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CONTACT

Correspondence Email:
ulfaasr72@gmail.com
rozialdi1213@gmail.com
ayatullah@unusia.ac.id

Address:
Taman Amir Hamzah No.5
Kelurahan Pegangsaan,
Kecamatan Menteng, Kota
Jakarta Pusat, 10320

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THE SYNCRETISM OF ISLAM AND MINANGKABAU CUSTOMS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF HISTORY EDUCATION: AN ANALYSIS OF THE *MAKAN BAJAMBA* TRADITION IN NAGARI KOTO TANGAH

ULFA SHOFI ROHMAWATI¹, ROZI ALDI², AYATULLAH³

^{1,2,3} Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Indonesia

ABSTRACT

The *Makan Bajamba* ritual in Nagari Koto Tangah is a unique Minangkabau tradition that blends Islamic values with local customs. This tradition embodies the syncretism of Islamic culture and Minangkabau customs, rooted in the philosophy of *Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah* (ABS-SBK). This research aims to analyze how this syncretism is reflected in the practice of *Makan Bajamba* and to examine its potential as a medium for historical education and the preservation of cultural values. A qualitative-descriptive approach was employed, with data collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and literature review. The findings indicate that *Makan Bajamba* serves not only as a ritual tradition but also as a medium for transmitting values of togetherness, respect, and harmony between religious teachings and customs. Islamic influences are evident in the prayers and dining etiquette that promote simplicity, while customary values are reflected in the ritual's social structure and symbolic elements, which emphasize communal unity and social hierarchy. This tradition holds relevance for historical education, as it integrates local history learning with moral and cultural values that can be instilled in younger generations. This study concludes that *Makan Bajamba* is a tangible manifestation of cultural acculturation and serves as a model for local wisdom-based history education. As a cultural heritage, this tradition requires preservation through collaborative efforts involving the community, government, and educational institutions to maintain its values. Additionally, preserving *Makan Bajamba* contributes to strengthening the Minangkabau cultural identity in the increasingly homogenized context of globalization.

I. INTRODUCTION

Minangkabau, one of the largest ethnic groups in Indonesia, has a unique cultural heritage. One of the most prominent characteristics of Minangkabau culture is the community's ability to align Islamic teachings with local customs based on the philosophy of *Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah* (ABS-SBK) (Murdiana, 2024). The syncretism between Islam and Minangkabau customs has created a value system that serves as a guideline for community life. However, this phenomenon is also an intriguing subject of study because it shows the negotiation process between the universal values of Islam and the local values that occasionally present fundamental differences. One manifestation of this syncretism is reflected in the tradition of *Makan Bajamba*, a ritual that is rich in symbolism and filled with philosophical values.

The ritual of *Makan Bajamba* has profound meaning within both the customary and religious context, particularly in Nagari Koto Tangah, one of West Sumatra's largest *nagari* (Erlina & Nasrulloh, 2023). Traditionally, *Makan Bajamba* is a communal meal ritual held during various customary events such as religious celebrations, weddings, and village meetings. This ritual reflects social solidarity, respect for ancestors, and appreciation for togetherness. However, in practice, *Makan Bajamba* also shows the influence of Islamic teachings, evident in practices such as prayers, the separation of men and women, and the serving of food in accordance with Islamic law.

The author chose this topic due to the existing knowledge gap in the study of syncretism between Islam and Minangkabau customs, especially regarding the *Makan Bajamba* ritual. Previous research has mostly focused on general aspects of Minangkabau culture or the influence of Islam on customary law (Marlina Selfia & Endriyenti, 2023). Studies that specifically explore how this syncretism is reflected in particular rituals like *Makan Bajamba* are still limited. Additionally, existing studies often approach this phenomenon from anthropological or cultural sociology perspectives, with little emphasis on history education. However, examining this phenomenon through the lens of history education offers fresh insights into how local values can be taught and preserved as part of national identity.

