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Cultural Interaction and Islamic Beliefs: An Ethnoreligious Study on the Baritan Tradition in Panasas Hamlet, Tondowulan Village, Jombang

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Abstract

This study discusses the interaction between local Javanese culture and Islamic beliefs through an ethnoreligious study on the *baritan* tradition in Panasas Hamlet, Tondowulan Village, Jombang Regency. This tradition is a form of prayer ritual with the community that contains the value of local wisdom as well as a symbol of religiosity. The purpose of the research is to reveal the history, meaning, and Islamic values that are reflected in the implementation of *baritan*. The method used is qualitative with an ethnographic approach, through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The results of the study show that the *baritan* tradition has its roots in the agrarian culture of the Javanese people, but in practice it has undergone an Islamization process, such as the recitation of Islamic prayers and religious *tausiyah*. The noble values that emerge include togetherness, gratitude, and social concern. From an Islamic perspective, *baritan* can be understood as a medium of friendship and collective prayer that is in line with the principle of *ukhuwah*, although it still needs to be straightened out from elements that are not in accordance with the *aqidah*. Analysis with Max Weber's theory of social action shows that the existence of *baritans* is motivated by traditional, affective, and rational-value actions of society, so that this tradition not only preserves culture, but also strengthens the identity of Islamic religiosity at the local level.

Keywords: Baritan Tradition, Islamic Faith, Javanese Culture, Ethnoreligious

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is known as a country with extraordinary cultural diversity and traditions, especially in the Javanese society which still maintains the legacy of socio-religious rituals to this day. In the context of a predominantly Muslim society, local traditions often interact with religious values. These interactions do not always go one-way, but form a dynamic process of dialogue and acculturation between Islamic culture and beliefs in daily life.

One of the traditions that is still sustainable is *baritan* in Panasan Hamlet, Tondowulan Village, Ploso District, Jombang Regency. *Baritan* is a form of *selametan* or joint prayer that is held every *Friday Legi* in the *Kedung* area corner of the border bridge between hamlets. In this procession, residents brought market snacks to be distributed to other participants as an expression of gratitude as well as a request for safety. This tradition is often controversial: some people consider it an expression of gratitude to Allah and a means of strengthening social solidarity, while others consider it to be potentially contrary to the principles of monotheism. This difference in interpretation shows that there is a tug-of-war between religious beliefs and local cultural practices.

From an academic point of view, this issue is interesting to study not only as a ritual phenomenon, but also as a social process that shows the way in which societies negotiate their religious and cultural identities. The ethnoreligious approach becomes relevant to read these dynamics, because it combines ethnographic analysis and religious reflection in a balanced way. Similar studies in the Southeast Asian context show that religious-cultural identity has an influence on people's patterns of tolerance, religious interpretation, and social cohesion (Kanas et al., 2022).

The case of *baritan* in Panasan Hamlet was chosen because it represents a cultural practice that is still alive, but relatively rarely studied from an ethnoreligious perspective. As of the 2021–2025 period, specific studies of this tradition have not appeared in many indexed academic publications, although a number of studies on similar rituals have developed. By highlighting the practice of *baritan* at the local level, this study seeks to provide a contextual understanding of the dialogue between Islamic culture and beliefs in rural communities in Java (Nada et al., 2022).

The novelty of this research lies in three main aspects. First, focus on the *baritan* tradition in Panasan Hamlet which has not been widely researched. Second, the use of an ethnoreligious approach that puts cultural values and Islamic teachings in an equal position, rather than

affirming each other. Third, the application of Max Weber's theory of social action as an analytical framework to understand the motives of collective action of society, both traditional, rational-value, affective, and rational-instrumental. Recent studies such as research on the *Sewu Sempol* tradition (Lestari et al., 2025), *Sinoman* (Aswin et al., 2024), and *Siraman Sedudo* (Fathiha, 2022) show that Weber's theory is effective for reading the intersection between traditional and religious values in the context of local culture.

According to Weber, human social actions can be categorized into four: traditional (based on hereditary habits), affective (influenced by emotions), value-rational (based on belief in moral or religious values), and rational-instrumental (goal-oriented). With this framework, the research will examine the reasons why the people of Panasan Hamlet still maintain the *baritan* tradition. Whether driven by traditional heritage, religious motivations, or social considerations, as well as how those practices affect their level of religiosity.

Based on the description above, this study aims to: (1) describe the history and management of the *baritan* traditional ritual in Panasan Hamlet; (2) reveal the meaning and values contained in it; (3) analyze the tradition from an Islamic perspective; and (4) explain the relevance and influence of *baritan* tradition on the religiosity of society using Max Weber's theory of social action. The research questions to be answered include: (a) how is the history and form of implementation of *baritan*; (b) what is its meaning and values for society; (c) how Islam views the practice of *baritan*; and (d) how this tradition contributes to the formation of the religiosity of the local community.

The *baritan* tradition describes the way the Javanese people understand the balance between the natural and inner dimensions of life. The values of mutual cooperation, joint prayer, and alms reflect the belief that social welfare does not only depend on human efforts, but also on the Divine will. The collective consciousness of society grows from the view that human beings live in interconnected relationships with others, nature, and God. The perspective of the sociology of religion views the *baritan* as a form of religious social function as explained by Durkheim, that religion plays a role in maintaining solidarity and social order through meaningful symbols and rituals (Durkheim, 1912).

