Social Relations between Muslim and Christian Communities: A Study of Living Hadith in Rejoagung Village Jember Regency

Kasman

Universitas Islam Negeri Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember kasman@uinkhas.ac.id

Makhrus

Universitas Islam Negeri Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember makhrus@uinkhas.ac.id

Achmadana Syachrizal M. F

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel Surabaya rsyach024@gmail.com

Abstract: The relationship between Islam and Christianity in Indonesia is often marked by religious conflicts due to a lack of understanding of the fundamental teachings of moderation in both religions. In Rejoagung, a village with a predominantly Protestant Christian population bound by traditional customs, the relationship between the Muslim and Christian communities has distinct origins: Christians through migration and Muslims through marriage. This study aims to examine the lives of the Muslim minority in Reioagung, focusing on the background of community formation and existing socio-religious relations. Utilizing a qualitative approach and phenomenological method, this research reveals the lived experiences of the Muslim minority in Rejoagung through interviews, observations, and documentation. The findings indicate that values of mutual cooperation and humanity are the foundation for interfaith harmony. While there are social interactions such as visiting each other during religious celebrations and interfaith marriages, there remains controversy over Muslim participation in other religious rituals, which Muslim scholars unanimously deem impermissible. In the context of Muslim and Christian relations in Rejoagung, two pertinent hadiths are prevalent: the hadith concerning marriage between Muslims and Alh al-Kitab, and the hadith regarding Muslim involvement in the worship practices of other faiths. These findings demonstrate that despite the strict principles in Islamic teachings regarding certain boundaries, values of humanity and mutual cooperation play a crucial role in fostering and maintaining interfaith harmony in Rejoagung. Keywords: social relations, Muslim, Cristian, Rejoagung, living hadith

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Introduction

Conflicts, tensions, and even wars that occur in society are often triggered by interests claimed in the name of religion. One example is the Crusades between Muslims and Christians, initiated by Pope Urban II on November 25, 1095, at the Council of Clermont. The eruption of the Crusades was primarily caused by two main factors: first, the hatred of Christians towards Muslims. Second, the Christian recognition of the Holy Land (*Bait al-Muqaddas*). These two reasons led to an unending conflict from the Crusades to the World Wars. Hence, conflicts triggered by religious interests require significant attention.

In Indonesia, there have been several instances of religious conflicts between Islam and Christianity, such as the conflict in Aceh in 2015. This unrest occurred when a demonstration by Muslims demanded that the government dismantle several churches. The conflict resulted in casualties from both groups.² Additionally, there was the burning of a mosque in Papua on July 17, 2015, in Tolikara Regency, which prevented local Muslims from performing Eid prayers.³ Furthermore, a church was burned in Sigi Regency, Central Sulawesi, by the Eastern Indonesia Mujahideen group.⁴ These cases seem to indicate that conflicts frequently arise due to the diverse interests within religions (religious conflicts).

Religious conflicts will have negative impacts on the affected communities, as religious activities will inevitably be disrupted. For instance, if someone were a Muslim residing in Tolikara Regency, they would be unable to perform the *Eid al-Fitr* prayer, an event that occurs

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¹ Zaenal Abidin, "PERANG SALIB (Tinjauan Kronologis Dan Pengaruhnya Terhadap Hubungan Islam Dan Kristen)," Rihlah: Jurnal Sejarah Dan Kebudayaan 1, no. 01 (2013): 129, http://journal.uin-alauddin.ac.id/index.php/rihlah/article/view/658.

² Winda Ika Pratiwi, "Dialog Antar Agama-Konflik: Jalan Damai Konflik Islam-Kristen Di Aceh Singkil Tahun 2015," *Panangkaran: Jurnal Penelitian Agama Dan Masyarakat* 4, no. 1 (2021): 27–47.

³ Moh Rosyid, "Peredam Konflik Agama: Studi Analisis Penyelesaian Di Tolikara Papua 2015," *Afkaruna: Indonesian Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Studies* 13, no. 1 (2017): 48–81.

⁴ Putra Ananda, "Pembakaran Gereja Di Sigi, PGI Imbau Masyarakat Tenang," Media Indonesia, 2020, https://mediaindonesia.com/politik-dan-hukum/364735/pembakaran-gereja-di-sigi-pgi-imbau-masyarakat-tenang.

only once a year. In addition to being unable to carry out their religious activities, such conflicts will inevitably result in trauma and discomfort in worship for the victims.

