



The Interaction between Islam and Local Wisdom in Indonesia: A Normative-Philosophical Study

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Abstract

This study explores the dynamic interaction between Islam and local wisdom in Indonesia from a normative-philosophical perspective. Its aim is to examine how Islamic legal philosophy, particularly through the frameworks of *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah*, ‘urf, and *maṣlaḥah mursalah*, accommodates and reforms diverse customary practices without contradicting *Sharī‘ah* principles. Employing a library research method, the study analyzes classical *fiqh* and *uṣūl al-fiqh* texts, the work of Nusantara scholars such as *Sabilal Muhtadin*, and modern literature on Banjar, Minangkabau, and Bugis-Makassar traditions. The findings demonstrate that Islamic law in Indonesia is flexible and adaptive, integrating traditions such as *jujuran*, matrilineal inheritance, and *siri’* with Islamic values through the principles of ‘urf *sahih* and *maṣlaḥah*. The study implies that Islam Nusantara represents a philosophical synthesis promoting moderation, tolerance, and inclusivity, offering a valuable model for other plural Muslim societies in balancing Islamic universality with local cultural particularism.

Keywords: Islam, local wisdom, *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah*, ‘urf, *maṣlaḥah mursalah*, social *fiqh*, Islam Nusantara.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji interaksi dinamis antara Islam dan kearifan lokal di Indonesia dari perspektif normatif-filosofis. Tujuannya adalah menjelaskan bagaimana filsafat hukum Islam, melalui kerangka *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah*, ‘urf, dan *maṣlaḥah mursalah*, mampu mengakomodasi sekaligus mereformasi praktik adat yang beragam tanpa bertentangan dengan prinsip syariat. Dengan menggunakan metode penelitian pustaka (*library research*), studi ini menelaah teks klasik *fiqh*, *ushul fiqh*, karya ulama Nusantara seperti *Sabilal Muhtadin*, serta literatur modern tentang adat Banjar, Minangkabau, dan Bugis-Makassar. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa hukum Islam di Indonesia bersifat fleksibel dan adaptif, mampu mengintegrasikan tradisi seperti *jujuran*, warisan matrilineal, dan *siri’* dengan nilai-nilai keislaman melalui prinsip ‘urf *sahih* dan *maṣlaḥah*. Implikasi penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa konsep Islam Nusantara merupakan bentuk sintesis filosofis yang mendorong moderasi, toleransi, dan inklusivitas, sekaligus menjadi model bagi masyarakat Muslim plural lainnya dalam menyeimbangkan universalitas Islam dengan partikularitas budaya lokal.

Kata Kunci: Islam, kearifan lokal, *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah*, ‘urf, *maṣlaḥah mursalah*, *fiqh* sosial, Islam Nusantara.

Introduction

Indonesia, as the nation with the world's largest Muslim population, is characterized by its profound ethnic and cultural diversity. This rich tapestry of traditions has historically interacted with Islamic teachings, leading to a unique religious and cultural synthesis. The spread of Islam in the Nusantara archipelago was predominantly through a process of acculturation rather than confrontation, allowing for the integration of pre-existing animistic, dynamic, and Hindu-Buddhist beliefs and practices. Early Muslim traders, preachers, and Sufi travelers played a crucial role in this peaceful integration, often through marriage, education, and various arts, which facilitated the blending of Islamic culture with local traditions. This adaptive-compromise path ensured Islam's acceptance within diverse cultural landscapes, particularly in Java where it merged with mystical traditions and Hindu-Javanese culture.¹

Local wisdom, or *kearifan lokal*, such as *adat banjar*, *adat bugis*, and *adat minangkabau*, represents deeply ingrained traditional values and practices that have co-evolved with Islamic teachings, forming a distinctive Indonesian Islamic identity. This historical process has resulted in a form of Islam that is deeply intertwined with local socio-cultural influences, demonstrating Islam's extraordinary ability to adapt to diverse cultural contexts globally. This adaptation has made Islam not just a system of faith but an integral part of the social and cultural life of local communities.²

While the interaction between Islam and local wisdom in Indonesia has been extensively studied, most existing research approaches this phenomenon primarily from anthropological or sociological perspectives. These studies often describe the cultural manifestations and social dynamics of this interaction, detailing how Islamic values are expressed through local customs or how local practices are maintained within a Muslim-majority society.

¹ Asrindah Nasution and Rizky Arum, "Acculturation Of Javanese Culture With Islam In Indonesia," *Dharmawangsa: International Journal of the Social Sciences, Education and Humanitis* 5, no. 1 (2024): 32–38.

² Heru Purwoyuliyanto and Kasori Mujahid, *Islam and Local Wisdom: A Literature Review on the Relationship Between Culture and Religion in Indonesia*, 3, no. 1 (2025).