As part of the literature review, this study refers to several key theoretical frameworks. One of them is Clifford Geertz's theory of cultural syncretism, which posits that syncretism arises from the interaction of various value systems, resulting in a new cultural synthesis (Geertz, 2014). In the context of Minangkabau society, the universal teachings of Islam interact dynamically with local values such as mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) and social harmony, ultimately shaping a distinct cultural identity, as reflected in the ABS-SBK philosophy (*Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah*).

This is complemented by Azyumardi Azra's theory on the relationship between Islam and local traditions, which argues that Islam in Indonesia has developed within a strong cultural context, adapting to local customs without losing the core of its teachings (Firdausi et al., 2024).

This perspective is highly relevant for understanding how Islamic values and Minangkabau customs can coexist harmoniously in ritual practices.

This study also employs Émile Durkheim's theory of social integration to explain how the *Makan Bajamba* ritual functions as a means of reinforcing social solidarity. According to Durkheim, such collective practices form a shared consciousness and strengthen the sense of togetherness within a community (Turner, 1981).

Additionally, Homi K. Bhabha's theory of cultural hybridity provides an interpretive lens through which the encounter between Islamic values and local customs is not seen as a weakening mixture, but rather as a process of creating new cultural meanings (Mohammed, 2024). In this context, *Makan Bajamba* represents a hybrid cultural practice that preserves tradition while simultaneously integrating Islamic values.

This study emphasizes the importance of integrating cultural traditions into history education. It demonstrates how the values embedded in *Makan Bajamba* can be incorporated into local history curricula through contextual, collaborative, and project-based approaches. By connecting learning to students' cultural environments and lived experiences, this makes learning process more meaningful and relevant for students.

To support this integration, the study proposes educational strategies that involve contextual learning, where students relate historical content to real-life practices such as local rituals (Indriani et al., 2025). Collaborative and project-based learning can also be implemented to engage students in group activities focused on documenting or exploring *Makan Bajamba*. This approach naturally encourages interdisciplinary connections, enabling students to link historical themes with the religious, social, and artistic aspects of Minangkabau culture. In terms of assessment, project-based or portfolio evaluations are considered effective tools for capturing students' critical reflections and creativity (Abdurahim-Salain, 2024).

In the era of globalization, local values are often eroded by the forces of modernization that bring foreign cultures (Soviafirdaus et al., 2018). This presents a challenge for the Minangkabau people to preserve their cultural identity without closing themselves off to change. Therefore, understanding and preserving traditions like *Makan Bajamba* is becoming increasingly important. This tradition is not only a symbol of harmony between Islam and customs but also a vital means to safeguard local wisdom, serving as a balancing force in modern life (Hambali, 2025).

Through this model, students are not only introduced to *Makan Bajamba* as a historical tradition but are also encouraged to internalize its core values, such as solidarity, mutual respect, and social harmony (Nofra & Auliahadi, 2019). Thus, this study contributes not only to academic literature on cultural syncretism but also offers practical insights into how local wisdom can enrich history education and foster cultural awareness among younger generations.

II. METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study method to examine the syncretism between Islam and Minangkabau customs in the *Makan Bajamba* ritual in Nagari Koto Tangah, West Sumatra. This method was chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of socio-cultural phenomena within a specific local context, with Nagari Koto Tangah being selected for its representative nature in reflecting cultural syncretism in Minangkabau society. The research subjects include customary leaders, religious scholars, community members, and educators involved in the implementation of the *Makan Bajamba* ritual. Data collection techniques consist of literature review (drawing on Clifford Geertz's theory of cultural syncretism, Azyumardi Azra's perspective on Islam and local traditions, Émile Durkheim's theory of social solidarity, and Homi K. Bhabha's concept of cultural hybridity, or the "third space" to understand the cultural intersection), in-depth interviews (to explore the philosophical, Islamic, and customary values embedded in the ritual), and participant observation (to directly observe the ritual process, cultural symbols, and social dynamics). Visual documentation was not conducted through field photography but instead supported by AI-generated illustrations that represent the key elements of the ritual and cultural atmosphere. Data were analyzed using a descriptive-interpretive approach through thematic coding to identify patterns, symbols, and values of Islamic and Minangkabau syncretism expressed in the *Makan Bajamba* ritual. The findings were then contextualized within the framework of history education to assess their curricular relevance. Data triangulation was conducted by comparing results from the literature review, interviews, and observations to ensure the validity and accuracy of the research findings, ultimately addressing the study's objectives related to the integration of Islamic and Minangkabau values and their contribution to historical learning.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Dynamics of Islam and Minangkabau Customs Syncretism in the *Makan Bajamba* Ritual

