

Islamic Law and Custom in the Land of Bima: A Study in the History of the Government of the Bima Sultanate

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Abstract

Islamic law and customary law in the Bima Sultanate are two pillars that coexist and complement each other in creating a just and socially acceptable legal system. This study aims to examine the relationship between Islamic and customary law in the history of the Bima Sultanate government, focusing on integrating the two legal systems in the socio-political life of the Bima community. This study uses a historical approach and qualitative methods with a literature review, this study examines various sources of literature that can be accounted for their validity, such as the *Bo' Sangaji Kai* Chronicle, Abdul Gani Abdullah's work on religious slavery, and books by Henri Chambert Loir, Alan Malingi, and Muhammad Mutawali. This study leads to the critical role of the *Syara'* Assembly as an institution that integrates Islamic law into the structure of government, as well as the position of the *Mufti/Qadhi*, which is parallel to the *Ruma Bicara*, as a form of strengthening collaboration between religious law and customary law in government. Through harmonizing Islamic values and local wisdom, the Bima Sultanate created an inclusive and just legal system, which could answer the social and cultural challenges of the Bima community.

Keywords: Islamic Law; Customary Law; Bima Sultanate; Sharia Council.

Introduction

Discussion of the relationship between religion and state has been a central topic in the study of various religious traditions. In Islam, the relationship between religion and politics reflects a variety of approaches, ranging from theocratic models, in which political power is based on religious law, to secular models that separate the roles of

religion and state (Haedar Nashir, 2018). This is also seen in the history of Islamic civilization, such as the caliphate which combined political and spiritual authority, and the modern model of government in Muslim-majority countries which is more pluralistic (Amrin, 2022). Meanwhile, in the Christian tradition, the doctrine of the relationship between religion and state has given birth to concepts such as "two swords," which refers to secular and spiritual authorities working side by side. The existence of the Vatican as the spiritual and political center of the Catholic Church is a concrete example of the unique relationship between religion and state in the Christian context (Gunawan, 2017). The relationship between Islam and politics cannot be understood in a single model. Throughout its history, Islam has inspired various forms of government, from the classical caliphates such as the Umayyad and Abbasid Dynasties to the modern republican model such as Turkey after the reforms of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (Pulungan et al., 2018). In the context of the caliphate, Islamic values became the legal and moral basis that guided society, while in the secular-modern model, religion still has an important role, but in a more personal and spiritual framework. This difference reflects the flexibility of Islamic values that can adapt to the context of time and place, while also showing that Islam provides space for dynamic interpretation in building the relationship between religion and the state (Pepen Irpan Fauzan and Ahmad Khorul Fat, 2018).

The Bima Sultanate was one of the great kingdoms that played an important role in the history of Sumbawa Island. Its territory was not only limited to the current Bima area but also included the Manggarai area in West Flores and the Alor and Solor islands in East Nusa Tenggara. With its wide area coverage, the Bima Sultanate became one of eastern Indonesia's significant political and cultural forces. In addition to being the center of government, the Bima Sultanate was also the center of the spread of Islam which had a major influence on the culture and life of the local community (Salahuddin, 2013).

Geographically, the Bima Sultanate is located in the eastern part of Sumbawa Island which has strategic boundaries. To the north, its territory borders the Java Sea,

an important trade route then. To the east, it borders the Sape Strait, which connects Sumbawa Island with Flores, while to the south it borders the Indian Ocean, which is an international shipping route. To the west, the Bima Sultanate borders the Dompu Kingdom, which has close historical and cultural ties (St. Mariam, 1999). This geographical position makes the Bima Sultanate a strategic link in the Nusantara trade network. Before Islam arrived, the Bima region was known as a kingdom that adhered to local beliefs. However, with the arrival of Islam, the Bima government system changed into a sultanate based on Islamic values. This transformation brought about significant changes in the structure of government, law, and the social life of its people. As an Islamic sultanate, Bima became one of the centers for the spread of religion in eastern Indonesia, the influence of which can still be felt today. The Bima Sultanate not only played a political role but also became a center for the development of Islamic culture that enriched the identity of the Bima people (Amrin et al., 2023).

The Bima Sultanate has established a close relationship between Islamic teachings and the local wisdom of the Bima community. One form of this integration can be seen through the application of Islamic law, which serves not only as a moral guideline but also as a basis for making and enforcing laws in the Bima Sultanate. In addition, customary law that existed before the arrival of Islam continues to be maintained and is seen as an inseparable part of the legal structure of the sultanate (Yunus et al., 2024).

The existence of these two legal systems, Islamic law and customary law, shows the existence of complex dynamics in the history of the Bima Sultanate government. Islamic law is presented as a moral and legal basis in various aspects of life, from justice, and economy, to social, while customary law, which is rooted in the traditions of the Bima people, is still upheld as a means to maintain the values of local wisdom that already exist. In this case, the legal system applied in the Bima Sultanate reflects Islam's influence and shows respect for local cultural heritage and traditions (Yono, Amrin, 2022).

A previous study by Abdul Gani Abdullah in his book *Religious Courts in Islamic Government in the Bima Sultanate* highlighted how Islamic law was formally

implemented in the government structure, mainly through religious court institutions. Abdullah emphasized that the role of the Syara' Assembly as the guardian of Islamic law was very significant in ensuring the implementation of Islamic law was effective in Bima society (Abdul Gani Abdullah, 2004).

Henri Chambert Loir in his study of the Bima Kingdom in Literature and History discusses local chronicles that describe the evolution of the Bima Sultanate from a political and religious perspective. He highlights how chronicles such as *Bo' Sangaji Kai* are essential in understanding the dynamics of law and government in the Bima Sultanate (Loir, 2004). Alan Malingi through his work *Bima Heritage the Traces of Islam in the Land of Bima* focuses on how Islamic values are integrated with local customs. Malingi emphasizes the importance of harmony between Islam and tradition in forming the identity of the Bima community (Alan Malingi, 2022).

