

## **Constructing Sacred Authority: A Weberian–Bourdieuian Analysis of *Sayyid* Identity and Social Legitimacy in Cikoang, South Sulawesi**

**Asma Dwi Putri\***

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Email: [dwiputriasma@gmail.com](mailto:dwiputriasma@gmail.com)

**Wahyuni Pratiwi**

Universitas Islam Indonesia Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Email: [wahyunipratiwi.dg.ratu@gmail.com](mailto:wahyunipratiwi.dg.ratu@gmail.com)

*\*Corresponding Author*

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**Abstract:** This study examines the social legitimacy of the Sayyid community in Cikoang, South Sulawesi, through the perspectives of Max Weber and Pierre Bourdieu. Using a qualitative interpretive approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews with twelve informants selected through purposive sampling and analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis. The findings show that Sayyid legitimacy is sustained not only through genealogical claims as descendants of the Prophet Muhammad, but also through ritual leadership, collective recognition, inherited religious roles, and symbolic practices embedded in everyday social life. Weber's concept of traditional legitimacy explains the collective acceptance of Sayyid authority, while Bourdieu's concepts of symbolic capital, habitus, and field reveal how such legitimacy is continuously reproduced through social and religious practices. This study concludes that Sayyid legitimacy in Cikoang operates as a socially reproduced symbolic order maintained through ritual continuity, symbolic recognition, and community belief. These findings offer a synthesis between Weber's traditional legitimacy and Bourdieu's symbolic capital to explain the reproduction of spiritual authority beyond formal structures of power.

**Keywords:** Sayyid of Cikoang, Traditional Legitimacy, Symbolic Capital, Social Field

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini mengkaji legitimasi sosial komunitas Sayyid di Cikoang, Sulawesi Selatan, melalui perspektif Max Weber dan Pierre Bourdieu. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif interpretatif dengan pengumpulan data melalui wawancara mendalam terhadap dua belas informan yang dipilih menggunakan purposive sampling dan dianalisis menggunakan reflexive thematic analysis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa legitimasi Sayyid tidak hanya dipertahankan melalui klaim genealogis sebagai keturunan Nabi Muhammad, tetapi juga melalui kepemimpinan ritual, pengakuan kolektif, peran keagamaan yang diwariskan, serta praktik simbolik yang tertanam dalam kehidupan sosial-keagamaan sehari-hari. Konsep legitimasi tradisional Weber menjelaskan penerimaan kolektif terhadap otoritas Sayyid, sementara konsep modal simbolik, habitus, dan arena sosial Bourdieu menjelaskan bagaimana legitimasi tersebut terus direproduksi melalui praktik sosial dan keagamaan. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa legitimasi Sayyid di Cikoang beroperasi sebagai tatanan simbolik yang direproduksi secara sosial melalui keberlanjutan ritual, pengakuan simbolik, dan kepercayaan masyarakat. Temuan ini menawarkan sintesis antara

legitimasi tradisional Weber dan modal simbolik Bourdieu untuk menjelaskan reproduksi otoritas spiritual di luar struktur kekuasaan formal.

**Kata kunci:** Sayyid Cikoang, Legitimasi Tradisional, Modal Simbolik, Arena Sosial



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## Introduction

Social legitimacy within religious communities is often formed through long historical processes involving collective belief, symbolic recognition, inherited traditions, and socially reproduced forms of authority. In many traditional societies, legitimacy does not rely solely on formal institutional structures but is sustained through shared cultural values, ritual practices, and communal recognition passed down across generations. Through this process, a social structure can become deeply entrenched because it is maintained not only materially but also through beliefs, symbols, and knowledge passed down from generation to generation.<sup>1</sup>

Regarding religious matters, Muslims in Indonesia still exhibit a strong tendency to follow the teachings and advice conveyed by religious scholars and traditional religious institutions. This adherence is evident not only in daily worship practices but also in how the community responds to fatwas, moral exhortations, and other religious guidelines. This indicates that the figures of ulama and long-trusted religious institutions remain the primary reference points in religious life, while also playing a crucial role in shaping the understanding and practice of Islam that is alive within society.<sup>2</sup>

In traditional Muslim societies, religious authority is often attributed not only to scholarly expertise or formal religious office, but also to genealogical and symbolic identities embedded within the collective consciousness of society. Previous studies on Hadhrami and *Sayyid* communities in Indonesia suggest that *Sayyid* authority is rooted both in genealogical and spiritual connections to the Prophetic lineage and in hierarchical religious relationships that position them as legitimate transmitters of Islamic teachings within Muslim communities.<sup>3</sup> One group possessing such authority is the *Sayyid* descendants, namely those who are genealogically believed to be descendants of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Across various regions of the Indonesian archipelago, the social and religious positions of the *Sayyids* exhibit diverse

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<sup>1</sup> Endrizal Endrizal and Novi Hendri, "IDENTITAS: KONSTRUKSI SOSIAL DAN KEKUASAAN," *Islam Realitas: Journal of Islamic & Social Studies* 4 (December 2018): 1, [https://doi.org/10.30983/islam\\_realitas.v4i1.463](https://doi.org/10.30983/islam_realitas.v4i1.463).

<sup>2</sup> Rachmadhani and Arnis, *Otoritas Keagamaan di Era Media Baru: Dakwah Gus Mus di Media Sosial*, 5 (2021).