Jember Regency, like other regencies in East Java Province, has a predominantly Muslim population. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2018, out of the 2,501,663 inhabitants of Jember Regency, 98% or 2,446,826 people are Muslims. However, what is interesting is that among the 248 subdistricts/villages in Jember Regency, there is a village where almost 100% of the population is Christian, namely Rejoagung Village in Semboro District. According to the Jember Regency Interfaith Communication Forum (FKUB), there are only four Muslims in Rejoagung Village.

Based on preliminary data, there is an indication of the dominance of Christians in Rejoagung Village and efforts to maintain that dominance. This situation can be observed in the historical documents of Rejoagung Village, which appear to remain relevant today. The documents explain that in 1913, a meeting was held to draft village regulations, resulting in the following decisions to be perpetuated through generations in Rejoagung Village: (1) land in Rejoagung Village is only permitted to be sold to local families; (2) non-Christians are not allowed to participate in clearing forests in Rejoagung Village, unless they adapt to the customs of Rejoagung Village residents—in other words, by becoming Christian; (3) if someone has resided for five years, their land rights will be legitimized. This indicates a strong dominance among the majority religious community.

⁵ Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Jember, "Kabupaten Jember Dalam Angka 2018" (Jember, 2018).

⁶ Muktafi Niam, "Muslim Di Desa Rejoagung Jember Hanya 4 Orang," NU Online, 2009, https://www.nu.or.id/warta/muslim-di-desa-rejoagung-jember-hanya-4-orang-UeNsn.

⁷ Agus Budi Kristanto, "Gereja Dan Ghetto Studi Empiris Mengenai Gambar Gereja GKW Jemaaat Rejoagung Yang Mengontekstualisasikan Di Tengah Jemaat Homogen Yang Ada Dalam Konteks Yang Heterogen" (Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana, 2015).

As far as research goes, there have been numerous studies concerning the Ouran and Hadith in the context of interfaith relations. Among these is Arifin's research on the concept of tolerance among religious communities from a Hadith perspective.⁸ Ismail has also examined a similar topic but from the perspective of Quranic interpretation.9 Additionally, Sawaun has explored concepts within Hadith, particularly emphasizing the context of interfaith marriage. 10 In the context of Islam-Christian relations, research has been conducted by Ghufron in Central Java. 11 Rerung and Qodir have also studied the relations between followers of these two religions in their respective regions. 12 Research in the same village has been carried out by Natalia on the congregation of the East Java Christian Church (Gereja Kristen Jawi Wetan). 13 However, Natalia's research did not focus on interfaith relations but rather on the life of the congregation, whereas this study focuses on interfaith relations and their connection to the living Hadith within it.

The purpose of this research is to uncover the social relations between Muslim and Christian groups in Rejoagung Village, specifically whether the Muslim minority living among the Christian majority can freely engage in religious activities or not. This is considered an important area of study because it can reveal interesting patterns of how harmony between minority and majority religious communities

⁸ Ramlan Arifin and Muhammad Yusuf, "Toleransi Umat Beragama Dalam Perspektif Hadis," *As-Shaff: Jurnal Manajemen Dan Dakwah* 1, no. 1 (2020): 1–13.

⁹ Yusuf Ismail, Rudi Muhamad Barnansyah, and Izzatul Mardhiah, "Toleransi Antar Umat Beragama Perspektif Al-Qur'an," *Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an* 19, no. 1 (2023): 143–54.

¹⁰ Sawaun Sawaun, "Pernikahan Lintas Agama Dalam Perspektif Hadits," *Syariati: Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an Dan Hukum* 2, no. 01 (2016): 29–46.

Ghufron Ghufron, "Relasi Islam-Kristen: Studi Kasus Di Desa Tegalombo, Pati, Jawa Tengah," *Progresiva: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 1 (2020): 1–25.
Zuly Qodir, "Kontestasi Penyiaran Agama Di Ruang Publik: Relasi Kristen Dan Islam Di Kota Jayapura," *Harmoni* 14, no. 1 (2015): 38–52; Alvary Exan Rerung, "Nilai Hospitalitas Budaya Raputallang Sebagai Upaya Gereja Dalam Moderasi Beragama Pada Relasi Islam-Kristen Di Toraja," *Skenoo: Jurnal Teologi Dan Pendidikan Agama Kristen* 2, no. 2 (2022): 102–12.

