

The Rights of Sasak Noble Muslim Women in Choosing A Mate: An Analysis of the Marriage of Noble Women With *Jajar Karang* Men From the Perspective of Islamic Law

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Abstract: This article explores several aspects of equality in Banjar Customary marriage law, especially regarding the rights of Sasak noble women in choosing a life partner. The aim is to find out and analyze the rights of Sasak noble women from the perspective of gender and Islamic Law. According to Banjar Customary Law, a noblewoman (*Menak*) cannot marry a *Jajar Karang* men (ordinary people). If this is done, the act is considered a *nyerompang* (violation) that impacts the severance of kinship ties and inheritance rights. This study uses the contestation method from Michel Foucault which is applied to study the position and status of men and women in Sasak Society. This study found the fact that two kinds of tendencies are currently developing in Sasak society. First, the group that maintains customary law, and second, the group that welcomes change. The emergence of this second group is influenced by several factors, including the influence of local Ulama who offer egalitarianism in Islamic Law to solve marriage problems that arise in society. This study also concludes a relationship between customs strengthened by scholars with the theory of contestation, where customs are normative forces that are maintained and influence the dynamics of power in the context of marriage. The presence of laws, thus, that combine cultural traditions and religious beliefs is needed to achieve gender equality in marriage.

Keywords: Sasak customary marriage law, social status of *Menak* women and *Jajar Karang* men, law contestation between customary law and Islamic marriage law

Abstrak: Artikel ini mengeksplorasi beberapa aspek kesetaraan dalam hukum pernikahan Adat Banjar khususnya tentang hak-hak perempuan bangsawan Sasak dalam memilih pasangan hidup. Tujuannya untuk mengetahui dan menganalisis hak-hak wanita Bangsawan Sasak dari perspektif jender dan hukum Islam. Menurut hukum Adat Banjar, seorang perempuan bangsawan (*Menak*) tidak dapat menikah dengan laki-laki *Jajar Karang* (ordinary people). Jika hal ini dilakukan maka perbuatan itu dianggap sebagai *Nyerompang* (pelanggaran) yang berdampak pada terputusnya hubungan kekerabatan dan hak waris. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kontestasi dari Michel Foucault yang diterapkan untuk mempelajari kedudukan dan status laki-laki dan perempuan dalam masyarakat Sasak. Penelitian ini

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menemukan fakta bahwa ada dua macam kecenderungan yang sekarang sedang berkembang dalam masyarakat Sasak. Pertama, kelompok yang tetap mempertahankan hukum Adat, dan kedua, kelompok yang menyambut baik perubahan. Munculnya kelompok yang kedua ini dipengaruhi oleh sejumlah faktor, antara lain adalah pengaruh kaum terpelajar dan para Ulama setempat yang menawarkan egalitarianisme hukum Islam guna menyelesaikan problem perkawinan yang timbul dalam masyarakat. Penelitian ini sekaligus menyimpulkan bahwa ada keterkaitan antara adat istiadat yang dikuatkan oleh ulama dengan teori kontestasi, dimana adat istiadat merupakan kekuatan normatif yang dipertahankan dan mempengaruhi dinamika kekuasaan dalam konteks perkawinan. Ini berarti bahwa kehadiran hukum yang memadukan tradisi budaya, dan keyakinan agama sangat dibutuhkan untuk mencapai kesetaraan jender dalam pernikahan.

Kata kunci: hukum pernikahan Adat Sasak, status sosial wanita *Menak* dan pria *Jajar Karang*, kontestasi hukum Adat dan hukum perkawinan Islam

Introduction

Finding a life partner and building a family is one of the most pressing demands of human life. Humans have an innate desire to live side by side with others.¹ Humans are social creatures who are naturally interdependent. Men and women depend on each other and cannot live separately without the involvement of the other party. A man will not feel his life is complete without the presence of a woman; Likewise, a woman will not feel her life is complete without the presence of a man. To achieve all that, the institution of marriage is needed.²

Marriage is the only legal means to create a relationship of attachment between a man and a woman. It is also the ultimate goal of every male and female couple sailing in the world of love.³ Through marriage, the physical and spiritual relationship between a man and a woman can be realized through a husband and wife relationship in a happy, harmonious, and prosperous family. Marriage has a major influence in determining a person's status and position in various aspects, especially

¹ A Suryantoro, D. D., & Rofiq, "Nikah dalam Pandangan Hukum Islam," *AHSANA MEDIA: Jurnal Pemikiran, Pendidikan dan Penelitian Ke-Islaman*, 7.2 (2021): 38–45.

² Ahmad Syaripudin, "Tinjauan Hukum Islam Terhadap Perkawinan *Merariq* Perempuan Bangsawan (*Menak*) dengan Laki-Laki Bangsawan Menurut Hukum Culture Sasak (Studi Kasus Desa Penujak Kabupaten Lombok Tengah)," *Jurnal Bustanul Fuqaha*, 3.2 (2022): 144-155.

