

Historical Development, Social Structure, and Cultural Preservation in Marindal 1 Village

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ABSTRACT

Marindal 1 Village in Patumbak District, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra, possesses a long historical trajectory characterized by social diversity and enduring cultural traditions. Although previous studies have documented aspects of local history and culture, limited attention has been devoted to examining the interrelationship between historical development, social structure, and cultural preservation within a unified analytical framework. This study investigates the historical development of Marindal 1 Village, its social structure, and the preservation of its cultural heritage. The research employs a qualitative historical approach using the historical method, encompassing heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography, supported by an extensive literature review to reconstruct historical continuity and explain socio-cultural dynamics through documented evidence. The findings indicate that the village developed through sustained interaction among Batak, Malay, and Javanese communities since the nineteenth century, giving rise to a social structure characterized by kinship, cooperation, and collective solidarity. These social values have enabled the continuous preservation and adaptation of local traditions despite the pressures of urbanization and globalization. This study contributes to local history scholarship by demonstrating how historical development has shaped social structure and strengthened cultural preservation, providing a comprehensive understanding of rural socio-cultural continuity in Marindal 1 Village.

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INTRODUCTION

Local history constitutes a fundamental field of historical inquiry because it explains how communities evolve through interactions between historical development, social structure, and cultural preservation. Beyond documenting past events, local history provides an analytical framework for understanding how collective experiences shape community continuity across generations. Within this perspective, social structure reflects enduring patterns of social relations, whereas cultural preservation represents the dynamic process through which traditions and local values are maintained despite social change. These perspectives have become increasingly significant in explaining the transformation of rural communities experiencing rapid modernization. Marindal 1 Village, located in Patumbak Subdistrict, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra Province, represents one such community characterized by continuous historical development and socio-cultural diversity (Zega, 2016). Geographically, the village borders Medan City, placing it within an area of rapid urban expansion and intensive social interaction, thereby creating a dynamic environment for historical continuity and cultural preservation (Syarif, 2013; Syarif et al., 2014).

The significance of local history extends beyond preserving historical records, as it also serves as an important medium for understanding the interaction between communities and their surrounding environment over time. Changes in settlement patterns, economic activities, and demographic composition provide valuable evidence of how historical processes influence the formation of social institutions and collective behavior. Consequently, the study of local history enables researchers to examine historical continuity not only through chronological events but also through the transformation of everyday social life that shapes the character of a community.

In rural communities undergoing rapid development, historical experiences often function as an important source of resilience in responding to social and economic change. The continuity of community life is maintained through the adaptation of long-established social norms, collective values, and customary practices to contemporary circumstances.

Rather than disappearing under the influence of modernization, these historical legacies frequently evolve into mechanisms that strengthen cooperation, facilitate conflict resolution, and preserve social stability within increasingly diverse populations.

The strategic location of a rural community adjacent to an expanding urban center creates both opportunities and challenges that deserve scholarly attention. Increased mobility, economic integration, and technological advancement may accelerate social transformation while simultaneously placing pressure on traditional institutions and cultural practices. Examining these dynamics provides a more comprehensive understanding of how historical development continues to influence present-day social organization and cultural preservation, demonstrating that rural communities are active agents in negotiating continuity and change rather than passive recipients of external influences.

The historical development of Marindal 1 Village cannot be separated from successive waves of migration by Batak, Malay, Javanese, and other ethnic communities, which collectively shaped its pluralistic social structure. Since the nineteenth century, settlement expansion began with agricultural land clearing, which established the economic and demographic foundations of the village before subsequent growth in trade and services (Hutasoit et al., [2024](#)). Although modernization has transformed livelihood and settlement patterns, long-standing values of kinship, cooperation, and communal solidarity continue to influence social organization. This continuity demonstrates that historical development and cultural preservation have evolved simultaneously rather than independently, enabling traditional values to adapt to changing socio-economic circumstances while maintaining community cohesion. Consequently, the village provides an important context for examining the interaction between historical processes and contemporary rural socio-cultural development.

