, culture is the entire system of ideas and feelings, actions, and works produced by humans in social life, which are made their own through learning (Koentjaraningrat 2005). Meanwhile, *Begawe* is a thanksgiving activity or party that is usually held by the Sasak people in celebrating something, such as weddings, circumcisions, aqiqah, the Prophet Muhammad's birthday and other thanksgiving activities. Usually residents in the same village and neighboring villages come to the house of the event host while carrying a basin/container filled with rice and sugar, even in some villages there are some who bring their agricultural products, then after returning home they bring "Berkat" or souvenirs from the homeowner which usually consists of rice with side dishes and various traditional snacks. The main purpose is to foster friendship (Opera 2020).

Every social life constantly experiences changes, this occurs because people have different interests. This change is a natural social phenomenon. According to Suwarsono, social reality is always in a continuous process of change (Suwarsono 1991). Likewise, Soekanto stated that every society has experienced change, this is because there is no society that lives in absolute isolation (Soekanto 2000).

Social change from an economic perspective refers to the process of transformation in a community's system, which includes changes in the economic life of that society. This encompasses shifts in livelihoods, changes in income, and even improvements in the overall standard of living. Sociologists believe that every society inevitably undergoes change, which may have been occurring for decades or even centuries. The difference between present-day change and that of the past lies in its speed, intensity, and sources. Today, social change occurs more rapidly and intensively, while the sources of change and the elements undergoing transformation are also more numerous.

These changes may represent progress or, conversely, decline. The elements that typically undergo change include social values, social norms, patterns of behavior, social organization, social institutions, social stratification, power, responsibility, leadership, and so on. In developed or developing societies, such social and cultural changes are always closely related to the characteristics and forms of their economies.

The tradition of *Begawe* (festivity) is essentially something that should be preserved, as it fosters positive values. One such example is the gathering of extended family members from different regions to

celebrate and assist with the event, thereby maintaining strong bonds of kinship and good relations within the community.

However, field observations and interviews—particularly in the city of Mataram—show that the tradition of *Begawe Merariq* has gradually begun to erode. This is supported by the accounts of Amaq Marwan, H. Daus, and Amaq Somad, who note that in today's modern era, many things have become more convenient. As a result, anything required before the wedding procession can be directly ordered according to one's preferences and desired style. The host family simply invites relatives and neighbors to attend the wedding (*merariq*) celebration.

With the presence of event organizers, hosts feel calm and comfortable, as all the preparations for the festivity are handled by the responsible party. The hosts need only prepare themselves to welcome and host the guests and relatives who come to attend the *begawe* (Daus, 2020; Marwan, 2020; Somad, 2020).

According to Sae, Sun, and Rahmi (2020), the *begawe* tradition—although it may appear rustic—is highly festive, and the procession can last for an entire day. Besides fostering friendship among fellow believers, the *begawe* tradition is very cost-effective. This is because all the needs, preparations, and other things are done together (*gotong royong*) by the host families and the surrounding community (neighbors), starting from preparing a less luxurious venue to other things. So it is not surprising that when *begawe merariq* begins to be heard among both young and old, it will certainly look lively and impressive. However, this can sometimes be prevented due to the wishes of children or in-laws who want their wedding (*begawe*) to be held or handled by an event organizer, because they think it is an old tradition and a trend in ancient times. Whereas now is the age of change (modern), everything is sophisticated and convenient, so anything needed can be met without the hassle or fatigue of preparing it (Rahmi, 2020; Sae, 2020; Sun, 2020).

Therefore, it is not surprising that many parents in the Mataram City area have gradually abandoned customs that are ancestral traditions, due to their children's preference for modern life over traditions upheld by their forebears to this day. In this context, it is also unsurprising to see city residents rarely gathering with neighbors and distant relatives, as ties of friendship (*silaturahmi*) among fellow Muslims have weakened.

