

TOWARDS AN INTERRELIGIOUS FIQH A Study of the Culture-Based Religious Tolerance in the Kaloran Community, Central Java, Indonesia

Ali Sodiqin* & Roehana Rofaidatun Umroh**

*Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University (UIN) Yogyakarta, Indonesia

**PKPPS Ulya Nidaul Quran Temanggung, Indonesia

email: ali.sodiqin@uin-suka.ac.id

Abstract

This paper explores local wisdom in Kaloran, Temanggung, Central Java, Indonesia, with its religious diversity that influences the understanding and practice of their religiosity. The people's local wisdom is agama ageming aji and sing penting brayan, which becomes the basis for building religious tolerance. It raises the question of how people interpret this philosophy as a guideline for building religious tolerance. What is the dialectic pattern of religion and culture practised by Kaloran Muslims? What is the form of implementation of inter-religious fiqh that manifests religious tolerance? The researchers argue that religion for the Kaloran people is like ageman (clothing), so choosing a religion is an individual's freedom and rights that somebody must respect. The ultimate purpose of religion is to build social harmony (brayan). In addition, the pattern of religious and cultural dialectics practised by the Muslim Kaloran is in the form of desacralisation and culturalization of religious teachings. The pattern, in turn, encourages the rise of such kind of inter-religious fiqh built by placing religion as a private matter and must go hand in hand with culture as a medium for building tolerance. The Muslim community integrated religion and culture through desacralisation and culturalization.

[Tulisan ini membahas kearifan lokal masyarakat Kaloran, Temanggung, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia, dengan keragaman keagamaannya yang mempengaruhi pemahaman dan praktik keberagaman masyarakat. Mereka memiliki kearifan lokal berupa agama ageming aji dan sing penting brayan sebagai dasar membangun toleransi beragama. Hal ini menimbulkan

pertanyaan bagaimana masyarakat memaknai falsafah tersebut sebagai pedoman dalam membangun toleransi beragama? Bagaimana pola dialektika agama dan budaya yang dipraktikkan Muslim Kaloran? Bagaimana bentuk implementasi fikih antar agama yang merupakan perwujudan dari toleransi beragama? Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa agama bagi masyarakat Kaloran diibaratkan sebagai ageman (pakaian), sehingga memilih agama adalah kebebasan dan hak individu yang harus dihormati. Tujuan beragama adalah untuk membangun harmoni sosial (brayan). Dengan pemahaman seperti itu, pola dialektika agama dan budaya yang dipraktikkan oleh masyarakat Kaloran berupa desakralisasi dan kulturalisasi ajaran agama terhadap budaya. Pola ini kemudian mendorong munculnya konstruksi fikih antar agama yang dibangun dengan menempatkan agama dalam wilayah privat yang harus berjalan beriringan dengan budaya sebagai media membangun toleransi. Agama dan budaya diintegrasikan melalui pola desakralisasi dan kulturalisasi.

Keywords: multi-religious community, agama ageming aji, inter-religious marriage, religious tolerance.

A. Introduction

Community culture affects both the form of religious interaction and its tolerance practice. Religious norms are determinants and have limitations in defining tolerance in specific communities.¹ The culture of a society is an open, collective agreement on values, views, and public attitudes influenced by external factors.² Therefore, local strengths and dynamics are essential in managing religious harmony.³ Culture plays a significant role in the development of religious tolerance, thereby making it essential to examine the contribution of a society's culture to the growth of religious moderation attitudes.

Meanwhile, religious moderation suppresses the emergence of religious intolerance that has been a severe threat to global peace and

¹ Trond Jørgensen, "Tolerance – a Culturally Dependent Concept?," *FLEKS - Scandinavian Journal of Intercultural Theory and Practice*, vol. 1, no. 2 (2014), pp. 1-18.

² Muhammad Kamil, "Cultural Tolerance, Diversity, and Pluralism: The Recognition of Yogyakarta as the City of Tolerance," *Journal of Local Government Issues*, vol. 1, no. 1 (2018), p. 46.

³ Otmar Oehring (ed.), *The Tension between Tolerance, Harmony of Religions and Freedom of Religion* (Berlin: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2019), p. 60.

harmonious co-existence.⁴ The community can build religious tolerance based on three aspects: justice, empathy, and fairness, which can suppress destructive actions caused by intolerance.⁵ According to Forst, tolerance is a normatively dependent concept that requires a relevant context, such as cultural values, in its growth.⁶ It is crucial to study the efforts of religious adherents in building a dialogue on understanding, acceptance, and development of religious tolerance in a plural society.

All official religions in Indonesia and some local beliefs have their adherents in Kaloran, Temanggung, Central Java, Indonesia. The Temanggung population statistics show that 88 per cent of the Kaloran people are Muslims, and the rest belong to various religions and beliefs.⁷ However, despite their religious diversity, Kaloran people rarely face religious conflicts due to the implementation of the *agama ageming aji* adage, a belief that all religions teach virtue. Religion is associated with clothing (*ageman*), a personal right that somebody must respect. This local wisdom unites religious differences and has become a medium for forming religious moderation. This paper seeks to see how such local wisdom works and how people comprehend it to guide social interaction.