<sup>3</sup> Huub de Jonge, *In Search of Identity: The Hadhrami Arabs in the Netherlands East Indies and Indonesia (1900-1950)*, Leiden Studies in Islam and Society, volume 14 (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2022).

configurations, depending on social structures, customary values, and the continuity of local Islamic traditions.<sup>4</sup>

Local communities play a crucial role in shaping perceptions of lineage and religious prestige. Recognition of a *Sayyid* or *Habib* is often based not solely on verifiable historical genealogy, but also on forms of social and spiritual legitimacy collectively acknowledged within society. Studies on Hadhrami communities further demonstrate that *Sayyid* groups historically occupied privileged religious and social positions as descendants of the Prophet Muhammad, functioning as religious leaders, mediators, and guardians of Islamic traditions within Muslim society.<sup>5</sup> Various religious symbols, ritual roles, and genealogical narratives further reinforce this status. However, in the modern era, academic studies have increasingly re-examined these traditional narratives through historical, anthropological, and sociological approaches. In this context, lineage identity gains meaning not simply through biological descent but through continuous social recognition and acceptance within particular cultural settings. In Indonesian Muslim communities where religious traditions remain influential, lineage continues to function as a symbolic link between religious authority, social status, and cultural legitimacy. Consequently, the symbolic dominance of the *Habibs* persists thanks to a blend of respect inherited from previous generations and acceptance by contemporary society.<sup>6</sup>

In the coastal region of South Sulawesi, particularly in the village of Cikoang, Takalar Regency, the role of the *Sayyid* holds its own distinct characteristics. Within the Cikoang village community, descendants of the *Sayyid* occupy the highest social status, as they are believed to descend from *Sayyid* Jalaluddin Al-Aidid, a descendant of Al-Husain, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. However, before the arrival of *Sayyid* Jalaluddin, the people of Cikoang already had a social structure consisting of three social strata: the Karaeng as the noble class, the Tumaradeka as the general populace, and the Ata as the group serving the nobility. The arrival of *Sayyid* Jalaluddin subsequently brought changes to this order. His genealogical status, linked to the Prophet's lineage, led the community to place the *Sayyids* in a higher social standing than the Karaeng. From that point on, a new social stratification emerged, granting a special status to the *Sayyids* or *Sayye*,<sup>7</sup> making them the most revered figures in Cikoang's religious and social life.

This community is widely known for the *Mauduq Lompoa* or Maulid Besar celebration, a religious tradition that commemorates the birth of the Prophet Muhammad in a manner unique to the Makassar people, in which the role of the *Sayyid* is central. They serve not only as ritual leaders but also as figures believed to bring barakka, or divine blessings, to the community. Their position within the social

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<sup>4</sup> Muhammad Nasyirudin, "Lineage and Symbolic Power: Sociological Analysis of the Polemic of Recontextualizing Ba'alwi Lineage in Indonesia," *Translitera : Jurnal Kajian Komunikasi dan Studi Media* 14, no. 1 (March 2025): 66–78, <https://doi.org/10.35457/translitera.v14i1.4495>.

<sup>5</sup> Jonge, *In Search of Identity*.

<sup>6</sup> Nasyirudin, "Lineage and Symbolic Power."

<sup>7</sup> Juliati and Andi Ima Kesuma, *Strata Sosial Keturunan Sayyid (Sayye') pada Masyarakat Desa Cikoang di Kabupaten Takalar*, 2023.

structure of the Cikoang community is not solely due to religious knowledge, but also stems from a genealogical status considered sacred and possessing spiritual legitimacy passed down through generations.<sup>8</sup>

The enduring social position of the Sayyid in Cikoang is significant to examine because it demonstrates how religious legitimacy can be historically constructed, socially recognized, and continuously reproduced through symbolic practices, collective belief, and intergenerational traditions. The legitimacy of the Sayyid is understood not merely as a genealogical status but as a socially reproduced form of symbolic authority embedded within rituals, historical narratives, inherited habitus, and the religious structure of the community. In this context, the legitimacy they possess does not stem from formal institutions, but rather from collective recognition built through tradition, religious knowledge, and symbolic capital that continues to be passed down. Their presence illustrates how lineage-based legitimacy can persist amid social change through the continuous interaction between ritual authority, symbolic recognition, and collective belief within local religious life.

Previous studies on the *Sayyid* community in Cikoang have primarily emphasized ritual traditions, cultural continuity, and social stratification within local Islamic society. Fitriani et al.'s 2023, for example, highlight the elevated social position of the *Sayyid* within the traditional hierarchy of Cikoang society,<sup>9</sup> while Juliati and Kesuma focus on lineage-based stratification as the basis of social differentiation. Meanwhile, Handayani's work examines the cultural and religious dimensions of the *Mauduq Lompoa* tradition.<sup>10</sup>

Although these studies provide important insights into the cultural and ritual significance of the *Sayyid* community, they tend to treat *Sayyid* legitimacy as a relatively stable cultural inheritance. As a result, insufficient attention has been given to how *Sayyid's* identity and legitimacy are continuously constructed, recognized, and reproduced through everyday social practices. The persistence of *Sayyid* legitimacy cannot be understood solely through ritual continuity or genealogical claims, but also through symbolic processes, collective recognition, inherited habitus, and social practices that sustain their privileged position within the local religious field.

This study addresses that gap by examining how the social legitimacy of the *Sayyid* in Cikoang is maintained through the interplay between Weberian traditional legitimacy and Bourdieusian forms of symbolic capital, habitus, and field. By doing so, this article contributes to the sociology of Indonesian Islam by demonstrating how genealogical legitimacy continues to operate as a socially reproduced form of symbolic hierarchy within contemporary Muslim society.

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<sup>8</sup> Hermin, Ahmadin, and Asmunandar, "Maudu'lompoa: Studi Sejarah Perayaan Maulid Nabi Terbesar Di Cikoang Kabupaten Takalar (1980-2018)," *Pattingalloang* 7 (2020): 284-96.

<sup>9</sup> Fitriani, M. Chaerul Risal, and A. Tenri Yeyeng, "Status Kaum *Sayyid* Dalam Pranata Sosial Adat Masyarakat Cikoang Kabupaten Takalar," *Siyasatuna: Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Siyasa Syar'iyah* 4 (2023).

<sup>10</sup> Juliati and Andi Ima Kesuma, *Strata Sosial Keturunan Sayyid (Sayye') pada Masyarakat Desa Cikoang di Kabupaten Takalar*.

In examining the position of the *Sayyid* as an influential figure in the religious and social life of the Makassar community in Cikoang, this study employs two theoretical frameworks: Max Weber's theory and Pierre Bourdieu's theory of symbolic capital of the three forms of legitimacy that Weber describes, namely legal-rational, charismatic, and traditional legitimacy,<sup>11</sup> the most relevant approach for analyzing this phenomenon is traditional legitimacy. This model of legitimacy emphasizes power derived from collective belief in customs, lineage, and legitimacy passed down from generation to generation, making it suitable for understanding how the status of the *Sayyid* remains respected and maintained within the social structure of Cikoang.