According to Muhammad Mutawali in the *Dou Donggo Trial*, the Contestation of Customary Law discusses the contestation of customary law with Islamic law, especially in the *Dou Donggo* community. He explains how customs are often maintained in specific contexts even though the influence of Islam continues to strengthen (Muhammad Mutawali, 2021).

Although many studies have revealed the relationship between Islamic law and customary law in the Bima Sultanate, most previous studies have not emphasized the role of institutions such as the *Majelis Syara'* Law in the implementation of Islamic law, *Ruma Bicara*, as a representative of customary law, interacts and collaborates with religious institutions. This study attempts to fill this gap by analyzing more deeply the functional relationship and reciprocal influence between the two institutions in the governance of the Bima Sultanate. The importance of Islamic and customary law in the history of the Bima Sultanate's government raises questions about how these two legal systems are integrated into the practice of government and social justice. This study aims to analyze how Islamic law and customary law are integrated into the governance structure of the Sultanate of Bima, as well as their impact on the socio-political life of the Bima community.

This research uses a qualitative method with a literature study (Nurrahmania, 2022). The approach used is the Historical Method. This method aims to reconstruct past events based on valid historical sources on how Islamic and customary law was applied in the government of the Bima Sultanate. The primary data sources were obtained from the *Bo' Sangaji Kai* and several other references related to the history of the Bima Sultanate, including the work of Abdul Gani Abdullah on Religious Courts in Islamic Government in the Bima Sultanate, Henri Chambert Loir's book entitled *The Kingdom of Bima in Literature and History*, Alan Malingi's book entitled *Bima Heritage: Traces of Islam in the Land of Bima*, and Muhammad Mutawali's book discussing the *Dou Donggo Court: Contestation of Customary Law*. The data, theories, and concepts found in various literature are then used as the basis for analysis. Content analysis, namely this method, can be used to explore how Islamic and customary law are interpreted in historical texts and how the government of the Bima Sultanate applies these values. With this technique, researchers can identify patterns, themes, or policy changes in the laws adopted by the Bima Sultanate.

Discussion

History of the Arrival of Islam in Bima

The Malay Arabic manuscript notes of the Bima Sangaji Kai Sultanate are known to have events that occurred around the time of the Islamic missionaries in Bima around the year 1018 Hijri. These notes confirm that the beginning of the entry of Islam in Bima is inseparable from the history of the land of Makassar, because at that time, Makassar had a significant influence on the kingdoms around it, including the island of Sumbawa (Salahuddin, 2013).

According to Ismail, the history of the entry of Islam into the kingdom of Bima, namely when Ruma-ta Ma Bata Wadu was inaugurated at a young age. When his uncle, King Ma Ntau asi Peka, created chaos in the kingdom of Bima who wanted to seize power and the throne and wanted to kill the young king so that the king of Bima Ruma-ta Ma bata Wadu was forced to flee to Makassar via Sangiang Island (Wera) and

crossed by boat from Naga Kanda Island to Makassar by asking for help from the King of Gowa to reclaim the throne from his uncle (Ismail, 2002).

Upon arriving at the Palace of the King of Gowa, Ruma-ta Ma Bata Wadu conveyed his intentions and goals to Makassar. The King of Gowa answered and was willing to help on the condition that if he succeeded in reclaiming the crown of the Bima kingdom, by allowing the spread of Islam in Bima (Shobron & Rosyadi, Imron, 2020). At that time, the Gowa kingdom had embraced Islam in 1605 AD, brought by Datuk di Banda and Datuk Tiro from Minangkabau (Nurrahmania, 2022). Before agreeing, Ruma-ta Ma Bata Wadu studied and deepened his knowledge of Islamic teachings. Seeing the teachings of Islam and making sense, Ruma-ta Ma Bata Wadu liked the conditions proposed by the king of Gowa to spread the message of Islam in Bima (St. Mariam, 1999).

While living in Makassar to seek help and deepen the teachings of Islam, the king of Gowa noticed the behavior and noble character of Ruma-ta ma Bata Wadu which touched his feelings so much, that the king of Gowa was very impressed and asked Ruma-ta Ma Bata Wadu to be willing to marry his sister-in-law (sister of his wife), namely the daughter of Karaeng Kassuruang Sanra Bone. Then Ruma-ta Ma Bata Wadu accepted the request, and the marriage between the two was carried out according to Islamic law. Not long after, King Ruma-ta Ma Bata Wadu departed with the help of the Gowa Kingdom's army to the Bima area, accompanied by two of his teachers from the Gowa kingdom, namely Datu di Banda and Datuk di Tiro. In the month of *Rabi' al-Awwal* 1018 *Hijriyah*, the group arrived in Bima and was able to reclaim the crown of the Bima kingdom (St. Mariam, 1999) (Wardatun, 2016) (Amrin et al., 2024).

The royal crown changed hands to Ruma-ta Ma Bata Wadu, and Sultan Abdul Kahir Ruma-ta Ma Bata Wadu was given the Islamic title. He ruled around 1611-1635 AD. In carrying out governance, orders are issued to *the jeneli*, *tureli*, and *ranklings* to adhere firmly to Islamic teachings and determine the application of customary laws that do not contradict Islamic law (Muhammad Aminullah, 2017).

The Government System of the Bima Sultanate

The Bima Sultanate has had a very complex government system for centuries. This system reflects the role and responsibility of each element in the Bima community's social order, which is closely related to the values of custom, religion, and political leadership. Although laden with developed local traditions, the sustainability of this government system cannot be separated from external influences, especially the influence of Makassar, which is present through strong cultural and political interactions between kingdoms in the archipelago. One of the external influences that is very visible in the Bima Sultanate's government system is the administrative system that adopts the model of the Makassar kingdom, which during its heyday was one of the centers of Islamic power in Sulawesi and the archipelago.