The *baritan* tradition showcases the ability of local communities to negotiate religious identities amid the current of modern Islamic purification. Some residents interpret the prayers recited as a form of *tawassul* and gratitude to Allah, while others try to reinterpret the meaning of rituals to remain in line with the principles of monotheism. These socio-religious dynamics

reflect the process of learning and adjusting Islamic values in the context of Javanese culture. Weber's social action theory framework describes the phenomenon as rational-value actions based on moral and spiritual beliefs, as well as rational-instrumental actions aimed at maintaining social harmony at the community level (Weber, 1978).

Research on *the baritan* tradition confirms the relationship between religion and culture in forming a stable social system. This local tradition shows the ability of Islam in Indonesia to adapt and dialogue with the local culture. The value of moderation, inclusivity, and local wisdom keeps the religious forms of village communities alive and firmly rooted in their social reality (Nada et al., 2022; Kanas et al., 2022; Fathiha, 2022).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with the type of ethnographic-religious research. This approach was chosen by the researcher because the main focus of the research lies in the effort to understand the meaning, values, and socio-religious practices in *the baritan* tradition in Panasan Hamlet, Tondowulan Village, Jombang Regency. Through ethnography, researchers seek to explore the experiences and meanings of people directly in the context of their daily lives (Spradley, 2007). This approach allows researchers to read cultural values and spiritual dimensions simultaneously so that the data obtained is in-depth and contextual.

The research location is in Panasan Hamlet, Tondowulan Village, Jombang Regency. This area still holds strong ancestral heritage traditions while developing a dynamic religious life. The research subjects include religious leaders, village elders, village officials, and residents who play an active role in the implementation of *the baritan tradition*. The selection of subjects was carried out by *purposive sampling* technique, which is to select informants who truly understand and are involved in the implementation of the tradition (Sugiyono, 2019). This technique allows researchers to gain a diverse and in-depth view of the meaning and social function of *the baritan* in people's lives.

The research data was collected through three main complementary techniques. First, the researcher observed participants by directly participating in the *procession of baritans* to understand the course of the ritual and the dynamics of social interaction between residents. Through this involvement, researchers can capture the symbolic meanings and religious expressions that emerge during the activity. Second, in-depth interviews were conducted with religious leaders, village elders, and residents who actively participated. This interview aims to

explore their interpretation of religious and cultural values in *the practice of baritan*. Third, documentation is carried out by examining village archives, records of community activities, and photos of *baritan processions*. Documentary data serves to strengthen the results of observations and interviews, as well as present a historical and visual picture of the continuity of the tradition (Moleong, 2018).

Data analysis is carried out qualitatively through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The analysis process is carried out repeatedly until a stable pattern of meaning is found. The results of the interpretation were then associated with Max Weber's theory of social action to examine the motives of society in preserving *the baritan* tradition, both traditional, affective, rational-value, and rational-instrumental (Weber, 1978).

The reflective stage is carried out after all the data is collected. The researcher compiled a narrative description that describes the relationship between social structures, religious values, and cultural practices that live in society. The researcher re-examined the validity of the data through *member checking* and triangulation of sources so that the research results have strong validity (Creswell, 2016). This process shows that ethnographic-religious approaches are able to uncover the layers of meaning hidden behind *the baritan tradition*. The Panasan community not only preserves traditional ceremonies, but also maintains a balance between cultural heritage and Islamic beliefs. The tradition is a reflection of the social awareness that local culture and religious teachings can go hand in hand without eliminating each other. The results of this research are expected to enrich the study of Islamic anthropology as well as open a new space for dialogue between local wisdom and the religiosity of rural communities in East Java (Geertz, 1976; Kanas et al., 2022).

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

History and Implementation of the Baritan Tradition in Panasan Hamlet

The *baritan* tradition in Panasan Hamlet, Tondowulan Village, is a form of prayer with the community by presenting tumpeng food or produce, which is then eaten in congregation. This practice is seen as a means of strengthening friendship, strengthening social solidarity, and asking for Allah's blessings. The baritan tradition in Panasan Hamlet, Tondowulan Village, Ploso District, Jombang Regency, has existed since the time of the ancestors and has been passed down from generation to generation. The local people believe that this tradition originated from the

habits of ancestors who wanted to express gratitude for the harvest and the safety of the people after going through difficult times. The tradition then became a routine custom held every *Friday Legi* in the Javanese calendar, a day that the local people considered to bring blessings to their lives.

The preparation of the *baritan* is carried out in a mutual cooperation. The mothers prepare the meals, while the young men help arrange the place and decorate the offering containers. When the time for implementation arrived, religious leaders and village elders led a joint prayer. The prayer is recited in Javanese and Arabic at the same time, indicating a combination of cultural and religious values. Residents then exchanged food and chatted, creating a warm atmosphere full of familiarity. This activity is not only a means to be grateful, but also a moment to strengthen social relations between citizens (Fadilah, 2015, 106).