³ Wibisana, "Pernikahan dalam Islam," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam-Ta'lim*, 14.2 (2016): 189–93.

in civil relations, such as the rights and obligations of husband and wife, joint property, the position of children, the rights and obligations of parents, inheritance, kinship, and so on.⁴ Even in certain social activities, such as holding traditional ceremonies and religious activities, marital status has an important function and influence.⁵ On a more macro scale, marriage is the only legitimate means for humanity to give birth to a new generation, as well as to maintain its existence on the surface of this earth. Thus, marriage is important for community life and represents a basic means of keeping human existence.⁶

In the Sasak Tribe community of Lombok Islands of West Nusa Tenggara, marriage has its form, pattern, and procedure. This is because the Sasak Tribe recognizes the existence of a classification and class hierarchy between the group of noble descendants, known as "*Menak*" and the group of ordinary/non-noble people called "*Jajar Karang*". This Noble Group can be recognized from the title used in front of their name, namely the word "*Lalu*" or "*Raden*" (for men) and "*Baiq*" or "*Lale*" (for women). The differentiation of community groups into these two groups is not limited to the level of classification alone. In many ways, this differentiation also affects their status and position in various social activities, especially in marriage.

In the customary law of the Sasak people, the nobility (*Menak*) and their descendants have a higher social status and strata than ordinary citizens (*Jajar Karang*). This also affects the provisions on marriage law where sons/daughters must follow these provisions including who they may or may not marry. According to Sasak customary law, a noble (*Menak*) must marry another noble, they may not marry someone lower in strata than their group. If they do the latter, they will be considered to have committed *Nyerompang* and violated *awiq-awiq* (customary rules).

⁴ Hilman Hadikusuma, "*Hukum Perkawinan Indonesia Menurut: Perundangan Hukum Adat Hukum Agama*", (Bandung: Mandar Maju, 1990), p. 8.

⁵ Wiludjeng Siombo, M. R., *Hukum Adat dalam Perkembangannya* (Jakarta: Universitas katolik Indonesia Atma Jaya, 2020), p. 34.

⁶ Junaidi, Abqa, Abas, M., Suhariyanto, dkk., *Hukum & Hak Asasi Manusia: Sebuah Konsep dan Teori Fitrah Kemanusiaan dalam Bingkai Konstitusi Bernegara* (Jakarta: PT. Sonpedia Publishing Indonesia, 2023), p. 45.

The risk is that they will not only lose their noble status but will also be "*diteteh*" (banished) from their family,⁷ and no longer have the right to receive inheritance from their parents.⁸

The marriage law rules that apply specifically to the nobility are still in effect among the Sasak people. However, recently there has been a new tendency driven by educated nobles to abandon such customary rules and without hesitation marry the *Jajar Karang*. Because the number of marriage cases between nobles and the *Jajar Karang* is increasing, several researchers are interested in studying it more comprehensively.

Among the researchers studying the dynamic changes in the Sasak community is L.R. Wijaya. Through his research entitled, "Gender Bias in the Marriage of Sasak Noble Women" Wijaya found the fact that among some of the Sasak Indigenous people there are still practices of the old customary marriage system known as hereditary marriage and guardianship where descendants of nobility must marry descendants of nobility. However, over time, a re-examination of customary provisions that are considered no longer following the development of the times has begun to be carried out by several figures, especially provisions that are gender biased against Sasak noble women in choosing their life partners.⁹

Another study on the same topic was also conducted by Siti Aminah who found the fact that in the past, noble women who married non-noble men would usually be ostracized, lost their nobility, and no longer considered part of the family by their parents and siblings. Although until now these traditions and provisions are still firmly held in some circles of local Indigenous communities, there has been a new tendency,

⁷ Harfin Zuhdi, *Praktik Merariq: Wajah Sosial Orang Sasak*, Lembaga Pengkajian Publikasi Islam dan Masyarakat (Leppim) (Mataram, 2012).

⁸ M. B. Satriawan, *Pandangan Masyarakat Bangsawan Lombok Terhadap Konsep Kafa'ah dalam Pernikahan: Studi Pada Masyarakat Lombok di Kecamatan Sakra Kabupaten Lombok Timur Nusa Tenggara Barat* (Malang: Doctoral Dissertation, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim, 2017). See also Lalu Supriadi bin Mujib, Khairul Hamim, and Setiyawan bin Gunardi. "The Concept of Qathi and Zhanni and Its Implication to Religious Behavior among Muslim Communities in Lombok." *Al-Adalah*, 17.2 (2021): 269-294.