However, Weber's framework alone is insufficient to explain how such legitimacy continues to be maintained and reproduced within a society undergoing social change. Therefore, this study also employs Bourdieu's concepts of symbolic capital, habitus, and field to examine the social mechanisms through which *Sayyid's* legitimacy is reproduced in everyday social life. Symbolic capital refers to a form of power that emerges from respect, social recognition, prestige, and symbolic legitimacy bestowed by the community.<sup>12</sup> In the context of Cikoang, respect toward the *Sayyid* lineage, genealogical status, and inherited religious prestige function as important forms of symbolic capital that reinforce their privileged social position within the local religious field. This symbolic legitimacy is continuously reproduced through ritual participation, collective recognition, inherited habitus, and social practices embedded within everyday community life. The persistence of *Sayyid* legitimacy, therefore, cannot be understood solely through genealogical claims, but also through the symbolic and social processes that sustain their recognized position across generations.

The combination of Weberian and Bourdieusian perspectives in this study is intended to bridge two complementary dimensions of social legitimacy. Weber's framework illuminates the normative foundation through which the *Sayyid* are collectively regarded as legitimate figures based on lineage and inherited tradition, while Bourdieu's framework explains the mechanisms of symbolic reproduction that sustain such legitimacy within social practice. While Weber emphasizes legitimacy grounded in collective meaning and belief, Bourdieu highlights the role of practice, symbolic power, and social reproduction in maintaining social hierarchy. By combining these perspectives, this study examines not only why the *Sayyid* are considered socially legitimate, but also how that legitimacy continues to be reproduced and maintained within the contemporary religious life of Cikoang society.

This study asks how the social legitimacy of the *Sayyid* in Cikoang is constructed, maintained, and reproduced through Weberian traditional legitimacy and Bourdieusian forms of symbolic capital, habitus, and field. By addressing this

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11 Effendi Chairi, *Ketiadaan Otoritas Terpusat dalam Fenomena Kontemporer di Indonesia: Kritik Terhadap Teori Otoritas Max Weber*, 2019.

12 William Ocasio, Jo-Ellen Pozner, and Daniel Milner, "Varieties of Political Capital and Power in Organizations: A Review and Integrative Framework," *Academy of Management Annals*, ahead of print, January 15, 2020, Briarcliff Manor, NY, <https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2018.0062>.

question, this article seeks to explain how genealogical status continues to operate as a socially recognized and symbolically reproduced form of legitimacy within the contemporary religious life of Cikoang society.

### **Research Method**

This study employs a qualitative interpretive approach to examine the social legitimacy of the *Sayyid* community in Cikoang, South Sulawesi. The research focuses on understanding how legitimacy is socially constructed, recognized, and reproduced through everyday social and cultural practices within the local community. Primary data were collected through semi-structured, in-depth interviews with twelve informants consisting of *Sayyid* descendants, community elders, religious figures, and non-*Sayyid* residents. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their social position, involvement in local traditions, and knowledge of the social structure of Cikoang society. The informants ranged in age from approximately 25 to 60 years old and represented different social backgrounds and relationships to the *Sayyid* lineage. Secondary data were obtained through a literature review, including academic articles, books, and historical sources related to the *Sayyid* community and Islamic social structure in Cikoang.

The research was conducted between September 2025 and January 2026. In addition to interviews, the researcher also conducted limited participant observation during community religious activities and local traditions related to the *Sayyid* community. Data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's approach, involving data familiarization, coding, theme development, and interpretive reading of the data.<sup>13</sup> The analysis focused on identifying patterns related to traditional legitimacy, symbolic capital, habitus, and social reproduction within the religious social field of Cikoang society. Reflexive thematic analysis was chosen because it enables the researcher to interpret meanings, social experiences, and recurring symbolic patterns within qualitative data. Holloway and Todres (2003) further argue that thematic analysis serves as a foundational analytical method in qualitative research.<sup>14</sup> To enhance the validity of the findings, this study employed source triangulation by comparing interview data, field observations, and relevant literature.

### **Result and Discussion**

#### **Social History and the Formation of *Sayyid* Identity in the Village of Cikoang**

The Cikoang community has a social structure that was formed through a long process, both before and after the arrival of Islam. Before the arrival of *Sayyid* Jalaluddin Al-Aidid, Cikoang's social structure was shaped by local leadership patterns and customary norms. Significant changes began to occur when *Sayyid* Jalaluddin arrived

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<sup>13</sup> Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology," *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (2006): 77-101.

<sup>14</sup> Heriyanto, "Thematic Analysis sebagai Metode Menganalisa Data untuk Penelitian Kualitatif," *ANUVA* 2, no. 3 (2018): 317-324, <http://ejournal.undip.ac.id/index.php/anuva>.

in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and introduced Islamic teachings, which subsequently interacted with local culture and gave rise to a distinct form of religious practice unique to Cikoang.<sup>15</sup>

The *Sayyid* class in Cikoang occupies the highest position in the social hierarchy, based on the community's recognition of their lineage, religious roles, and educational capabilities. This social legitimacy is reflected in special reverence during customary rituals, celebrations, and wedding ceremonies, where *Sayyid* participation is considered central. Their social status and identity are not merely symbolic but are also reproduced through cultural practices and intergenerational social interactions, making the *Sayyids* both shapers of social norms and guardians of traditional continuity in Cikoang.<sup>16</sup> The social structure of the Cikoang community is essentially composed of three main groups: the Karaeng, the *Sayyid* (*Sayye'*), and the Jawi. Within the *Sayyid* group itself, there is a more detailed internal classification, including *Sayye'* Opu or *Karaeng Opu*, *Sayye' Karaeng*, *Sayye' Massang*, and *Sayye' Biasa*.<sup>17</sup>

Before the arrival of *Sayyid* Jalaluddin, the social stratification in Cikoang still followed the traditional Makassar pattern, which distinguished between the Karaeng as the nobility, the *tumaradeka* as the free people, and the *ata* as the group serving the elite. The presence of the Karaeng lineage in Cikoang is closely linked to the migration of the Karaeng Cikondong from the Binamu Kingdom in Jenepono, who subsequently established settlements in the region. However, the dominance of the Karaeng group gradually diminished as the *Sayyid* community grew, bringing new influences to the social order, thereby creating a process of acculturation and the formation of a more complex social structure.