In the context of Javanese culture, traditions such as *baritan* can be understood as part of *slametan*, which is salvation intended to maintain a balance between humans, nature, and God. Clifford Geertz explained that the *slametan* tradition functions as a social mechanism that strengthens integration and a sense of togetherness in village communities (Geertz 1960, 12). In Panasan Hamlet, *baritan* has changed its meaning because the community interprets this activity no longer as an offering to the spirits of ancestors, but as an expression of gratitude to Allah for the sustenance and salvation given (Hasan 2014, 51).

Social and Religious Values in the *Baritan* Tradition

This religious meaning has made the *baritan* sustainable to this day. The community views it not as a mystical activity, but as a form of local wisdom that is in harmony with Islamic teachings. This tradition not only strengthens social bonds, but also deepens citizens' spiritual sense of divine values (Suharto 2005, 88). *Baritan* thus becomes clear evidence that local culture and religious teachings can dialogue harmoniously in the life of the rural people of Java.

From an Islamic perspective, this activity is in line with the value of togetherness (*ukhuwah*) and helping in goodness as affirmed in the word of Allah:

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ۚ

"And help yourselves in righteousness and piety, and do not help each other in sin and enmity." (Q.S. Al-Maidah [5]: 2).

This verse gives legitimacy that cultural practices that foster brotherhood and social goodness can be seen as in line with Islamic values as long as they are not mixed with polytheism. Field studies show that people understand *the baritan* as an expression of gratitude and a prayer for mutual salvation, rather than a ritual of worship to ancestral spirits (Maskur & Masnida, n.d.). In addition, *the baritan tradition* is relevant to the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH:

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ بُكَيْرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا اللَّيْثُ، عَنْ عُقَيْلٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ شِهَابٍ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنِي أَنَسُ بْنُ مَالِكٍ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ " مَنْ أَحَبَّ أَنْ يُبْسَطَ لَهُ فِي رِزْقِهِ، وَيُنْسَأَ لَهُ فِي أَثَرِهِ، فَلْيَصِلْ رَجْمَهُ ".

"Yahya bin Bukair narrated to us, narrated to us Al-Laits, from 'Uqail, from Ibn Shihab, he said: Anas ibn Malik narrated to me that the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: Whoever is happy to have his sustenance extended and prolong his life, then let him continue the bond of friendship." (Narrated by al-Bukhari no. 5986, Muslim no. 2557).

This hadith provides the basis that cultural activities that strengthen ukhuwah, such as joint prayers and eating together in baritan, are in harmony with Islamic values. A similar thing is seen in the tradition *São Paulo* in various regions of Indonesia, which is understood as a means of strengthening the spirituality and solidarity of Muslims (Sagir & Hasan, 2021). A number of recent studies corroborate this view. The baritan tradition, for example, was found to contain religious values in the form of prayer and gratitude to Allah, as well as the values of aqidah, sharia, and morals that strengthen the religiosity of the community. Another study emphasizes that baritan is understood by the community as a prayer for mutual salvation, (Maskur & Masnida, n.d.) It has even undergone reinterpretation to better suit Islamic values. (Husna & Maola, 2023). In addition to baritan, other local traditions also undergo a similar process of Islamization. Javanese wedding rituals (Ruslan et al., 2021) as well as the tradition of Kosek Ponjen (Setiyani et al., 2021) shows that culture is still practiced as long as the value of monotheism is maintained. In Gorontalo, the tradition *Squirt* It is understood as a form of Islamic acculturation with local culture that produces social harmony.

From the perspective of aqidah, there is indeed a debate. Some scholars consider that the practice of baritan must be careful so as not to contain elements of shirk. However, research on local medicine rituals in Sulawesi shows that cultural symbols are often reinterpreted with a monotheistic orientation while the study of the Islamization of the Wiwitan tradition

emphasizes that the process of Islamization of local culture is a creative adaptation of the Muslim community (Nugroho, 2024, Kuswianto & Yuwono, 2025). This phenomenon shows the ability of the Muslim community to reinterpret the ancestral culture without abandoning Islamic values.

In the framework of Max Weber's theory of social action, *the baritan* tradition describes the diversity of motives behind the actions of society. The citizens involved in this tradition have reasons rooted in experience, beliefs, and social values. The act reflects a balance between religious rationality and social commitment. Traditional motifs can be seen from the preservation of hereditary customs; affective motives are seen in the atmosphere of togetherness and emotional warmth; Rational-value motives arise from the belief that *the baritan* is in harmony with Islamic teachings; while rational-instrumental motives indicate social and economic goals in the form of harmony and village welfare (Weber, 1978).

The *baritan tradition* shows the ability of the people of Panasan Hamlet to maintain their cultural identity while strengthening religiosity. The community places prayer as the center of activities and views *baritan* as a social worship that strengthens relationships between citizens (Hidayat, 2019). They carry out the values of *ukhuwah*, gratitude, and mutual cooperation within the framework of local wisdom. The existence of *baritan* that has survived to this day shows that society has adaptive power in facing social changes. This tradition does not stop at the ritual aspect, but serves as a social mechanism that maintains a balance between spiritual and social life. Within the framework of Weber's theory, the social actions of the Panasan community display a synthesis between religious rationality and traditional values that produce social harmony and strengthen the religiosity of the village community (Weber, 1978).