⁹ L.R. Wijaya, "Bias Gender Pada Perkawinan Perempuan Bangsawan Sasak," *QAWWAM*, 16.1 (2020): 1-11.

especially among educated nobles, to facilitate marriage between their sons and daughters, both for the nobility and the common people. In this recent development, the noble title of a daughter who marries a man not from the nobility will indeed be lost, but the ties of kinship with the family and other relatives will remain and be well-established. The emergence of this new tendency, according to Siti Aminah, is influenced by various factors, especially the progress of the times and the practice of Islamic teachings.¹⁰

Like the two previous studies, this study also examines the different treatment of Sasak noblewomen who marry *Jajar Karang* men. However, the author studies it from the perspective of Islamic culture and law, especially regarding social standards, caste, and cultural factors that influence marriage between noble women and *Jajar Karang* men, as well as the role of Islam in responding to such marriages. This is where the novelty of the research that the author conducted lies compared to several previous studies.

Research Methods

This study is classified as normative legal research that analyzes the case of the marriage of a Muslim Sasak noblewoman with a *Jajar Karang* men through the perspective of Michel Foucault's contestation. According to Foucault, individuals and organizations must understand the complex function of power in society to create potential resistance. The author uses this perspective to gain a better understanding of the dynamics of power, views, and social control in Sasak society, especially when a Sasak noble woman chooses a life partner, and how these dynamics can be changed or challenged.

This study first examines how the power structure emerged in the context of the Sasak noble family, focusing on the dynamics of power in the family, the relationship between parents and children, and the role

¹⁰ S. Aminah, "Stratifikasi Sosial dalam Perkawinan Masyarakat Islam Sasak (Studi Pada Perkawinan Masyarakat Desa Sengkerang, Lombok Tengah)," *Jurnal Sosiologi Agama*, 11.2 (2017): 209–28.

of customs played by each family member in choosing a life partner. Furthermore, this study analyzes the social, and cultural norms and customs that influence the choice of life partner and how the Sasak community maintains and changes traditions, including exploring how religious interpretations influence people's behavior in choosing a life partner.

Marriage Customs of the Muslim Sasak Community and Its Development

The structure of the Sasak Lombok tribe can be divided into two large groups, namely the noble group, called *Menak*, and the common people or non-noble group, called *Jajar Karang*. The difference in classification between these two groups can easily be seen from the presence of the word "*Raden/Lalu*" in front of the male name and the word "*Lale* or *Baiq*" in front of the female name, which indicates that the bearer comes from the nobility.¹¹ These two titles attached to their names are not given arbitrarily but must meet certain requirements that have been determined in the customary law of the Sasak community.

Related to the kinship system, the Sasak Tribe adheres to a patrilineal kinship system, namely a lineage determined through the father's line or the male side. Meanwhile, for marriage law, the Sasak community adheres to an endogamous marriage system, namely a marriage that occurs between relatives or in the same social class. The main purpose of this endogamous marriage system is to keep the inheritance within one family, while also ensuring that their ethnicity and nobility can be maintained, upheld, and not easily removed by other groups.¹² That is why in the Sasak customary law system, sons/daughters of nobles are not allowed to marry other members of society who are not descendants of noble families (*Jajar Karang*).¹³ If this provision is violated, the perpetrator

¹¹ M. N. Aminullah, "Akulturasi Islam dengan Tradisi Perkawinan Masyarakat Bangsawan Sasak (Studi di Kecamatan Kopang Kabupaten Lombok Tengah)," *Palapa*, 5.1 (2017): 109–37.

¹² Wayan Resmini, "Perkawinan Antar Bangsawan dan Implikasinya Terhadap Hubungan Sosial Keluarga (Studi Kasus di Desa Aikmel Kecamatan Aikmel Kabupaten Lombok Timur Tahun 2011)," *Jurnal Gane Swara*, 6.1 (2012): 30.

¹³ M Syaripudin, A., Wahab, A. R., & Muzanni, "Tinjauan Hukum Islam Terhadap

will receive customary sanctions. Marriage between nobles and other women/men who are not on the same level as them, in the Sasak tribe, is termed *Nyerompang*.¹⁴

Marriage between the same class is simpler than between noble women and commoners. In the past, women with the title *Menak* would receive an inheritance in the form of a lifetime severance pay with the risk of not returning to the family. Such is if she marries a commoner (*Jajar Karang*) who is very rich. But if she marries a man who does not have much wealth, then this provision does not apply. This is what causes *Jajar Karang* men (commoners) to postpone marrying noble women because they are sure they will not be able to pay *Aji Krame*.¹⁵ As a result, noble women must bear all the heavy duties and burdens because the marriage is merely to uphold the customs that have been practiced by several generations.

In the past, the nobles strongly rejected marriages between members of the nobility and members of *Jajar Karang* because they were worried that the dominance of the nobility would collapse. As a social entity characterized by patrilineal, social status in Sasak society will automatically be passed down directly to the descendants of the male side. Therefore, every Sasak woman must follow her husband's strata so that the "*negak mame* (sitting and tightening)" ceremony in the Sasak marriage tradition can be carried out.¹⁶

Perkawinan *Merariq* Perempuan Bangsawan (*Menak*) Dengan Lak-Laki Bukan Bangsawan (*Jajar Karang*) Menurut Hukum Adat Sasak (Studi Kasus Desa Penujak Kabupaten Lombok Tengah)," *BUSTANUL FUQAH: Jurnal Bidang Hukum Islam*, 3.2 (2022): 144–55.