¹³ Diana Natalia, "Jemaat Greja Kristen Jawi Wetan Rejoagung Kecamatan Semboro Kabupaten Jember Tahun 1945-2018" (Fakultas Keguruan Dan Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Jember, 2019).

can be established in one place. Through the living Hadith study model, this research aims to uncover the Hadith principles underlying the reality of their social relations.

The research method employed is a qualitativephenomenological field research approach. This means the research targets a societal phenomenon to reveal patterns or relationships within it. 14 Additionally, this study utilizes the living Hadith research model, which aims to uncover the Hadith principles in Islam that underlie a practice or reality occurring in society, regardless of whether they are the actual motives. 15 The locus of this research is Rejoagung Village, Semboro District, Jember Regency. The community within this area serves as the primary data source for this study, while journals, books, and similar documents provide secondary data. Data collection initially involves observation techniques, followed by interviews, and is complemented by documentation techniques. The collected data are then analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing methods. The analysis is conducted using a social relations approach, which includes aspects of social-community and socialreligious relations. 16 Thus, this research aims to reveal the relationship between Christians and Muslims in the community of Rejoagung Village, Semboro District, Jember Regency, and its alignment with the Hadith principles (living Hadith) used in Islam.

Result and Discussion

Socio-Cultural Conditions of Rejoagung Community

Jember Regency is one of the regencies in East Java Province, covering an area of 3,293.34 km²,¹⁷ characterized by fertile plains in the

¹⁴ Abd Hadi, Penelitian Kualitatif Studi Fenomenologi, Case Study, Grounded Theory, Etnografi, Biografi (CV. Pena Persada, 2021).

¹⁵ Ananda Prayogi, "Study of Living Hadith on Reciting Surah Al-Waqi'ah Tradition at Pesantren Tebuireng," *Jurnal Living Hadis* 7, no. 2 (2023): 239–51, https://doi.org/10.14421/livinghadis.2022.4391.

¹⁶ John Lewis Gillin and John Philip Gillin, "Cultural Sociology: A Revision of an Introduction to Sociology," (No Title), 1948.

¹⁷ Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Jember, "Kabupaten Jember Dalam Angka 2018,"3.

central and southern parts. Land use in Jember Regency is predominantly green areas, consisting of forests, rice fields, dry fields, and plantations. The region is surrounded by several mountains and has rivers that flow year-round. These favorable natural conditions contribute to Jember Regency's high fertility and make its soil highly suitable for agriculture. This fertility is further supported by the presence of several mountains in Jember Regency, such as Mount Argopuro and Mount Raung. The sedimentation process through various rivers flowing throughout the year also enhances the soil fertility in Jember Regency. Widely recognized as an agricultural area producing crops such as corn, rice, and oranges, as well as a region with tobacco plantations, Jember Regency benefits greatly from its supportive natural conditions.

In terms of its social conditions, the community residing in Rejoagung Village is considered very cohesive and supportive. This is evident during community cleanup activities, where every resident enthusiastically participates. Residents engage in mutual cooperation to clean up the village environment, and their support extends further to assisting neighbors during celebrations or times of hardship. This high level of awareness has fostered a harmonious and peaceful coexistence among both Christian residents and those of other faiths in the village.

Furthermore, kinship relations among people of different religions are highly amicable. This is evidenced during *Eid al-Fitr* celebrations, where residents of Rejoagung Village open their doors to guests who wish to visit their relatives in the village. Conversely, it is not uncommon for some residents of Rejoagung Village who have Muslim relatives outside the area to joyfully participate in celebrating the *Eid al-Fitr* festivities with them.

The harmonious kinship relations between the Christian and Muslim communities in Rejoagung Village can be seen as a reciprocal relationship conducted consciously, and its tangible manifestation of harmony is not merely an idea that remains in their thoughts, but is expressed through their actions in daily life. For example, Muslims in Rejoagung Village participate in the weekly worship services of Christians, known as *Patuwen Brayat*. This activity is a regular religious

practice within the East Java Christian Church congregation. Muslim residents also play a role by welcoming the worship activities into their homes, and they gladly attend when these services are held at their neighbors' homes who are part of this group.