Several studies have shown the contribution of local culture in promoting religious tolerance in the local context of Indonesia. Local traditions can be an effective medium of interaction to build social harmony,⁸ create communion,⁹ and maintain religious tolerance in multi-

⁴ Kazeem Oluwaseun Dauda, "Islamophobia and Religious Intolerance: Threats to Global Peace and Harmonious Co-Existence", *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies*, vol. 8, no. 2 (2020), pp. 257-92.

⁵ Arif Budiman Al Fariz and Gazi Saloom, "Religious Tolerance Measurement: Validity Test in Indonesia," *Jurnal Pengukuran Psikologii Dan Pendidikan Indonesia*, vol. 10, no. 1 (2021), pp. 67-78.

⁶ Rainer Forst, "Two Stories about Toleration", *RECON Online Working Papers Series* (Norway, 2010), <http://www.reconproject.eu/projectweb/portalproject/AbstractRECONwp1015.html>.

⁷ "Jumlah Penduduk Menurut Kecamatan dan Agama yang Dianut di Kabupaten Temanggung, 2020", *Badan Pusat Statistik Temanggung*, <https://temanggungkab.bps.go.id/stactable/2021/12/08/453/jumlah-penduduk-menurut-kecamatan-dan-agama-yang-dianut-di-kabupaten-temanggung-2020.html>, accessed on 6 April 2022.

⁸ Muhammad Japar, Komarudin Sahid, and Dini Nur Fadhillah, "Social Tolerance in the Multi-Religious States: A Case Study in Cigugur Society, Indonesia", *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, vol. 7, no. 7 (2019), p. 371.

⁹ Masduki, "Toleransi Di Masyarakat Plural Berbasis Budaya Lokal (Studi Kasus Di Desa Klepu Kec. Sooko Kab. Ponorogo)," *Social Budaya*, vol. 14, no. 1 (2017), pp. 13-21.

religious¹⁰ and multi-ethnic societies.¹¹ Through cultural acculturation, society applies patterns of associative interaction between adherents of different religions.¹² The community creates local wisdom that contains teachings of moderation and becomes a guide in social interaction.¹³ Thus, the adat plays a vital role in avoiding inter-religious conflict.¹⁴

Sutopo stated that religious teachings are not a source of intolerance. The socio-cultural, political, and economic factors determine religious tolerance instead.¹⁵ In the state's life, religion, when interacting with culture, contributes to the formation of nationalism.¹⁶ Pluralism also contributes to shaping political and religious balance and encourages tolerance in society's collective mind.¹⁷ On the other hand, religious observance positively impacts the emergence of respect for freedom in a pluralistic society.¹⁸

Previous studies have discussed the contribution of culture in building religious tolerance, both through preserving traditions and practising cultural teachings sourced from local wisdom. However, those researchers had yet to explore how cultural teachings affected the implementation of religious teachings. This study shows a different phenomenon. In the Kaloran community, cultural norms influence

¹⁰ Kamil, "Cultural Tolerance, Diversity and Pluralism".

¹¹ Suprpto, "Sasak Muslims and Interreligious Harmony: Ethnographic Study of the Perang Topat Festival in Lombok - Indonesia", *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, vol. 11, no. 1 (2017), pp. 77–98.

¹² Sinta Paramita and Wulan Purnama Sari, "Intercultural Communication to Preserve Harmony Between Religious Group in Jaton Village Minahasa (Komunikasi Lintas Budaya Dalam Menjaga Kerukunan Antara Umat Beragama Di Kampung Jaton Minahasa)", *Journal Pekommas*, vol. 1, no. 2 (2016), p. 153.

¹³ Putu Subawa, "Falsafah Tri Hita Karana sebagai Pondasi Moderasi Beragama", *Widyacarya: Jurnal Pendidikan, Agama Dan Budaya*, vol. 5, no. 1 (2021), pp. 65-9.

¹⁴ Sihol Farida Tambunan, "Adat and Religious Tolerance: Ethnophilosophy Perspective", *Journal of Indonesian Social Sciences and Humanities*, vol. 8, no. 2 (2018), pp. 89-100.

¹⁵ Dhanny Septimawan Sutopo, "Managing Diversity as A Foundation of Religious Tolerance: A Study in Sidoasri Village, the Regency of Malang", *Humaniora*, vol. 7, no. 4 (2016), p. 453.

¹⁶ Sekar Ayu Aryani, "Dialectic of Religion and National Identity in North Sulawesi Jewish Communities from The Perspective of Cross-Cultural and Religious Psychology", *Al-Jāmi'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, vol. 60, no. 1 (2022), pp. 199-226.

¹⁷ Ahmed Al-Ismaili, "Ethnic, Linguistic, and Religious Pluralism in Oman: The Link with Political Stability", *AlMuntaqa*, vol. 1, no. 3 (2018), pp. 58–73.