¹⁴ B. N. S. Ardiyanti, *Pernikahan Semarga Keturunan Bangsawan Sebagai Kriteria Kafaah Bagi Masyarakat Sasak di Desa Denggen Kabupaten Lombok Timur. Pernikahan Semarga Keturunan Bangsawan Sebagai Kriteria Kafaah Bagi Masyarakat Sasak di Desa Denggen Kabupaten Lombok Timur*, 2023.

¹⁵ "Aji, Which Means Price, the Value of a Collective Agreement, and Krame, Which Means the Value of a Group of Residents of a Particular Village or Region; an Agreement of All Customary Residents, an Area That Has Permanent Legal Force as a Symbol of Purific," n.d.

¹⁶ D. Lamhatul, R., Mabru, M., & Dahlan, "Perubahan Nilai Budaya dalam Tradisi *Merariq* Antara Masyarakat Bangsawan dan Masyarakat Jajarkarang Pada Masyarakat Suku Sasak (Studi di Desa Sakra Kecamatan Sakra Kabupaten Lombok Timur)," *Jurnal Pendidikan Sosial Keberagaman*, 8.2 (2021): 137-147.

Unfortunately, in practice, the rule is not applied fairly to all genders of children. Noble men do not need to go through a long process to marry commoner women, and society does not question if a nobleman marries a *Jajar Karang* woman even though it violates customary provisions. It is different if the person who does the act is a noblewoman. In this case, if a *Menak* woman marries a *Jajar Karang* man, then immediately the relationship with her family is severed. She is no longer allowed to use the title "*Baiq*" in front of her name because her noble lineage has been disqualified. In addition, the *Menak* woman is also no longer allowed to live in her parents' residence, and her rights to inheritance from her parents are also lost. This is because her noble status has been destroyed by the marriage and neither the mother nor the child from this marriage will receive a noble title. This condition continues until the era of change. This is marked by the attitude and tendency of the noblemen to no longer comply with the customary norms of Sasak marriage by carrying out cross-social strata marriages (*merariq*) between themselves and the *Jajar Karang* community.¹⁷ The change in cultural values of marriage practices among the Sasak tribe can be seen in the increasing number of marriage cases between the nobility and the *Jajar Karang*.

Now, although citizens of *Menak* descent who marry *Jajar Karang* must still lose their title and have their social status lowered, other members of the *Menak* family will still accept them as family members even though they are aware that the marriage is against the prevailing customs. The union of a *Menak* and a *Jajar Karang* is now seen as an equal union in Sasak society because they believe that religion does not prohibit this and blood relations are more important than being "*diteteh* (thrown away)". The same thing also applies to *Menak* women. Although they no longer have the name "*Baiq*" in front of their name and are no longer considered to be of noble descent, the family relationship with their siblings is not completely severed. Because, if in the future the

¹⁷ Z. Pebrianto, *Kawin Culik Adat Sasak Menurut Hukum Islam (Study Kompratif Hukum Islam, Adat dan Hukum Positif)* (Jakarta: Fakultas Syariah dan Hukum Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, n.d.).

woman divorces her husband, she can return to live with her parents and receive inheritance.

Islam and Gender Equality in Choosing a Partner

The word "gender" comes from English which refers to sex.¹⁸ In Webster's New World Dictionary, "gender" is defined as the differences in values and actions between men and women. This cultural concept distinguishes between men and women in terms of roles, actions, mindsets, and emotional aspects that emerge in society. In Indonesian, "gender" or sex focuses more on a person's biological characteristics, such as variations in body chemistry and hormone levels, physical anatomy, sexual function, and other biological characteristics. Gender, on the other hand, emphasizes social, cultural, psychological, and other non-biological variables. Gender is usually used from a sociocultural perspective to distinguish between men and women. The biological differences between men and women are often determined through sex differences.

The idea of gender equality comes from the thoughts of the classical Republic expert Plato which was then first disseminated by Western society during the Renaissance.¹⁹ The Renaissance has indeed revolutionized the treatment of Western society towards women which then caused the economic life of women to start to change for the better. The strict and harsh laws governing marriage and divorce were relaxed.²⁰ Likewise, the social norms that restricted and forced them into slavery were abolished.²¹ The doors of education were opened wide for them so that women could receive the highest level of education as men could. These changes have

¹⁸ A. R. Saidek, "Pandangan Islam Tentang Gender Ditinjau dalam Perspektif al-Qur'an," *Aktualita: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan*, 9.2 (2019): 78–93.