Essentially, Muslim residents of Rejoagung Village understand that *Patuwen Brayat* is a religious ritual for Christians within the East Java Christian Church community. ¹⁸ In fact, some of them are converts (*muallaf*) who fully grasp that *Patuwen Brayat* is a religious ritual and not merely a tradition devoid of religious elements. The underlying motive for Muslim residents of Rejoagung participating in this activity is to foster emotional closeness with the predominantly Christian population of Rejoagung. They perceive *Patuwen Brayat* as a social activity rather than a religious one.

This worship service is held regularly in Rejoagung Village every Wednesday from 18:00 to 20:00. After the service, the residents or congregation typically engage in socializing to strengthen their emotional bonds. During *Patuwen Brayat*, the church divides the congregation into several groups within Rejoagung Village. Each group is led by a pastor appointed by the church to guide the congregation. The implementation involves rotating the venue among the homes of residents, with each group taking turns weekly, aiming to bless each household chosen for the gathering.

Background of the Christian and Muslim Communities in Rejoagung

The background of the formation of the Christian and Muslim communities in Rejoagung presents distinct narratives. The presence of Christianity in Rejoagung began when seven individuals originally from Mojowarno, Jombang, embarked on an expedition to Jember in search of a new settlement due to overpopulation in their hometown. Their objective was not only to find a new place to live but also to discover potential agricultural land for long-term use. This small group,

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¹⁸ In academic discourse, the term "Christian" is typically preceded by the word "community," just as the term "Muslim" is preceded by the same word.

whose population grew steadily over the years, played a pivotal role as the founding fathers of Rejoagung Village.

When the small group entered Jember Regency in 1907, they rested at the house of R. Promo Notodiharjo. Subsequently, they were informed about the fertile and potential land in Tanggul, specifically in the area of South Tanggul. After receiving this information in 1907, the group then sought permission from the Dutch government at the Besuki Residency, requesting assistance from Reverend Van Der Speigel of the Java Committee.

The purpose of the arrival of this group was welcomed by Van Der Speigel, but Reverend Van Der Speigel stipulated that the land should be used for settlement and must carry out a religious mission. In 1907, the Dutch government granted their permission under the name of Marwi Kertowiryo and 6 other heads of families: Pandri alias Nasiti, Rupingi, Purwo, Pramu Suwardi, Prami Plontang, and Insanmudro Darmo. To commemorate the contributions of these seven individuals who pioneered the land development in the Rejoagung area, the residents of Rejoagung erected a statue replica of these seven individuals in front of the Rejoagung Village Hall. The background related to the formation of Rejoagung and the Christian community cannot be separated from each other. This is because the figure behind the existence of Rejoagung Village and the Christian Community is the same person.

As for the background of the formation of the Muslim community in Rejoagung, accurate information regarding the year of their arrival is not known. However, researchers have identified marriage as a significant factor contributing to the presence of Muslims in Rejoagung. The overall presence of the Muslim minority in Rejoagung is largely due to marriage. This argument is based on interviews conducted by the author with Muslim informants in Rejoagung. The three informants visited by the author were Muslim families where initially, before marriage, one of the spouses was a Christian and a native resident of Rejoagung. However, all three subsequently married in Islamic ceremonies and converted to Islam before their marriages.

The author did not find supporting evidence regarding the presence of Muslims in Rejoagung due to population migration, as it is indeed difficult for outsiders to buy land in Rejoagung. This is because both Christian and Muslim residents of Rejoagung adhere to social customs and norms inherited from their ancestors. One of these customs concerns the sale of land to individuals outside Rejoagung. This rule is not a written law but a tradition passed down through generations. In practice, when residents of Rejoagung want to sell their land, they always offer it to their relatives in Rejoagung first. If there are no interested buyers among them, they then offer it to their neighbors. Following this process ensures that ancestral land remains in the possession of Rejoagung residents. This practice is not limited to Christians today but also binds Muslim residents and Catholics in Rejoagung to this tradition.