However, there remains a significant scholarly gap concerning normative-philosophical explorations rooted in Islamic law and thought. Previous studies, while acknowledging the relationship between *fiqh* (Islamic law) and local culture, have often been partial, failing to fully engage with aspects of constitutionalism or to develop a systematic methodological framework capable of synergizing *fiqh*, local culture, and the national legal system.³ This limitation extends beyond a mere academic oversight; it carries practical consequences. The absence of a robust normative-philosophical understanding means that the implementation of Islamic values within local traditions can create tension between modernization and cultural preservation.⁴ Without a clear framework for action, policymakers may lack the necessary guidance to formulate strategies that effectively integrate religious principles with local customs. This impedes the harmonious preservation and development of traditions, leaving unresolved conflicts or leading to the erosion of valuable cultural heritage. A comprehensive understanding of how Islamic legal philosophy provides the inherent flexibility and mechanisms for accommodating and regulating local wisdom is therefore critically needed to inform both policy and practice.

Methods

This study employs a normative-philosophical approach, primarily relying on library research (*maktabi*). This method allows for a deep textual and conceptual analysis of Islamic legal and philosophical sources in conjunction with literature on Indonesian local wisdom. The objective is to analyze the theoretical underpinnings and practical applications of Islamic legal principles in accommodating diverse cultural practices.

³ Ivan Sunata et al., *Reconstruction Of Cultural Jurisprudence To Strengthen The Constitutional Guarantee Of Local Culture In Indonesia*, n.d.

⁴ Hanung Sito Rohmawati and Didin Saepudin, "Interdisciplinary Islamic Approaches to Local Traditions in Indonesia for Sustainable Development," in *Towards Resilient Societies: The Synergy of Religion, Education, Health, Science, and Technology*, 1st ed., by Maila D.H. Rahiem (CRC Press, 2025), <https://doi.org/10.1201/9781003654940-23>.

Primary sources for this investigation include the Qur'an and Hadith, which serve as the foundational texts of Islamic law. Classical *fiqh* texts, particularly from the Shafi'i school, are crucial for understanding traditional legal rulings, given their widespread adoption in Nusantara. Works on *usūl al-fiqh* (principles of Islamic jurisprudence) are essential for analyzing the methodologies of legal derivation and accommodation. Shaykh Arsyad al-Banjari's *Sabilal Muhtadin*, written in 1779 M, stands as a key primary source, offering unique insights into the contextualization of *fiqh* within Indonesian local settings, specifically the *Banjar* community.⁵

Secondary sources encompass scholarly works on Islam and *adat* in Indonesia. Prominent figures such as Clifford Geertz, whose *The Religion of Java* (1960) explored the intricate relationship between Javanese religion and Hindu-animistic traditions, provide critical insights into the historical and socio-cultural dimensions of this interaction.⁶ Azyumardi Azra's contributions further illuminate the inclusive and flexible characteristics of *Islam Nusantara*, emphasizing its interaction with local socio-cultural contexts.⁷ Contemporary Indonesian Islamic legal scholars' analyses also enrich the understanding of modern contextualizations and ongoing debates.

Analytical Frameworks

The analysis is structured around several key Islamic legal and philosophical frameworks:

1. *Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* (Objectives of Islamic Law): This framework is central to understanding the higher objectives of Islamic law, which include the preservation of religion (*hifdz al-din*), life (*hifdz al-nafs*), lineage (*hifdz al-nasl*), intellect (*hifdz al-'aql*), and property (*hifdz al-mal*). In the Indonesian context, the contextualization of *maqāṣid* often aligns these objectives with the

⁵ A. Syaifullah, "Moderasi Islam Dalam Kitab Sabilal Muhtadin: Kearifan Lokal Tanah Banjar," *Muṣarrah: Jurnal Kajian Islam Kontemporer* 2, no. 1 (2020): 31, <https://doi.org/10.18592/msr.v2i1.3676>.

⁶ M. Aqil Fahmi Sanjani et al., "Islam and Local Wisdom: Integration of Local Values in Islamic Thought," *Journal of Social Studies and Education* 2, no. 1 (2024): 27–43, <https://doi.org/10.61987/jsse.v2i1.567>.

⁷ Sa'dullah Sa'dullah and Hajam Hajam, "The Role of Nusantara Ulama's Da'wah in Islamic Moderation: A Critique of Blackwater and Peripheral in Islamic Studies," *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 45, no. 1 (2025): 69–86.

Pancasila principles, demonstrating a unique national-religious synthesis that prioritizes collective welfare and national unity.⁸

2. *'urf* (Custom) and *Maslahah Mursalah* (Unrestricted Public Interest): These are vital secondary sources of Islamic law, allowing for the accommodation of local customs that do not contradict fundamental *Shari'ah* principles.⁹ *'urf* provides flexibility for *fiqh* to adapt to societal changes, recognizing established practices as legally valid.¹⁰ *Maslahah mursalah*, on the other hand, serves as a basis for legal reasoning that prioritizes public welfare when no explicit textual guidance exists, as exemplified by its application in the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI) in Indonesia.¹¹
3. Comparative Analysis: The study employs a comparative analysis between classical Islamic jurisprudence and its contextualization within the Indonesian archipelago. This approach highlights the adaptability and dynamism of Islamic law in diverse local settings, demonstrating how universal principles are applied and reinterpreted in specific cultural contexts.¹²

The methodological choices made in this study emphasize a crucial connection between abstract legal theory and empirical social reality. The analytical frameworks, particularly *'urf* and *Maslahah mursalah*, inherently bridge this divide. *'urf* is predicated on the existence of actual customs within a society, while *Maslahah mursalah* necessitates an understanding of societal needs and public benefit

⁸ Shofiyullah Muzammil et al., "Indonesian Maqasid Al-Syari'ah: A Study of Yudian Wahyudi's Thought," *DINIKA: Academic Journal of Islamic Studies* 8, no. 2 (2023): 178–202.