¹⁸ Robert A. Dowd, "Religious Diversity and Religious Tolerance: Lessons from Nigeria", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 60, no. 4 (2016), pp. 617–44.

people's understanding of religious teachings, resulting in various religious practices. The local wisdom of the *agama ageming aji* forms the basis for interpreting religious teachings, as seen in the practice of interfaith marriages and religious celebrations. These two religious practices are a form of interreligious fiqh practised by the Kaloran Muslims to implement religious tolerance. It raises the question of how local wisdom contributes to the formation of interreligious fiqh.

Religion is autonomous and absolute, so culture cannot terminate religious teachings. On the other hand, religion influences and determines the existence of culture because religion and culture have different essential levels.¹⁹ Religion becomes a measuring tool for cultural existence when religion and culture meet. In the context of Islamic fiqh, cultural traditions can be conformed to religion (Ar: *'urf ṣaḥīḥ*) or conflict with religious teachings (Ar: *'urf faṣīd*).

On the other hand, culture becomes a tool for interpreting religious teachings, thus causing diversity in their implementations. Religion and culture are not contradictory but are positioned as a bridge to build social harmony.²⁰ The concept of religious and cultural dialectics emerged, such as inculturation, acculturation, assimilation, and syncretisation. All of these patterns place the principles of religious teachings superior to cultural norms. Religion is final, absolute, universal, and eternal, while culture is particular, relative, and temporary.²¹ Religion is not the result of the evolution of culture, so culture cannot change the principles of religious teachings.²²

Different facts occur in the Kaloran Muslim community. Through the concept of *sing penting brayan*, the society places cultural norms as a tool for interpreting religious teachings. They perform interfaith marriages, though both Islamic fiqh and state law prohibit it. They also celebrate the holidays of any religion together as a social tradition. Religious provisions inherent in these two matters are released and replaced with cultural norms. It raises the question, what is the dialectical pattern of religion and culture that forms the basis for developing fiqh of religious tolerance?

¹⁹ Edmund Weber, "On a Dialectical Theory of Religion Fundamentals and Applications", *Journal of Religious Culture*, no. 264 (2020), pp. 3-4.

²⁰ Abdurrahman Wahid, "Pribumisasi Islam", in Muntaha Azhari dan Abdul Mun'im Shaleh (eds.), *Islam Indonesia Menatap Masa Depan* (Jakarta: P3M, 2001), p. 111.

²¹ Kuntowijoyo, *Muslim tanpa Masjid, Esai-Esai Agama, Budaya, dan Politik dalam Bingkai Strukturalisme Transendental* (Bandung: Mizan, 2001), p. 196.

²² Zaini Muchtarom, *Santri dan Abangan di Jawa* (Jakarta: Indonesian-Netherlands Cooperation in Islamic Studies, 1988), p. 38

This paper explains how society places cultural and religious relations to build religious tolerance. The aim is to clarify how local wisdom sociologically influences the community's perspective on religious teachings that are theological. Community understanding of theological and sociological boundaries of religious teachings is mapped based on their behaviour, namely in interfaith marriages and celebration of religious holidays. Religious teachings regulate and bind their implementation in both practices, but society changes these religious provisions. This study constructs the public's view of interreligious fiqh, forming the basis for implementing religious tolerance. How did society dialectic religion and culture into inclusive and tolerant teachings that underlie the religious behaviour of the Kaloran Muslims?

This case study conducted using qualitative design aims to describe the cultural life of the Kaloran community following Creswell's view,²³ examining contemporary problems intrinsically by describing the context of the case study. The exploration is focused on bounded systems to find the specificity and complexity of the cases studied, collected through observation and in-depth interviews. The data analysis uses Amin Abdullah's intersubjective approach, a combination of a subjective approach based on religious knowledge and an objective approach based on social science.²⁴ Fundamental features of the intersubjective type of religiosity: general pattern and unique pattern, epoche, eidetic vision, the historicity of religion, verstehen, empathy and sympathy, dialogue of inclusive partnership, and new enlightenment religious. Interviews with informants focused on their abilities and sensitivity to other religious communities whose rights must be respected and guaranteed, which, according to Amin Abdullah, is the core of a multicultural society.

B. Religious Pluralism in the Kaloran Society

Kaloran is one of the 20 sub-districts in Temanggung Regency, Central Java Province, Indonesia, comprising 14 villages.²⁵ Based on

²³ J. W. Creswell, *Research Design, Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (London: Sage Publication, 2015).

²⁴ M Amin Abdullah, "The Intersubjective Type of Religiosity: Theoretical Framework and Methodological Construction for Developing Human Sciences in a Progressive Muslim Perspective", *Al-Jāmi'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, vol. 58, no. 1 (2020), pp. 62-102.