The continuity of *the baritan* tradition also shows the historical awareness of the Javanese people that religious values can grow on their own cultural roots. Researchers found that people not only perform rituals, but also make these traditions a space for spiritual and social learning. The younger generation learns about the importance of togetherness, patience, and gratitude from parents who are actively involved in the procession. This process forms a continuum of values across generations that strengthens the morals and collective identity of citizens.

Thus, *baritan* can be understood as a tangible form of synthesis between religion and culture that gives birth to a form of religiosity typical of Javanese rural society. This tradition is a concrete example of the concept of "cultural Islam" that places Islamic values in the local social framework in harmony (Azra, 2013). The Panasan society proves that religion does not have to

negate culture, but can revive it with a new, more spiritual meaning. In this context, *baritan* is not only a ritual of gratitude, but a manifestation of social awareness that religion also means maintaining a balance between humans, nature, and God, a harmony that is the core of the archipelago's Islam.

Motives of Community Social Action in the *Baritan* Tradition

The traditional motif can be seen in the way the residents maintain the *baritan* as an ancestral heritage. They grow up in habits that are passed down from generation to generation, so that their implementation feels natural and becomes part of the common identity. *Baritan* activities are considered a form of respect for predecessors as well as a symbol of continuity between the past and the present. This pattern shows that traditions are alive because they are socially accepted and carried out collectively without much opposition. The affective motive can be seen from the atmosphere of togetherness created during the implementation of the *baritan*. Residents brought market snacks, gathered around the *kedung*, then shared food while praying together. This kind of situation fosters gratitude and strengthens social relations between citizens. This moment of togetherness creates warmth and solidarity that is difficult to find in their daily lives. *Baritan* is a social space where people express their mutual concern and strengthen bonds between citizens.

The rational-value motive is related to the view that the *baritan* tradition is in line with the teachings of Islam. Many residents consider that joint prayers and alms carried out in *baritan* are a form of gratitude to Allah and a means of strengthening the Islamic *ukhuwah*. The religious values contained in it make the community feel calm and confident that this activity does not contradict the principles of monotheism. This understanding shows the ability of the community to interpret traditions according to the religious values they adhere.

The rational-instrumental motive is seen from the belief that *baritan* brings real benefits to social life. Residents believe that this activity can maintain harmony, strengthen mutual cooperation, and bring blessings to the village. Some community leaders also consider that this tradition helps maintain environmental order and security. This kind of view shows that *baritan* is not only maintained because of its spiritual value, but also because of the social results that are directly felt by the community.

These four motifs show that *baritan* is a complex form of social action. This tradition cannot be understood solely as cultural heritage, but also as the result of negotiations between religious values and local wisdom. The community seeks to maintain a balance between belief

in Islamic teachings and respect for ancestral traditions. Elements that are considered incompatible with the teachings of monotheism tend to be adjusted without eliminating the value of togetherness and gratitude in it.

The *baritan* tradition shows the ability of the people of Panasan Hamlet to maintain their cultural identity while strengthening their religiosity. *Baritan* is a forum for maintaining social and spiritual harmony, where cultural values and religious teachings go hand in hand. As long as the main purpose of this activity still leads to gratitude to Allah and strengthens relationships between others, *baritan* can be seen as a form of inculturation that enriches the religious practices of rural Javanese people. The *baritan* tradition in Panasan Hamlet is still carried out today, even in the midst of modernization that has begun to change the lifestyle of the village community. Every Javanese month on Friday Legi, residents still gather on the banks of Kedung to carry out prayers together and eat together. Cross-generational involvement from children to parents shows that *baritan* has been strongly embedded in the social identity of the residents of Panasan Hamlet.

When viewed with Max Weber's theory of social action, *baritan* can be understood as an action that has four main motives: traditional, affective, rational-value, and rational-instrumental. In the context of traditional motives, people carry out *baritan* because of a habit that is inherited from generation to generation. They feel that stopping this tradition means breaking the ties of history and ancestral heritage. This action takes place spontaneously without much reflection, as it has become part of daily life (Weber 1978, 24).

The affective motive can be seen from the atmosphere of togetherness and positive emotions that accompany the implementation of the *baritan*. Residents come not only because of social obligations, but because of the joy of being able to gather, pray, and share food. This atmosphere fosters empathy and solidarity between citizens. For the community, togetherness in the *baritan* is a means to calm the heart and strengthen social relationships (Hasan 2014, 52).

On the other hand, *baritan* also contains a rational motive of value. Residents believe that this activity is in line with Islamic teachings, because in it there are joint prayers, food alms, and gratitude to Allah. Local religious leaders emphasized that as long as the prayer is addressed only to Allah and there is no element of polytheism, *baritan* becomes a form of *ukhuwah* and gratitude that is worth worship. Thus, *baritan* is not seen as a mystical practice, but rather a cultural expression that breathes religiosity.

The last motive is rational-instrumental, which is an action carried out with a certain purpose. The community believes that *baritan* brings blessings, safety, and social peace. Through this ritual, they hope that the relationship between others will remain harmonious, sustenance smoothly, and avoid disasters. This motif shows that the *baritan* functions not only spiritually, but also socioeconomically, because it is able to strengthen the social network that plays a role in daily life (Suharto 2005, 92). From these four motifs, it appears that *baritan* is not just a traditional ritual, but a mirror of the negotiation process between Islamic teachings and local culture. Citizens do not reject religious values, but integrate them into existing traditions. This process shows the dynamics of the religiosity of the village community which is dialogical: they are religious without leaving their own cultural roots (Azra 2013).