In *Bo' Sangaji Kai*, it is stated that the Bima government administration system adopts the Makassar doctrine, where the Sultan of Bima uses the same title as the Sultan of Makassar, namely *Ẓill Allāh fī al-ʿĀlam* (God's shadow on earth). This title emphasizes the position of the Sultan as the highest ruler who is expected to be a figure who not only rules politically but also religiously, with the obligation to uphold Islamic law and maintain the welfare of the people (St. Mariam, 1999).

In the Bima government system, the Sultan is considered a figure with a substantial moral and religious obligation towards his people. As *Ẓill Allāh fī al-ʿĀlam*, the Sultan is not only a political ruler but is also considered a representative of God who plays a role in maintaining the spiritual and social welfare of the community. The Sultan of Bima is respected by his people as a protector who is tasked with bringing peace, coolness, and tranquility, as well as protecting them from all forms of injustice. This position reflects the philosophy of *Dou Mbojo*, which describes the Sultan as a figure of "*Hawo ro Ninu*" (guardian or protector), who symbolically plays a role as a guide and protector of the social and religious life of the Bima community (Loir, 2004).

The *Dou Mbojo* philosophy is a profound outlook on life for the Bima people. In this context, the Sultan is a figure who is expected to be able to play a central role in social and governmental arrangements (Abdul Gani Abdullah, 2004). This philosophy

emphasizes the importance of togetherness, justice, and siding with the people. The Sultan plays a role in government administration and in efforts to balance customary law, religious law, and applicable social rules. In other words, the Sultan of Bima is not only a political leader but also a figure who has an essential role in developing the spiritual and cultural values of the Bima community (St. Mariam, 1999).

One of the distinguishing characteristics of the Bima Sultanate government is the existence of two leading institutions under the umbrella of the Sultan of Bima, both of which have equal status and authority in managing the government. Although the Sultan is the highest ruler, he always asks for input and views from the *Qadhi*, *Ruma Bicara*, and ministers in every decision-making process. Thus, decisions taken by the Sultan result from deliberation and joint discussion, reflecting decisions based on consensus and collective wisdom, not just the result of unilateral decisions by the Sultan. This shows that the Bima Sultanate government prioritizes collaboration and balance of power to guarantee the people's interests.

The implementation of Islamic teachings in the Bima Sultanate began during the reign of Sultan Abdul Kahir (1621-1640), which marked a new chapter in the history of the Bima government with the proclamation of the Parapi Oath in Raba Parapi Parangina Sape. This oath is not only a formal declaration but also a strong commitment to uphold the teachings of Islam in social and state life (Fahrurizki, 2019).

In the oath, Sultan Abdul Kahir vowed to form a government based on Islamic law, while still maintaining and integrating local customs based on *sara*, namely rules derived from the holy book of the Qur'an. This process created the foundation of a government that was not only authoritative but also prioritized the balance between religion and local culture in the lives of the Bima people. Over time, implementing Islamic teachings in Bima shows intelligent cultural adaptation. The Muslim community of Bima assimilates Islamic teachings and pre-Islamic traditions that existed previously. One striking example is the Tula Bala tradition, where people bring food to places that are considered sacred. However, in Islamic practice, the food is diverted to be given as charity to pious people, hoping they will pray to be protected

from all forms of disaster and calamity. This shows how Islamic teachings can blend with local culture without losing its spiritual essence. This tradition not only illustrates respect for Islamic teachings but also preserves the values of togetherness and social concern that have existed since before Islam entered Bima (Alan Malingi, 2022; Fauzi, 2006).



Source: BO, Sangaji Kai

Picture 1. Meseum Bima

The presence of Islam in the Bima Sultanate did not immediately eliminate long-standing customs and social structures. On the contrary, the arrival of Islamic teachings was smoothly accepted by the Bima community because of the good acculturation process between Islamic law and previously established customary law. The encounter between these two entities did not cause significant tension or social unrest, instead, they complemented and filled each other. With its universal principles, Islam was successfully implemented in a local context with strict customary rules. Customary law and Islamic law in Bima went hand in hand, united in a harmonious social life without conflict (Prihandoyo, 2022).

The integration of customary law and Islamic law can be seen in various aspects of life in the Bima Sultanate, starting from the government system and judicial institutions to the community's philosophy of life. In the government structure, the Sultan of Bima acts as the highest ruler but always prioritizes deliberation with *Qadhi*, *Ruma Bicara*, and religious officials to ensure that decisions taken are in line with the principles of Islamic law and applicable customs. (Muhammad Mutawali, 2021). The

judicial institutions in Bima also accommodate the application of Islamic law and customary law, where legal decisions are not only based on Islamic law but also consider local values that have become part of Bima's cultural identity (Abdul Gani Abdullah, 2004). In everyday life, the Bima community shows that these two entities can walk side by side and strengthen each other in creating peace and shared prosperity.

In terms of terms, the Sultan was the highest leader in the government of the Bima Sultanate, and the Majelis Hadat appointed his position. This institution played a role in determining the highest ruler. As head of government, the Sultan does not rule alone but is assisted by several institutions that have an essential role in running the government and maintaining the country's stability. One of the institutions that assists the Sultan is *Sara Tua*, led by *Bumi Luma Rasa Nae*, which functions to provide advice and views related to government issues that are more customary and social (Effendy, 2017). In addition, there is also the *Sara Sara Assembly* or *Tureli Assembly*, led by *Tureli Nggampo* known as *Ruma Bicara*, or Prime Minister, who has a vital role in the planning and implementing government policies. This assembly focuses more on the administrative aspects and daily management of government. The last institution that is also vital in the government structure of the Bima Sultanate is the *Syara Hukum Assembly*, led by an *Imam* or *Qadhi*. This assembly supervises and implements Islamic law (sharia) in government, ensuring that all decisions are made according to the teachings of Islam and applicable customs. These three institutions work synergistically in supporting the Sultan's policies to realize a just and prosperous government for the people of Bima (Malingi, 2022).