²⁵ The fourteen villages are Kaloran, Tlogowungu, Gandon, Tleter, Getas, Kalimanggis, Tempuran, Kemiri, Geblog, Tegowanuh, Keblukan, Tepusen, Gandulan, and Kwarakan. See *Kecamatan Kaloran dalam Angka 2021* (Temanggung: Badan Pusat

the 2020 census, the population in this sub-district is 45,064 people, consisting of 22,569 men and 22,495 women, with the majority working in the agricultural sector. The community has a unique religious plurality component with 39,975 Muslims, 5,715 Buddhists, 2,085 Christians, 353 Catholics, 10 Hinduists, and 143 followers of other beliefs.²⁶

Religious plurality appears in the construction of worship places for each religion. For example, in Kalimanggis village, every hamlet has places of worship and meditation, such as mosques, churches, and monasteries. During the celebration of religious holidays, people, irrespective of their religions, are involved, and all religious leaders usually lead prayers in turn.²⁷ In the *Nyadran* tradition in Getas Village, all adherents of Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Buddhism, and other beliefs carry food in a container made of bamboo called *tenong*. All religious leaders and hamlet heads also attend this tradition.²⁸

Social contact between religious adherents in society fosters uni dimensionality.²⁹ The Kaloran community with various religions has a baritone scale of contact that promotes the strengthening of inclusive attitudes in religion. Intensive communication within the family and community fosters tolerance and a friendly environment. Community traditions become a space for dialogue and cooperation between religious adherents, preventing social conflicts. Religious tolerance is built through the concept of a house-based society and kinship culture.³⁰

Religious differences in the community do not trigger conflicts due to solid cultural ties based on adages *agama ageming aji* and *sing penting brayan*. These adages become an agreed cultural norm that binds religious diversity and strengthens social solidarity. Through this philosophy, people have an attitude of openness, acceptance, and cooperation despite their religious differences, which prevents them from being religious fanatics. There are similarities in emotional competence regarding the structure

Statistik Kabupaten Temanggung, 2021).

²⁶ “Jumlah Penduduk Menurut Kecamatan”.

²⁷ Interview with Headman of Kalimanggis Village, 20 July 2019.

²⁸ Interview with Headman of Getas Village, 4 March 2022.

²⁹ Rahkman Ardi and Diah Budiarti, “The Role of Religious Beliefs and Collective Narcissism in Interreligious Contact on University Students,” *Heliyon*, vol. 6, no. 9 (2020).

³⁰ Philipus Tule, “Religious Conflicts and a Culture of Tolerance : Paving the Way for Reconciliation in Indonesia,” in *Antropologi Indonesia* (2014), pp. 518-28.

of faith, empathy, and self-discipline.³¹

The adage of *agama ageming aji* means that religion is symbolised like clothing (*ageman*) and teaches virtue (*aji*). Through this adage, the Kaloran people believe that all religions are the same; that is, they contain good teachings for the safety and welfare of life.³² This meaning shows that religion is more than just a theological belief but also has a sociological dimension, namely as a garment for the soul and body. By making religion as clothing, a person will behave well in his social environment.³³ The adage *sing penting brayan* has a vital meaning, namely, brotherhood. In social life, the main goal is to build brotherhood. If this adage is related to the *agama ageming aji*, then whatever religion it is should not be an obstacle to building brotherhood. Religion is a personal right that everybody must respect, so it must be a medium for realising community rights, namely harmony and tolerance.

The adage of *agama ageming aji* and *sing penting brayan* has become a cultural norm that unites religious plurality in the Kaloran community. Placing religion as an area of spirituality shows the Javanese religious culture, which is oriented towards mysticism. Religions, including Islam, were assimilated into Javanese mysticism.³⁴ Through this process, there was an adaptation of the religions adhered by the Kaloran people with Javanese culture, which was oriented towards the substance of divinity.³⁵

The plurality of religions in Kaloran, united by cultural norms, indicates a reciprocal relationship between religion and culture. Religion is determined by culture, but on the other hand, culture is influenced by religion. Religion becomes a marker of cultural identity, resulting in a blurring of the boundaries between religion and culture.³⁶ Religion and culture in the Kaloran community surround social behaviour and

³¹ Natalya Khon and Alla Kim, "From Religious Fanatic to Maturity in Faith: Cross-Confessional Tolerance as a Way to Understand Emotional Components of Others," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 236 (2016), pp. 260-4.

³² Mohammad Damami, *Makna Agama dalam Masyarakat Jawa* (Yogyakarta: LESFI, 2002), p. 32.

³³ Mukti Ali, *Komunikasi Antar budaya dalam Tradisi Agama Jawa* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Ilmu, 2016), p. x.

³⁴ Akhol Firdaus, "Agama Ageming Aji: Kekayaan Spiritualitas Kepercayaan Terhadap Tuhan YME dan Tantangan Penerimaannya", *Jurnal Dinamika Penelitian: Media Komunikasi Sosial Keagamaan*, vol. 20, no. 01 (2020), pp. 146-60.

³⁵ Niels Mulder, *Kebatinan dan Hidup Sehari-hari Orang Jawa (Kelangsungan dan Perubahan Kulturil)* (Jakarta: Gramedia, 1983).