The Formation of Community Religiosity Through the Baritan Tradition

The religiosity of the residents of Panasan Hamlet is reflected in the way they interpret *baritan* as a social worship. They affirm that prayer is addressed to God, not to the spirit of the ancestors. This view is in line with the concept of *bil-hal da'wah*, which is *da'wah* that is manifested through real deeds in people's lives (Hidayat 2019, 219). Thus, *baritan* becomes a spiritual space that teaches Islamic values such as gratitude, togetherness, and mutual sharing within the framework of local wisdom.

The existence of *baritan* that has survived to this day shows that society has adaptive ability to respond to change. This tradition is not just a relic of the past, but a living and evolving form of social identity. In the context of Weber's theory, the social actions of the Panasan community show a synthesis between religious rationality and traditional values that produce social harmony and strengthen the religiosity of the village community (Weber, 1978).

The *baritan* tradition in Panasan Hamlet has a strong social meaning because it contains the values of solidarity, togetherness, and concern for others. The community views this activity as a means to strengthen social ties and renew the spirit of mutual cooperation that is a characteristic of rural life in Java. In the social context, *baritan* functions as an interaction space that unites all levels of society regardless of economic or social status. Every citizen has the same role, whether in preparing food, attending events, or praying together. This equality of roles fosters a sense of togetherness and strengthens the social structure of the community (Hafidhuddin, 2003).

Religious values in *the baritan* arise through the spiritual awareness of the residents who place prayer as the core of the activity. Prayer is not only a means of communication with God, but also a symbol of recognition of man's limitations before God's power. This humble attitude is a form of *tawadhu'* and *gratitude* that is manifested collectively. In the view of the sociology of religion, the act shows the transcendental function of religion that connects the spiritual dimension with the social structure of society (Durkheim, 1912).

The food symbols in *the baritan* also have a deep religious and social meaning. The food collected by the residents reflects the concept of sharing sustenance, while the distribution of food after prayer together indicates the value of *ta'awun* or helping in kindness. This practice is in line with Islamic principles that emphasize the importance of *friendship* and social care (*hablun minannas*) as an integral part of faith (Q.S. Al-Ma'un [107]: 1-7). In this context, *baritan* becomes a space for *bil-hal da'wah*, namely da'wa that is manifested through real behaviors such as sharing food and fostering affection among fellow citizens (Hidayat, 2019).

Baritan as a Form of Cultural Islam and Javanese Social Identity

The *baritan* tradition also reflects the spirituality of the Javanese people who prioritize the balance between the natural and inner worlds. Society views social welfare as dependent not only on human hard work, but also on Divine blessings. Joint prayer and food alms are considered a means of strengthening the relationship with God while maintaining harmony with nature and fellow humans. This view is in line with the concept of *tawazun* in Islam, which is a balance between spiritual and material aspects in life (Rahman, 2019). At the cultural level, *baritan* functions as a medium for inheriting values across generations. The children and adolescents who participated learned the meaning of togetherness, responsibility, and appreciation for traditions. They absorb these values through direct experience, not just verbal teaching. This pattern shows that *baritan* plays a role as a vehicle for cultural and religious-based character education. This tradition maintains the continuity of moral values that form the religious habitus of society as Pierre Bourdieu explained, that habitus is formed through repetitive social practices and internalizes values in daily actions (Bourdieu, 1977).

The socio-religious dimension of *the baritan* is also seen in the way the community interprets togetherness as a form of worship. Residents believe that strengthening the bond of friendship is as valuable as worship that brings oneself closer to Allah. This belief is in line with the hadith of the Prophet who says that friendship can extend sustenance and prolong life (HR.

Bukhari-Muslim). Through this togetherness, *baritan* is not only a ritual of gratitude, but also a means of strengthening collective spirituality.

The *baritan* tradition shows that religion and culture do not stand as two poles that negate each other. The two actually complement each other in the framework of the life of the Javanese people who uphold the value of harmony. Islam is present in this tradition not to replace culture, but to give a new meaning that affirms the value of tauhid. The community's understanding of *baritan* reflects a contextual model of religiosity, where Islamic values are applied without negating local cultural roots (Azra, 2013).

The life of the people of Panasan Hamlet shows that Islamic values can live in cultural space through symbolic adjustments and spiritual meanings. Residents understand that Islamic teachings do not reject culture as long as they do not contain elements of shirk. This kind of interpretation shows the level of theological maturity of the community that is able to distinguish between *mahdhah worship* and *ghairu mahdhah*. Thus, *baritan* is seen not as a syncretic ritual, but as a religious expression rooted in local culture and oriented towards divine values.