As times progress, the younger generation in Lombok becomes influenced and follows trends, leading to the abandonment of traditions that should be preserved as cultural hallmarks of the Sasak people. As a result, customs that have long been maintained to strengthen kinship and friendship among Muslims are gradually being eroded and disappearing. This is as expressed by Amaq Ali, who emphasized that as parents, they greatly wish to preserve the *begawe merariq* tradition. However, young people often consider it an outdated custom that requires too much time to prepare. A frequently heard saying captures this sentiment: "If there is an easier way, why choose the harder one?"

This saying reflects the mindset of today's youth, who prefer ready-made solutions without the effort of preparation, regardless of the financial cost. Yet, compared to the *begawe merariq* tradition, which offers positive values such as fostering bonds among family, friends, and neighbors, modern wedding ceremonies provide little to no lasting effect—once the event is over, everything ends (Pratama, Mustari, & Karim, 2024). There is no follow-up activity such as cleaning up the venue or other communal work as in the *begawe merariq* tradition. This illustrates how significantly the traditions and culture of the Sasak people have shifted, steadily worn away by the forces of modernity and the advancement of the times (Ali 2020).

Indonesia is a country with a diverse culture, and this diversity does not divide its people. Instead, it unites them in accordance with the national motto, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, which means “unity in diversity.” Cultural diversity is a hallmark of Indonesian society that continues to be preserved and safeguarded for all time.

Culture (customs and traditions) emerges within Indonesian society based on practices that have become habitual for certain community groups and are perceived to hold positive value, making them worth preserving so they can be carried forward by future generations. At times, certain customs created by the ancestors and passed down through generations are not accepted by the current generation, who tend to focus more on the modern world without considering whether the long-term effects will be beneficial or detrimental to the social order.

The influence of the modern world today is concerning, so it is unsurprising that in several regions of Indonesia, cultural traditions that have been preserved for a long time are now beginning to erode and are almost no longer practiced. One such example is the Lombok region in West Nusa Tenggara. Lombok, known as the “Island of a Thousand Mosques,” is predominantly Muslim and has customs and traditions that are deeply rooted in the community, making them difficult to change. One of these is the *begawe* custom, which, according to the Muslim community in Lombok, provides positive effects directly related to religious obligations, such as maintaining *silaturrahmi* (kinship bonds), helping one another, and more. This is why the people of Lombok generally continue to preserve and maintain the *begawe* tradition. However, the conveniences offered by the modern world have caused this custom to be gradually abandoned by the younger generation.

The Muslim community in Lombok, especially in Mataram City, West Nusa Tenggara, whether consciously or not, has begun to feel the shift in traditions and culture, particularly in the *begawe merariq* tradition. While not all parts of Mataram City have abandoned the *begawe merariq* tradition, there are still some areas that continue to practice it. This is done to ensure that existing traditions and culture are preserved, along with the belief among those who maintain them that tradition and culture are the lifeblood of the community. In addition, attention from various parties, especially the local government, is needed to remain concerned and make efforts to safeguard local traditions, including the *begawe merariq* tradition in Mataram City.

Differences among groups within the Sasak community in interpreting and practicing the *begawe merariq* tradition reflect a complex social and cultural dynamic. Groups that still practice this tradition in a traditional manner generally live in rural areas or regions that strongly uphold ancestral values. They carry out *begawe merariq* as a sacred series of rituals with complete stages, involving many family members and the surrounding community. For them, this tradition is not only about marriage but also a symbol of family honor, a medium for *silaturrahmi*, and a collective identity passed down from generation to generation.

Conversely, community groups that have adopted modern approaches—generally urban residents or those more exposed to a practical and efficient lifestyle—tend to simplify the implementation of *Begawe Merariq*. They may still retain certain elements of the tradition but prefer to use event organizer services, minimize customary rituals, and focus the event on legal-formal aspects such as the marriage contract (*akad nikah*) and the reception. For this group, efficiency, cost, and time are the main considerations, so the symbolic values contained in traditions such as *kadangjari* or mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) have gradually been marginalized.