¹⁹ Husein Muhammad, "*Fiqih Perempuan: Refleksi Kiai Atas Wacana Agama dan Gender*", (Yogyakarta: LKiS Pelangi Aksara, 2001), p. 130. See also Linda Firdawaty, Ahmad Munji, Ahmad Sukandi, Nurnazli Bukhari, and Ira Apriani. "Husein Muhammad's Thoughts on Gender Equality in Islamic Inheritance Law." *Al-Adalah*, 19.2 (2023): 223-244.

²⁰ Ahmad Atabik, *Wajah Maskulin Tafsir al-Qur'an: Studi Intertekstualitas Ayat-Ayat Kesetaraan Gender* (Palastren, n.d.), p. 317.

²¹ Ahmad Atabik, p. 128.

gradually helped women express their abilities, which were previously suppressed by social norms and flawed moral beliefs.²²

Among Feminists, the basic premise of gender equality comes from the idea of nurture. They argue that since gender roles are not innate but are created by social construction (nurture), gender roles are interchangeable.²³ This means that gender roles are equal, neutral, and appropriate for both male and female sexes. In short, men and women are equal, there is no difference between the two.

Moreover, conceptually, gender can be described as the roles played by men and women in society and culture. These roles or qualities are based on the cultural views of society that are associated with men and women because, in the traditions or activities of society, each has certain tendencies that are generally only done or owned by one group and are different from others. Mansour Faqih, in his book *Gender Analysis and Social Transformation*, emphasizes that the idea of gender is a characteristic attached to men and women that is formed socially and culturally. Men are seen as extraordinary, masculine, rational, and strong figures, while women are stereotyped as good, beautiful, sensitive, or motherly.²⁴

In Islam, the concept of gender equality, although in its version, is also recognized. When the Qur'an talks about the creation of humans, the holy book refers to the creation of Adam and Eve who came from the same species, namely humans. Because both come from the same species, their position is equal. Furthermore, history shows that before Islam came, women faced difficult times, because they were considered useless and as if they were not human. Many baby girls were buried alive by their parents because they were worried that it would bring shame when they grew up. The freedom and opportunities that men have are not available to women, men can even inherit and trade wives at will without having to ask permission from women.

²² Ibnu Mustafa, *Wanita Islam Menjelang Tahun 2000*, IV (Bandung: al-Bayan, 1987), p. 23.

²³ Ratna Megawangi, *Membiarkan Berbeda? Sudut Pandang Baru Tentang Relasi Gender* (Bandung: Mizan, 1999), p. 94.

²⁴ Mansour Faqih, *Analisis Gender & Transformasi Sosial* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2008), p. 7.

When Islam came, the culture of the Jahiliyah civilization was eradicated and modified in such a way as to raise the dignity of women. The status of women as heirs of property, which was previously not taken into account, was recognized by giving them the right to receive half of the male portion.²⁵ Islamic marriage law also orders husbands to treat their wives well. With the coming of Islam, the position of women was more respected, and their rights as human beings were realized.²⁶

In Islam, both women and men have the right to love and be loved until they meet in a life partner bond. Women have the same right to express their consent to the man they will marry as do men. The agreement of both parties before the marriage contract, in turn, will result in the creation of an environment of *mawaddah wa rahmah* after they get married.²⁷

Islamic history also records the fact that during the time of the Prophet, women were active in various fields of life as seen in the stories of the Prophet's wives, namely Khadijah, who was known as a successful businesswoman, and Aisha, who led the war with the Prophet. This phenomenon shows that under the banner of Islam, gender equality has made extraordinary progress and this is even strengthened by the word of Allah in the Qur'an which emphasizes that no one, either male or female, has a noble position in the eyes of Allah except those who are pious.²⁸

Recognition of gender equality is also the attitude of classical scholars, especially the Imams of the Madzhab. It's just that they have

²⁵ Y. Zuhra, T., & Roslaili, "Pembagian Hak Waris Terhadap Wanita," *Takammul: Jurnal Studi Gender dan Islam Serta Perlindungan Anak*, 10.1 (2021): 59–81.

²⁶ S. M. Mulia, *Kemuliaan Perempuan dalam Islam* (Jakarta: Elex Media Komputindo, 2014), p. 27.

²⁷ Muhammad Haramain, "Dakwah Pemberdayaan Perempuan : Telaah Pemikiran Qasim Amin Tentang Kesetaraan Gender," *Jurnal Pemikiran Islam*, 5.2 (2019): 218-235.