The term "*Jawi*" refers to the group of people who do not belong to either the Karaeng or *Sayyid* lineages. This stratum includes residents from the general populace, comprising both the indigenous people of Cikoang and those who arrived and subsequently settled there.<sup>18</sup> In the social structure of Cikoang, the Jawi serve as the majority group, carrying out daily activities and acting as the mainstay of the village's social and economic life, without holding any genealogical claim to aristocratic or religious authority.

In general, social conditions in Cikoang Village before the arrival of Islam were not significantly different from other regions in South Sulawesi, characterized by a traditional hierarchical structure among the Karaeng, *Tumaradeka*, and *Ata* or servant class. However, following the arrival of *Sayyid* Jalaluddin and the spread of Islamic teachings in the region, Cikoang's social order underwent significant changes. The

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<sup>15</sup> Edi Hariyadi and Firdaus W. Suhaeb, "Eksistensi Pernikahan Perempuan *Sayyid* Di Desa Cikoang Kabupaten Takalar," *Predestination: Journal of Society and Culture* 1, no. 2 (December 2020): 79, <https://doi.org/10.26858/prd.v1i2.17949>.

<sup>16</sup> Fitriani, M. Chaerul Risal, and A. Tenri Yeyeng, "Status Kaum *Sayyid* Dalam Pranata Sosial Adat Masyarakat Cikoang Kabupaten Takalar."

<sup>17</sup> Juliati and Andi Ima Kesuma, *Strata Sosial Keturunan Sayyid (Sayye') pada Masyarakat Desa Cikoang di Kabupaten Takalar*.

<sup>18</sup> Ardawiyanti, "Sistem Kekebabatan Pada Komunitas *Sayyid* Di Desa Cikoang, Kecamatan Mangarabombang, Kabupaten Takalar," *Tebar Science: Jurnal Kajian Sosial Dan Budaya* 6, no. 1 (2022).

presence of the *Sayyid* group introduced a new form of legitimacy rooted in religious status and lineage, causing the social structure, which had previously been based on local customs, to transform and merge with religious values. This process not only altered how the community viewed authority and honor but also shaped a collective identity that remains an integral part of Cikoang's social life to this day. Thus, this historical shift underscores how the arrival of Islam served as a turning point in the development of social stratification and power dynamics in Cikoang.

In Cikoang society, the *Sayyid* or *Sayye'* group is understood as a class believed to be direct descendants of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. The existence of this social stratification stems from the arrival of *Sayyid* Jalaluddin in the Takalar region as a propagator of Islam, who introduced himself as a descendant of the Prophet. Over time, this status of honor was accepted and institutionalized by the local community, thereby forming a social stratum that holds a distinct position within the religious and cultural life of the Cikoang community.<sup>19</sup>

Broadly speaking, the Cikoang community recognizes four main categories of *Sayyid* descendants, whose positions are determined by their proximity to the traditional leadership line. First, *Sayyid Opu*, also known as Karaeng Opu, constitutes the group with the highest status in the social hierarchy. They occupy the top position because they possess a dual lineage that is highly respected: the title Opu derives from the maternal line of Buton descent, while the title Karaeng is obtained through the lineage of Jafar Sadik, who was once appointed as a local leader.<sup>20</sup> *Sayyid Opu* holds the highest authority in the execution of *Mauduq Lompoa* and is responsible for ensuring the continuity of the ritual.<sup>21</sup> This position is hereditary and is passed on to a successor after the previous *Sayyid Opu* passes away.

Second, the *Sayyid Karaeng* are a group of *Sayyids* who share a bloodline with the Makassar nobility through the maternal line. This status arose from marriages between *Sayyid* descendants and women bearing the title of Karaeng, thereby creating a genealogical stratification that unites religious authority and aristocratic prestige.

Third, *Sayyid Massang*, a group that remains within the circle of Karaeng Opu's relatives, though they do not hold leadership positions. They are descendants of Jafar Sadik, who were not chosen as successors to the leadership and thus occupy a lower social position than Karaeng Opu. Within the local social structure, *Sayyid Massang* are often addressed as "*Tuan*" and are still respected as part of the core group of the founder's descendants.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Juliati and Andi Ima Kesuma, *Strata Sosial Keturunan Sayyid (Sayye') pada Masyarakat Desa Cikoang di Kabupaten Takalar*.

<sup>20</sup> Sadriani Ilyas, Tahir Kasnawi, and Sakaria Sakaria, *Struktur Sosial Masyarakat Pesisir (Kajian Tentang Pelapisan Sosial Masyarakat Di Desa Cikoang Kabupaten Takalar) | Syntax Literate ; Jurnal Ilmiah Indonesia*, July 11, 2022, <https://jurnal.syntaxliterate.co.id/index.php/syntax-literate/article/view/8570>.

<sup>21</sup> Hermin, Ahmadin, and Asmunandar, "Maudu'lompoa: Studi Sejarah Perayaan Maulid Nabi Terbesar Di Cikoang Kabupaten Takalar (1980-2018)."

<sup>22</sup> Achmad Badawi Alfarezi et al., "Pesan Dakwah Dalam Tradisi Ma'udu Lompoa Di Desa Cikoang Kecamatan Managarabombang Kabupaten Takalar," *Didaktik: Jurnal Ilmiah PGSD STKIP Subang* 11 (2025).

Fourth, the *Sayyid Biasa*, a group of *Sayyid* descendants tracing their lineage to *Sayyid* Massang, but who have undergone a process of genealogical intermarriage with the general population. They do not hold specific structural roles and function more as followers within the local religious authority network, particularly in relation to the anrongguru in Cikoang. Although their genealogical status remains recognized, their social standing is not as high as that of the previous three categories, and they have become more integrated with communities outside Cikoang.<sup>23</sup>

A community leader in Cikoang explained that respect for the *Sayyids* has become a kind of social consensus passed down from generation to generation. “...those bearing the title of *Sayyid* in Cikoang are direct descendants of the Prophet Muhammad, who converted the people of Cikoang to Islam during a time when they still practiced animism. Since then, the descendants of *Sayyid* have been the sole religious teachers imparting knowledge through the Sufi order method” (interview, 2025). The community believes that this lineage brings blessings and possesses inherent religious authority. This recognition stems not only from theological narratives but also from historical experience, as Cikoang is known as a center for the early spread of Islam along the southern coast of Sulawesi, and the figure of *Sayyid* Jalalludin Al-Aidid believed to be the first preacher in this region, serves as a central figure marking the inception of a da’wah tradition rooted in the tarekat.