The *Makan Bajamba* tradition that flourishes in Nagari Koto Tangah is a vivid manifestation of the historical interaction between Islam and Minangkabau customs (Mustafidin, 2021). This integration is reflected in various dimensions of the ritual. Religiously, the event begins with communal prayer and involves the use of halal food, in line with Islamic dietary principles. Culturally, it showcases Minangkabau customs through collective dining using a *dulang* (large shared tray), the wearing of traditional clothing, and the display of cultural symbols rooted in local wisdom.

The ritual also embodies the ABS-SBK philosophy (*Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah*), which affirms the harmonious relationship between Islamic teachings and customary law. Beyond its ceremonial aspects, *Makan Bajamba* serves important social and educational

functions, fostering community solidarity and transmitting core values such as mutual respect and social harmony to younger generations (Pakasi et al., 2023). This practice illustrates how two distinct value systems can synergize to create a cultural form rich in social, spiritual, and historical values. In the context of history education, this ritual not only represents the harmony of syncretism but also reflects a long process of adaptation and acculturation within the dynamic Minangkabau society (Wahid, 2023).

The preparation phase of *Makan Bajamba* is a critical stage that highlights the integration of Islamic values with Minangkabau customs. According to interviews with local residents, the process begins with a collective division of tasks, where each community member contributes according to their role. The core Minangkabau value of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) is strongly embodied in these activities. Everyone works together to prepare the food, clean the venue, and arrange the dining area. This value not only reinforces communal solidarity but also serves as a learning medium for the younger generation about the importance of collaboration and social responsibility (Nugroho A, 2023).

However, Islamic values also play a significant role in this process. A local adat leader explained that all ingredients must be ensured *halal*, from the slaughtering of animals to the selection of spices used. This demonstrates that, although the principle of *gotong royong* is predominant, Islamic halal standards have become a fundamental basis for the tradition's execution. At this stage, the normative principles of Islam meet the collective spirit of adat (Fajria & Fitriasia, 2024), resulting in a ritual deeply rooted in both spiritual and social foundations.

The implementation of the *Makan Bajamba* ritual further accentuates the fusion between Minangkabau customs and Islamic principles. Before the food is served, the ritual begins with a communal prayer led by a religious figure or an adat elder. This prayer not only expresses gratitude to God but also serves as a reminder of the importance of unity and brotherhood (Putri S & Fadlullah M, 2022). Field observations reveal that the prayer is often recited in both Arabic and Minangkabau language, reflecting the adaptation of Islam within the local cultural framework. The inclusion of prayer adds a religious dimension to the ritual without diminishing the communal spirit that lies at the heart of *Makan Bajamba* (Mustopa, 2020).

After the prayer, the food is presented in large communal trays placed in the center of small groups. This dining arrangement embodies the egalitarian ethos of Minangkabau adat, where participants, regardless of social or economic status, sit together at the same level. The philosophy of "*duduak samo randah, tagak samo tinggi*" (sitting equally low, standing equally tall) is palpably reflected here (Albert et al., 2022). Observations show that everyone eats from the same tray without any special division based on differences. While this value originates from adat, the Islamic principle of *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) reinforces the concept of unity, transforming the ritual into both a social and spiritual experience.

The transformation of adat values due to the influence of Islam is a significant dynamic in Makan Bajamba. Before the advent of Islam, this tradition included offerings to ancestral spirits as a form of reverences. However, as Islam took root, elements conflicting with *tauhid* were either removed or replaced (Rormianto et al., 2021). For instance, offerings were substituted with prayers, and the food served was prepared according to halal guidelines (Erlina & Nasrulloh, 2023). Interviews indicate that these changes did not face notable resistance, as the Minangkabau community is known for its adaptability to new influences. The flexible and open nature of adat enabled the acceptance of Islamic values without erasing the essence of local traditions.