⁹ Sunata et al., *Reconstruction Of Cultural Jurisprudence To Strengthen The Constitutional Guarantee Of Local Culture In Indonesia*.

¹⁰ Adi Nur Rohman, "The Existence Of Maslahah Mursalah As The Basis Of Islamic Law Development In Indonesia," *KRTHA BHAYANGKARA* 13, no. 2 (2019): 251–60, <https://doi.org/10.31599/krtha.v13i2.9>.

¹¹ Achmad Roziqi et al., "The Legal Reasoning Of The Compilation Of Islamic Law In Indonesia On Mandatory Bequests (A Study of the Dialectics of Islamic Law and Socio-Cultural Context)," *International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews* 6, no. 3 (2025): 6472–79, <https://doi.org/10.55248/gengpi.6.0325.12104>.

¹² Syamsul Azizul Marinsah et al., "Consideration of Local Wisdom Elements in The Concept of Fiqh Sabahi: A Literature Review," *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 14 (n.d.).

derived from observing lived experiences. The inclusion of seminal works like *Sabilal Muhtadin* and the scholarly contributions of Geertz and Azra further grounds this normative study in historical and socio-cultural facts. This approach demonstrates that a normative-philosophical examination of Islam and local wisdom in Indonesia cannot be purely theoretical or textual. It must engage deeply with the lived realities and historical developments of Indonesian society. The chosen frameworks and sources collectively illustrate a methodological commitment to understanding how Islamic legal principles are applied and adapted to specific contexts, thereby moving beyond a rigid, abstract interpretation of law to a dynamic, context-sensitive one. This interaction creates a continuous feedback loop where local realities inform legal interpretation, and legal interpretations, in turn, shape local practices.

Results and Discussion

Classical Jurisprudence: *'urf* as a Valid Source

Classical Islamic jurisprudence recognizes *'urf* (custom) as a valid source of law, provided it does not contradict explicit texts of the Qur'an or Sunnah (*'urf sahih*). This principle, often summarized by the maxim *al-'ādah muhakkamah* (custom is a source of judgment), highlights the inherent flexibility of Islamic law to accommodate societal practices.¹³ The strength of Islam lies in its ability to adapt to previous cultures and align them with Islamic values, making it acceptable in diverse contexts.¹⁴ This adaptability is crucial in Indonesia, where Islam encountered deeply rooted pre-Islamic traditions such as animism, dynamism, and Hindu-Buddhism, integrating with them rather than leading to total rejection.¹⁵

'Urf can be categorized into *'urf sahih* (valid custom) and *'urf fasid* (corrupted custom), with the latter being prohibited due to

¹³ Sunata et al., *Reconstruction Of Cultural Jurisprudence To Strengthen The Constitutional Guarantee Of Local Culture In Indonesia*.

¹⁴ Dinar Fatmawati, "Islam and Local Wisdom in Indonesia," *Journal of Social Science* 2, no. 1 (2021): 20–28, <https://doi.org/10.46799/jss.v2i1.82>.

¹⁵ Nasution and Arum, "Acculturation Of Javanese Culture With Islam In Indonesia."

elements like heresy, superstition, or *shirk*.¹⁶ This distinction provides a crucial normative filter for the integration process, ensuring that cultural adaptation does not compromise core Islamic tenets.

Principles of Flexibility (*Taysīr*), Tolerance (*Tasāmuh*), and Justice in Lawmaking

Islamic law possesses a dynamic character, capable of responding to various societal cases and changes across times and places. This inherent adaptability is guided by principles such as *Taysīr* (facilitation or ease) and *tasāmuh* (tolerance), ensuring that religious obligations are not unduly burdensome. The concept of *Maslahah mursalah* (unrestricted public interest) is a crucial method used by *mujtahids* (jurists capable of independent reasoning) in extracting Islamic law from the Qur'an and Hadith when explicit textual rulings are absent.¹⁷ It serves as a legal reasoning foundation for addressing societal needs not explicitly covered by textual sources, as seen in the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI) in Indonesia. The KHI's regulation on mandatory bequests (*wasiat wājibah*) exemplifies the use of *Maslahah* to integrate local values, such as the strong relationship between adopted children and their adoptive families, with Sharia principles. This demonstrates a paradigm shift in Indonesian Islamic legal thinking, prioritizing public benefit and social justice, even when differing from conventional *fiqh* views.¹⁸ The flexibility of *fiqh* allows for its evolution, with new laws being established and existing ones updated in response to social changes, ensuring its continued relevance and influence in society.¹⁹

The following table summarizes the key normative frameworks and their application in facilitating the integration of Islam with local wisdom in Indonesia:

¹⁶ Marinsah et al., "Consideration of Local Wisdom Elements in The Concept of Fiqh Sabahi: A Literature Review."

¹⁷ Rohman, "The Existence Of Maslahah Mursalah As The Basis Of Islamic Law Development In Indonesia."

¹⁸ Roziqi et al., "The Legal Reasoning Of The Compilation Of Islamic Law In Indonesia On Mandatory Bequests (A Study of the Dialectics of Islamic Law and Socio-Cultural Context)."