Socio-Community Relations in Rejoagung

Social relations refer to the reciprocal relationships between individuals, influencing each other and based on mutual support. Social relations, or social interactions, between individuals over a period of time result in patterns, which are also known as social relationship patterns. There are at least two forms of social relations in society: associative relations and dissociative relations. Associative social relations are positive in nature, involving cooperation, accommodation, acculturation, and assimilation. On the other hand, dissociative relations are characterized by negative directions such as competition, conflict, and disputes. Both forms of social relations can be easily found in society, whether in homogeneous or heterogeneous communities.¹⁹

Social relations can be assessed based on the unity and cohesion exhibited by individuals within a group. The success of relations within specific groups, whether communities, organizations, or societies, depends on mutual acceptance and the cultivation of healthy

¹⁹ Dwi Endarwati, "Model Relasi Sosial Masyarakat Umat Budha Dan Umat Islam Di Desa Kalimanggis, Kecamatan Kaloran, Kabupaten Temanggung" (Universitas Negeri Semarang, 2016), 4.

relationships through attitudes of trust, openness, and rational thinking, thereby transforming initially abstract social relations into tangible realities. While the decision to foster positive social relations or otherwise is ultimately an individual choice, environmental factors also play a role in this decision-making process. Whether directly or indirectly, the environment influences one's perspectives and thought processes.²⁰

As Indonesian citizens grounded in Pancasila, it is our duty to cultivate social relationships based on Pancasila, the core tenet of which, according to Soekarno, is mutual cooperation (gotong royong). The spirit of gotong royong, deeply ingrained by the ancestors of Rejoagung, exemplified during the land liberation in Rejoagung, the establishment of churches, and united resistance against repressive actions by the Japanese government, serves as concrete evidence that gotong royong in Rejoagung is not merely a myth. However, considering the different circumstances of today, the practice of gotong royong in Rejoagung has evolved. This evolution does not diminish the essence of gotong royong itself but rather manifests differently. While the ancestors of Rejoagung took up arms against colonizers, today's actions focus on nurturing unity among religious communities.

Considering that there is an effort from each individual to uphold traditions, customs, and social norms through generational transmission, reflects the ideal of mutual cooperation (gotong royong) ingrained in the inhabitants of Rejoagung. One form of action undertaken by the people of Rejoagung to preserve these traditions, passed down through generations, is the tradition of slametan during the celebration of Indonesia's Independence Day on August 17th (starting from the evening of August 16th), held within each congregation group during the night. The *Slametan* tradition serves as an expression of gratitude to the fallen heroes on the battlefield. The event begins with an agreement among individuals or families within each congregation group to bring "encek" containers filled with rice,

²⁰ Raesita Melati Dewi, "Pola Relasi Komunitas Pecinta Masjid" (UIN Sunan Gunung Djati, 2020), 75.

fish, and various snacks. These "encek"²¹ containers are then collected and placed in the middle of the congregation circle, with members sitting around them. The event proceeds with praises and prayers. Afterward, the food in the "encek" containers is shared and eaten together by exchanging them among each other.

In addition to preserving the traditions of Rejoagung society, the community there also adheres firmly to social norms that have existed since ancient times. Despite this, residents of Rejoagung continue to face misconceptions, such as the notion that Rejoagung, being a predominantly Christian village, is closed off socially from outsiders, perceived as fanatical, and so forth. According to Mr. Sumarsono's experience, he mentioned:

"Before I moved to Rejoagung, I had heard comments from neighbors in my previous village. They believed that anyone who wanted to enter Rejoagung had to be like them (Christian), but I didn't believe it until I saw it for myself, and I found that Rejoagung is not like that."²²

This can happen because the presence of the Christian population hegemonizing within a village is considered unusual, compounded by customary village regulations that still require clarification or reinterpretation to avoid prolonged misunderstandings. These rules state: a) Land in Rejoagung Village can only be sold to local families; b) Individuals outside the Christian faith cannot participate in clearing forests in Rejoagung Village unless they conform to the customs of Rejoagung Village – in other words, become Christian; c) After residing for five years, one's land rights will be confirmed.²³

Regarding the customary rule that often draws attention in Rejoagung Village, regulation number one stating "Land in Rejoagung

²¹ "Encek" originates from Javanese, which refers to a square-shaped container made from banana leaves and supported by bamboo sticks to hold food placed inside it. Meanwhile, this container is known as "ancak" in the Madurese language.