Beyond its spiritual significance, *Makan Bajamba* also highlights the social dimension that is a hallmark of Minangkabau customs. (Rusyaida D, 2024) Respect for guests is a key element of the ritual. Observations show that guests are given special places, both in seating arrangements and in the distribution of food. Guests are usually invited to eat first as a mark of honor. This practice not only reflects adat values but also aligns with Islamic teachings on the importance of honoring guests (Rustandi et al., 2024). A participant in the ritual noted that respecting guests symbolizes the spirit of openness and togetherness taught by ancestors and reinforced by religion.

In practice, *Makan Bajamba* serves as a social space that fosters intergenerational interaction. Younger generations learn directly from the elders about the rituals, from preparation to execution. Adat and Islamic values are thus transmitted through hands-on practice, rather than solely through theoretical instruction. For example, children are taught to help prepare food while listening to stories from adat leaders about the origins of the tradition. This process becomes a form of living history education, where young people not only learn about customs and religion but also the importance of maintaining harmony between the two (Fahlevvi et al., 2024).

The *Makan Bajamba* ritual in Nagari Koto Tangah is more than a communal dining tradition; it is a cultural practice that reflects the dynamic syncretism of Islam and Minangkabau customs in everyday life. Islamic values provide spiritual foundations, while Minangkabau adat offers a social framework that keeps the tradition relevant amidst changing times. This integration is evident in every stage of the ritual, from preparation to performance, embodying a long historical process of dialogue between religion and culture (Shamad & Chaniago, 2022). In the context of history education, this tradition serves as a vital medium for understanding how Islamic principles and local customs coexist harmoniously, producing a culturally rich practice imbued with profound meaning and social relevance (Soviafirdaus et al., 2018).

The Role of *Makan Bajamba* in Shaping Minangkabau Social Identity

The tradition of *Makan Bajamba*, which has been passed down through generations in Minangkabau society, represents a cultural practice rich in social, spiritual, and cultural meaning. As part of the customary system grounded in the philosophy of *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah*, this tradition is not merely a culinary practice but also a medium for shaping

social identity rooted in collective and religious values. In Nagari Koto Tangah, Agam Regency, this tradition remains alive as a symbol of unity and a means to transmit social values across generations.

1. Manifestation of Unity and Mutual Cooperation

In practice, *Makan Bajamba* embodies the spirit of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation), which serves as one of the fundamental pillars of Minangkabau society. The preparation of this tradition involves the participation of all community members, from children to the elderly. In Nagari Koto Tangah, tasks are divided fairly, with women responsible for cooking while men prepare the venue and ensure the smooth execution of the event (Wiemar et al., 2022).

This spirit of cooperation not only creates order during the ritual but also instills a sense of social responsibility. Children participating in these activities learn the importance of teamwork and sharing roles within the community (Sutrisno & Arcylla, 2024). Furthermore, this practice strengthens interpersonal bonds, which in turn fosters social cohesion as a collective identity of the Minangkabau people.

2. Instilling Social Values and Character

The *Makan Bajamba* tradition functions as an effective informal educational medium for instilling social values and character. According to research conducted in Agam Regency, children involved in this tradition learn to respect their elders, appreciate guests, and uphold group harmony (Sari N, 2021).

In practice, children are guided to sit together with elders or community leaders and observe proper dining etiquette. For instance, they are taught not to begin eating before a communal prayer is recited and to always prioritize guests when serving food. This process cultivates respect, politeness, and responsibility, which are foundational elements of Minangkabau social identity.

3. Integration of Religious Values in Traditional Customs

Amid the rich symbolism of customary practices, Islamic values play a significant role in the *Makan Bajamba* tradition. Before the food is served, the event begins with a prayer led by a religious leader or a traditional elder. This prayer not only serves to express gratitude for Allah's blessings but also acts as a reminder of the importance of *ukhuwah islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood) and unity among the community (Viondra R. et al., 2023).