¹⁹ Marinsah et al., "Consideration of Local Wisdom Elements in The Concept of Fiqh Sabahi: A Literature Review."

Table 1. Normative Frameworks and Their Application to Local Wisdom

Framework	Core Principle	Application to Local Wisdom in Indonesia	Relevant References
<i>Maqāṣid al-sharī'ah</i>	Preservation of essentials: religion (<i>hifdz al-din</i>), life (<i>hifdz al-nafs</i>), lineage (<i>hifdz al-nasl</i>), intellect (<i>hifdz al-aql</i>), property (<i>hifdz al-mal</i>)	Provides higher objectives for integrating local practices; aligns with Pancasila principles for national welfare and harmony.	²⁰
<i>'urf (al-'ādah muhakkamah)</i>	Custom as a source of law, if not contradicting <i>Sharī'ah</i>	Legitimizes customs not contradicting Sharia (<i>'urf sahih</i>); provides a filter against harmful customs (<i>'urf fasid</i>); allows adaptation to local contexts.	²¹
<i>Maslahah Mursalah</i>	Unrestricted public interest; pursuit of benefit and prevention of harm	Basis for legal innovation and judicial discretion (e.g., KHI's <i>wasiat wājibah</i>); prioritizes public welfare and social justice in legal reasoning.	²²
<i>Taysīr/ Tasāmuḥ</i>	Facilitation/Ease and Tolerance	Ensures Islamic practice is not unduly burdensome; promotes acceptance of	²³

²⁰ Muzammil et al., “Indonesian Maqasid Al-Syari’ah: A Study of Yudian Wahyudi’s Thought.”

²¹ Sunata et al., *Reconstruction Of Cultural Jurisprudence To Strengthen The Constitutional Guarantee Of Local Culture In Indonesia*.

²² Roziqi et al., “The Legal Reasoning Of The Compilation Of Islamic Law In Indonesia On Mandatory Bequests (A Study of the Dialectics of Islamic Law and Socio-Cultural Context).”

²³ Rohman, “The Existence Of Maslahah Mursalah As The Basis Of Islamic Law Development In Indonesia.”

		diversity and peaceful coexistence with local traditions.	
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This table illustrates how these legal principles collectively form a robust normative framework for the interaction between Islam and local wisdom. It moves beyond a mere description of individual legal concepts to a structured presentation of how these concepts collectively enable the accommodation of diverse cultural practices. This systematic approach highlights that the flexibility observed in Indonesian Islam is not arbitrary but rather deeply rooted in established jurisprudential principles. This structured presentation enhances clarity and provides a quick reference for understanding the theoretical underpinnings of the integration process.

Case Studies of Islam–Local Wisdom Interaction in Indonesia

The dynamic interplay between Islam and local wisdom is vividly demonstrated through various case studies across Indonesia's diverse communities. These examples illustrate how Islamic legal philosophy accommodates and, at times, reforms existing *adat* practices.

***Adat Banjar*: Marriage and Dispute Resolution**

The *Banjar* community in South Kalimantan, with its deep Islamic worldview and customs, showcases a nuanced interaction between *adat* and *fiqh*. The *jujuran* tradition, a cultural practice in *Banjar* marriage, involves the groom's family providing monetary or material gifts to the bride's family. This is distinct from the Islamic *mahr* (dowry). This tradition, likely predating the arrival of Islam, was not prohibited by early scholars but was reinterpreted to align with Islamic values of respect, appreciation, and deliberation, reflecting the *Banjar* people's worldview and serving as a symbol of prestige and support for the wedding ceremony.²⁴

²⁴ Rusdiyah Rusdiyah et al., "Elements of Islamic Law in Traditional Banjar Marriage" *Jujuran* Viewed from a Historical Perspective," *JOURNAL OF ISLAMIC AND LAW STUDIES* 9, no. 2 (2025): 280–90.

Another notable practice is *wali muhakkam* (arbitrator guardian) in marriage. While Islamic law typically requires a *wali nasab* (lineage guardian) or *wali hakim* (judicial guardian), in *Banjar*, an *ulama* or religious figure sometimes acts as a *wali muhakkam*. This occurs due to a reluctance to engage with the magistrate guardian or a desire for a more convenient path.²⁵ Although some *ulama* consider such marriages invalid if a magistrate guardian is readily available, the persistence of this practice underscores the community's reliance on religious leaders and local interpretations of legal convenience.²⁶

For social dispute resolution, the *barambangan* concept in *Banjar* society addresses marital conflicts nearing divorce, often referred to as *pisah ranjang* (separated beds). This traditional mechanism involves religious leaders (*tetuha*) as mediators, aiming for peaceful separation or reconciliation. The 19th-century (1835 M) Sultan Adam Law, specifically Article²⁷, formalized aspects of *barambangan*. It prohibited coercion and mandated reconciliation through judges (representing Islamic law) and relatives (representing customary law), with the Sultan as a final arbiter for complex, deadlocked cases. This system exemplifies a blend of Islamic legal principles and customary law, emphasizing deliberation (*syura*) and consensus for maintaining social harmony.²⁸

The *Pamali* tradition, a set of unwritten customary prohibitions or taboos, is deeply respected in *Banjar* society. Its origins lie in a combination of animistic and dynamic beliefs, which were later adapted and reinterpreted to gain legitimacy from Islamic teachings. Examples include prohibitions on sweeping at night (believed to bring bad luck) or speaking harshly in sacred places. *Pamali* functions as a social

²⁵ Muhammad Rizky Naufal Imami, *Pandangan Dr. H. Ahmad Zuhdi, Sh, M. Hum. Terhadap Wali Muhakkam (Studi Kasus Praktik Nikah Siri Melalui Jasanikahsiri*****. Com)*, UIN SUNAN KALIJAGA YOGYAKARTA, 2024.