Previous studies concerning Marindal 1 Village have predominantly examined social change, kinship relations, or cultural traditions as separate themes. While these studies provide valuable empirical findings, they offer a limited explanation of how historical development, social structure, and cultural preservation interact within a single analytical framework. Consequently, the broader process through which historical continuity shapes present-day community life remains insufficiently understood, particularly in rural communities undergoing rapid socio-economic transformation. This limitation underscores the need for a more comprehensive approach that can integrate these interrelated dimensions to explain the continuity and transformation of rural society more systematically (Siregar et al., [2025](#); Syafitri et al., [2021](#)).

The novelty of this study lies in integrating historical development, social structure, and cultural preservation into a single analytical framework to explain the long-term evolution of Marindal 1 Village. Rather than examining these dimensions independently, this study demonstrates how historical processes have shaped the village's social structure while simultaneously influencing the continuity and adaptation of its cultural traditions. This integrated perspective provides a broader understanding of rural socio-cultural development. It contributes to Indonesian local history scholarship by illustrating the interconnected relationship among historical continuity, social organization, and cultural preservation within a rapidly changing rural environment.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to examine the historical development of Marindal 1 Village, analyze its social structure, identify the forms of cultural heritage that continue to be preserved, and explain the community's efforts to sustain cultural preservation amid modernization. Through these objectives, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how historical development has influenced the formation of social structure and the continuity of cultural practices. Furthermore, the findings are expected to enrich the literature on Indonesian local history by offering an integrated perspective on the relationship between historical development, social structure, and cultural preservation.

Accordingly, this study addresses four research questions: (1) how the historical development of Marindal 1 Village has unfolded; (2) what characterizes the village's social structure; (3) what forms of cultural heritage continue to be preserved; and (4) how the community sustains cultural preservation in the context of modernization. These questions are designed to guide a systematic analysis of the interrelationship between historical development, social structure, and cultural preservation. By addressing these questions, the study seeks to provide a more comprehensive explanation of the processes that have shaped the continuity and resilience of Marindal 1 Village over time.

METHOD

This study employs a historical method and a qualitative approach, grounded in a literature review, to examine the historical development, social structure, and cultural preservation of Marindal 1 Village. The historical method was selected because it enables the systematic reconstruction of historical processes while facilitating the interpretation of social and cultural continuity through documented evidence. The research followed four interconnected stages: heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography. This methodological framework is considered appropriate for explaining long-term historical development and its relationship with contemporary socio-cultural conditions without departing from verifiable documentary evidence.

The heuristic stage involved the systematic collection of secondary sources, including academic books, peer-reviewed journal articles, research reports, and historical documents relevant to the historical development, social structure, and cultural preservation of Marindal 1 Village. Sources were selected based on their academic relevance, thematic consistency with the research objectives, and their contribution to understanding the village's historical and socio-cultural development. To ensure analytical coherence, the collected materials were categorized into three principal themes: historical development, social structure, and cultural preservation. This classification facilitated a systematic organization of the available evidence prior to analysis.

The source criticism stage focused on evaluating the authenticity and credibility of the collected materials by comparing authorship, publication background, consistency of historical information, and compatibility among multiple documentary sources. This process was intended to minimize potential bias and to ensure that only reliable information was incorporated into the analysis. Subsequently, the interpretation stage examined the relationships among historical events, social transformation, and cultural continuity by synthesizing evidence from the categorized sources. Rather than describing individual references independently, the analysis integrated complementary findings to construct a coherent explanation of the village's historical development and socio-cultural dynamics.

The final stage, historiography, involved organizing the interpreted findings into a systematic scholarly narrative that reflects the chronological development of Marindal 1 Village and its evolving social and cultural characteristics. The synthesized data were analyzed using qualitative descriptive techniques to identify patterns of continuity and change across different historical periods. Although the study primarily relies on documentary sources, the analytical emphasis was placed on cross-source corroboration to strengthen the credibility and consistency of the findings. This approach provides a comprehensive historical interpretation of the interrelationship between historical development, social structure, and cultural preservation in Marindal 1 Village (Daliman, [2018](#); Herlina, [2020](#)).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Historical Development and Socio-Economic Transformation of Marindal 1 Village

The historical development of Marindal 1 Village reflects the broader transformation of the Deli Serdang region, where environmental resources, demographic change, and regional expansion collectively shaped the evolution of rural society. The village emerged as part of the territorial development that characterized eastern North Sumatra during the nineteenth century, rather than as an isolated settlement. This historical trajectory reveals not only the sequence of local development but also the processes that established the foundations of the village's present social structure and cultural preservation. The interaction between historical change and community adaptation continues to influence contemporary social life, making the village an important case for understanding the long-term dynamics of rural development.