The halal status of the food is also a primary concern. The dishes presented in this tradition are ensured to comply with Islamic law, from the slaughtering process to the serving. This demonstrates that Minangkabau customs are not solely rooted in local values but are harmoniously aligned with the religious teachings embraced by the majority of its people.

4. Representation of Egalitarianism in Dining Practices

One of the most prominent aspects of the *Makan Bajamba* tradition is the spirit of egalitarianism reflected in its dining practices. All participants, regardless of social or economic status, sit together in a circle and share meals from a single tray. This tradition embodies the philosophy of "*duduak samo randah, tagak samo tinggi*", which emphasizes equality and togetherness.

Observations in Nagari Koto Tangah show that each group typically consists of five to seven people, including guests, traditional leaders, and the general community. There is no distinction in the serving of food, ensuring that everyone feels valued as part of the community. This practice not only strengthens social bonds but also reinforces a collective identity as members of the Minangkabau society. (Sari, 2023).

5. A Medium for Preserving Cultural Identity

Amid the tide of modernization, *Makan Bajamba* remains a significant symbol in preserving the cultural identity of the Minangkabau people. As a tradition practiced in various events, such as weddings, the inauguration of traditional leaders, and religious celebrations, *Makan Bajamba* serves as a space where customary and religious values are passed down to younger generations. This preservation is evident in the community's efforts to consistently uphold the tradition, albeit with certain adaptations. For instance, in some regions, the practice has been simplified in terms of food presentation to align with modern lifestyles (Sari, 2023). However, the essence of togetherness and the core values embedded in this tradition continue to be preserved.

6. Respect for Guests as a Marker of Social Identity

Makan Bajamba also serves as a medium for demonstrating respect for guests, one of the core values of Minangkabau customs. In practice, guests are always given priority in seating arrangements and food service. This reflects the deeply rooted tradition of honoring guests, which is an integral part of the social identity of the Minangkabau people.

Guests attending this event are regarded as bearers of blessings, and their presence is always welcomed with respect and warmth. This tradition not only strengthens social bonds but also serves as a means for the Minangkabau community to express their identity as a hospitable and open society.

7. Challenges and Dynamics in the Practice of Tradition

Although the *Makan Bajamba* tradition continues to be preserved, modernization presents new challenges to its sustainability. In some areas, a shift in values is becoming evident, with younger generations showing less engagement in practicing this tradition. This is influenced by changes in lifestyle and a declining understanding of its significance as part of their social identity.

However, in Nagari Koto Tengah, efforts to keep the tradition alive are actively pursued through initiatives involving schools and customary institutions. For instance, *Makan Bajamba* is often introduced to school children through cultural events, helping them grasp the philosophical meaning behind the tradition. With the rich values it embodies, *Makan Bajamba* is not merely a tradition but a reflection of the social identity of the Minangkabau people, highlighting togetherness, equality, and spirituality. This tradition remains a harmonious fusion of customary and religious values, shaping the unique and resilient identity of the Minangkabau community in the face of changing times.

***Makan Bajamba* as a Medium for Historical Education in a Cultural Context**

Makan Bajamba is a communal dining tradition that has become a cultural heritage of the Minangkabau people. More than just a social event, this tradition holds profound educational values. It serves as a medium to introduce the younger generation to the history, culture, and life philosophy of the Minangkabau people, while simultaneously preserving the continuity of cultural identity amidst changing times.

Makan Bajamba is not only a tradition practiced in the present but also a reflection of the long history of the Minangkabau community. This practice is believed to have emerged alongside the spread of Islam in West Sumatra in the 14th century, when Minangkabau customs began to align with Islamic teachings (Erlina & Nasrulloh, 2023). The philosophy of *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah* is reflected in every aspect of this tradition.