²⁶ Abdul Kadir Syukur, "Pernikahan Dengan Wali Muhakkam (Studi Tentang Implikasi Dan Persepsi Ulama Di Kota Banjarmasin)," *Syariah: Jurnal Hukum Dan Pemikiran* 14, no. 1 (2014).

²⁷ Roziqi et al., "The Legal Reasoning Of The Compilation Of Islamic Law In Indonesia On Mandatory Bequests (A Study of the Dialectics of Islamic Law and Socio-Cultural Context)."

²⁸ Munisah Munisah et al., "Barambangan: Dynamics and Challenges in Resolving Husband and Wife Disputes in the Banjar Community," *Syariah: Jurnal Hukum Dan Pemikiran* 23, no. 1 (2023): 50–60.

mechanism that maintains balance and harmony, promoting inclusive multiculturalism within an Islamic framework by aligning with Islamic principles of respecting differences and social ethics.²⁹

Shaykh Muhammad Arsyad Al-Banjari's *Sabilal Muhtadin* (1779 M) is a seminal *fiqh* text crucial for understanding the harmonization of *fiqh* and *adat* in *Banjar*. It exemplifies Islamic moderation by mediating between local customs and mainstream *fiqh*. For instance, Shaykh Arsyad permitted the use of *jamban* (river latrines) and *tabala* (wooden coffins for burial), practices often deemed problematic by Middle Eastern scholars, by considering local environmental conditions (soft, watery soil) and social needs. His rulings, which also included nuanced views on providing food for mourners, demonstrate the application of *Taysir* and *Maslahah* to make Islamic practice less burdensome and more relevant to the *Banjar* context.³⁰

Adat Minangkabau: Matrilineal Inheritance and Islamic Law

Minangkabau society is unique in Indonesia for its matrilineal kinship system, where inheritance (*harta pusaka* – ancestral property) is passed down through the maternal line, primarily to female heirs. This contrasts sharply with the bilateral, individual-based Islamic inheritance law, which typically grants men a larger share, often in a two-to-one ratio, based on their financial responsibilities. Despite the philosophical motto "*adat basandi syara', syara' basandi Kitabullah*" (customs based on Islamic law, and Islamic law based on the Qur'an), a significant divergence exists regarding ancestral property, which is exclusively passed down to female descendants, with men receiving no share.

Efforts have been made by reformist thinkers and legal authorities to reconcile these differences. Shaikh Ahmad Khotib al-Minangkabawi, a prominent Islamic reformer, strongly opposed the customary inheritance of *harta pusaka*, deeming it *haram* (forbidden) for depriving rightful heirs. His student, Shaikh Abdul Karim Amrullah,

²⁹ Ahda Fithriani et al., "Pamali and Multiculturalism: Islamic Thought in Preserving the Rights of Cultural Customs in Banjar Society," *Kawanua International Journal of Multicultural Studies* 5, no. 1 (2024): 125–38, <https://doi.org/10.30984/kijms.v5i1.1087>.

³⁰ Syaifulloh, "Moderasi Islam Dalam Kitab Sabilal Muhtadin."

nanced this by distinguishing between *harta pusaka* (ancestral property of unclear origin) and search property (personally acquired wealth). He argued that *harta pusaka* could be treated as *waqf* (endowment) or jointly owned tribal property, not subject to Islamic inheritance rules, while search property should follow Sharia. This distinction led to formal deliberations, culminating in a 1953 decision to maintain customary inheritance for *harta pusaka* (high inheritance) and apply Sharia for search property (low inheritance). This dual system is considered to contain gender justice, as it allows men's personal wealth to be divided according to Sharia, aligning with Islamic principles while preserving cultural identity.³¹

Adat Bugis-Makassar: *Siri'* and Islamic Values of Dignity and Morality

The concept of *siri'* (honor/dignity) is a core value in Bugis-Makassar society, defining individual and community identity. It serves as a strict social norm, demanding adherence to moral and ethical standards.³²

Siri' encompasses dignity and shame simultaneously, acting as a motivation for hard work (e.g., performing pilgrimage, avoiding family dishonor) and a basis for self-defense. The Bugis *paseng* (adage) "*Tellui ri ala sappo Tau'e ri dewata Siri;'e ri watakkale Siri'e ri padatta tau*" translates to "There are three principles: Faith in God, Respect for yourself, and Respect for fellow human beings," illustrating an inherent link to spiritual and social values.³³

While *siri'* can motivate positive behavior, its misinterpretation can lead to violence and conflict, as defending *siri'* has historically justified murder in some contexts.³⁴ The *Passampo siri'* marriage

³¹ Nelna Saprina and Yulia Rahmi, "Evolution of the Minangkabau Inheritance System and Its Relevance to Gender Justice in Islamic Law," *USRATY: Journal of Islamic Family Law* 2, no. 1 (2024): 89–101.