The *Majelis Sara Tua*, *Majelis Sara Sara*, and *Majelis Sara Hukum*, collectively referred to as the Executive, Legislative, and Religious Bodies, play a significant role in the governance of the Bima Sultanate. Each institution has different but complementary duties and authorities, all of which work on the orders of the Sultan and are directly responsible to the Sultan regarding the implementation of their duties. The *Majelis Sara Tua*, as part of the Executive Body, is responsible for providing advice and determining

policies on matters relating to customary and social affairs. The *Majelis Sara* (*Majelis Tureli*), which functions as the legislative body, has a significant role in planning and making day-to-day government policies and regulating the state administrative structure. Meanwhile, the *Majelis Sara Hukum*, which focuses on implementing Islamic law, functions as a religious body tasked with ensuring that policies and decisions taken by the government are always by the principles of Islamic law (Abdul Gani Abdullah, 2004).

Although these three institutions have different functions, they still coordinate and work harmoniously to achieve common goals in maintaining the stability and welfare of the country while still respecting local wisdom and Islamic law. All these institutions operate under the control of the Sultan, who has the highest authority in making final decisions, but based on deliberation and cooperation between these institutions.

Legal Syara' Institution in the Bima Sultanate

The establishment of religious institutions in the Bima Sultanate began with the initiative of the second Sultan of Bima, Abdul Kahir Sirajuddin (1640–1682). This institution was initially called *Syara Hukum*, which functioned as a religious authority and Islamic-based law in the sultanate. The establishment of *Syara Hukum* reflected the integration of Islamic teachings into the government and legal system of the Bima Sultanate, which was in line with the transformation of Bima into an Islamic sultanate. This institution was essential in regulating people's lives based on Sharia principles (Malingi, 2022).

During the reign of Sultan Ibrahim (1881–1915), the Sharia Law changed and was inaugurated as the Sharia Court (Loir, 2004). This change shows the strengthening of the structure and function of religious institutions as a more formal and organized legal entity. The Sharia Court has become an institution that not only regulates legal issues based on Islamic law but also becomes a forum for resolving disputes and regulating the social life of the Bima Sultanate community. This transformation shows

the sultanate's response to the increasingly complex needs of society along with the development of the times.

During the reign of Sultan Muhammad Salahuddin (1915–1951), this religious institution underwent another change and was named *Badan Hukum Syara*. This institution was led by a *Qadhi* or *imam*, who was responsible for implementing sharia law within the sultanate. The name change and strengthening of the institution showed the commitment of the Bima Sultanate to maintaining Islamic values as the legal and moral foundation of society. The existence of the *Badan Hukum Syara* reflects the continuity of Islamic tradition in the Bima Sultanate, an important legacy of its history (Alan Malingi, 2022). In implementing the development of religious propagation, *Qadhi*, as the leader of the Sharia Law Agency, does not work alone. He is assisted by four main officials called *Khatib Upan*, consisting of *Khatib Tua*, *Khatib Karoto*, *Khatib Lawili*, and *Khatib To'i*. These four *khatibs* have a strategic role in coordinating various religious activities at the central level, including spreading Islamic teachings, managing mosques, and implementing sharia law. *Khatib Upan* is at the forefront of supporting *Qadhi*, while also ensuring that Islamic law is implemented correctly in the lives of the people of the Bima Sultanate (St. Mariam, 1999).

At the sub-district level, the responsibility for implementing religious propagation is under the control of an official named *Lebe Na'E*. *Lebe Na'E* serves as an extension of *Khatib Upan* in carrying out religious functions in smaller administrative areas. They are tasked with supervising the implementation of worship, resolving religious issues, and guiding the community regarding Islamic teachings. This position shows the existence of a decentralized system in the institutional structure of religious propagation so that the implementation of Islamic law can be reached even in the remote areas of the sultanate (Fahrurizki, 2019). At the village level, *Cepe Lebe* continues this role, acting as the local religious leader. *Cepe Lebe* is directly responsible to *Lebe Na'E* in carrying out his duties, including leading the implementation of daily worship, providing religious education, and maintaining social harmony based on Islamic values in the village. With the hierarchical structure from *Qadhi*, *Khatib Upan*,

and *Lebe Na'E*, to *Cepe Lebe*, the Bima Sultanate can develop a strong and organized network of religious propagation. This structure not only strengthens the spread of Islam in the sultanate but also creates social and spiritual stability in the lives of the community (Muhammad Mutawali, 2021).

The *Khatib Upan* in the Bima Sultanate has a complex role, not only as a *khatib* tasked with delivering sermons in the mosque but also as a prayer leader and an arbitrator of Islamic religious cases. As spiritual leaders, they become central figures in society in terms of worship and resolving problems based on Islamic law. With this responsibility, the *Khatib Upan* becomes an integral part of the religious system of the Bima Sultanate, helping the *Qadhi* ensure the consistent implementation of Islamic law throughout the region. Of the four *Khatib Upan*, the *Khatib Tua* occupies the highest position because of his role as an elder leader. The "old" status of the *Khatib Tua* refers not only to age but also to the depth of mastery of Islamic religious knowledge and his wisdom in making decisions. The *Khatib Tua* becomes a protector and guide for the other *khatibs* under him, ensuring that the Sharia principles carry out all decisions and religious duties. This position requires high competence in religious knowledge and the ability to lead wisely and fairly (Abdul Gani Abdullah, 2004).