²² Sumarsono, diwawancarai oleh Penulis, Jember, 04 September 2022

²³ Kristanto, "Gereja Dan Ghetto Studi Empiris Mengenai Gambar Gereja GKW Jemaaat Rejoagung Yang Mengontekstualisasikan Di Tengah Jemaat Homogen Yang Ada Dalam Konteks Yang Heterogen," 1.

Village can only be sold to local families" is frequently discussed. The perspective on this rule will be discussed based on interviews conducted with various parties. According to Mr. Gatot Susanto, the Head of Rejoagung Village, this rule is not actually a written regulation but a tradition passed down from ancestors to their descendants. Generally, residents of Rejoagung will offer their land to their relatives within the village; if none of them are interested in buying, then it will be offered to neighboring residents, and eventually, someone will purchase it..²⁴

Besides Mr. Gatot Susanto, Mr. Budi, a village official, also expressed views consistent with the Head of Rejoagung Village. He mentioned that regarding the customary rule prohibiting land sales, no archives have been found, and it is regarded by the community as an oral tradition. According to him, ancestors surely conveyed messages to their descendants, such as, "My children, I leave this inheritance to you. Father's advice is not to sell it, but if necessary, offer it to your siblings." This advice continues to be upheld by the people of Rejoagung to this day.²⁵

The village administration of Rejoagung, which serves administrative functions on one hand, also serves as a reminder for its community to uphold this testament. Every resident intending to buy or sell land always inquires first whether the land has been offered to their siblings. If it has been offered and there is no interest, then it will be offered to neighbors. Although the land sales mechanism in Rejoagung differs slightly from other villages, the consequence is that land in Rejoagung is cheaper compared to surrounding areas, despite its higher fertility. However, residents choose to accept this consequence and continue to adhere to this advice. This is a contributing factor as to why the author did not find cases of Muslims entering Rejoagung through migration.

The actions above represent the determination of the residents of Rejoagung to preserve the land of their ancestors. However, this steadfastness is not an exclusive characteristic of the residents of Rejoagung towards communities outside Rejoagung. This applies not

²⁴ Gatot Susanto, interviewed by the author, Jember, 11 August 2022

²⁵ Budi, interviewed by the author, Jember, 01 September 2022.

only to Christians in Rejoagung but also to the Muslim population of Rejoagung, who are automatically included in this rule.

For example, Mr. Yosua's house, where he currently resides on Gang 8, is land that he purchased after getting married according to Islamic law. However, Yosua can still engage in land transactions because he is a native resident of Rejoagung. This is different from two other families who currently reside in their parents' inherited homes.

The idea of prohibiting the sale of land to outsiders in Rejoagung was reinforced by Pastor Teguh because before he assumed the role as pastor at the East Java Christian Church (GKJW) in 2004, there had been cases of land sales to external parties, but these lands have since been reclaimed by residents of Rejoagung. Pastor Teguh's actions aimed to motivate the Rejoagung community to preserve their cultural authenticity and heritage through generations, which is commendable because at that time, Pastor Teguh envisioned Rejoagung as a village that would uphold its identity as a Christian village.²⁶

One reason the residents of Rejoagung continue to uphold this testament is due to cases in several areas previously inhabited by a majority of Christians, where land was freely sold, resulting in almost all land ownership in those villages being held by others. Consequently, the landowners brought their own workers for land cultivation, thereby excluding local residents from benefiting.

Furthermore, Gatot Susanto also conveyed the wisdom behind preserving this advice, which is to safeguard the economy and job opportunities of the people in the surrounding areas, which can be considered as middle to lower-middle class. Muslim residents in Rejoagung do not object to this rule, as they view it as part of the legacy left by ancestors who played a role in opening up land for their descendants.²⁷

In addition to the rule prohibiting the sale of land to outsiders in Rejoagung village, there is another rule that makes Rejoagung unique

²⁶ M Afifudin Syarif, "Keberadaan Greja Kristen Jawi Wetan Rejoagung Kecamatan Semboro Kabupaten Jember Tahun 2004-2013," *Universitas Jember*, 2015, 81–82.

²⁷ Gatot Susanto, interviewed by the author, Jember, 11 August 2022.

and different from other villages, namely the prohibition of activities on Sundays. This rule, like the previous unwritten rule, is simply a message passed down through generations.