Local communities initiated the earliest phase of settlement by clearing forested and uninhabited land for agricultural purposes. This environmental transformation created productive farmland and encouraged permanent settlement in the area. Gimlah et al. ([2026](#)) explain that communities began establishing settlements in the Marindal area during the nineteenth century as agricultural activities became the primary source of livelihood. The establishment of permanent settlements encouraged residents to develop regular patterns of interaction, cooperation, and shared responsibility, gradually strengthening social organization within the growing community.

Agriculture became the primary driver of local development because fertile land enabled residents to cultivate rice, corn, and various cash crops that sustained household livelihoods. Farming activities also required continuous

collaboration in land preparation, irrigation management, harvesting, and the distribution of agricultural resources. These collective practices strengthened interpersonal trust, reinforced reciprocal relationships, and encouraged cooperation among community members. The historical expansion of agriculture, therefore, shaped not only the village economy but also the social structure by creating strong networks of cooperation that continued to support community stability across generations.

Community groups expanded alongside agricultural production as residents organized themselves to manage collective economic activities and mutual assistance. Families and neighboring households gradually transformed informal cooperation into more structured social organizations that coordinated production and regulated community relationships. This development illustrates that economic growth and institutional development progressed simultaneously throughout the village's historical evolution. The historical experience of Marindal 1 Village shows that productive activities served as an important foundation for building durable social institutions that strengthened community cohesion and supported collective decision-making over time.

The Dutch colonial period introduced another stage of transformation through the rapid expansion of plantation activities across the Deli Serdang region. Colonial authorities improved transportation infrastructure, increased regional connectivity, and encouraged greater population mobility, allowing Marindal 1 Village to interact more intensively with surrounding areas. These developments expanded settlement patterns and created broader economic opportunities without fundamentally altering the community's established social organization. The village responded to these external changes by adapting its economic activities while maintaining the cooperative relationships that had developed during the earlier agrarian period.

Marindal 1 Village experienced substantial socio-economic transformation after Indonesian independence, as population growth and its strategic location near Medan City created new economic opportunities. Many residents diversified their livelihoods by participating in trade, services, and urban employment while maintaining strong connections with agricultural activities that had long supported the local economy (Akbar & Sahrul, [2026](#); Lubis & Rosdiana, [2025](#)). This transition illustrates that modernization encouraged economic adaptation instead of replacing the village's historical foundations. Residents combined emerging urban-oriented occupations with existing community values, allowing socio-economic transformation to progress without weakening the social relationships established through earlier historical development.

Infrastructure development also accelerated the village's transformation by constructing roads, educational facilities, and other public services that improved accessibility and expanded opportunities for education, employment, and economic exchange. These improvements increased interaction between Marindal 1 Village and surrounding urban communities while exposing residents to broader patterns of social and economic change. At the same time, the community continued to uphold values inherited from previous generations, including solidarity, mutual responsibility, and cooperation, which remained embedded in everyday social life (Dwisuda et al., [2022](#); Gultom, [2020](#); Lestari et al., [2025](#)). This combination of adaptation and continuity demonstrates that the community actively responded to modernization while preserving the social and cultural foundations established through its historical experience.

The historical development of Marindal 1 Village illustrates the interaction between environmental adaptation, economic transformation, and socio-cultural continuity across successive historical periods. Each stage of development, from early settlement formation and agricultural expansion to colonial influence, post-independence growth, and contemporary modernization, contributed to shaping the village's present social structure and strengthening cultural preservation. These historical processes explain why Marindal 1 Village continues to maintain strong community cohesion despite experiencing substantial socio-economic change. The village's historical experience demonstrates that long-term historical development has created a resilient social foundation that enables the community to accommodate modernization while sustaining the cultural values that define its collective identity.