³⁶ Jaco Beyers, "Religion and Culture: Revisiting a Close Relative", *HTS Theologesic Studies/Theological Studies*, vol. 73, no. 1 (2017).

form a value system. The adage of *agama ageming aji* and *sing penting brayan* is a cultural value system that binds and influences people's religious behaviour. The religious pattern of the Kaloran community is included in an intersubjective way. They can accommodate other groups with rights that everybody must respect in social life.³⁷

C. The Desacralization of Religion in the Interfaith Marriage

Religious diversity in the Kaloran community is not only found within the scope of society but also in the family due to the interfaith marriage factor. Some members of one family embrace a different religion because, after marriage, many of them return to their previous religion.³⁸ This religious difference occurs among husbands and wives and between parents and children without causing conflict. Each family member respects each other's beliefs by interpreting religion as a personal matter.

Several families have members of different religions. For example, in the BP family, the husband and wife are Muslims and Buddhists, respectively, while their two children are Christians. BP converted to Buddhism to fulfil the requirements for marriage regulations, followed by the wife's belief in 1986. A year later, BP converted again to become a Muslim. R's family also has a pluralistic religious condition, where the husband, wife, and children are Buddhists, Muslims, and Christians, respectively. For BP and R, religion cannot be forced, even on their families.

Inter-religious marriage is also experienced in families at Ngadisari, Tempura Village, Kaloran Sub-district, where most couples are Muslim and Buddhist. Examples include SD (Muslim) and SL (Buddhist), SM (Buddhist) and WL (Muslim), IS (Muslim) and WL (Buddhist), BN (Muslim) and LY (Buddhist), and MK (Muslim) and SR (Buddhist). Inter-religious marriages occur when one partner converts to another religion to obtain a marriage certificate. Some couples married at the Kaloran Sub-district Office of Religious Affairs. In contrast, others prefer staying before a Buddhist ruler and registering at the Temanggung Regency Civil Registry Office. The conversion to the spouse's religion is carried out by changing the religious status on the Identity Card (KTP). Interestingly, when couples return to their original religion after marriage, they often

³⁷ Abdullah, "The Intersubjective Type of Religiosity".

³⁸ Waris Fahrudin, "Pemberdayaan Muallaf Perspektif Fikih Zakat: Studi Pemberdayaan Badan Amil Zakat Nasional," *Jurnal Iqtisad: Reconstruction of Justice and Welfare for Indonesia*, vol. 7, no. 2 (2020), pp. 181-97.

fail to change their religious status on the KTP. However, the KTP is just an administrative requirement for them and a need for worship.³⁹

Despite religious differences in the family, the socialisation of cultural values or rules in society continues due to the intensity of family communication. Mutual respect through the freedom to embrace religion is the key to harmonious relations in the family. It enables family members to work and celebrate the religious holiday together. After all, in their view, religion is a matter of belief.⁴⁰ Therefore, husbands, wives, and children have the same right to select a religion based on their beliefs.

The Kaloran people have not been involved in conflicts with religious nuances, irrespective of their diverse religions. Society has the concept of *agama ageming aji*, which means any religion teaches salvation. In line with that, most people of Javanese culture understand religion as the primary way of life. It is positioned as an *ageman*, which means clothing, and the way to God, which everyone can select. Religion should not be a barrier; differences must be harmonised to achieve balance.⁴¹ This concept gave birth to tolerance, which can unite and harmonise the multi-religious community. Religion has not become a barrier to social relations but merges society into a harmonious system. Phenomenologically, religious diversity is an effective socio-political force in society.⁴²

The Kaloran people's understanding that religion is included in the private domain causes the issue of religious differences not to be debated in social life. This view is the local wisdom of the Kaloran community, which places tolerance into a cultural advantage that the community is proud of. The truth of religions is recognised as relative truth so that all religions are in the same position. All religions are paths to the same God, so adherents of any religion may not claim or believe their religion is more valid or better than others.

On the other side, understanding religious teachings is only sometimes directly proportional to the emergence of an attitude of tolerance. A high level of religiosity and acceptance of inter-religious marriages in the family are negatively and positively correlated with religious tolerance.⁴³ Its diversity in society is not seen as individual

³⁹ Interview with SM, interreligious marriage couple.

⁴⁰ Interview with IS, interreligious marriage couple.

⁴¹ Interview with SM, interreligious marriage couple.

⁴² Zainal Abidin Bagir et al., *Pluralisme Kewargaan: Arab Baru Politik Keragaman di Indonesia* (Bandung: Mizan & CRCS, 2011).

⁴³ Arief Anshory Yusuf, Akhmad Rizal Shidiq, and Hariyadi Hariyadi, "On Socio-Economic Predictors of Religious Intolerance: Evidence from a Large-Scale",

theological or philosophical pluralism. People go their separate ways regarding theological and ritual affairs but are united in social affairs.⁴⁴ The concept of *agama ageming aji* is the basis for developing religious tolerance among the Kaloran community. This concept can negate religious conservatism since society has an inclusive perspective, i.e., seeking common ground for all religious teachings. Culturalization also occurs in social interactions by placing religion as an individual matter that everybody must respect.⁴⁵ The main religious teachings, such as goodness and salvation, are acculturated in societal and cultural values. These teachings are manifested in the daily behaviour of moderate and inclusive people.