The *Begawe Merariq* tradition is one that must be preserved, as it provides an opportunity for the people of Lombok to gather and strengthen bonds with one another. It serves not only as a family reunion

but also as a moment to build and solidify extended family ties (*kadangjari*, *semeton jari*). The meaning of *kadangjari* is now less understood, appreciated, and practiced, eroded by the pressures of materialism and individualism. Moreover, there is almost no longer any socio-cultural institution or communal value serving as a unifying force for the Sasak community. This has become a bleak chapter in the socio-cultural reality of the Sasak people today, rooted in the loosening of communal bonds that once fostered shared responsibility. Traditional and cultural symbols are still often mentioned and spoken of, but they have been reduced to slogans devoid of meaning.

The erosion of the meaning of *kadangjari* within the *Begawe Merariq* tradition reflects a shift in social values within the Sasak community, influenced by the growing dominance of materialism and individualism. *Kadangjari*, which literally means “new family” or “a family formed through the bond of marriage,” once held deep meaning as a symbol of social ties between two extended families. Through this tradition, a network of kinship was established that provided mutual support in economic, social, and spiritual aspects. In the *Begawe* ceremony, the concept of *kadangjari* was realized through togetherness, mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), and collective participation of the entire extended family and community—contributing labor, finances, and time.

Over time, however, and with the increasing influence of modern values, especially materialism and individualism, the meaning of *kadangjari* has begun to degrade. Materialism has shifted the community's orientation toward financial considerations, with *Begawe* often viewed as an occasion for prestige or a display of wealth rather than a cultural ritual rich in familial values. As a result, the tradition has become an economic burden for some families, leading them to simplify or even avoid it altogether. On the other hand, individualism fosters a mindset that prioritizes personal comfort and efficiency, causing the practice of *gotong royong* and collective participation—the core of *kadangjari*—to be abandoned. People increasingly hand over the entire process to third parties such as event organizers, eliminating the social interaction that once strengthened ties between families and the wider community.

The consequence of this shift is the emergence of emotional and social distance between extended families that were once closely connected. The younger generation, in particular, is losing an understanding of the social function of *kadangjari*, viewing it as a customary burden irrelevant to contemporary needs. Yet culturally, *kadangjari* remains an important symbol in building the collective identity and social solidarity of the Sasak people. This erosion of meaning has the potential to weaken the social networks that have long been the strength of the indigenous community and, in the long run, could threaten the survival of the tradition itself.

To prevent the loss of the meaning of *kadangjari*, efforts are needed to revitalize cultural values in a contextual manner. Cultural education for the younger generation, the involvement of community and religious leaders in reviving the values of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), and the adaptation of traditions without eliminating their meaning are important steps to ensure that this tradition survives not merely as a symbol, but continues to live as a meaningful social practice in the lives of the Sasak people in the modern era.

Therefore, the *begawe merariq* tradition will remain preserved if the people of Lombok continue to uphold it, supported by the local government. In this way, a culture that has been safeguarded and preserved until now will not be eroded by the pressures of materialism and individualism. As for the younger generation, they must be introduced to and taught about the meaning and values contained in the *begawe merariq* tradition, so that they are not easily swayed by the modern world, which prioritizes convenience over kinship among family members and fellow Muslims.

The difference in approach has a direct impact on the preservation of Sasak tradition and cultural identity. Traditional groups play an important role in maintaining the continuity of local values but face challenges in dealing with modernization and economic pressures. Meanwhile, modern groups—although more adaptive to the changing times—risk losing the cultural and spiritual depth embedded in the practice of *Begawe Merariq*. Without collaborative efforts to balance the two, there is a risk that this tradition will undergo a reduction in meaning or even disappear over time.