Social Structure, Social Capital, and Community Resilience in Marindal 1 Village

The social structure of Marindal 1 Village reflects long-standing patterns of interaction that have developed through continuous historical processes rather than through formal institutional arrangements alone. Residents maintain strong kinship relationships while simultaneously building social ties through everyday interactions that extend beyond family boundaries. Silitonga et al. ([2024](#)) explain that social relationships within the village do not rely exclusively on blood relations but also emerge through sustained communication, cooperation, and shared social experiences. These

interaction patterns have created a stable social structure that supports collective action and strengthens the community's capacity to respond to social change.

The ethnic composition of Marindal 1 Village also plays an important role in shaping its social structure. Batak, Malay, Javanese, and other ethnic communities have shared the same social space for generations, allowing intercultural interaction to become part of everyday community life. Residents maintain harmonious relationships by practicing tolerance, mutual respect, and reciprocal cooperation despite their diverse cultural backgrounds. This long-term coexistence illustrates that social integration in Marindal 1 Village results from continuous interaction rather than the elimination of cultural differences, enabling diversity to function as a source of social cohesion rather than social fragmentation.

Traditional, religious, and community leaders continue to influence social life by maintaining communication among different social groups and facilitating conflict resolution when disputes arise. Community members also actively participate in youth organizations, religious associations, and other local groups that offer opportunities for regular interaction and collective decision-making. These formal and informal institutions strengthen social coordination while reinforcing commonly accepted norms within the village. The continued effectiveness of these institutions demonstrates that community leadership remains an important mechanism for maintaining social stability amid changing socio-economic conditions.

The social organization of Marindal 1 Village has continuously adapted to the transformations occurring in the peri-urban environment surrounding Medan City. Population mobility, residential expansion, and changing employment opportunities have altered patterns of daily interaction without fundamentally weakening established social relationships. Dewi et al. (2025) argue that communities located within rapidly developing urban buffer zones frequently experience social restructuring as they adjust to new economic and demographic realities. Marindal 1 Village demonstrates this adaptive capacity by maintaining community participation and collective interaction while accommodating increasingly diverse social and occupational backgrounds.

The continuity of interpersonal trust, reciprocal relationships, and extensive community networks indicates that social capital remains an important feature of everyday life in Marindal 1 Village. Residents continue to rely on mutual trust and established social networks to organize community activities, resolve local issues, and address shared needs. Kunarsih and Tampilen (2022) emphasize that trust, social networks, and collective norms serve as valuable social resources that support cooperation and enhance the effectiveness of community decision-making. The experience of Marindal 1 Village supports this perspective because residents consistently mobilize these social resources to facilitate collective participation and maintain harmonious relationships despite increasing social complexity.

Economic development and demographic diversification have introduced new social challenges that require continuous adjustment within the community. Differences in educational background, occupation, cultural orientation, and socio-economic status have expanded the range of interests represented within village society. Residents address these differences through consultation, informal communication, and consensus-building practices that encourage dialogue rather than confrontation. Anwar (2022) notes that communities capable of accommodating diverse interests through participatory approaches generally demonstrate stronger social stability, a pattern evident in Marindal 1 Village despite ongoing socio-economic transformation.

The persistence of *gotong royong* provides one of the clearest examples of how Marindal 1 Village has preserved its social values while adapting to contemporary conditions. Community members no longer limit *gotong royong* to physical activities such as environmental cleanup or public infrastructure construction; they also apply it to educational initiatives, religious programs, and responses to various social issues. Agustin and Mesra (2024) argue that this transformation reflects the ability of traditional values to remain relevant by adapting to changing social needs without losing their original meaning. The experience of Marindal 1 Village demonstrates that *gotong royong* continues to function as an important mechanism for strengthening collective identity, expanding community participation, and sustaining social solidarity within an increasingly modern social environment.

The social structure of Marindal 1 Village demonstrates that long-term historical development has produced not only stable patterns of social interaction but also institutional and cultural capacities that enable the community to respond constructively to modernization. Strong kinship networks, multicultural coexistence, interpersonal trust, community participation, and the continued practice of *gotong royong* collectively strengthen the village's social

resilience while supporting sustainable local development. These characteristics distinguish Marindal 1 Village from communities where rapid urban expansion has weakened traditional social relationships, because residents continue to integrate new socio-economic opportunities with long-established communal values. This interaction between historical continuity and adaptive social organization explains how the village maintains social cohesion while responding to the dynamic challenges of contemporary rural transformation.