The presence of *Sayyid* as the figure of Anrong Guru also reflects a distinctive pattern of social inheritance within traditional Islamic communities in the Indonesian archipelago, where descent from great scholars is often used as a benchmark for the legitimacy of religious preaching and teachings.<sup>24</sup> This phenomenon is not much different from the role of the *Habib* in Hadramaut and various regions in Indonesia, where the community’s acceptance of the *Habib* is an expression of respect for the lineage of the Prophet, believed to bring blessings and spiritual knowledge.<sup>25</sup> Within this framework, the position of the *Sayyid* in Cikoang can be understood as a local manifestation of a lineage-based religious authority structure that derives its symbolic power from the cultural and religious legitimacy of the community.

This social contract is also evident in the way the community negotiates the role and function of the *Sayyid* amid changing times. Although modernization has begun to influence how the community understands religious authority, the *Sayyid*’s position as a central figure in Cikoang spirituality remains intact. This is because their legitimacy does not rest on institutional authority, but on the community’s historically formed beliefs and habitus. In Bourdieu’s terminology, habitus is a system of dispositions that causes individuals to act automatically in accordance with internalized values. In this

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<sup>23</sup> Hermin, Ahmadin, and Asmunandar, “Maudu’lompoa: Studi Sejarah Perayaan Maulid Nabi Terbesar Di Cikoang Kabupaten Takalar (1980-2018).”

<sup>24</sup> Ilyas, Kasnawi, and Sakaria, *Struktur Sosial Masyarakat Pesisir (Kajian Tentang Pelapisan Sosial Masyarakat Di Desa Cikoang Kabupaten Takalar) | Syntax Literate ; Jurnal Ilmiah Indonesia*.

<sup>25</sup> Atho’ilah Aly Najmuddin and Irwan Abdullah, “Habib, Islam, Dan Otoritas Keagamaan: Penerimaan Masyarakat Muslim Banyuwangi,” *ResearchGate*, ahead of print, August 8, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.30603/jf.v19i1.2539>.

regard, respect for the *Sayyid* has become an integral part of the social dispositions of the Cikoang community, deeply rooted over the course of centuries.

The status of the *Sayyid* in Cikoang also illustrates how the community interprets the concept of religious legitimacy within the framework of local tradition. This legitimacy is not individual in nature, but rather stems from social relationships rooted in a communal value system. In this context, the community does not assess the *Sayyids'* authority solely based on their scholarly capacity, but rather on the symbolic connection they maintain with the ancestors of Islamic da'wah in Cikoang. This awareness positions the *Sayyids* as the custodians of a spiritual lineage that ensures the continuity of Islamic teachings considered pure and authentic. Therefore, the *Sayyids'* legitimacy has two dimensions. First, a genealogical dimension that connects them to the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Second, a social dimension that reinforces their role in maintaining the community's religious harmony.<sup>26</sup>

The informant emphasized that respect for the *Sayyid* does not require normative justification, as it is already an integral part of local customs and beliefs. This statement suggests that the legitimacy of the *Sayyid* in Cikoang no longer depends on rational proof but has become a social norm governing the relationship between the spiritual leader and his congregation. In the *Mauduq Lompoa* or Maulid Besar tradition, for example, the role of the *Sayyid* is highly prominent. They serve as the focal point of processions, the recitation of prayers, and the organization of worship rituals.<sup>27</sup> The community positions them as mediators between the divine dimension and the human world. Thus, this demonstrates that the *Sayyid's* authority is not merely a genealogical symbol but also an institutional one within the local religious system.

The role of the *Sayyid* as *Anrong Guru* is fundamentally the result of a social process shaped by the history of da'wah, traditional legitimacy, and symbolic capital that continues to be reinforced through religious practices and social relations in Cikoang.<sup>28</sup> This authority persists not due to coercive power but because it has become integrated into a system of meaning recognized and practiced by the community in their daily lives.

### **A Weberian Analysis of *Sayyid* Legitimacy**

In Cikoang society, the legitimacy of the *Sayyid* is not merely accepted as a social fact but is continuously justified through collective narratives regarding lineage, religious inheritance, and ritual authority. Several informants explained that the *Sayyid* are viewed as the "rightful" religious leaders because their authority is believed to originate from the descendants of *Sayyid* Jalaluddin and has been preserved through generations. From a Weberian perspective, this reflects a process of legitimacy

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<sup>26</sup> Juliati and Andi Ima Kesuma, *Strata Sosial Keturunan Sayyid (Sayye') pada Masyarakat Desa Cikoang di Kabupaten Takalar*.

<sup>27</sup> Hermin, Ahmadin, and Asmunandar, "Maudu'lompoa: Studi Sejarah Perayaan Maulid Nabi Terbesar Di Cikoang Kabupaten Takalar (1980-2018)."

<sup>28</sup> Ilyas, Kasnawi, and Sakaria, *Struktur Sosial Masyarakat Pesisir (Kajian Tentang Pelapisan Sosial Masyarakat Di Desa Cikoang Kabupaten Takalar) | Syntax Literate ; Jurnal Ilmiah Indonesia*.

formation rooted in collective belief rather than coercive power. This legitimacy typically manifests in three types.<sup>29</sup>

First, traditional legitimacy, which is based on hereditary customs and the belief that a particular group has always been granted the right to lead. Second, charismatic legitimacy, which stems from the personal or spiritual qualities of a figure deemed to possess extraordinary qualities, making it natural for others to follow them. Third, legal-rational legitimacy, which arises from rules, procedures, or institutional structures deemed legitimate by society. These three forms of legitimacy function not only as the basis of power but also as a framework of meaning that instills a sense of propriety, devotion, and respect toward the figure or group holding authority.<sup>30</sup>