³² Ridwan Jamal and Asandi Mitra, "A Critical Analysis of the Bugis Wedding Tradition 'Passampo Siri,'" *Al-Mujtahid: Journal of Islamic Family Law* 4, no. 1 (2024): 12, <https://doi.org/10.30984/ajifl.v4i1.3040>.

³³ Supratman et al., "Islam And Spirituality Of Buginess Human," *JURNAL ILMU BUDAYA* Vol. 12, No. 2 (2024), <https://journal.unhas.ac.id/index.php/jib/article/view/36078/12235>.

³⁴ Darul Ma'arif Asry, "*Siri'*as Bugis People's Dignity In Qur'anic Perspective," Atlantis Press, 2017, 235–41.

tradition, aimed at covering family disgrace through arranged marriages, reflects the extreme measures taken to maintain *siri*'. The normative-philosophical challenge lies in aligning *siri*' with Islamic values of dignity (*karamah*) and morality, emphasizing its positive aspects while reforming harmful interpretations. Islamic education aims to instill character that is morally upright, aligning with the positive dimensions of *siri*'.³⁵ This requires a contextual understanding and multidimensional analysis to prevent the "breaking" of traditions without reflective attitudes.³⁶

The following table provides a comparative overview of these case studies, demonstrating the specific interactions and reconciliations between *adat* practices and Islamic legal principles:

Table 2. Case Studies: *Adat* Practices and Islamic Legal Reconciliation

<i>Adat Practice</i>	Cultural Context	Islamic Legal Challenge/ Interaction	Reconciliation/Synthesis	Key Figures/ Concepts
<i>Jujuran</i> (Banjar)	Groom's family provides gifts to bride's family, distinct from <i>mahr</i> , symbolizing respect and prestige.	Not explicitly prescribed in Islamic law, but aligns with values of generosity and appreciation.	Reinterpreted to align with Islamic values of respect and deliberation; functions as a cultural expression of goodwill.	' <i>urf</i> <i>sahih</i> , deliberation, social prestige.
<i>Wali muhakkam</i> (Banjar)	An <i>ulama</i> or religious figure acts as marriage guardian, often for convenience or to avoid magistrate.	Validity debated by <i>ulama</i> if a <i>wali hakim</i> (judicial guardian) is available; potential	Community reliance on religious leaders; highlights local interpretations of legal necessity;	<i>Wali nasab</i> , <i>wali hakim</i> , <i>wali muhakkam</i> , <i>Taysir</i> .

³⁵ Wardah Hanafie Das et al., "The Reconstruction Of" Siri Culture" In Bugis Perspective Of Islamic Education.," *Journal of Positive School Psychology* 6, no. 10 (2022).

³⁶ Jamal and Mitra, "A Critical Analysis of the Bugis Wedding Tradition 'Passampo Siri.'"

		for lack of legal force.	ongoing debate on validity.	
<i>Barambangan</i> (Banjar)	Marital conflicts nearing divorce (<i>pisah ranjang</i>) resolved through traditional mediation by <i>tetuha</i> (religious leaders).	Blends customary dispute resolution with Islamic principles of reconciliation.	Sultan Adam Law (19th C.) formalized aspects, mandating reconciliation by judges (Islamic law) and relatives (customary law); emphasizes <i>syura</i> and consensus.	Sultan Adam Law, <i>tetuha</i> , <i>syura</i> , <i>Maslahah</i> .
<i>Pamali</i> (Banjar)	Unwritten customary prohibitions/taboo, rooted in animistic/dynamic beliefs, adapted with Islamic legitimacy.	Potential for contradiction with Islamic monotheism or rationalism if not reinterpreted.	Underwent adaptation and reinterpretation to align with Islamic principles of social harmony, ethics, and multiculturalism.	' <i>urf sahih</i> , cultural identity, multiculturalism.
Matrilineal Inheritance (Minangkabau)	<i>Harta pusaka</i> (ancestral property) passed through maternal line to female heirs; men are custodians.	Contrasts with Islamic inheritance (bilateral, men typically receive more due to financial responsibilities).	Distinction between <i>harta pusaka</i> (customary, akin to <i>waqf</i>) and search property (personal, follows Sharia); formal 1953 decision to apply Sharia to search property.	<i>Harta pusaka</i> , search property, <i>waqf</i> , Shaikh Ahmad Khotib, Shaikh Abdul Karim Amrullah, gender justice.
<i>Siri'</i> (Bugis-Makassar)	Core value of honor/dignity, encompassing shame, motivation for hard work, and self-defense.	Misinterpretation can lead to violence (e.g., justified murder); <i>Passampo siri'</i> marriage to cover disgrace.	Efforts to align with Islamic values of dignity (<i>karamah</i>) and morality; emphasis on positive aspects; requires contextual	<i>Karamah</i> , <i>Passampo siri'</i> , social norms, ethical standards.

			understanding and critical reflection.	
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This comparative table offers a structured and concise overview of the diverse ways Islam and local wisdom interact across different Indonesian communities. It serves to demonstrate the practical application of theoretical concepts like *'urf* and *Maslahah* to specific cultural practices. By highlighting both the challenges encountered and the reconciliation efforts undertaken, it reinforces the central argument regarding the dynamic and adaptive nature of Islamic legal philosophy in Indonesia. The specific examples illustrate how Islamic principles provide a framework for evaluating, legitimizing, and, where necessary, reforming local traditions to ensure their continued relevance and ethical alignment.