Inter-religious marriages in the Kaloran community raise the issue of Islamic law (fiqh) among Muslim communities regarding the validity of the marriage from a fiqh perspective. In the provisions of fiqh, the validity of a marriage is determined by the similarity of religion between husband and wife. Religious equality is a sacred provision in Islamic marriage law. Conditions for the equality of religions are also regulated in state law. These fiqh and state rules are binding and determine the legality of marriage in Indonesia. Therefore, interfaith marriages in Indonesia are a polemic between legal provisions and practices in society. One of the ways taken by interfaith marriage partners is to propose a designation to the civil court.⁴⁶

The Kaloran community views marriage and its legality as profane and is not bound by religious law. Religion is a private spiritual matter, while marriage is a cultural matter. Therefore inter-religious marriage is a matter of human rights and is left up to the couple who will marry. To obtain state legality, they perform pseudo-submission to their partner's religion. This submission is only temporary for administrative purposes of changing the status of religion on the KTP. In essence, the husband and wife continue to follow their respective religions as before the

Religions, vol. 11, no. 21 (2020), pp. 1-24.

⁴⁴ Zainal Abidin Bagir, Robert W Hefner, and Ihsan Ali-Fauzi, *Mengelola Keragaman dan Kebebasan Beragama: Sejarah, Teori, dan Aplikasi* (Bandung: Mizan & CRCS, 2014), p. 4.

⁴⁵ Flavius Floris Andries, "The Integration of Religion and Culture to Construct Social Identity Through the Pukul Sapu Ritual in Mamala Village, Moluccas", *Jurnal Humaniora*, vol. 30, no. 1 (2018), p. 92.

⁴⁶ Ermi Suhasti, Siti Djazimah, dan Hartini, "Polemics On Interfaith Marriage In Indonesia Between Rules and Practices", *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, vol. 56, no. 2 (2018), pp. 367-94.

marriage took place.

The phenomenon of interfaith marriage has received a response from local religious leaders. Marriage for Muslims is sacred and has theological value, so it must comply with Islamic law (fiqh). In Islam, marriage is *misaaq galiz* or a heavy agreement because it contains religious values which are manifested by pronouncing the shahada at the time of the marriage contract. Tolerance is not justified in the theological realm but only in sociological matters.⁴⁷

The practice of interfaith marriage in the Kaloran Muslim community shows a unique religious pattern in building relationships between adherents of different religions. Although it is prohibited by state law and Islamic law, they still accept the practice based on their perspective on religion. Religion is a private right that cannot be forced on other people, including when they are married. Marriage is placed as a social relationship on the basis of the willingness of each party. They let go of aspects of faith or sacredness in marriage, as believed by the majority of Muslims. Interreligious Jurisprudence, which manifests itself in the practice of interfaith marriages, is built based on agreed socio-cultural norms, namely the *agama ageming aji* and *sing penting brayan*.

D. The Culturalization of Religious Holiday Celebrations

The Kaloran society has a unique composition in terms of religiosity and ethnicity. In terms of religion, the people of Kaloran are heterogeneous because they adhere to different religions. Regarding ethnicity, Kaloran society is homogeneous since the majority is Javanese. According to Ardi, a homogeneous social environment tends to show low tolerance for strangers.⁴⁸ It is contrary to the reality in Kaloran, where it is positively correlated with religious tolerance by creating religious traditions and rituals as a medium of social communication. In this sub-district, the celebration of the religious holidays of each religion is a moment to maintain and improve good community relations. Differences in religious rituals between communities require followers to understand and respect one another following unwritten rules. When the Buddhist community meditates, for example, the Muslim community turns down the volume of the loudspeakers in the mosque to not disturb their Buddhist brothers who are contemplating.

⁴⁷ Interview with GY, religious leader, 25 September 2019.

⁴⁸ Rahkman Ardi et al., "Religious Schema and Tolerance towards Alienated Groups in Indonesia", *Helijon* vol. 7 (2021).

In addition to religious holidays, there are interfaith activities, such as *tablilan*, *tasyakuran*, and other religious events held by Muslims, which people from different religions attend. Another religious tradition is *sadranan*, a *selamatan* or thanksgiving ritual performed at the cemetery. This tradition becomes a shared public space between people of different religions, which includes interfaith prayer.⁴⁹ Community cooperation also occurs in implementing cultural traditions, such as the *Suro* commemoration, *sedekah bumi* or harvest party, Indonesia's Independence Day on August 17, et cetera. These religious and cultural rituals become a medium for the Kaloran community to conduct interfaith dialogue and a means of community cohesiveness. In this context, the encounter of religions gives birth to harmony and togetherness,⁵⁰ and also becomes a proponent of culture.

Traditions and religious rituals are a medium for constructing social identity and integrating religious and cultural teachings formed through a dialectical process, relations, and negotiations.⁵¹ The Javanese tradition that dominates this community undergoes a dialectical process with various religious teachings embraced by the community. Relations and negotiations in this process are based on two local wisdom: *agama ageming aji* and *sing penting brayan*. Religion is mainly used for building humanist social interactions. Rituals, such as religious holidays, are no longer interpreted as exclusively belonging to certain adherents but are used as a shared social tradition.