As a spiritual leader, the *Khatib Tua* strategically leads *Khatib Karoto*, *Khatib Lawili*, and *Khatib To'i*. He not only ensures the smooth implementation of religious duties but is also responsible for developing the quality of the *khatibs* under him. The *Khatib Tua* is a role model in society because of his high authority in religious matters, both in the dimensions of worship and resolution of cases. With this function, the *Khatib Tua* plays an essential role in maintaining the sustainability of Islamic traditions in the Bima Sultanate and strengthening the existing socio-religious structure.

In the structure of the *Khatib Upan* of the Bima Sultanate, *Khatib Karoto* has a unique and strategic role. The word "*Karoto*," which means throat, reflects the main task of *Khatib Karoto* as the primary liaison in conveying enlightenment and counseling related to Islamic law to the community. The dominant oral tradition at that time made *Khatib Karoto* a central figure in effectively disseminating religious knowledge and

Islamic law. In this role, he ensured that the community could understand and implement every fatwa, law, or decision issued by the *Qadhi* and *Khatib Tua*. In addition to carrying out his functions as a *khatib* and prayer leader, *Khatib Karoto* acted as a "Public Relations" in the modern government system. He was tasked with socializing Islamic laws and fatwas decided by the *Qadhi* and *Khatib Tua* so that religious messages could spread widely and evenly. This role reflected his position as the sultanate's mouthpiece in religious matters and placed him as an essential figure in maintaining social harmony through Islamic law education. *Khatib Karoto* became a bridge between the sultanate's government structure and the general public.

Historically, the role of *Khatib Karoto* was once carried out by a great figure, KH. Abu Bakar Husen, was an international *Qari* who had significant influence. The presence of a scholar figure like KH. Abu Bakar Husen strengthened *Khatib Karoto's* position as an authoritative religious leader, not only in the local religious field but also in the international arena. His leadership is an example of how *Khatib Karoto* not only conveyed Islamic law but also enriched Islamic traditions in Bima through his dedication and expertise in religious knowledge.

In the structure of *Khatib Upan*, *Khatib Lawili* has a crucial task as a legal advisor to other khatibs before making a decision. The word "*Lawili*," which means chest, symbolizes broad-mindedness and wisdom in making fair and wise decisions. The role of *Khatib Lawili* requires the ability to think deeply and be neutral in considering various points of view. As a guardian of justice, he ensures that decisions are made according to Islamic law values and considers the interests of the entire community.

Unlike other preachers, *Khatib To'i* represents the younger generation in the *Khatib Upan* structure. As a young preacher, *Khatib To'i* is prepared to become the successor to the baton of leadership in the Sharia Law Agency (Alan Malingi, 2022), starting from replacing *Khatib Lawili* to occupying the position of *Khatib Tua*, even Imam. *Khatib To'i* is usually appointed from among young people who have completed higher education in Islamic learning centers such as Java and Mecca. The presence of *Khatib To'i* shows the importance of regeneration in the religious structure and provides new energy and

perspectives in implementing Islamic law in the Bima Sultanate. In addition to forming a clear task structure in preaching and community development, the Bima Sultanate also has a deliberation mechanism to discuss various community problems. This deliberation involves stakeholders discussing religious issues, including the implementation of Islamic holy day activities. This tradition shows the commitment of the Bima Sultanate to prioritizing a participatory approach in decision-making while maintaining harmony and solidarity in society. With a strong leadership structure and deliberation, the Bima Sultanate has succeeded in keeping the sustainability of the inclusive and adaptive Islamic tradition to the dynamics of the times (Abdullah & Tajibu, 2020).

Conducting deliberations to make decisions is done in the form of *Doho Sara*, which is an integral part of the government system of the Bima Sultanate. Literally, "*Doho*" means sitting, and "*Sara*" means government (Hamzah, 2004). This forum is where palace officials gather to discuss various strategic issues and dynamics in the Sultanate. In *Doho Sara*, decisions are taken collectively through deliberation, reflecting the values of togetherness and justice that the Bima Sultanate upholds. This forum is also a means to formulate policies and strategic steps, especially in the fields of religion and government.

One of the crucial agendas discussed in *Doho Sara* is the preparation for the implementation of *Rawi ma Tolu Kali Samba'a*, a religious tradition held three times a year. This activity includes the celebration of the Prophet Muhammad's Birthday, *Eid al-Fitr*, and *Eid al-Adha*, which are essential moments in the lives of Muslims. This tradition is not only a spiritual celebration but also strengthens community solidarity and affirms Islamic values in the Bima Sultanate. Through thorough preparation in *Doho Sara*, this tradition runs organized, involving active participation from the community. *Doho Sara* functions as a forum for decision-making and reflects governance that prioritizes deliberation as the main principle. This tradition shows how Islamic values are integrated into the government system, creating harmony between worldly and hereafter affairs. By making *Doho Sara* a collective forum, the

Bima Sultanate can build an inclusive system based on moral values, so that all elements of society can accept every decision taken. This tradition is an important foundation supporting the sustainability of the Bima Sultanate government (Fahrurizki, 2019).

In addition to functioning as a forum for deliberation for decision-making, *Doho Sara* is also used by the Sultan as a means of friendship between the sultanate officials. In this atmosphere, the Sultan establishes direct communication with his officials, strengthening emotional ties and solidarity between government elements. One of the important moments in *Doho Sara* is the implementation of a complete session of the *Paruga Suba*, the highest assembly of the Sultanate. This session discusses strategic issues, such as religious development, security, prosperity, and the welfare of the people. Thus, *Doho Sara* becomes an essential forum for ensuring the continuity of a harmonious government based on deliberation.