Gotong Royong as a Foundation of Collective Identity and Cultural Continuity

One of the most distinctive characteristics of Marindal 1 Village is the continued practice of *gotong royong*, which serves not only as collective labor but also as a social institution that reinforces community relationships. Residents continue to practice *gotong royong* across generations, keeping this tradition embedded in everyday social life despite ongoing socio-economic transformation. Siregar et al. (2025) describe *gotong royong* as an integral element of rural communities, reflecting solidarity, reciprocity, and collective responsibility. The persistence of this practice indicates that historical development in Marindal 1 Village has preserved communal values that continue to shape patterns of social interaction rather than allowing individualistic values to dominate community life.

Residents actively organize *gotong royong* in a wide range of community activities, including the construction and maintenance of public facilities, religious events, neighborhood road repairs, and traditional ceremonies. These activities encourage direct participation from different social groups and strengthen cooperation among residents regardless of their social or economic background. Ningsih et al. (2025) explain that *gotong royong* enables communities to complete collective tasks without prioritizing individual interests, thereby strengthening shared responsibility for public welfare. The experience of Marindal 1 Village demonstrates that *gotong royong* continues to function as a practical mechanism through which residents translate collective values into everyday community action.

The continuity of *gotong royong* also reflects the operation of social capital within the village. Repeated participation in collective activities strengthens interpersonal trust, expands social networks, and reinforces reciprocal obligations among community members. These relationships enable residents to coordinate community initiatives more effectively while reducing the potential for social fragmentation in a village that continues to experience demographic and economic change. The historical continuity of *gotong royong*, therefore, extends beyond cultural symbolism because it provides an institutional resource that supports cooperation and collective problem-solving in contemporary community life.

Traditional ceremonies provide another important context in which *gotong royong* continues to demonstrate its social significance. Residents participate collectively in weddings, funeral ceremonies, and other communal events by contributing labor, financial support, food, or other forms of support as needed. These practices strengthen interpersonal relationships while reaffirming the values of mutual assistance that have developed through the village's historical experience. Regular participation in these activities also reinforces collective identity because community members continue to recognize cooperation as an essential element of their shared social life.

The persistence of *gotong royong* distinguishes Marindal 1 Village from many peri-urban communities where modernization has reduced opportunities for sustained communal interaction. Although residents increasingly participate in urban economic activities and experience greater social mobility, they continue to uphold *gotong royong* by adapting its practice to contemporary social conditions rather than abandoning it altogether. This adaptive process illustrates that modernization has transformed the expression of collective values without fundamentally altering their social function. The community has therefore maintained cultural continuity by integrating inherited traditions into the changing realities of everyday life.

The historical development of Marindal 1 Village demonstrates that *gotong royong* has evolved beyond a traditional cultural practice. Residents continue to use this institution to strengthen collective identity, reinforce social solidarity, and maintain community resilience amid continuing socio-economic transformation. The sustained practice of *gotong royong* also illustrates how cultural preservation operates through everyday participation rather than solely through symbolic recognition. This interaction between historical continuity, collective participation, and cultural adaptation explains why *gotong royong* remains one of the defining characteristics of Marindal 1 Village and continues to support the sustainability of its social and cultural life.

Cultural Preservation, Cultural Continuity, and Community Adaptation in Marindal 1 Village

Cultural preservation constitutes one of the defining characteristics of Marindal 1 Village because it reflects the community's continuous effort to maintain inherited traditions while responding to changing social conditions. The community preserves both tangible and intangible cultural heritage that has developed through successive generations, allowing cultural values to remain embedded in everyday social life. Traditional customs associated with the human life cycle, including birth, marriage, and death, continue to hold an important place in the community. These traditions extend beyond ceremonial practices because they reinforce social relationships, strengthen collective identity, and preserve values that have historically shaped community life.

The continuity of these cultural practices demonstrates that cultural preservation in Marindal 1 Village operates through active community participation rather than solely through symbolic recognition. Residents continue to organize and participate in traditional ceremonies as part of their shared social responsibilities, thereby keeping cultural knowledge closely connected to everyday interaction. This pattern indicates that cultural continuity depends on sustained involvement by community members who actively reproduce inherited values in contemporary social contexts. The historical development of the village has therefore created a cultural environment in which traditions continue to function as living social institutions rather than as historical remnants.