The above phenomenon shows that some Kaloran people believe that everyone should not limit cooperation to social issues only. The Kaloran Muslim community believes that celebrating religious holidays is a cultural area and not a religious ritual. It is evidenced by Christian or Buddhist invitations to attend religious traditions when celebrating Christmas or Vesak Day. In the view of Buddhists or Christians, this invitation does not matter because the presence of Muslims in their religious ceremonies will not affect their religious values in any way.⁵²

The placement of religious holidays as a social tradition also has an impact on a similar understanding of the teachings of other Islamic

⁴⁹ Suranto Suranto, "Manifestasi Kearifan Lokal Sebagai Akar Nasionalisme Pancasila Pada Dialog Lintas Agama Di Kaloran, Temanggung," *Jurnal Pencerahan*, vol. 11, no. 2 (2018), pp. 83-98.

⁵⁰ Ismail Suardi Wekke, "Harmoni Sosial dalam Keberagaman dan Keberagamaan Masyarakat Minoritas Muslim Papua Barat," *KALAM*, vol. 10, no. 2 (2016), pp. 295-312.

⁵¹ Andries, "The Integration of Religion and Culture".

⁵² Interview with GY, 25 September 2019.

religions. Regarding distributing zakat and sacrificial animals, for example, non-Muslim communities demand that Muslims also allocate them to them. They argue that during the Vesak celebration, Buddhists always distribute red packets regardless of any religion in society. Reciprocal requests like this create a social dilemma in society. In the end, most Muslim communities will use the local wisdom *sing penting brayan*,⁵³ which is important for maintaining harmony, so they sacrifice their religious teachings.⁵⁴

The social reality above shows the culturalization of religious teachings by the Kaloran people. Religious rituals are positioned as social traditions that are open to society as a form of social harmony. When these religious teachings intersect with social interests, there should be no restrictions on religious identity in practice. Communities may involve themselves in its implementation as part of maintaining religious tolerance. This fact received a response from the Kaloran Muslim leaders. Tolerance is the willingness to accept differences, so there should be no coercion of a value or belief, including imposing religious rituals that have theological values on adherents of other religions. The fusion of Muslims with people of other religions in the social realm and matters of cultural harmony value is not a problem. Still, the rejection must be emphasised if the fusion is related to faith.⁵⁵

E. Towards Cultural-Based Interreligious Fiqh

Religion and culture are two different and inseparable entities practised by many communities.⁵⁶ In this context, cultural values are seen as a religious foundation.⁵⁷ Muslim Kaloran community interprets the concept of *agama ageming aji*, which is a matter of spiritual belief that is personal, subjective, and transcendental. This meaning has implications for people's ability to accept, recognise, respect, and tolerate different religions. This meaning manifests itself in the form of growing empathy in society towards adherents of other religions and creates an

⁵³ Syarief Ahmad, *Menguatkan Toleransi Antaragama di Pedesaan* (Temanggung: Desa Pustaka Indonesia, 2019), p. 42.

⁵⁴ Interview with GY, 25 September 2019.

⁵⁵ Interview with HA, religious leader, 15 Mei 2020.

⁵⁶ Mariam Rawan Abdulla, "Culture, Religion, and Freedom of Religion or Belief," *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, vol. 16, no. 4 (2018), pp. 102-15.

⁵⁷ Inna Reddy Edara, "Religion: A Subset of Culture and an Expression of Spirituality," *Advances in Anthropology*, vol. 7 (2017), pp. 273-88.

inclusive partnership dialogue. The manifestation of this understanding of religiosity leads to the attainment of the *sing penting brayan* concept, namely the obligation to maintain social harmony. Religious differences must not interfere with and limit social relations, on the contrary, belief in religion must be a capital for creating social harmony.

Guarding against the concept of *sing penting brayan* tends to subjugate the exclusive territory of religious teachings. Interfaith marriages have clear rules in the laws and regulations in Indonesia.⁵⁸ It is prohibited since it legally impacts children's status and inheritance rights.⁵⁹ In Islamic and positive laws, these provisions have binding force and do not need to be violated. Muslims must comply with the law since it is the exclusive area of Islamic teachings. The Muslim community of Kaloran practices inter-religious marriages for the legality of state law, which fulfils administrative requirements by changing their religion and following their partner. After obtaining the marriage certificate, these couples return to their previous religion. This condition shows that the perpetrators of inter-religious marriages subject the exclusive aspects of religious law to culture. Selecting a partner is a choice that needs to be respected, and it is the freedom of each individual. The issue of inter-religious marriage is separated from religious law and is considered a profane issue whose existence depends on mutual agreement. This view also applies in the case of celebrating a different religious holiday.