For this reason, it is important to create a space for dialogue between these two groups, and to involve customary and religious leaders in formulating new forms of the tradition that preserve the core values of Sasak culture while remaining relevant to current social conditions. This approach will not only strengthen the cultural identity of the Sasak people but also position *Begawe Merariq* as a living tradition that can endure amid the tides of change.

Culture, as one of the nation's assets, must not stop with one generation but must be passed on to the next. The continued practice of the *begawe* tradition signifies that the Sasak people deeply care about and respect the heritage of their ancestors. Regardless of the progress of the modern era, the Sasak continue to preserve the culture of their own region, ensuring that the traditions and customs attached to their homeland remain well-protected and will not be swallowed up by history.

The *Begawe Merariq* tradition, as practiced by the Sasak Muslim community of Lombok, is a tangible example of the acculturation between local culture rooted in Hinduism and Islamic values that arrived later. The connection between this tradition and Islamic teachings is reflected in several aligned values, such as the importance of maintaining *silaturahmi* (social bonds), upholding family honor, and practicing mutual cooperation in the execution of ceremonies. In Islam, these values are highly encouraged, and in the context of *Begawe Merariq*, their implementation can be seen in the community's collective involvement in preparing for the celebration, the division of roles among families, and the habit of helping one another. This shows that local traditions do not necessarily conflict with religion but can serve as a means of strengthening Islamic values in community life.

The role of religious leaders in the implementation of *Begawe Merariq* is highly significant, particularly in providing religious legitimacy to the series of events. Religious figures such as *tuan guru* are often involved in various stages, from planning to the execution of the wedding ceremony. They typically offer marital advice to the bride and groom based on Islamic teachings, lead prayers during the event, and ensure that the customs observed do not deviate from the *sharia*. In this way, religious leaders act as mediators between tradition and religion, ensuring that the practice of the tradition remains within the bounds of Islamic values.

However, the involvement of religious leaders can also reflect the ever-changing social dynamics. In some cases, these leaders hold differing views on the practice of *Begawe Merariq*, particularly if certain elements are deemed irrelevant or contrary to Islamic principles—such as extravagance, *shirk* (associating partners with God), or excessive entertainment. This critical role positions them not only as cultural actors but also as agents of change who encourage the community to adapt traditions in line with purer religious values.

Thus, the relationship between Islamic teachings and the *Begawe Merariq* tradition is neither rigid nor static, but rather contextual and adaptive. Islam provides a value framework that serves as a moral compass, while local traditions act as a medium of social expression that enriches the community's religious life. When the two are wisely integrated—as practiced by religious leaders and traditional figures in Lombok—harmony is created between cultural identity and religious belief, each strengthening the other.

Typology of Sasak society in interpreting begawe merariq

Social

The *begawe merariq* tradition, when viewed from the start of the ceremony to its conclusion, has an extraordinary impact on the Muslim community in Mataram City. This is because, whenever a *begawe* or celebration is to be held in a village, hamlet, or district, the host of the event (*empunya gawe*) distributes invitations (*pesila'an*) to all family members, relatives, kin, friends, and neighbors in the surrounding villages. Usually, the host also invites or hires various forms of local performing arts to provide entertainment in the evening. News about the upcoming celebration and the entertainment to be featured begins to spread about a week before the *begawe* ceremony is held. This information is shared in a chain-like manner by word of mouth among the youth, who then prepare themselves to attend the event (Kuntowijoyo 2006).

This procession reflects the social behavior formed through the spirit of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation), as various preparations are carried out collectively beforehand (Butler, 2016). These preparations include cooking food ingredients and setting up the *taring*, which in Indonesian is known as a *terop* (canopy or tent). However, the *taring* used in the Sasak *begawe* tradition is made from woven coconut leaf fronds, crafted into long strips and then arranged with bamboo poles to form the *taring* structure. The process of erecting the *taring* is done by men, typically those whose homes are near the *epen gawe* (the event host), who assist in setting it up.

In addition, preparations also involve cooking, which is usually carried out by women. Similar to those who help build the *taring*, the cooking is also done by people who live nearby or have family ties to the host.