In the government of the Bima Sultanate, the *Mufti* played a powerful role alongside the Sultan. As the highest religious leader, the *Mufti* provided religious considerations to the Sultan and served as the guardian of Islamic law in every policy taken. The closeness of the *Mufti* to the Sultan was evident from the special treatment given to them. The *Mufti* and his family were given a special area to live in, reflecting great respect for their position. This area became a symbol of recognition of the *Mufti's* role as the guardian of morality and justice in government.

Collaboration between the Sultan and the *Mufti* became one of the main foundations of the Bima Sultanate government. The Sultan acted as a political and administrative leader, while the *Mufti* became a strategic partner in the religious field. This harmonious relationship ensured that the government ran in harmony, not only fulfilling the material needs of the people but also upholding spiritual values. The special treatment of the *Mufti* reflected the Sultan's recognition of the importance of the role of religion in building a just and prosperous society. This shows how the Bima Sultanate integrated Islamic values into the government structure in a real and sustainable way (Fahrurizki, 2019).

In addition to implementing Islamic law, the *Sharia* Legal Agency during the Bima Sultanate was also responsible for managing religious educational institutions. The establishment and operation of these institutions were entirely borne by the sultanate, reflecting the government's commitment to building a society based on Islamic values. These educational institutions became a forum for spreading religious knowledge to the community, ensuring the continuity of Islamic teachings in everyday life. Although the Bima Sultanate no longer exists, several Islamic educational institutions inherited from the sultanate still exist and are managed by the Islamic Foundation as the successor to the role of the *Sharia* Legal Agency in the modern context (Effendy, 2017).

Islamic education plays an essential role in internalizing Islamic values in people's lives. Through education, individuals are taught to understand, appreciate, and practice Islamic teachings by the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* guidelines. This process not only includes theoretical aspects but also practical aspects that aim to shape the character and morality of the people. In the context of the Bima Sultanate, Islamic education is used as a foundation for building a religious society, so that the level of depth, appreciation, and practice of Islamic teachings in society indicates the success of education implemented by the sultanate. The level of quality of Islamic education received by the community is directly proportional to the level of understanding and practice of Islamic teachings. The Bima Sultanate realized that quality education is the key to creating a devout and harmonious society. Therefore, religious education during the sultanate was designed not only to instill knowledge, but also to instill ethical values, morals, and spirituality. Until now, the legacy of Islamic education from the Bima Sultanate remains an important foundation for society, especially in forming a generation that can practice Islamic teachings in modern life.

Facts show that the process of internalizing Islamic teachings in the archipelago through educational institutions such as Islamic boarding schools has been going on for a long time. In areas such as Sumatra, Java, and Sulawesi, Islamic boarding schools have become religious educational institutions that have played an essential role in spreading and strengthening Islamic teachings since the early centuries of Islam.

However, a different situation occurred in the Bima region, where the existence of Islamic boarding schools was relatively late to develop. Based on Mukhlis's notes, Islamic boarding schools in Bima have only been established for around 55 years, even though Islam has entered the region since 1609 AD (St. Mariam, 1999; Loir, 2004).

The delay in establishing Islamic boarding schools in Bima can be understood in the context of the region's Islamization process, which was initially carried out more through the role of the sultanate and institutions such as the Sharia Legal Agency. Instead of establishing Islamic boarding schools, the sultanate prioritized establishing an Islamic legal system and mosque-based educational institutions that focused on teaching the basics of religion (Fahrurizki, 2019).

With this approach, the Islamization of Bima emphasized strengthening sharia and fostering society through the structure of the sultanate government rather than through formal educational institutions such as Islamic boarding schools. It was only in the modern era that Islamic boarding schools emerged in Bima as part of a broader transformation of Islamic education. This development shows the influence of the national Islamic education system which seeks to integrate Islamic boarding schools as the main educational institution.

Although late compared to other regions, Islamic boarding schools in Bima now play an important role in teaching Islamic values in depth to the younger generation. Islamic boarding schools symbolize the adaptation and continuity of the Islamic education tradition in Bima, connecting the sultanate's legacy with modern society's needs. In the early days of the Bima Sultanate, Islamic education was centered within the palace environment. The palace became the center of learning, where the general public was allowed to attend to learn from scholars who were directly selected by the Sultan. These scholars deeply mastered religious knowledge and were trusted to spread Islamic teachings to the community. This educational approach reflected the palace's direct involvement in Islamization and forming a society based on Islamic values (Ismail, 2002).

Outside the palace environment, the role of the Islamic Religious Council was very significant as part of the executive body of the Sultanate. This council was tasked with coordinating various Islamic educational activities in the community. Mosques, prayer rooms, and *langgar* became the main centers of religious learning, which functioned to teach the basics of Islam such as reading the *Qur'an*, prayer, and morals. This shows that Islamic education at that time was community-centric, where mosques and other places of worship became centers of religious activities as well as education.

At that time, no formal Islamic educational institutions such as madrasahs or Islamic boarding schools existed in Bima. Instead, education was carried out informally through religious studies and direct guidance at places of worship. This approach not only instilled religious teachings but also strengthened social relations in the community. Over time, this education system became the basis for forming more structured Islamic educational institutions in the following period. This marked the transition from traditional-based education to a more formal and organized form.

M. Fachrir Rahman explained that in the Bima Sultanate system, the duties and authorities in education have been regulated through the Palace protocol. Those responsible for implementing education are divided based on administrative levels and social groups. Education at the central level, especially for the Sultan and his family, is the responsibility of the *Qadhi* and the imam. They are the leading figures who supervise the implementation of education and ensure that Islamic teachings are applied correctly in palace life (M. Fachrir Rahman, 2011). Meanwhile, Islamic education for the general public is coordinated by officials who are closer to the daily lives of the community. *Lebe NaE* is responsible for implementing Islamic education at the Keeneland or sub-district level. At a smaller level, namely the village level, this task is held by *Cepe Lebe*, who liaises between the village community and the education policy from the center. In a more local scope, education at the village level is managed by officials known as *Robo*. This structure shows a tiered system in the effective management of Islamic education, from the central to the village level. This model not only ensures equal access to Islamic education but also integrates religious values into

the community's life as a whole. With a clear division of responsibilities, this system reflects the harmony between the structure of government and the implementation of education, so that Islamic teachings can be deeply internalized in various levels of society (Ismail, 2002).