Through the practice of *Makan Bajamba*, younger generations are introduced to their local cultural roots, such as how this tradition was once used to strengthen relations between neighboring villages, as part of customary celebrations like the *aleg-aleg penghulu* ceremony, or as a form of gratitude during major events like harvest festivals. In Nagari Koto Tengah, for example, *Makan Bajamba* is still carried out during significant cultural events such as weddings and the inauguration of traditional leaders. This tradition provides an opportunity for the youth to hear stories about their ancestors' roles in maintaining social harmony, while also understanding the symbolism embedded in the communal dining process.

Makan Bajamba serves as a means to instill strong cultural values. Every stage of the tradition involves mutual cooperation. Women are responsible for cooking and preparing the meals, while men organize the seating arrangements and oversee the event. The younger generation is involved to learn teamwork, assist the elders, and understand the importance of collective contributions in community life (Fahlevvi, 2024). This tradition also emphasizes equality and togetherness, where everyone sits together regardless of social status. The philosophy of *duduak samo randah, tagak samo tinggi* (sit equally low, stand equally high) forms the foundation for instilling the importance of unity within the community.

In addition to being a means of cultural formation, *Makan Bajamba* also serves as a medium for character education and discipline. Children learn dining etiquette and respect for elders by allowing them to take food from the tray first and waiting for the prayer before eating as a form of gratitude to Allah SWT. This tradition also teaches self-regulation, as sharing food from one tray trains children to avoid greed and prioritize the needs of others.

Historical education through symbolism is another important aspect of *Makan Bajamba*. The large tray symbolizes the unity of the Minangkabau community, the serving of halal food represents the integration of Islam into the culture, and the circular seating arrangement reflects egalitarianism. Every element of this tradition imparts historical and philosophical values that help the younger generation understand their cultural roots.

Amid modernization, the preservation of *Makan Bajamba* faces challenges. However, various efforts are being made, such as integrating the tradition into formal education through local content in schools in Agam District, as well as involving the younger generation in customary events. These initiatives help children understand the importance of this tradition as part of their identity (Albert et al., 2022).

Makan Bajamba also demonstrates the harmonious synergy between Minangkabau customs and Islamic teachings. The communal prayer before the meal and the serving of halal food reflect the balance between religion and tradition (Marlina, 2023). Islamic values such as *ukhuwah islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood) are embodied in the sense of togetherness celebrated through this tradition, where the younger generation learns about the role of religion in shaping local culture.

Through practices like *Makan Bajamba*, the younger generation not only connects with their past but also understands the noble values that shape the cultural identity of the Minangkabau people. This tradition serves as an important bridge in history education based on local culture, ensuring that ancestral heritage remains alive and relevant amidst the changing times.

The Role of the Bajamba Eating Tradition in Integrating Islamic Values and Minangkabau Customs in the Perspective of History Education

The *Makan Bajamba* ritual is a fundamental cultural tradition in Minangkabau society that embodies the harmonious fusion of Islamic values and indigenous customs. Rooted in the philosophy of communal harmony and social equality, this practice extends beyond mere dining; it serves as a medium for reinforcing religious teachings, strengthening kinship bonds, and preserving historical continuity. The integration of Islam into Minangkabau traditions is evident in various aspects of the ritual, from the structured seating arrangements to the etiquette of sharing food, all of which reflect the principles of unity, humility, and gratitude.



Figure 1. Illustration of cooking preparation together.

Image generated by DALL·E (OpenAI), accessed July 2025.

This documentation includes the early stages of the *Makan Bajamba* ritual, with particular emphasis on photographs that capture the active participation of the younger generation in the food preparation process. In this scene, youths and women are seen collaborating in a modest communal kitchen area, seated on traditional mats while preparing dishes together. Carrots, spices, and traditional utensils surround them, indicating both the simplicity and depth of cultural heritage expressed through food.

Their involvement reflects not only the Minangkabau spirit of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation), but also the internalization of Islamic values such as cleanliness, modesty, and togetherness. The integration of young participants in this phase symbolizes the transmission of cultural-religious knowledge across generations, reinforcing the central thesis of this article: that the *Makan Bajamba* ritual represents a living example of the syncretism between Islam and Minangkabau adat, especially when viewed through the lens of historical education.



Figure 2. Illustration of bajamba arrangement.