Traditional legitimacy is grounded in an enduring faith in the sanctity of traditions and ancient customs. This system operates through a set of customary norms and rules passed down across generations, thereby granting leaders the right to exercise dominance as long as they act in accordance with these traditions. As long as the community continues to uphold these traditional values and believes in their continuity, leadership will be considered legitimate and appropriate.<sup>31</sup>

Even new rules can only be legitimized if they are claimed to have “always existed.” If we view the *Sayyid* phenomenon in Cikoang through Max Weber’s lens within the framework of traditional legitimacy, their status as spiritual leaders and guardians of tradition can be understood as the result of a collective belief that has existed since the arrival of *Sayyid* Jalaluddin Al-Aidid. The lineage believed to trace back to the Prophet Muhammad SAW, forms the symbolic foundation for the emergence of respect, while hereditary practices such as leading the *Mauduq Lompoa*, teaching Sufi teachings, and serving as a reference in various social rituals reinforce the perception that the *Sayyids*’ position has indeed “always been” the central position within religious and social life. Thus, this legitimacy does not rest on formal power or coercion, but rather on a deep acceptance of traditions that are continuously upheld through rituals, historical narratives, and a lineage strictly preserved. This aligns with a statement by one of the *Sayyids* in an interview, who affirmed that “*what takes place in Cikoang today has existed since the time of Jalaluddin and has been maintained to this day.*”

At the same time, there is an element of charismatic legitimacy, particularly associated with key figures such as *Sayyid* Jalaluddin. His charisma as a propagator of Islam, a possessor of esoteric knowledge or a Sufi master, and the first spiritual leader in Cikoang established an authority that continues to be passed down through the chain of transmission (*sanad*), the teacher-student relationship, and ritual capacities

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<sup>29</sup> Oluwagbenga Michael Akinlabi, “Understanding Legitimacy in Weber’s Perspectives and in Contemporary Society,” in *Police-Citizen Relations in Nigeria: Procedural Justice, Legitimacy, and Law-Abiding Behaviour*, ed. Oluwagbenga Michael Akinlabi (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2022), 11–24, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-92919-0\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-92919-0_2).

<sup>30</sup> Arild Wæraas, *On Weber: Legitimacy and Legitimation in Public Relations* (2018).

<sup>31</sup> Nilna Fauza, “Legitimasi Politik Tokoh Agama: Kajian Interpretatif Masyarakat Multiagama di Kabupaten Nagnjuk,” *Lentera: Kajian Keagamaan, Keilmuan, dan Teknologi* 19 (2020), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.29138/lentera.v19i1.620>.

that are still considered exclusive to *Sayyid*. This founder's charisma has not faded over time but has been institutionalized within customary rules, the role of the anrong guru, and reverence for his biological descendants.

In legal-rational legitimacy, the foundation of this legitimacy lies in the belief that the prevailing rules are valid, orderly, and accountable. Weber emphasizes that this form of legitimacy operates through two main principles: first, the existence of official functions that operate continuously and are bound by rules; second, the existence of a clear division of authority so that each position has its own duties and limits of competence.<sup>32</sup>

Related to the *Sayyid* community in Cikoang, this principle is evident in the way they organize their religious and social life through internal rules passed down across generations. The *Sayyid* class structure ranges from Opu, Karaeng, and Massang to *Sayyid Biasa*, and clearly defines who has the authority to lead rituals. The process of inheriting religious roles, the method of selecting the *Mauduq Lompoa* leader, and the criteria for who may teach religion essentially function like a merit-based system within a traditional bureaucracy.

This aligns with interview findings that reinforce this observation. The community explains that one can only teach religion in Cikoang if they are a descendant of a *Sayyid* or have at least studied directly under a *Sayyid*. This means that, in addition to scholarly ability, one must possess an authoritative lineage recognized as valid by the community. This teacher-student relationship acts as a formal mechanism ensuring that the teachings conveyed remain within the legitimate lineage of the *Sayyid*. Although not fully bureaucratic in the Weberian sense, certain structured mechanisms regarding ritual leadership and religious transmission indicate limited procedural features resembling legal-rational organization.

Viewed through Weber's broader framework, the three forms of legitimacy in Cikoang do not operate separately, but rather interact and reinforce one another within the social position of the *Sayyid* community. The charismatic legitimacy initially embodied by *Sayyid* Jalaluddin as an Islamic propagator and spiritual figure gradually underwent what Weber describes as the routinization of charisma, namely the transformation of personal charisma into enduring social structures and hereditary traditions. Over time, this charisma became institutionalized through lineage-based authority, ritual obligations, hereditary religious roles, and customary norms that continue to regulate social and religious life in Cikoang society.

In the contemporary context, traditional legitimacy remains the dominant form sustaining the *Sayyid's* social position, as community recognition continues to rely heavily on inherited lineage, collective memory, and the continuity of customary traditions. Nevertheless, elements of charismatic legitimacy persist through ongoing reverence toward *Sayyid* Jalaluddin and his descendants, while quasi-legal-rational features appear in the structured mechanisms governing ritual leadership, religious

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<sup>32</sup> Abdul Kadir, *Prinsip-prinsip Dasar Rasionalisasi Birokrasi Max Weber Pada Organisasi Perangkat Daerah Kota Kendari Provinsi Sulawesi Tenggara*, 2015.

transmission, and internal social hierarchy. This interaction demonstrates that *Sayyid's* legitimacy in Cikoang operates not as a single form of authority, but as a historically layered process of symbolic and social institutionalization.

### **A Bourdieusian Analysis of the Construction of *Sayyid* Identity**

Identity construction refers to the social process that shapes how a group is understood both by itself and by the wider society (Mutmainnah, Ade Yolanda Latjuba, and Hasbullah 2022). From Bourdieu's perspective, identity does not emerge naturally but is formed through social practices, habitus, historical narratives, and ongoing power relations. Group identity is built through how they position themselves, how they are positioned by others, and how various symbols, practices, and knowledge are passed down and internalized across generations.<sup>33</sup>

In the context of Cikoang, the construction of *Sayyid* identity is shaped through genealogical narratives as descendants of the Prophet, religious practices, kinship structures, and religious habitus passed down since the arrival of *Sayyid* Jalaluddin Al-Aidid. This identity is then consecrated through ritual roles, such as leading the *Mauduq Lompoa*, serving as the center for the transmission of Sufi knowledge, and acting as a reference in birth, marriage, and death rituals. Through this series of symbolic practices, the position of the *Sayyid* is not merely recognized as a specific lineage group but acknowledged, trusted, and legitimized as a figure possessing honor and spiritual authority within the social structure of Cikoang.