Source: Internet, Sultansinindonesie

Picture 2. Bima Sultanate

The establishment of Islamic law and education institutions in the Bima Sultanate reflects the very close relationship between the Sultan, *Ruma Bicara*, and *Mufti*. The three form a unity that not only focuses on the *da'wah* and *syi'ar* but also includes the implementation of Islamic law and Islamic education throughout the Bima Sultanate. The existence of these institutions shows how government and religion work side by side to ensure that Islamic values are integrated into the government system and the daily lives of the Bima people.

1. Sultan as Religious and State Leader

The Sultan in the Bima Sultanate has a very vital role in the structure of government and the social life of its people. As a worldly ruler, the Sultan is responsible for the people's security, welfare, and prosperity. However, more than that, the Sultan also holds an important position as a religious leader, making him a figure who regulates worldly and spiritual affairs. In this case, the Sultan of Bima combines both roles in a harmonious way, where the policies he takes always consider Islamic values as a guideline in life (St. Mariam, 1999).

One of the important steps the Sultan of Bima took in carrying out his religious role was establishing the Sharia Legal Body, which was tasked with ensuring that Islamic law was implemented fairly and firmly in society (Effendy, 2017). With this institution, the Sultan seeks to realize a legal system that aligns with Islamic teachings, while providing legal certainty for his people. This policy covers legal aspects and touches on religious education, where the Sultan regulates the education system to ensure a deep understanding of religion among the people.

Through this policy, the Sultan of Bima shows his commitment to maintaining the purity of Islamic teachings and ensuring that these teachings can be applied in everyday life. The Sultan of Bima is a very important link between religion and state, creating a balance in implementing Islamic law. With his dual role as a worldly and spiritual ruler, the Sultan is a symbol of political power and the integration of religion in governance. In this context, the Sultan of Bima is a political leader and a guardian of Islamic values that can bring peace and harmony to society. As a result, the Bima Sultanate can realize a balanced life between worldly and hereafter demands.

2. *Ruma Bicara* as a Discussion Forum

Ruma Bicara is a very important forum in the government system and social life in the Bima Sultanate. This forum functions as a gathering place for religious officials, including *Khatib*, *Qadhi*, and *Mufti*, who have a major role in determining policies related to various religious and social issues (Abdul Gani Abdullah, 2004). In this forum, religious officials and the Sultan openly discuss and formulate solutions to problems faced by the community, both religious and social. *Ruma Bicara* shows that in implementing Islamic law, the Sultan of Bima prioritizes the principles of deliberation and consensus, which are the basis for making fair and wise decisions.

This principle of deliberation strongly reflects the teachings of *shura* in Islam, which emphasizes the importance of joint involvement in making decisions related to the interests of the people. In *Ruma Bicara*, every decision is based not only on the will of the Sultan alone but also through discussion and joint agreement between religious officials who have authority in the religious field. This makes this forum a vehicle for

finding solutions that are by Islamic law and are most beneficial for the people of Bima, ensuring that the decisions made truly accommodate the interests of the people.



Source: Internet, Romantika Bima

Picture 3. Cabinet Minister of the Sultanate of Bima

In addition, *Ruma Bicara* also serves as a forum to discuss broader issues, including issues of sharia law, Islamic education, and the development of *da'wah* in society. These issues are very important in maintaining the purity of Islamic teachings and the continuity of religious life in the Bima Sultanate.

Through this forum, the Sultan and religious officials can evaluate the implementation of religious education among the people, ensuring that the correct understanding of Islam can be passed on to the next generation. On the other hand, this forum is also a place to monitor and organize *da'wah* strategies, so that Islamic messages can be spread effectively throughout all levels of society (Loir, 2004). Thus, *Ruma Bicara* functions as a tool for making political decisions relating to the state's interests and has a central role in ensuring that Islamic law and education are implemented correctly at every level of society. This forum reflects the importance of institutions that ensure harmony between government policies and religious teachings and create a social order based on Islamic law. As a place for deliberation, *Ruma Bicara* maintains a balance between worldly and *ukhrawi* aspects, making the Bima Sultanate an example of harmonious integration between religion and state.

3. *Mufti* as Religious Authority

The *Mufti* in the Bima Sultanate plays a significant role as a religious authority who provides *fatwas* and religious guidance to the Sultan and other government officials. As someone with in-depth knowledge of Islamic teachings, the *Mufti* is responsible for ensuring that every policy or decision taken by the government does not deviate from the principles of the Qur'an and Hadith. This makes the *Mufti* a guardian so that the laws and decisions taken by the Sultan are always in line with religious guidance. Thus, the *Mufti* acted as a fatwa giver and as a guide for the Sultan and other officials in running the government based on Islamic teachings. The *Mufti* also plays a major role in developing religious education in the Bima Sultanate. The *Mufti* is responsible for guiding scholars and religious leaders so that they can teach Islamic law correctly to the community. In this case, the *Mufti* functions as a director for religious educators, ensuring that the material taught is by valid Islamic teachings and does not deviate from the agreed rules. Therefore, the *Mufti* also has a big influence in shaping the character and religious understanding of the Bima community, creating an environment that adheres to Islamic law (Abdul Gani Abdullah, 2004).