²⁸ Z. Tohirin, T., & Zamahsari, "Peran Sosial Laki-Laki dan Perempuan Perspektif al-Qur'an," *Profetika: Jurnal Studi Islam*, 22.1 (2021): 91–108. See also Supriyadi, Supriyadi, Abdul Qodir Zaelani, Siti Mahmudah, and Ahmad Khumedi Ja'far. "Building Husband and Wife Partnership Patterns Among Regional Parliament (DPRD) Members from the *Mubadalah* Perspective." *Al-Istinbath: Jurnal Hukum Islam*, 8.2 (2023): 445-464.

different views on several things, especially regarding the understanding and position of caste in marriage. Wahbah al-Zuhaili thinks that caste is a component that influences the benefits or otherwise of a marriage relationship according to Islamic law. According to him, the word "caste" in this context is quite appropriate. This is because one of the elements of family harmony is equality of strata and degree between the two partners. In short, caste plays an important role in determining the harmony of family relationships.²⁹

Imam Jalaluddin proposes five benchmarks of caste, namely: a. Health from incurable diseases, such as insanity; b. Freedom, therefore slaves are not in the same caste as free people; c. Lineage; people who come from honorable families are not in the same caste as people who come from low families; d. Purity, wicked people are not in the same caste as pious people; e. Position, people who are higher in rank are not in the same caste as people who are lower in rank.

Imam Malik argued that men and women should be equal only in terms of religion, caste, and kufu, while wealth, ethnicity, and free status have nothing to do with marriage. A sweeper is equal to a merchant's daughter; *An 'Ajam* (non-Arab) man is equal to an Arab woman, and a slave is equal to a free woman.³⁰

Most scholars argue that caste in marriage includes religion, independence, social class, and descent. The caste in question, according to Imam Malik, is being free from diseases that are considered incurable or difficult to cure. According to the al-Dhahiriyyah School, caste is not a condition for marriage because in Islam everyone is treated equally, and obedience to religion is the only condition.

Imam Ahmad Ibn Hambal formulated caste into four things, namely:

- a) Religion. Evil men are not of the same caste as pious women.
- b) Occupation. People who work in low places are not of the same caste as people who work in noble places.

²⁹ Wahbah al-Zuhaili, *Al-Fikih al-Islâmi Wa Adillautuhu* (Damaskus: Dâr al-Fikr, n.d.), p. 87.

³⁰ Abu Zayd al-Qayrawani, *Fawâkih al-Dawâni* Juz II, II (Bayrût: Dâr al-Fikir, 2008), p. 9.

- c) Freedom. Slaves are not of the same caste as free people.
- d) Lineage. Arab men or women are not of the same caste as the 'Ajam people.³¹

The Hanafi school includes several factors other than religion in the concept of caste, namely:

- a) *Al-Hurriyyah* (freedom). The aspect of *al-Hurriyyah* is no longer a problem because slavery no longer exists.
- b) *Al-Nasab* (descent). A woman who comes from a pious lineage is allowed to reject a man who comes from a bad lineage.
- c) *Al-Hirfah* (social strata). In this aspect, a middle-class woman must be proposed to by a man whose social strata is higher or at least equal to the woman. They also added *al-Ghina* (wealth) to the equality between men and women.³²

Imam Hanafi, Shafi'i, and Hanbali think that religion is the first caste component in marriage. Therefore, Muslim men whose parents are atheists do not have the same status as Muslim women whose parents are Muslims. A good woman is not comparable to a bad man. The bad men referred to are those who openly commit serious sins.

According to the Hanafi School, caste is not necessarily a requirement for a valid marriage, especially if a woman marries someone who is not of the same caste.³³ As long as caste is a requirement for a valid marriage, a woman can marry without a guardian. If a woman marries someone who is not her biological guardian (biological father), then caste can also be an absolute requirement.

Furthermore, scholars agree that caste is not a prerequisite for a valid marriage. Caste is considered a customary requirement, namely, a requirement that allows the woman or her guardian to file for an annulment of marriage if the man is not of the same caste and the woman

³¹ Beni Ahmad Saebani, *Fikih Munakahat*, (Bandung: Pustaka Amani, 2001), p. 200.

³² Al-Kasani, *Bada'i al-Tsana'i*, Juz II, II (Bayrūt: Dâr al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, n.d.), p. 319.

³³ R. Purnama, *Persyaratan Pernikahan Tanpa Wali Menurut Mazhab Hanafi* (Aceh: Doctoral Dissertation, UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, 2018), p. 47.

does not want it.³⁴ Likewise with physical disabilities or disgrace. It can be one of the reasons for the annulment of a marriage if one party does not want it. If we look at the hadith of the Prophet which states that caste is a requirement for a valid marriage and the statement of Article 61 of the KHI which states that caste cannot be used as a reason not to marry unless the marriage is not related to caste in religion. Thus, a marriage that does not contain caste remains valid, unless the woman has the right to annul the marriage.³⁵

Based on the description above, it is clear that in understanding the concept of caste scholars have different opinions. This difference also illustrates how difficult it is to understand social reality, especially when linked to religious norms.