Synthesis: Functionalization and Rationalization in the Baritan Tradition

This study found that *baritan* has three main functions in the life of the people of Panasan Hamlet. First, the social function that maintains solidarity and togetherness. Second, religious functions that affirm gratitude to Allah and strengthen the spirituality of citizens. Third, an educational function that instills moral values in the younger generation through direct participation in traditional activities. These three functions are interrelated and form a value system that maintains the balance of social and spiritual life of the community (Husna & Maola, 2023). Thus, *baritan* can be understood as a manifestation of Islamic cultural da'wah that lives in rural communities. This tradition shows that Islamic values are not only present in the form of formal worship, but also in social practices that foster a sense of togetherness and gratitude. *Baritan* is a symbol of Islam in the archipelago that is moderate, open to culture, and oriented towards the common good. The people of Panasan Hamlet through this tradition have succeeded in proving that true religiosity is not only measured by formal rituals, but also by the ability to maintain harmony between humans, nature, and God in daily life.

The social changes that occurred in rural communities in Java cannot be separated from the flow of modernization, technology, and intensification of Islamic da'wa. The people of Panasan Hamlet, like many other communities in rural Java, now live in a social space that is

increasingly open and connected to the outside world. Changes in mindset, education, and social mobility affect the way residents interpret ancestral traditions, including *baritan*. This tradition is no longer understood as a mystical ritual or just a hereditary custom, but as a symbol of togetherness and religious expression that is relevant to modern life (Rahman, 2019).

The people of Panasan Hamlet reinterpreted the meaning of *baritan* to be in harmony with the values of monotheism. Residents no longer bring offerings or offerings as was done in the past. Instead, they focus their activities on prayer, *dhikr*, and the recitation of Qur'anic verses. Local religious leaders play an active role in providing understanding to the community that prayer and alms must be addressed only to Allah. This reinterpretation shows the process of *cultural Islamization* carried out peacefully and participally. Local culture is not erased, but its meaning is purified to be in harmony with the principles of Islamic faith (Kuswianto & Yuwono, 2025).

Transformation is also seen in the way the *baritan* is organized. If in the past the implementation of events was simpler and limited to certain residents, now these activities have become more inclusive and organized. Village administrators, mosque youth, and PKK women played an active role in the preparation and implementation of the event. *Baritan activities* are often integrated with social activities such as compensation for orphans, environmental community service, or collection of donations for underprivileged residents. This change expands the function of *baritan* from just a religious ritual to a productive socio-religious activity (Afriyanti, 2020).

The role of religious leaders and local educators is very important in this reinterpretation process. They provide guidance so that Islamic values can be applied without causing cultural conflicts. The local *ustazah* and *kiai* explained that the essence of *baritan* is prayer and togetherness, not a form of offering to supernatural beings. This understanding is widely accepted by the community because it is conveyed through a persuasive approach and uses cultural language that is familiar to the ears of the residents. This approach is in line with the principle of *da'wa bil hikmah*—conveying the truth with wisdom and gentleness (Q.S. An-Nahl [16]: 125).

Modernization has not only changed the way people worship, but also the way they document traditions. The young generation of Panasan Hamlet began to record *baritan* activities through social media, such as short videos and digital photos uploaded to online platforms. This action is not just entertainment, but a form of digital preservation of local culture. They want to

show that *baritan* is a positive, religious, and moral tradition. This phenomenon illustrates the emergence of a religious-digital generation that combines Islamic identity and pride in local culture (Lestari et al., 2025).

Transformation also occurs in the way people understand food symbols and *tumpeng*. If in the past every food had a mystical meaning, now residents interpret food as a symbol of gratitude and almsgiving. For example, *tumpeng* is considered to symbolize prayer for life to always improve, while traditional snacks such as *apem* and *klepon* are seen as a form of modesty and simplicity of life. This shift in meaning shows that society does not reject symbols, but provides new meanings that are more rational and theological (Hasan, 2014).

Reinterpretation of the Baritan Tradition in an Islamic Perspective

The reinterpretation of the meaning of *baritan* is also rooted in changes in the religious pattern of the community. The recitation activities, *yasinan*, and *taklim* assemblies that developed in Panasas Hamlet strengthened the understanding of Islam among the residents. The pilgrims began to understand that every form of ritual that contains the value of gratitude, togetherness, and alms can be seen as part of social worship. This awareness makes *baritan* no longer seen as an ancient tradition, but as a cultural da'wah medium that strengthens faith and Islamic *ukhuwah* (Yusuf & Ningsih, 2021).

In the perspective of Max Weber's social action theory, this process of reinterpretation shows a shift in motives from traditional to value-rational. People no longer just perform rituals because of hereditary habits, but because they believe in the moral and religious values behind them. The actions of citizens in preserving *the baritan* are seen as a form of *value rationality*—actions taken on the basis of a belief in moral and spiritual truth, not just an emotional impulse or habit (Weber, 1978).

In addition, modernization also encourages the emergence of reflective awareness in society. Residents began to realize that the preservation of local culture is part of their moral responsibility and Islamic identity as the people of the archipelago. They argue that preserving traditions such as *baritan* is not a form of aberration, but rather an expression of love for the culture inherited by the ancestors. This attitude shows a form of *instrumental rationality*, in which society maintains a tradition to maintain social cohesion and community harmony (Ritzer & Goodman, 2010).

The reinterpretation of the meaning of *baritan* also shows the ability of society to adapt to social changes without losing Islamic values. This tradition is a symbol of the meeting between religion and culture that takes place naturally and harmoniously. Society no longer opposes the two, but considers them as two elements that enrich each other. This pattern reflects the moderate Islamic character of Indonesia (*wasathiyah*), inclusive, and firmly rooted in local culture (Azra, 2013).