The existence of the *Mufti* as a religious advisor is very important in maintaining a close relationship between religion and state in the Bima Sultanate. In a government system that prioritizes justice and religious truth, the *Mufti* becomes a bridge between worldly policies taken by the Sultan and religious teachings that are the guidelines for the lives of Muslims. The *Mufti* not only serves as a provider of religious advice but also as a reminder to state leaders that every policy they take must always consider the people's interests and be by religious teachings. Thus, the *Mufti* becomes a symbol of integration between worldly power and spiritual power in maintaining the balance of religious and state life.

The role of the *Mufti* in the Bima Sultanate shows how important the position of a cleric is in a government system based on religious values. By issuing fatwas, guiding religious education, and ensuring that state policies align with Islamic law, the *Mufti* not only functions as an advisor but also as a guardian of the integrity of Islamic

teachings in social and political life. The existence of the *Mufti* illustrates how religion and state can collaborate harmoniously to create a just and prosperous social order for all Bima people.

The existence of the Sharia Law Agency, Islamic educational institutions, and the religious court system run by religious officials, are all products of close cooperation between the Sultan, *Ruma Bicara*, and the *Mufti*. All of these institutions work together to ensure that Islamic law and religious education run hand in hand and are acceptable to the people of Bima. Not only to preach Islam but also to create a just and moral society according to Islamic law. These institutions are real evidence that religion and state are not separated in the Bima Sultanate, but work in unity to create spiritual and social welfare for the people. (Muhammad Mutawali, 2021).

The link between customary law (local tradition) and Islamic law (Islamic values) is also seen in the inauguration procession of the Sultan of Bima which combines elements of government, custom, and religion, showing how deep the relationship is between local tradition and Islamic teachings in the sultanate system. This tradition reflects the combination of Bima customs that existed before the arrival of Islam and Islamic values adopted after Islam entered the region. In the inauguration process, the *Qur'an* as the highest source of law and the main spirit shows that Islam plays an essential role in the legitimacy and ratification of the Sultan's power.

The inauguration of the Sultan of Bima in *Amba* (market) symbolizes the implementation of customs that have existed in Bima since pre-Islamic times but with a strong emphasis on religious aspects (Malingi, 2022). The use of the *Qur'an* in the Sultan's oath-taking indicates that although custom has a vital position, Islam is the moral and legal framework that guides the course of government. This shows the harmony between tradition and religion in the political and governmental processes in the Bima Sultanate.

The tradition of taking an oath, known as *Tuha ro Lanti*, depicts a sacred ceremony full of meaning. Placing the Axe on the head of the prospective Sultan and saying the sentence "*Ake Ponggo di ma Bia tutamu ma lai si eli labo ruku rawimu*" (this is the Axe that

will split your head if your words and actions are not by religious teachings) symbolizes a serious threat to the ruler who does not carry out his mandate properly (Fahrurizki, 2019). Although symbolically, the axe is a traditional tool associated with power and justice in Bima society, in this context, it also symbolizes the Sultan's commitment to Islamic law. The Sultan is expected not only to fulfill the expectations of the indigenous people but also to uphold the religious values contained in the *Qur'an*.

The axe in this procession is more than just a symbol of tradition, but also a strong representation of justice. This tradition reminds the Sultan that his power must be exercised with justice, by the provisions of Islam. The axe placed on the head of the prospective Sultan is a reminder that religious sanctions can come if the leader acts unfairly or deviates from Islamic teachings. This underlines the central role of Islamic law in assessing and controlling government actions (Ismail, 2002).

The inauguration of the Sultan with a mixture of customs and religion gives legitimacy to the Sultan, not only from a political perspective but also from a religious perspective. In a society that highly prioritizes the relationship between religion and customs, this ceremony shows that the Sultan's power is not only due to political or hereditary factors but also because of the moral and religious agreements established by the community. A Sultan who is inaugurated in this way is considered legitimate politically and religiously because he has sworn to uphold the mandate by Islamic teachings and customary values. Equality in the application of Sharia law and customary law in the Bima Sultanate reflects an inclusive and harmonious model of government, combining two important aspects of community life: Islamic teachings and local wisdom. The Bima Sultanate prioritizes Islamic law as the main basis of law and gives an important place to customs that have long developed in society. This shows how the Bima Sultanate can maintain a complementary balance between local traditions and religious principles taught by Islam.

This study supports the narrative that the Bima Sultanate successfully integrated Islamic law and customary law into its government system. This is in line with the view that Islamic law does not replace custom, but rather coexists and complements

each other. In addition, this study emphasizes the important role of the Majelis Syara' as an institution that integrates Islamic law into the government structure. This strengthens our understanding of how Islamic values were institutionalized in the legal system of the Bima Sultanate. This study also supports the narrative about the importance of collaboration between religious law and customary law by highlighting the position of the *Mufti/Qadhi* which is parallel to the *Ruma Bicara*. This shows an effort to harmonize Islamic values and local wisdom.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the Bima Sultanate has successfully integrated Islamic law and customary law into its government system, forming an inclusive and just legal foundation. This integration is realized through the *Majelis Syara'*'s active role in implementing Islamic law into the government structure. In addition, the collaboration between the *Mufti/Qadhi*, who represents Islamic law, and the *Ruma Bicara*, which represents customary law, shows a strong synergy between the two legal systems in government running. This system reflects Islam's influence and respect for the cultural heritage and local traditions of the Bima community. This integration of Islamic and customary law creates a stable and harmonious social order, where Islamic values become the moral and legal foundation, while customary law maintains local wisdom. The Bima Sultanate can create an adaptive and just legal system by harmonizing Islamic values and local wisdom. This system can address the Bima community's social and cultural challenges at that time, resulting in a stable and respected government. This study highlights the importance of integrating religious and customary law in building an inclusive and sustainable government system. This research provides valuable contributions to studying the history of law and governance in Indonesia, especially in the context of integrating Islamic and customary law. The results of this study can be an essential reference for further research on similar topics, as well as inspire efforts to integrate law and local wisdom in the context of modern governance.

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