Contestation between Sasak Traditions and Islamic Law

Analysis of Sasak traditions must begin with the principle that "customs must not conflict with Islamic law," especially if it relates to social strata. Islamic marriage law is designed to equalize both parties in marriage and all people in general. The general definition of the benefits of marriage is everything that happens during marriage that benefits the people involved and society in general. Everything done to achieve the substance of the maqasid sharia of marriage is also called the benefits of marriage.³⁶

Several social phenomena such as: a) the growth of various disciplines and individual and social behavior; b) a set of standards set and enforced by institutions related to religion, law, education, and health; and c) modifications in the way people interpret and value actions, pleasures, feelings, sensations, behaviors, pleasures, seen from the perspective of Michel Foucault's power relations theory contains the relationship between the concepts of power and knowledge. The previous idea between

³⁴ Yahya bin Syaraf al-Nawawî, *Raudhtu al-Thâlibîn* Juz V (Riyad: Riyadh: Dâr al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, n.d.), p. 428.

³⁵ Amir Syarifuddin, *Hukum Perkawinan Islam di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Kencana, n.d.), p. 103.

³⁶ Yusuf Hamid 'Alim, "*Al-Maqâsid al-Ammah Li al-Syarîah al-Islâmiyyah*," USA, n.d., USA: International Graphic Printing Service, p. 102.

knowledge and power claiming that knowledge could only develop outside the scope of power has been discredited by Foucault's theory. According to Foucault, there is a dynamic relationship between power and knowledge because no practice that uses power can exist without producing knowledge, and no body of knowledge can exist without including power relations.³⁷

This is true because cultural values are principles adopted by most of society and become guidelines for its citizens to live their lives. Cultural values are guidelines on how members of society should behave, but as an idea, cultural values have a broad definition and are often difficult to explain rationally and concretely.³⁸ However, precisely, as these values are general, broad, and not concrete, cultural values can live in the emotional realm of individuals who support the implementation of the culture. Furthermore, these individuals are raised with cultural values instilled in them as these concepts have long been embedded in their minds. As a result, the penetration of other cultures cannot take place quickly and rationally.

Culture has determined that a hypogamous marriage in which the woman is superior to the man will have certain legal effects. In that context, the application of customary law to the marriage of a noble Sasak woman to a *Jajar Karang* men has strengthened customary law as a source of authority and power. In Sasak culture, customary law is a long-standing legal system that contains prohibitions and expectations regarding marriage and upholds social order and family honor.³⁹ Islamic law, on the other hand, upholds a more inclusive viewpoint and supports gender equality and individual freedom.⁴⁰ Islamic law recognizes individual rights, places a strong emphasis on inclusive ideals, and offers basic

³⁷ Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality: An Introduction* Volume 1 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), p. 120.

³⁸ A Liliwari, *Pengantar Studi Kebudayaan* (Jakarta: Nusamedia, 2019), p. 38.

³⁹ N. Sulistiawati, *Urgensi Banjar Sebagai Wadah Ta'awun dalam Tradisi Perkawinan Masyarakat Muslim Sasak di Kabupaten Lombok Tengah* (Lombok Barat: Doctoral Dissertation, UIN Mataram, 2023), p. 231.

⁴⁰ Febriani Dewi, N. Fikri, "Dinamika Kesetaraan Gender di Arab Saudi: Sebuah Harapan Baru di Era Raja Salman," *Jurnal Sosial Politik*, 6.1 (2020): 30–42.

justifications for approving inter-caste marriages with the consent of both parties.⁴¹

Customary law, which protects rigid customs and community institutions, is in many ways at odds with the more liberal interpretation of Islamic law, which supports women's rights and equal rights for men. The conflicting interests and principles are demonstrated in the argument between Culture and Religion.⁴² In this discussion, many religious interpretations and justifications are cultivated to support or refute the legitimacy of existing marriage boundaries. This highlights the complex relationship between culture and religion in Sasak society and how these contested processes can influence social dynamics, the erosion of moral norms, and modifications in how gender is constructed in the context of marriage.⁴³

Furthermore, Islamic law and Customs conflict when they relate to the union of Sasak noblewomen and *Jajar Karang* men. Customs have a significant impact on the gender roles and expectations of noblewomen in Sasak society. While noblewomen are tasked to uphold their family's social position and legacy, Adat limits their marital choices to men of equal or higher standing, particularly in the Sasak, where men are given greater freedom to choose their life partners than women. This reflects conventional views and perpetuates the strict caste structure of Sasak society.⁴⁴

The Sasak tradition, which strictly forbids marriage between noble women and *Jajar Karang* men and requires noble women to marry men

⁴¹ S. Rahmawati, *Islam dan Adat: Tradisi Kalosara dalam Penyelesaian Hukum Keluarga Pada Masyarakat Tolaki di Konawe Selatan* (Jakarta: Pascasarjana UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, 2017), p. 58.

⁴² M. I. Rahmat, *Islam Pribumi: Mendialogkan Agama, Membaca Realitas* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2003), pp. 25-30.

⁴³ K. Syaifullah, "Kontestasi Ganja: Diskursus Legitimasi Ganja Badan Narkotika Nasional (BNN) dan Lingkar Ganja Nusantara (LGN) Tahun 2011-2016" (UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2017), p. 98.