However, it is important to underline that the purpose of this prohibition is to allow the majority Christian community of Rejoagung to fulfill their obligation to worship on Sundays at church. This rule does not intend to completely halt activities of Rejoagung residents, but rather to restrict them. According to Sudarmanu's explanation, activities such as harvesting, planting rice are prohibited, but activities such as feeding livestock are allowed. Furthermore, Sudarmanu explained that there are no consequences behind this rule, but residents are simply reminded that it is now Sunday.²⁸

Although to this day the residents still adhere to customary rules, the information provided by the sources points to a consistent conclusion that the exact origins of these rules remain unknown. As a minority Muslim community residing in Rejoagung, they accept the consequences of these customary rules without feeling intimidated, despite the fact that the originators of these rules were the Christian ancestors of Rejoagung. Similarly, regarding the prohibition of activities on Sundays, the Muslim minority in Rejoagung does not object, as Sunday is traditionally a day off work, according to Karnoto, Sumarsono, and Yosua.

Socio-Religious Relations in Rejoagung

Social relations concerning religion within a community are diverse. This is due to the traditional and pre-industrial life still prevalent in society today, which frames the pluralistic religious life of the community. Each individual pays particular attention to specific formulas for executing socio-religious realities cooperatively.²⁹ Observing the diverse religious life realities in Rejoagung enables each member of the community to attempt to integrate different perspectives towards the common goal of building a harmonious and

²⁸ Sudarmanu, interviewed by the author, Jember 01 September, 2022.

²⁹ Ahmad Zainuri, "Relasi Sosial Muslim Dan Kristiani Di Desa Sidorejo Kecamatan Umbulsari Kabupaten Jember Pada Tahun 1970-2019" (IAIN Jember, 2020), 52.

cohesive community. This fosters an environment where people of different religions and beliefs accept differences and coexist without striving to impose their own truths on others.

The social relations between Christians and Muslims in Rejoagung Village have never encountered issues regarding religious matters that lead to conflicts between religious communities. Mr. Gatot Susanto, as the Head of Rejoagung Village, stated that:

"The people of Rejoagung live in peace. Despite being the majority (Christians) here, we still embrace our minority brothers and sisters, and our kinship extends beyond Rejoagung. The average Muslims in Rejoagung participate in the *Patuwen Brayat* activities. Actually, the church never imposes because they understand that everyone has their own beliefs. Interestingly, it is the Muslim community themselves who offer to host these activities."³⁰

Similar statements are also expressed by the Muslims themselves, such as Mr. Karnoto, who stated that the relationships among the residents proceed naturally, without coercion, including my participation in *Patuwen Brayat* and following the established norms. However, in matters of faith, whether Muslim or Christian, they must firmly hold onto their beliefs.³¹

From the accounts of both sources, it can be concluded that there has never been any conflict arising between religious communities in Rejoagung Village. A sense of humanity forms the foundation of peaceful and harmonious coexistence among religious communities in Rejoagung. Furthermore, this situation is undoubtedly attributed to the role of religious leaders who consistently motivate their followers to act in accordance with their respective religious teachings. Pastor Rena, as the highest leader at East Java Christian Church (GKJW) Rejoagung, always instills values of love and compassion in the congregation, beginning from an early age, as directly expressed by him:

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³⁰ Gatot Susanto, interviewed by the author, Jember 11 August 2022

³¹ Karnoto, interviewed by the author, Jember, 17 August 2022.

"As a religious leader in Rejoagung, I always instill values of love and compassion to the congregation, even teaching these principles to children from a young age. The guideline used is the example set by Lord Jesus, where He demonstrated His boundless love even towards the Samaritan woman. During that time, the patriarchal cultural influence relegated women to a secondary position in the social hierarchy; furthermore, Samaritan women were considered ritually unclean."³²

Besides the story of Lord Jesus and the Samaritan Woman, the guideline firmly upheld by Christians regarding love and compassion is contained in the Bible, specifically in the Book of Matthew, chapter 22. In this book, it describes an incident where Jesus was questioned by a Pharisee who approached Him upon hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees with a question, "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus answered, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself." In chapter 5, verses 43-44, Jesus said, "You have heard that it was said, "Love your neighbor and hate your enemy." But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

In this verse, Pastor Rena explains that Lord Jesus has provided a very clear example for his people, and these values of love are always taught to his congregation. Furthermore, Pastor Rena elaborates:

"Lord Jesus Himself exemplified by continuing to love those who oppose us; it is not normal to love our enemies. If you love those who do good, it is already common; it is the duty of humans to reciprocate kindness with kindness. But if you show your love to your enemies, those who oppose you, therein lies the true essence of showing love."³⁵

³² Pastor Rena, interviewed by the author, Jember, 17 August, 2022.