Traditional arts also represent an important dimension of cultural preservation within Marindal 1 Village. Community members continue to perform *gondang* and use traditional musical instruments during customary ceremonies and cultural celebrations, keeping these artistic expressions relevant across generations. Syafitri et al. (2021) emphasize that local wisdom plays a central role in maintaining cultural continuity by providing ethical principles and collective values that guide community life. The continued practice of traditional arts demonstrates that cultural expression serves not only as entertainment but also as a mechanism for preserving historical memory and collective identity within the community.

The community also maintains oral traditions by transmitting folktales, customary knowledge, and moral values from older to younger generations through everyday family interaction and broader community engagement. This process enables cultural knowledge to remain closely associated with lived experience rather than becoming confined to written documentation. Intergenerational transmission strengthens the continuity of local values by enabling younger community members to learn cultural norms through direct participation in social and cultural activities. Marindal 1 Village illustrates how cultural preservation depends on continuous intergenerational interaction that collectively sustains historical memory and shared community identity.

Rapid technological development, expanding digital communication, and globalization have introduced new challenges to cultural preservation in Marindal 1 Village. Utari (2023) explains that these social transformations influence community perspectives and behavioral patterns, particularly among younger generations who increasingly engage with global popular culture through social media and digital platforms. Greater exposure to external cultural influences has reduced some young people's familiarity with local traditions and decreased participation in certain customary activities. Population mobility and urban expansion have intensified these changes by creating more diverse social environments that require continuous adaptation without weakening the community's cultural foundations.

The experience of Marindal 1 Village demonstrates that modernization has led to cultural transformation rather than displacement. Community members continue to preserve traditions by adjusting how cultural activities are organized and practiced while maintaining the fundamental values inherited from previous generations. This adaptive process illustrates cultural sustainability because the community preserves essential cultural meanings while responding to contemporary social realities. The interaction between historical continuity and social adaptation explains why local traditions remain relevant despite the increasing influence of modernization and globalization.

Residents preserve culture through multiple social institutions that collectively support intergenerational cultural transmission. Families introduce cultural values to children from an early age through informal education and everyday social interaction, allowing traditional norms to become part of children's social development. Schools complement this process by introducing local history and cultural knowledge through educational activities, while community organizations strengthen cultural awareness through art performances, religious celebrations, and other collective events. Auliana and Izar (2023) argue that local cultural education is an effective strategy for maintaining cultural heritage during periods of rapid social change, a pattern evident in Marindal 1 Village.

Government institutions and the broader community also contribute to safeguarding local cultural heritage by supporting programs that encourage cultural participation and strengthen awareness of local traditions. These collaborative efforts demonstrate that cultural preservation requires shared responsibility among families, educational institutions, community organizations, and public authorities, rather than relying solely on individual initiatives. Marindal 1 Village distinguishes itself by integrating historical experience, collective participation, and institutional support into a continuous cultural preservation process that extends beyond ceremonial activities. This interaction between historical development, social structure, and cultural continuity explains how the community has maintained its cultural identity while adapting to the opportunities and challenges created by modernization.

CONCLUSION

The historical development of Marindal 1 Village demonstrates that it has evolved from an agrarian settlement established in the nineteenth century into a dynamic peri-urban community while maintaining the social and cultural values inherited from previous generations. This study shows that historical development, social structure, and cultural preservation operate as interconnected dimensions that collectively shape the continuity of community life. Strong kinship networks, multicultural coexistence, community participation, and the continued practice of *gotong royong* have enabled the community to maintain social cohesion while adapting to socio-economic transformation and modernization. These findings contribute to local history and village studies by demonstrating that long-term historical processes not only explain patterns of rural development but also provide the institutional and cultural foundations that sustain community resilience and cultural continuity in rapidly changing social environments.

This study relies primarily on secondary sources and documentary evidence, which limits its ability to capture contemporary community experiences and everyday cultural practices directly. Future research should incorporate field-based approaches, including interviews, oral history, participant observation, and ethnographic methods, to provide richer empirical evidence on the interaction among historical development, social structure, and cultural preservation. Such approaches would strengthen understanding of how local communities negotiate cultural continuity amid ongoing modernization and would further enrich scholarship on local history, rural communities, and cultural preservation in Indonesia.

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