⁴⁴ A. A. Mutmainna, "Pernikahan Adat Darah Biru Pada Masyarakat Bugis Ditinjau dari Aspek Sosiologis dan Hukum Islam (Studi Kasus di Kelurahan Tempe Kecamatan Tempe Sengkang Kabupaten Wajo)" (Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Palopo, 2022), pp. 28-40.

of the same caste or higher, creates conflict.⁴⁵ The majority of Sasak people are Muslim, which has several different views on marriages with different noble statuses. Islam teaches the principle of gender equality and the possibility of inter-caste marriages with the permission and agreement of both parties, while Culture enforces a rigid caste system and limits the marriage options for noble women. When customs and religion have different understandings and practices regarding this marriage, controversy occurs. Social pressure and clashes between customary conventions that limit their choices and their aspirations to follow their hearts and create partnerships based on love and agreement may occur for noble Sasak women who want to marry *Jajar Karang* men. This conflict symbolizes the conflict between custom and religion, two contrasting value systems in Sasak civilization.⁴⁶

The emergence of conflict between culture and Islamic law in the context of marriage between noble Sasak women and *Jajar Karang* men is a result of the clash of the two. Significant tensions are found in these marriage processes, as custom may preserve the honor of the nobility while Islamic law promotes marriage equality. In this situation, Sasak noble women may feel strong social pressure to marry according to traditional gender roles and expectations.⁴⁷ The more universally accepted interpretation of Islamic law clashes with the social standards and constraints imposed by the culture.⁴⁸ The way society views mixed marriages changes as a result of this conflict. As a result, the culture must either adjust to a more accommodating interpretation of Islamic law or reach an understanding to allow such marriages.

The social picture in the Sasak community shows that social changes have changed the marriage preferences and gender perspectives of Sasak

⁴⁵ B. Basriadi, "Tinjauan Hukum Islam Terhadap Perkawinan Beda Kelas Muslim Sasak di Lombok," *Maraji: Jurnal Ilmu Keislaman*, 1.2 (2015): 297–329.

⁴⁶ A. R. Amalia, "Tradisi Perkawinan Merariq Suku Sasak di Lombok: Studi Kasus Integrasi Agama dengan Budaya Masyarakat Tradisional" (UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2017).

⁴⁷ A. Yasin, "Islam, Tradisi dan Modernitas dalam Perkawinan Masyarakat Sasak Wetu Telu" (Universitas Islam Negeri Mataram, n.d.).

⁴⁸ M. M. A Saf, "Persoalan HAM dan Hukum Islam," *Al Yasini: Jurnal Keislaman, Sosial, Hukum dan Pendidikan*, 3.1 (2018): 34–48.

noble women. Despite societal restrictions, some noble women now have the legal right to marry *Jajar Karang* men, however, due to more liberal religious views and an emphasis on individual rights, prospective partners must still be considered carefully. It must be acknowledged that issues surrounding customs and religion in the marriage of Sasak noble women with *Jajar Karang* men emphasize the complex social dynamics and rich cultural diversity of Sasak civilization. A deeper understanding of this conflict can be the basis for reshaping society to be more accepting of cross-caste ties and respect individual freedom.

Conclusion

Customs in Sasak society play an important role in strengthening the legitimacy of marriage between noble women and *Jajar Karang* men. This position persist until the emergence of a new tendency among the community towards cultural values that have been practiced and maintained in community life. However, recent developments show that the Sasak community now tends to approve of marriages between noble women and *Jajar Karang* men. This illustrates that social variables are important in determining how acceptable and legitimate such marriages are within a group. Social factors encourage the Sasak community to accept and allow marriages between noble women and *Jajar Karang* men, despite the negative impacts. This, in addition to illustrating how the dynamics of religious interpretation and social norms influence the marriage process in Sasak society, also shows the relationship between customs emphasized by scholars and the theory of contestation, where customs are normative forces that are maintained and influence the dynamics of power in the context of marriage.

Acknowledgment

The author expresses gratitude to all parties involved in this research, especially the informants from the Sasak nobility and the *Jajar Karang* who generously provided valuable information on marriage practices and social perspectives in choosing a life partner. Special thanks are

also extended to the traditional leaders, religious scholars, and elders of Sasak who contributed deep insights and understanding that enriched the research data. The support and participation of all parties have been invaluable in preparing this article.

Author's Contributions

Doni Azhari focuses on preparing the article design substantially, starting from clarifying the research problem, setting the writing objectives, determining the theories used for data analysis, and formulating the conclusions. Meanwhile, Syihabuddin Qalyubi completed the research data and wrote the article based on the design and structure outlined by Doni Azhari. Both work together to comment, review, and refine the article, with Syihabuddin Qalyubi responsible for reviewing and editing until the article reaches its final stage.

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