The social position of the *Sayyid* in Cikoang is closely tied to forms of capital recognized within the local religious social structure. Informants repeatedly associated *Sayyid* status with moral authority, ritual competence, and genealogical prestige. These forms of recognition function as symbolic and cultural capital that distinguish the *Sayyid* from other social groups within the village hierarchy. From a Bourdieusian perspective, the dominance of the *Sayyid* community can therefore be understood through the accumulation and reproduction of symbolic, cultural, social, and economic capital that collectively sustain their legitimacy within the social structure of Cikoang society.

Several informants associated *Sayyid* identity with spiritual blessing and moral authority. From a Bourdieusian perspective, this collective recognition functions as symbolic capital within the religious social structure of Cikoang society. Symbolic power refers to the ability to obtain social influence not through physical or economic coercion, but through recognition, prestige, and legitimacy acknowledged by the community. Bourdieu (1977) asserts that symbolic capital can take the form of prestige or self-image, which can be exchanged for advantages in both economic and social spheres. This form of prestige is evident in certain objects or attributes that are recognized as having added value and are capable of enhancing a person's status or

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<sup>33</sup> Blake E Ashforth and Beth Schinoff, "Identity Under Construction: How Individuals Come to Define Themselves in Organizations," *ResearchGate*, ahead of print, August 6, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-041015-062322>.

advantages in the eyes of society.<sup>34</sup> Symbolic capital serves as a resource used to build and maintain symbolic power, as symbols possess the power to shape reality, influence perceptions, and direct collective beliefs. Thus, symbolic capital constitutes an accumulation of prestige, reputation, honor, or consecration, all of which are constructed within the dialectic between *connaissance* (knowledge) and *reconnaissance* (social recognition).

First, symbolic capital within the *Sayyid* community in Cikoang stems from genealogical claims as descendants of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, through the lineage of *Sayyid* Jalaluddin. This lineage is not only respected but is considered sacred and endowed with moral authority, thereby generating a form of prestige widely recognized by the community. Several informants associated the *Sayyid* lineage with spiritual blessing, indicating that symbolic prestige remains deeply embedded in local religious consciousness. This symbolic capital is then institutionalized through major rituals such as *Mauduq Lompoa*, the recitation of the Barzanji, and various life cycle rituals. The prominent role of the *Sayyids* in these rituals reinforces the public perception that they are the guardians of tradition and a source of blessings, ensuring that their status is continuously passed down from generation to generation.

Furthermore, cultural capital is evident in the *Sayyids'* mastery of religious knowledge, particularly regarding Sufi orders, local history, traditional Islamic jurisprudence, and the procedures for performing traditional religious rituals. Mastery of religious knowledge is viewed as a form of "cultural heritage" inherent to the *Sayyid* family, and it is this that establishes them as respected teachers and authorities on various social and religious matters. In Cikoang, the norm holds that a person is only considered qualified to teach religion if they are a *Sayyid* or possess a scholarly lineage traceable to a *Sayyid*. Thus, cultural capital is maintained through mechanisms of inheritance, internal education, and restrictions on access to religious teaching authority.

The social capital of the *Sayyid* community is built through strong kinship networks, patronage relationships, and the exclusivity of lineage is maintained through the practice of endogamous marriage, where *Sayyids* are prioritized to marry other *Sayyids* or within specific family circles.<sup>35</sup>

This pattern is not merely a tradition but serves as a social strategy to preserve the purity of lineage, which is the primary source of honor. This network enables them to maintain a central position within Cikoang's social structure while expanding their influence through connections with religious figures, village institutions, and Sufi orders beyond Cikoang. The *Sayyids'* role as ritual leaders ensures their constant presence at key community events such as births, weddings, and funerals, which strengthen social bonds and collective trust. This social capital underpins their

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<sup>34</sup> Mega Mustikasari, Arlin Arlin, and Syamsu A. Kamaruddin, "Pemikiran Pierre Bourdieu dalam Memahami Realitas Sosial," *Kaganga: Jurnal Pendidikan Sejarah dan Riset Sosial Humaniora* 6, no. 1 (January 2023): 9–14, <https://doi.org/10.31539/kaganga.v6i1.5089>.

<sup>35</sup> Hariyadi and Suhaeb, "Eksistensi Pernikahan Perempuan *Sayyid* Di Desa Cikoang Kabupaten Takalar."

symbolic power and facilitates access to strategic positions within the government or traditional institutions.

Several informants noted that village leadership in Cikoang has historically been closely associated with *Sayyid* families, reflecting the strong social trust attached to genealogical authority. However, this appointment is not viewed as a form of imposed domination, but rather as the result of the community's collective trust, which holds that *Sayyid* figures possess the moral capacity, religious knowledge, and social legitimacy to lead. Thus, the community's preference in selecting local leaders demonstrates how respected genealogical authority continues to gain support through natural mechanisms of social consent.

Although economic capital within the *Sayyid* community may not always be the primary form of capital, it still plays a role in sustaining prestige and religious social activities. Some *Sayyid* families earn their livelihoods through agriculture, local trade, and enjoy a relatively stable economic status due to their extensive social networks. Furthermore, the ability to organize major rituals such as *Mauduq Lompoa* creates the impression that they possess sufficient material resources to fulfill customary obligations, thereby indirectly reinforcing their symbolic legitimacy in the eyes of the community. This economic capital functions as a support for symbolic and cultural capital, not as the dominant source of power, but as a factor that helps maintain the continuity of their position within the social structure.

From Bourdieu's perspective, these various forms of capital operate within what he describes as a field, namely a structured social arena in which individuals and groups compete for recognition, legitimacy, and influence according to specific social rules and values. In the context of Cikoang society, the religious social arena surrounding the *Sayyid* community can be understood as a distinct social field governed by its own doxa, namely the collectively accepted belief that genealogical descent from the Prophet constitutes a legitimate basis for social prestige and symbolic distinction. Within this field, symbolic recognition, ritual authority, social honor, and genealogical legitimacy become the central stakes continuously reproduced through everyday social interaction.