Image generated by DALL. E, accessed July 2025

In the illustration, the *jamba* (communal food tray) is depicted neatly arranged on the floor of a mosque, wrapped in colorful songket cloths featuring traditional Minangkabau motifs. This arrangement not only presents visual beauty but also conveys symbolic meanings related to order, reverence, and cultural aesthetics. The symbolism of color and pattern reflects the rich cultural role in reinforcing the community's collective identity.

The placement of *jamba* within a sacred space such as a mosque also reflects the principle of *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah*, in which customary practices are grounded in Islamic values. This illustration reinforces the understanding that the *Makan Bajamba* ritual is a product of syncretism between Islam and Minangkabau adat, where orderliness, mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), and reverence for sacred spaces are integral elements of the tradition.



Figure 3. Illustration of Jamba Delivery Procession.

Image generated by DALL·E (OpenAI), accessed July 2025.

This illustration vividly captures a pivotal moment in the *Makan Bajamba* ritual the ceremonial procession in which women, particularly mothers, take center stage in delivering the jamba to the communal gathering. Balancing food trays elegantly on their heads, wrapped in intricately embroidered cloths, the women move in unison, embodying dignity, discipline, and cultural pride. Their brightly colored traditional attire enhances the festive yet reverent atmosphere of the occasion, while their deliberate and graceful steps reflect the seriousness and sacredness of the event.

The image highlights the indispensable role of women in Minangkabau ceremonial life. As bearers of cultural memory and religious values, the mothers are not merely participants but custodians of tradition. Their prominent public presence in this ritual underscores the matrilineal structure of Minangkabau society, in which women are empowered to sustain and transmit adat (customary law and practice) across generations. The act of carrying the jamba—symbolizing hospitality, unity, and devotion mirrors Islamic teachings on modesty, community, and shared blessings. This moment, therefore, serves as a living illustration of the deep interweaving of Islamic principles and Minangkabau values, making rituals such as *Makan Bajamba* a rich source of historical and cultural education.



Figure 4. Illustration of Opening Ceremony with Minangkabau Cultural Atmosphere.

Image generated by DALL·E (OpenAI), accessed July 2025.

This illustration captures the opening ceremony of a culturally rich event imbued with Minangkabau tradition. At the center, young female performers dressed in vibrant traditional attire with gold embroidery present the Tari Pasambahan a welcoming dance performed to honor esteemed guests. One dancer is depicted offering a tray containing symbolic items to a dignitary seated in the front row, representing core values such as respect, unity, and hospitality.

The involvement of the younger generation in such a symbolic role reflects the active transmission of cultural heritage across generations. These youths serve not merely as performers but as custodians of identity, bridging past and present through embodied ritual. The setting marked by traditional costumes, respectful gestures, and communal gathering demonstrates how Minangkabau culture harmonizes with Islamic values and etiquette.

Through performances like the Tari Pasambahan, tradition becomes a living pedagogical space where the principle of *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah* is enacted in real time. This moment thus exemplifies how tradition, faith, and community converge, making such events critical to understanding the lived experience of syncretism in Minangkabau society.



Figure 5. Illustration of the *Makan Bajamba* Ritual.

Image generated by DALL-E (OpenAI), accessed July 2025

This illustration captures the heart of the *Makan Bajamba* ritual where men, dressed in traditional Minangkabau attire, sit cross-legged in a circle and share a communal meal from a large platter. The moment appears visually simple yet holds profound cultural meaning. Eating together from one dish symbolizes equality, humility, and unity core values shared by both Minangkabau adat and Islamic teachings.

The philosophy of *Makan Bajamba* is rooted in a collective spirit: no one eats before others, no one eats alone, and all are served the same. This egalitarian ethic resonates deeply with Islamic principles of *ukhuwah* (brotherhood), *barakah* (blessing in sharing), and *tawadhu'* (humility). At the same time, the ritual reinforces Minangkabau norms such as deliberation (*musyawarah*), mutual respect, and the cultural principle of *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah*.