Philosophical Synthesis: Local Wisdom as an Amplifier of Islamic Values and the Concept of *Islam Nusantara*

The interaction between Islam and local wisdom in Indonesia extends beyond mere coexistence; it culminates in a profound philosophical synthesis where local traditions amplify universal Islamic values and find expression in concepts like *Islam Nusantara*.

Local Wisdom Strengthening Islamic Values

Local wisdom in Indonesia often serves as a powerful medium for strengthening universal Islamic values such as justice, solidarity, and social harmony.³⁷ The acculturation process has created a positive synthesis where religious teachings and local traditions mutually reinforce each other, leading to a more just, peaceful, and harmonious society. Practices like *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) in Javanese tradition are strengthened by Islamic teachings on *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) and *shura* (deliberation), transforming social cooperation from a mere social value into a form of worship and deepening social solidarity.

³⁷ Mohamad Toha et al., "Acculturation of Mataraman Local Wisdom with Islamic Values: Implications for Social and Economic Development," *Danadyaksa: Post Modern Economy Journal* 2, no. 1 (2024): 33–47.

Traditional ceremonies such as *Bersih Desa* (village cleansing) and *Nyadran* (ancestral honoring ritual) promote moral values, cooperation, and harmony, aligning with Islamic principles of self-development, collective prosperity, and environmental stewardship. Conflict resolution through customary deliberations, involving Islamic principles like *syura*, proves more effective in creating social peace because it is more acceptable and relevant to local values than rigid formal legal approaches. This demonstrates how local values can maintain social order and become foundations for common life, with Islamic ethics like honesty and compassion reinforcing these norms.³⁸

Islam Legitimizing Positive Cultural Traditions and Reforming Harmful Ones Islam, through its adaptable nature, legitimizes positive cultural traditions that align with its principles, while simultaneously reforming or rejecting those that contradict *Sharī'ah*.³⁹ This selective adaptation ensures that local wisdom is preserved and developed in accordance with Islamic teachings.⁴⁰ The distinction between *'urf sahih* (valid custom) and *'urf fasid* (corrupted custom) provides the normative mechanism for this legitimization and reformation.⁴¹ This dynamic interaction allows for the evolution of local traditions, ensuring their continued relevance and ethical soundness within an Islamic framework, preventing the blind adherence to customs that may be harmful or contradictory to core religious values.

The Concept of *Islam Nusantara* as Philosophical Expression of this Synthesis *Islam Nusantara* is a profound philosophical expression of the synthesis between Islamic teachings and local wisdom, particularly Javanese culture, reflecting an Islamic identity with methodological nuance. It is defined as a model of thought, comprehension, and implementation of Islamic teachings that has undergone a dialectic process between Sharia texts and local culture and reality in Southeast Asia. This approach is characterized by harmony,

³⁸ Sanjani et al., "Islam and Local Wisdom."

³⁹ Purwoyuliyanto and Mujahid, *Islam and Local Wisdom: A Literature Review on the Relationship Between Culture and Religion in Indonesia*.

⁴⁰ Fatmawati, "Islam and Local Wisdom in Indonesia."

⁴¹ Marinsah et al., "Consideration of Local Wisdom Elements in The Concept of Fiqh Sabahi: A Literature Review."

moderation (*wasatiyyah*), inclusivity, tolerance, and multiculturalism.⁴² It emphasizes a peaceful dialogue between universal Islamic values and Nusantara's cultural characteristics, often facilitated by a Sufistic approach, which allowed for gradual integration rather than confrontation.⁴³

Azyumardi Azra highlights *Islam Nusantara's* inclusive and flexible characteristics, enabling interaction with local socio-cultural contexts without losing the essence of Islamic teachings.⁴⁴ It represents a *dawah* (proselytizing) methodology that engages with both good (*'urf sahih*) and even problematic (*'urf fasid*) traditions, seeking to purify or minimize contradictions with Sharia, rather than outright rejection.⁴⁵ This deep engagement with local realities means that *Islam Nusantara* is not merely a descriptive term for localized Islam but a proactive, normative framework that redefines how Islamic knowledge is constructed and valued in the Indonesian context. The Nusantara thought builds its epistemology from axiological values, emphasizing the ethical, sociological, virtuous, psychological, cultural, and spiritual dimensions of knowledge. This makes it deeply relevant to local wisdom and the lived experiences of the community. This philosophical synthesis provides a robust intellectual justification for the acculturation process, positioning *Islam Nusantara* as a unique contribution to global Islamic thought, offering a model for navigating religious universalism with cultural particularism, and contributing to national identity, harmony, and morality.⁴⁶

The sustained synthesis of Islam and local wisdom in Indonesia faces both internal and external pressures, yet it also presents significant avenues for continued development and strengthening.