The positions occupied by social actors within this field are not equal, but structured according to the forms of capital they possess and the legitimacy recognized by the community. The *Sayyid* Opu and prominent *Sayyid* families occupy dominant positions because they possess stronger accumulations of symbolic, cultural, and social capital derived from lineage, religious prestige, ritual roles, and kinship networks. Meanwhile, ordinary *Sayyid* descendants (*Sayyid Biasa*), Karaeng groups, and non-*Sayyid* communities (Jawi) occupy different positions within the hierarchy of the field, each negotiating their social recognition according to prevailing norms and symbolic boundaries.<sup>36</sup> Through this structure, struggles over legitimacy do not always appear as open conflict, but rather operate subtly through mechanisms of

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<sup>36</sup> Juliati and Andi Ima Kesuma, *Strata Sosial Keturunan Sayyid (Sayye') pada Masyarakat Desa Cikoang di Kabupaten Takalar*.

recognition, ritual participation, social respect, and the reproduction of inherited symbolic distinctions. Field observations during ritual activities also revealed that *Sayyid* figures consistently occupied central ceremonial positions, reinforcing their symbolic visibility within communal life. In this sense, the social dominance of the *Sayyid* in Cikoang is maintained not merely through tradition alone, but through the continuous operation of symbolic power within the local religious social field.

In addition to the concept of Capital, Pierre Bourdieu also emphasizes the importance of the concept of Habitus in social reality. From a Bourdieusian perspective, the intergenerational reproduction of habitus serves as a cultural mechanism ensuring the stability of the social structure in Cikoang. Habitus is understood as a set of dispositions, ways of thinking, and modes of action instilled through the socialization process from childhood onward, making them feel natural and self-evident.<sup>37</sup>

Within the *Sayyid* community, this habitus is clearly evident through the cultivation of an awareness that they are the heirs of religious traditions, the genealogical guardians of the Prophet's lineage, and figures deemed morally qualified to lead various rituals ranging from *Mauduq Lompoa* and *barzanji* to Sufi order education. Meanwhile, non-*Sayyid* groups develop with a different disposition. They are trained from an early age to view the *Sayyid* community as a given, a social order that is inherited and deserves respect. One non-*Sayyid* informant explained that respect toward the *Sayyid* had long been taught within families and was perceived as part of proper social conduct in Cikoang society. As both groups internalize their respective positions and roles, this social structure not only persists but also appears as though it were a natural part of daily life. Thus, habitus functions as a social mechanism that subtly yet effectively reproduces hierarchy, maintains the continuity of *Sayyid* symbolic dominance, and ensures that the old social order can endure even without coercion or formal regulation.

The Cikoang case also reflects broader patterns found in studies of *Sayyid* and *Habib* communities in other parts of Indonesia, particularly regarding the importance of genealogical legitimacy, symbolic capital, and inherited religious prestige in shaping social hierarchy. Studies by Nasyirudin (2025) and Atho'ilah Aly Najmuddin and Irwan Abdullah (2025), for instance, similarly demonstrate how *Sayyid* identity in Indonesian Muslim communities is sustained through collective recognition, religious symbolism, and the reproduction of social distinction rooted in lineage. However, the Cikoang case possesses distinctive characteristics due to the strong integration between genealogical hierarchy, local ritual structures, and the enduring social stratification embedded within community life.

Unlike some urban *Habib* communities where symbolic legitimacy increasingly operates through media visibility or contemporary religious networks, legitimacy in Cikoang remains deeply tied to hereditary ritual roles, customary structures, and

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<sup>37</sup> Joseph Robert Daniel, "Habitus and Identity," *Discussion Paper for the Monthly Meeting of the Bourdieu Discussion Group* (United Kingdom), 2022.

localized systems of social recognition. This demonstrates that while genealogical legitimacy remains a broader feature of *Sayyid* communities in Indonesia, its reproduction is always shaped by specific local social fields, cultural traditions, and historical trajectories.

## **Conclusion**

This study demonstrates that the social legitimacy of the *Sayyid* community in Cikoang is constructed, maintained, and reproduced through the interaction between genealogical lineage, ritual practices, collective recognition, and inherited social structures. The legitimacy of the *Sayyid* is sustained not solely through claims of descent from the Prophet Muhammad SAW, but through the continuous reproduction of symbolic authority within everyday religious and social life. Ritual leadership, hereditary religious roles, kinship structures, and community recognition collectively function as mechanisms through which *Sayyid* legitimacy becomes normalized and socially reproduced across generations. In this context, genealogical identity operates not merely as ancestry, but as a socially recognized form of symbolic legitimacy embedded within the religious social structure of Cikoang society.

The combination of Weberian and Bourdieusian perspectives allows this study to explain dimensions of legitimacy that neither framework could fully address independently. Weber's concept of traditional legitimacy clarifies why the *Sayyids* continue to be collectively accepted as legitimate religious figures through inherited customs, lineage, and historical continuity. However, Weber alone is insufficient to explain how such legitimacy persists and becomes socially reproduced in everyday life. Bourdieu's concepts of symbolic capital, habitus, and field therefore complement Weber by revealing the subtle social mechanisms through which respect toward the *Sayyid* becomes internalized, normalized, and continuously reproduced through ritual practice, symbolic recognition, and inherited social dispositions. Together, these perspectives demonstrate that *Sayyid's* legitimacy in Cikoang operates not merely as an inherited tradition, but as an actively reproduced symbolic order sustained through both collective belief and everyday social practice.

More broadly, this study contributes to discussions on Islamic authority and lineage-based legitimacy in Southeast Asian Muslim societies by demonstrating that genealogical authority remains socially meaningful even within contemporary contexts shaped by social change and modernization. The Cikoang case illustrates that religious legitimacy rooted in lineage persists not simply because of theological belief or historical inheritance, but because it is continuously reinforced through localized ritual structures, symbolic recognition, and socially embedded forms of habitus. These findings suggest that the persistence of lineage-based religious authority in Muslim societies should be understood not as a static cultural remnant, but as a dynamic process of symbolic and social reproduction shaped by specific historical and cultural contexts.

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