Thus, the *baritan* in Panasan Hamlet not only functions as a socio-religious ritual, but also as a medium for educational values and reconstruction of the religious identity of the rural people of Java. This tradition managed to maintain its meaning in the midst of modernization without losing its spiritual spirit. The community makes *baritan* a space to strengthen faith values, strengthen solidarity, and take care of cultural heritage that reflects Islamic wisdom that lives in local traditions.

The *baritan* tradition in Panasan Hamlet has a real influence on the formation of community religiosity. Residents consider that this activity is not just a ritual of togetherness, but also a medium to foster spiritual awareness in daily life. The value of gratitude, togetherness, and surrender to Allah is the core of the implementation of *baritan*, so that people understand religion not only at the level of individual worship, but also as a social experience that lives in the community (Fadilah, 2015).

The people of Panasan Hamlet express their religiosity through active involvement in *baritan* activities. Each individual has a moral responsibility to participate, whether by bringing food, helping to prepare the place, or participating in prayer together. This involvement forms a sense of belonging to the community while strengthening the social dimension of faith. In Durkheim's view, collective actions such as *baritones* strengthen social solidarity and maintain moral balance in society (Durkheim, 1912).

The religiosity of the community does not stop at the implementation of rituals, but continues in daily social life. After the *baritan event*, it is easier for residents to help each other, visit each other, and maintain harmony between neighbors. The values of helping (*ta'āwun*) and friendship are growing stronger. Local religious leaders said that *baritan* is a momentum for residents to improve social relations and strengthen the spirit of Islamic *ukhuwah*. This phenomenon shows that cultural activities can play a role as a means of internalizing religious values into social life (Hidayat, 2019).

According to psychological perspective, *baritan* has an effect of inner peace for residents. They feel more peaceful after praying and gathering together. This serenity arises from the belief that each joint prayer has its own blessings. Bourdieu called this kind of condition the result of *religious habitus*, which is a mindset and action formed from religious practices that are carried out repeatedly (Bourdieu, 1977). Thus, *baritan* plays a role in shaping the religious habitus of the community, because every citizen is used to expressing Islamic values through concrete social activities.

The *baritan* tradition also strengthens the moral dimension in the religiosity of the community. Values such as simplicity, sincerity, and honesty are always instilled by village elders during the implementation of joint prayers. Parents remind children not to throw away food, not to scramble, and to share it with others. This habit forms a religious character that is rooted in social action. In line with Weber's view, actions based on moral and religious values reflect the form of *rational-value actions* that underlie the social behavior of society (Weber, 1978).

In addition to the moral dimension, *baritan* also strengthens religiosity in the spiritual aspect. Residents believe that prayers that are offered together are easier to answer because they contain collective strength. This view is in accordance with Islamic values that emphasize the importance of congregational prayer and praying for each other among fellow Muslims. This activity fosters a high sense of spiritual togetherness and strengthens confidence in God's presence in daily life.

The religiosity of the people of Panasan Hamlet is also seen in the way they understand the relationship between humans, nature, and God. Each *baritan* is performed on the edge of *the kedung*, a symbol of water that is considered the source of life. Water is seen as a symbol of God's holiness, balance, and mercy for living beings. By gathering in that place, the community affirms an ecological awareness rooted in Islamic teachings about human responsibility as a caliph on earth. This understanding shows that their religiosity is not individualistic, but includes ecological and social awareness (Hasan, 2014).

Based on socio-religious perspective, *baritan* is an effective forum for cultural da'wah. Religious leaders used the moment to convey moral messages and Islamic values in simple language. The message of da'wa is conveyed contextually, for example about the importance of being grateful, working hard, and living in harmony. This approach makes Islamic teachings feel close to the lives of citizens. This kind of da'wa is included in the category of *da'wah bil hal*, namely da'wah through real actions and social examples (Suharto, 2005).

The religiosity of the people of Panasan Hamlet develops in a dialogical and inclusive form. They do not reject the traditions of their ancestors, but reinterpret them according to Islamic values. This attitude reflects a mature form of religiosity, because society is able to put religion and culture in a complementary position. They believe that obedience to God can be realized not only through formal rituals, but also through social togetherness and concern for others.

In the long run, *baritan* has a significant socio-religious function. This tradition maintains continuity between generations, instills spiritual values in children, and strengthens the sense of identity as a cultured Javanese Muslim community. The tradition becomes a social learning space where people understand the meaning of worship, gratitude, and solidarity in life together. Through *baritan*, the religiosity of the community is not only practiced, but also inherited as a value of life that lives in the midst of changing times (Azra, 2013).

The *baritan* tradition in Panasan Hamlet shows that there is a space for dialogue between local cultural values and Islamic teachings that coexist harmoniously. The community runs *baritan* not solely because of the encouragement of customs, but because of the belief that this activity is in harmony with Islamic principles such as gratitude, togetherness, and friendship. This dialogue process shows that religion is not present to replace culture, but rather to give new meaning to existing cultural practices (Azra, 2013).