Begawe, apart from being an expression of gratitude, also serves as a gathering place for families, relatives, and close acquaintances. It is not held only during Eid celebrations but also during other traditional ceremonies such as *begawe*. In other words, the *begawe* tradition strengthens *silaturrahmi* (social bonds) among families and the community at large, fostering togetherness (Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan NTB 1991).

In terms of fostering togetherness and social interaction, there is a customary practice known as *begibung*, which literally means eating together. People who attend the *begawe* celebration can participate in *begibung* with other members of the community, usually held toward the end of the *begawe* tradition, typically around midday or 12:00 local time. The meal is shared in one place using a single container for several people; for example, rice and various side dishes are placed on one large tray in portions sufficient for two or three people, or sometimes more. Viewed from its process, *begibung* carries the positive value of fostering togetherness among individuals within the community. It is therefore clear that the *begawe merariq* tradition provides positive values for the social life of the community, from fostering togetherness to strengthening *silaturrahmi* (social bonds) among families and residents of Mataram City.

Economy

Economics is one of the social sciences that indirectly influences human activities related to the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services. These activities greatly affect daily life; for example, the higher the level of consumption, the greater the expenses incurred.

The *begawe merariq* tradition (wedding celebration) naturally requires funds to achieve the desired goals of the event. Therefore, it is not surprising that during the wedding season in Lombok, the demand for goods needed for the celebration increases. As a result, it is possible that prices of goods also

rise. Clearly, the *begawe merariq* tradition has a significant impact on the economy of the Lombok community (Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan NTB 1991).

Interestingly, although the *gawe* (event) has a significant impact on the community's economy, it does not overly burden the host in organizing a *begawe merariq*, because the expenses are not as large or as extravagant as those of an event organized by a professional event organizer, where everything is paid for and prepared directly. This is because *begawe merariq* is carried out through *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) among family members and village residents, resulting in a lighter burden for the host since expenses are mainly for raw materials, which are then processed into finished goods by relatives and local residents.

Equally important, during the *gawe*, each resident or family brings contributions in the form of goods such as rice, sugar, snacks, and other items. Thus, the host does not experience shortages thanks to the assistance and participation of relatives and the local community, ensuring that the rich do not become richer and the poor do not become poorer. In this way, everyone can hold a *begawe merariq* with the help and contributions of local residents. This assistance is not limited to *begawe merariq* alone, but is extended to any *begawe*, as the community always participates or helps the host—meaning that those without goods or sufficient funds contribute their skills, and those without sufficient skills contribute goods or raw materials, allowing this chain of support to continue unbroken in helping one another.

Therefore, through the *begawe merariq* tradition, the community can both experience and participate in making the event a success, and the economy of Lombok society—especially in Mataram City—can be supported through mutual assistance without expecting any form of payment. This *gawe* tradition must continue to be preserved in order to maintain social bonds and to support the economy of fellow Muslims, and more broadly, the economy of the nation.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, *Begawe Merariq* is a tradition of significant social and spiritual value for the Sasak Muslim community in Lombok, serving primarily as a medium to strengthen kinship ties and maintain *silaturahmi*. However, deeper meanings—such as the concept of *kadangjari*—are gradually being eroded under the influence of modern values such as materialism and individualism.

The tradition also reflects elements of Hindu cultural acculturation that do not conflict with the core principles of Islamic teachings, but rather complement them through certain customary aspects. Furthermore, this research identifies two typologies within the Sasak community in their perception of *Begawe Merariq*: one group continues to regard it as a socio-religious obligation that must be preserved for its positive values, such as *gotong royong* and *ukhuwah Islamiyah*, while the other tends to adapt the tradition into more practical and modern forms through the use of professional services.

These findings carry important implications for the preservation of local culture and provide a theoretical contribution to the study of cultural acculturation and the dynamics of social change in traditional societies.

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