Submission to the exclusive area of religious law by maintaining harmony is two aspects that shape the cultural behaviour of the community. Religion, aesthetics, and ethics enhance culture in society,⁶⁰ thereby understanding culture needs to involve religion. The position of religion can be a marker and preserver of culture, even though it blurs the boundaries between both factors.⁶¹ Inter-religious marriages and celebrating other religious holidays are practices excluded from the exclusive area of religion and included in the socio-cultural area. The consequence is to place these two practices as social practices without involving religious teachings in their implementation. Unfortunately, it causes the blurring of religious and cultural teachings in society. Building

⁵⁸ Undang-Undang RI No. 1 Tahun 1974.

⁵⁹ Muhammad Adi Suseno and Lina Kushidayati, "Keluarga Beda Agama dan Implikasi Hukum terhadap Anak", *Yudisia Jurnal Pemikiran Hukum dan Hukum Islam*, vol. 11, no. 2 (2020), pp. 287-98.

⁶⁰ Beyers, "Religion and Culture".

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

cultural values to create religious tolerance can be conducted without negating religious teachings and through assimilation, acculturation, and segregation in the scope of interaction between individuals.⁶² Socio-cultural acculturation creates harmony between people of different religions.⁶³

Cultural values manifest in behaviour created based on collective beliefs and exist at various levels of human interaction, including religion.⁶⁴ There is a desacralisation of exclusive religious teachings, such as in inter-religious marriages and participating in celebrating holidays of different religions. Muslim Kaloran interprets both rituals as social and not religious. As a social ritual, the two practices serve as a medium for dialogue and religious teachings. This shows that religious-based concepts of culture and subculture are inherent in psychology, social psychology, and social movements.⁶⁵ The theological aspects in the teachings on marriage and celebrating holidays are excluded, thereby making it non-exclusive. Inter-religious marriages and religious holiday celebrations are social practices intended as a medium of social cohesion despite being practised by various religious adherents. The meaning of religion is narrowed to the personal realm, a belief that is a person's private life and must be respected by others.

The phenomenon of religious and cultural dialectics practised by the Kaloran Muslim community shows an inclusive inter-religious fiqh model. The construction of inter-religious fiqh is designed by making culture the basis for interpreting religious teachings. Religious teachings that have a social dimension, such as interfaith marriages and celebrations of religious holidays, are positioned as media to achieve religious goals. Creating peace is the ultimate goal of religion, so the implementation of religious teachings must be aimed at achieving this. Even though there are pros and cons, the inter-religious fiqh practised by the Kaloran Muslim community shows an inclusive pattern of diversity. They place adherents of other religions as parties whose rights must be guaranteed

⁶² Idrus al Hamid, "Islam, Local 'Strongmen', and Multi-Track Diplomacies in Building Religious Harmony in Papua," *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, vol. 14, no. 01 (2020), pp. 113-38.

⁶³ Idi Warsah et al., "Muslim Minority in Yogyakarta: Between Social Relationship and Religious Motivation," *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies*, vol. 7, no. 2 (2019), pp. 367-98.

⁶⁴ Edara, "Religion: A Subset of Culture".

⁶⁵ Laura R Olson, "The Essentiality of "Culture" in the Study of Religion and Politics", *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, vol. 50, no. 4 (2011), pp. 639-53.

and respected. Their subjective understanding of Islamic teachings is dialogued with objective social reality, namely religious plurality. In Amin Abdullah's view, intersubjective understanding is the basic capital for forming post-dogmatic religiosity.⁶⁶ Culture contributes to minimising the existence of exclusive, subjective, dogmatic religious patterns and ends with truth claims that have the potential to cause conflict between religious communities. Cultural norms contribute to the formation of new values, which lead to the creation of the principles of equality, partnership and non-discrimination between adherents of different religions.

F. Concluding Remarks

The Kaloran Muslim community interprets religion as a personal right that leads to self-righteousness (*agama ageming aji*). Religion is individual freedom that must be respected for building social harmony (*sing penting brayan*). This understanding is a factor influencing religious tolerance in the multi-religious Kaloran community. All religions have the same goal, so every adherent of religion must prioritise aspects of the inclusivity of their religious teachings to become a cultural norm.

Religion and culture in the Kaloran community are dialogued through desacralisation and culturalization processes. Desacralisation is carried out on teachings related to social relations, such as interfaith marriages. Marriage is a social relationship based on acceptance of each other, including accepting a different religion from their partner. Culturalization can be seen in changing religious rituals into cultural rituals, such as celebrating religious holidays. As a cultural ritual, everyone participates in the celebration regardless of religious differences.

Interreligious fiqh in the Kaloran Muslim community is constructed based on cultural norms resulting from interpreting the local wisdom of *agama ageming aji* and *sing penting brayan*. Religious teachings with a social dimension, such as inter-religious marriages and religious holiday celebrations, are stripped of their exclusive and sacred side to become inclusive and profane. Inter-religious fiqh is built by placing religion as a private area with a spiritual dimension. In the social realm, religious teachings must go hand in hand with culture as a medium for building harmony and tolerance. Religion and culture are not contradictory but integrated through a pattern of desacralisation and culturalization of religious teachings.

⁶⁶ Abdullah, "The Intersubjectife Type of Religiosity".

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