The residents of Panasan Hamlet understand that the traditions inherited by their ancestors need to be adjusted to Islamic values to remain relevant. They do not remove cultural elements that are considered neutral, such as togetherness and mutual cooperation, but remove symbolic elements that have the potential to lead to polytheism. This kind of adjustment shows the ability of the community to reinterpret *culture* in a contextual way. Within the framework of Weber's theory of social action, the process of reinterpretation reflects a rational-value action (*wertrational*), which is an action based on a belief in moral and religious values (Weber, 1978).

In the implementation of *baritan*, the community seeks to maintain a balance between spiritual and social aspects. They interpreted joint prayer as a form of worship, while the activity of sharing food was understood as an expression of affection for others. Weber asserts that social actions rooted in religious values can form a stable social structure, as they reflect the integration between faith and the practice of daily life (Weber, 1978). This can be seen in the lives of the residents of Panasan Hamlet who make *baritan* a space to strengthen *ukhuwah* as well as affirm gratitude to Allah.

According to Durkheim's perspective, *the baritan* serves as a means of social bonding that strengthens mechanical solidarity in rural communities. Durkheim explained that religious rituals have the power to unite individuals in a collective consciousness through symbols and collective actions (Durkheim, 1912). In this context, *the baritan* functions to maintain social order, because these activities involve all residents regardless of differences in economic status or age. Collective involvement creates a sense of commonality and togetherness that is the moral basis of society.

The value of solidarity that emerges in *the baritan* can be seen from the participation of all levels of society. The mothers prepare the dishes, the fathers help arrange the place, and the children participate enthusiastically. Each individual has a recognized role, so that this activity becomes a means of social education for all groups. Durkheim called this condition a manifestation of *collective effervescence*, which is a common spirit that arises when individuals feel spiritual unity in a religious ceremony (Durkheim, 1912). The people of Panasan Hamlet feel the presence of divine values through this togetherness, which then strengthens the moral bond between them.

The process of functionalization of *the baritan* also reflects how socio-religious institutions adapt to social changes. The taklim council, religious leaders, and village officials also play a role in directing the implementation of traditions so that they remain within the corridor of Islamic teachings. This effort shows the normative function of religion in controlling social behavior and ensuring that every cultural activity is oriented towards the value of monotheism. In the perspective of Durkheim's functionalism, this kind of action shows the function of religion as the guardian of collective morality and the regulator of social harmony (Durkheim, 1912).

The people of Panasan Hamlet also display a form of double rationality in carrying out *baritan*. On the one hand, they maintain elements of tradition to maintain cultural identity; on the other hand, they internalize Islamic values so that the practice has religious meaning. Weber calls this dynamic a form of *synthesis of rationality*, which is a combination of traditional actions and rational-values that give birth to social balance (Weber, 1978). In this context, *baritan* is not only a heritage ritual, but also a means of transforming values that strengthen the religiosity of the community.

The social context of Javanese society reinforces this pattern. People have a tendency to interpret life holistically, where spiritual and social aspects are not separated. Traditions such

as *baritan* are a tangible manifestation of a view of life that places religion and culture as a complementary unit. In Clifford Geertz's view, this kind of practice reflects *religious syncretism*, which is a form of religious adaptation that does not violate the main principles of religion, but adapts it to local socio-cultural conditions (Geertz, 1960).

The sustainability of *the baritan tradition* in the midst of modernization also affirms the power of collective values in maintaining religious identity. In the digital and urbanization era, people continue to use *baritan* as a means of maintaining mental balance and strengthening social relationships. This ritual serves as a social mechanism that connects the old and young generations in a contextual Islamic framework. Values such as gratitude, solidarity, and *ukhuwah Islamiyah* are social capital that protects society from moral disintegration.

The *baritan* is proven to have a dual function: a spiritual function as a form of collective worship, and a social function as a mechanism for community integration. This tradition not only teaches humans to be grateful, but also to share, cooperate, and live in harmony with others. This pattern shows that Islam in Java developed through a soft and grounded cultural path, not in a confrontational way. Islamic values permeate the culture, giving birth to a pattern of religion that is friendly and adaptive to social changes (Azra, 2013).

Thus, *baritan* can be understood as a form of harmonious dialogue between culture and religion. This tradition is not just a legacy of the past, but part of a social process that continues to live and conform to Islamic values. Within the framework of Weber and Durkheim's theory, *baritans* reflect the integration between the rationality of values and social functions, which together form a religious, solid, and cultured society. This tradition emphasizes that the religious diversity of Javanese society lies not only in the ritual aspect, but also in social practices that foster affection, mutual cooperation, and submission to God.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the *baritan* tradition in Panasan Hamlet is a socio-religious practice that blends Javanese cultural values with Islamic teachings. *Baritan* functions not only as a hereditary ritual but also as a space for communal prayer, gratitude, and social solidarity. Weber's theory highlights four motives behind the tradition, traditional, affective, value-rational, and instrumental-rational, while Durkheim's functionalism underscores its role in strengthening social integration and solidarity. The community also reinterprets *baritan* to

remain aligned with Islamic monotheism, creating a moderate and contextual religious expression. Overall, *baritan* serves both spiritual and social purposes, acting as a form of cultural da'wa that preserves cultural identity, reinforces Islamic values, and supports the social resilience of the community.

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