Educationally, *Makan Bajamba* functions as a living classroom. It teaches discipline, manners, patience, and prioritization of communal identity over individual desire. Far more than a shared meal, it is a performance of moral values internalized through embodied practice.

In modern contexts where individualism often prevails, such rituals serve as cultural counter-narratives. They reconnect youth to ancestral wisdom, encouraging values of solidarity and shared responsibility. In this way, *Makan Bajamba* becomes a crucial medium for cultural education, blending spiritual, social, and historical layers into one cohesive heritage experience.

The *Makan Bajamba* tradition practiced in Nagari Koto Tangah represents a living manifestation of syncretism between Islam and Minangkabau customs. Rooted in the philosophy of *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah*, the practice embodies both religious and cultural values through symbolic clothing, structured seating, communal etiquette, and spiritual intent. By integrating Islamic principles such as humility, equality, and community with customary norms such as mutual respect, matrilineal identity, and collective decision making, *Makan Bajamba* becomes a dynamic space where two worldviews coexist and reinforce one another.

From the perspective of historical education, *Makan Bajamba* offers a contextualized and experiential learning model. It allows students to see history not only as a chronological narrative but as a lived, evolving process. The ritual enables engagement with the ongoing impact of Islamization, kinship traditions, and local governance in West Sumatra.

Furthermore, the ritual supports intergenerational transmission. Youth participate not only in the shared meal, but also in preparatory rituals, processions, and performances such as *Tari Pasambahan*. These experiences serve as informal yet impactful education where values are learned not through textbooks, but through direct embodiment. As such, *Makan Bajamba* serves as both a vessel of heritage and a pedagogical tool to deepen students' understanding of syncretism in their own socio-historical environment.

IV. CONCLUSION

Makan Bajamba, as one of the traditions rich in meaning within the Minangkabau community, plays a significant role in various aspects of social, cultural, and educational life. This tradition not only reflects the dynamics of syncretism between Islamic teachings and Minangkabau customs but also serves as a medium that strengthens social identity while conveying profound historical values.

The syncretic dynamics within *Makan Bajamba* illustrate how the Minangkabau people have successfully integrated Islamic teachings with their local values, creating a form of harmony that complements both. This process is evident in various elements of the ritual, such as the communal prayer before the meal and the serving of halal food, which reflect Islamic influence, while the shared dining from a single tray and the sense of togetherness embody the values of mutual cooperation and egalitarianism that are characteristic of Minangkabau customs.

Moreover, *Makan Bajamba* plays a crucial role in the formation of the Minangkabau social identity. This ritual teaches the importance of togetherness, respect for elders, and the maintenance of harmony within the community. In *Makan Bajamba*, everyone, regardless of social status, sits together, shares food, and demonstrates solidarity. These values, passed down through generations, reinforce a sense of unity and togetherness, which serve as the foundation of social life within the Minangkabau community.

Equally important, *Makan Bajamba* also serves as an effective medium for historical education. Through participation in this tradition, the younger generation is introduced to the rich history of the Minangkabau people, both through the oral stories passed down by elders and the symbolism embedded in each ritual element, such as the *dulang* (tray), which represents unity and togetherness. By involving the youth in every stage of the tradition, *Makan Bajamba* becomes an effective means of transmitting historical knowledge, cultural values, and religious teachings to them.

Overall, *Makan Bajamba* is not merely a communal dining tradition, but more importantly, it is a platform that integrates social, religious, and historical values that shape the character of the Minangkabau community. By preserving this tradition, the community not only safeguards their cultural heritage but also ensures that the noble values contained within it continue to thrive and remain relevant in modern life.

Makan Bajamba, with all its meaning, remains a powerful symbol of the resilient and dynamic cultural identity of the Minangkabau people. To ensure that this tradition continues to be recognized and understood by future generations, efforts should be made to formally integrate *Makan Bajamba* into local history education. By including it as part of the curriculum, not only will students gain historical insight into their cultural heritage, but they will also develop a stronger connection to their Minangkabau identity. Such integration will allow the tradition to be preserved, studied, and reinterpreted in ways that remain relevant over time.

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