⁴² Mujamil Qomar, *Islam Nusantara: An Alternative Model of Islamic Thought, Comprehension, and Implementation*, 2015.

⁴³ Mohamad Abdun Nasir, "Revisiting the Javanese Muslim Slametan: Islam, Local Tradition, Honor and Symbolic Communication," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 57, no. 2 (2019): 329–58.

⁴⁴ Sa'dullah and Hajam, "The Role of Nusantara Ulama's Da'wah in Islamic Moderation: A Critique of Blackwater and Peripheral in Islamic Studies."

⁴⁵ Qomar, *Islam Nusantara: An Alternative Model of Islamic Thought, Comprehension, and Implementation*.

⁴⁶ Irmayanti Meliono, "Understanding the Nusantara Thought and Local Wisdom as an Aspect of the Indonesian Education," *Tawarikh* 2, no. 2 (2011).

A significant challenge arises from rigid textualism, which represents an internal interpretative stance within Islam. This approach tends to reject any form of cultural adaptation or contextualization, prioritizing a literal adherence to classical texts and often viewing local customs as deviations or *bid'ah* (innovation).⁴⁷ This can lead to a fundamental debate between preserving local wisdom and upholding what is perceived as "pure" Islamic law, creating tension and potential conflict. This static understanding of religious belief often places classical religious thought as inviolable, hindering the relaxation and flexibility necessary for Islamic discourse to remain dynamic in the face of technological advances and socio-cultural changes.⁴⁸

More extreme forms of this textualism manifest as radical rejection of local traditions. Groups like *Jemaah Islamiyah* (JI) adopt puritanical doctrines, such as Wahhabism and Salafism, which are inherently intolerant of local practices and common beliefs, viewing them as obstacles to establishing an Islamic state based on a narrowly construed Sharia.⁴⁹ This poses a direct threat to Indonesia's unique, tolerant, and pluralistic form of Islam, which has historically embraced acculturation.⁵⁰ Such ideologies seek to eradicate traditions that have co-evolved peacefully with Islam for centuries, aiming to impose a monolithic, de-contextualized religious identity.

An external challenge comes from the pervasive wave of globalization eroding cultural identity. This phenomenon causes Indonesians to gradually lose and forget the values of local wisdom, which are essential national assets and charms.⁵¹ The influx of global influences can dilute traditional customs and values, leading to a

⁴⁷ Purwoyuliyanto and Mujahid, *Islam and Local Wisdom: A Literature Review on the Relationship Between Culture and Religion in Indonesia*.

⁴⁸ Muhammad Nizar, "Epigonism Vis A Vis Authentic Islam: Authority Claim And Novelty Production," *JURNAL PENELITIAN*, July 27, 2022, 55–64, <https://doi.org/10.28918/jupe.v19i1.3562>.

⁴⁹ *Wikipedia*, "Islam in Indonesia," August 5, 2025, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Islam_in_Indonesia&oldid=1304323327.

⁵⁰ Matthew G Strickler, *Jemaah Islamiyah: Lessons From Combating Islamist Terrorism In Indonesia*, 2016.

⁵¹ Purwoyuliyanto and Mujahid, *Islam and Local Wisdom: A Literature Review on the Relationship Between Culture and Religion in Indonesia*.

weakening of cultural character.⁵² This erosion impacts the very foundation upon which the synthesis of Islam and local wisdom is built, necessitating deliberate efforts to preserve and revitalize these traditions. The interaction between internal purist movements and external cultural homogenization creates a dual pressure on the synthesis of Islam and local wisdom. Internal forces seek to purify Islam by removing local elements through confrontation, while external forces passively diminish local cultural identity, making it harder for these traditions to survive and interact harmoniously with Islamic principles. Understanding this dual pressure is crucial for developing effective strategies for preservation and continued synthesis.

Conclusion

The interaction between Islam and local wisdom in Indonesia is characterized not by conflict, but by a profound and ongoing process of complementarity and synthesis. Historically, the spread of Islam in the archipelago occurred through peaceful acculturation, fostering a unique blend of religious teachings and diverse ethnic traditions.

Normatively, Islamic legal philosophy provides robust and flexible tools, including *urf* (custom), *Maslahah mursalah* (unrestricted public interest), and *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* (objectives of Islamic law). These frameworks enable the integration of diverse local cultures with *Sharī'ah* principles, allowing for the legitimization of beneficial customs and the reform of harmful ones. This ensures that Islamic law remains relevant, just, and adaptable within the dynamic Indonesian context.

Through historical and contemporary case studies from *Banjar*, *Minangkabau*, and *Bugis*-Makassar communities, it is evident that this interaction has built a contextualized Islamic legal system uniquely suited for Indonesia's plural society. This process fosters social harmony, justice, and solidarity, demonstrating how universal Islamic values can be amplified and expressed through local traditions. The concept of *Islam Nusantara* embodies this philosophical synthesis,

⁵² Baderiah Baderiah and Ahmad Munawir, "Harmonizing Local Wisdom with Islamic Values: A Guide to Character Education Development," *International Journal of Asian Education* 5, no. 1 (2024): 63–75, <https://doi.org/10.46966/ijae.v5i1.374>.

promoting moderation, inclusivity, and multiculturalism as defining characteristics of Indonesian Islam.

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