³³ Kitab Matius, "Pasal 22 Ayat 34-40," Alkitab, 2022, https://alkitab.sabda.org/verse.php?book=Mat&chapter=22&verse=34.

³⁴ Kitab Matius, "Pasal 5 Ayat 43-44," Alkitab, 2022, https://alkitab.sabda.org/verse.php?book=Mat&chapter=5&verse=43.

³⁵ Pastor Rena, interviewed by the author, Jember, 17 August 2022

Unlike Christians who are always provided with a coexistence understanding based on Bible verses, as this is regularly disseminated by Christian religious leaders, Muslim residents of Rejoagung in their interactions and relationships with Christians do not rely on hadiths or Quranic texts but on experiences juxtaposed with the realities of Rejoagung, which then result in actions. This situation arises because there are no Islamic religious leaders in Rejoagung who can serve as role models for their community. Therefore, it is reasonable that Muslims in Rejoagung base their actions on humanitarianism and mutual cooperation rather than on hadiths or Quranic texts.

For example, Mr. Karnoto, in building interactions with the Christian majority in Rejoagung, adheres to the principle of not isolating himself from the surrounding community and going with the flow in societal matters, while maintaining firmness in matters of faith. He adheres to the old proverb "ojo njiwit yen ora gelem dijiwit," which suggests that anyone desiring peaceful coexistence should embody this proverb. Furthermore, he states that this proverb is not only suitable for the people of Rejoagung but also for the broader community.

Mr. Yosua also holds the same principle in fostering social relations among religious communities, which is to respect followers of other religions, as he stated:

"The principle I hold is that we should respect each other's religions. I never disturb followers of other religions, and they do the same. Even when there is a Christian neighbor of mine who passed away, I also attend the service just to pay respects."³⁶

As for the involvement of Muslim community members in *Patuwen Brayat* in Rejoagung, each individual has their own perspectives and principles guiding their actions. For instance, Karnoto believes that:

³⁶ Yosua, interviewed by the author, Jember, 04 September 2022.

"When I participate in the collective activities (*Patuwen Brayat*), it's similar to attending a wedding or a funeral where there are no legal consequences; anyone can join."³⁷

Mr. Karnoto considers that *Patuwen Brayat* is an activity that anyone can participate in, and there are no legal consequences according to Sharia law for those who participate. Fundamentally, Mr. Karnoto understands that *Patuwen Brayat* is a religious ritual of the Christian community, but beyond the reasons behind his actions, it is also a way for him to get closer to the community and not isolate himself from the surrounding environment.

Mr. Sumarsono's view on *Patuwen Brayat* is not much different from Mr. Karnoto's explanation. He explains that the purpose of his participation is to foster closeness with the community. In fact, Mr. Sumarsono feels awkward if he does not participate in the event. This is evident from Mr. Sumarsono's statement:

"My goal in participating is to foster closeness with the community. During the worship, I just sit quietly. Yes, I participate just to show goodwill, I can't just stay silent at home while my neighbors are having a celebration."³⁸

Meanwhile, Mr. Yosua's perspective regarding the worship of *Patuwen Brayat* is akin to a moment of neighborhood gathering. This is because this activity is organized by each neighborhood group, based on the neighborhood unit (RT) in Rejoagung. This is based on his statement:

"Patuwen Brayat for me is a moment of neighborhood gathering among the community units (RT)."³⁹

It should be noted that *Patuwen Brayat* in Rejoagung Village is a regular religious practice conducted by Christians since 1980 every Wednesday from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. This worship service takes place weekly on Wednesdays at a resident's house. Initially, before the

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³⁷ Karnoto, interviewed by the author, Jember 04 September 2022.

³⁸ Sumarsono, interviewed by the author, Jember, 04 September 2022.

³⁹ Yosua, interviewed by the author, Jember 04 September 2022.

formation of small groups, which now number 17 groups, the *Patuwen Brayat* worship was held at one house for the entire congregation of Rejoagung. This was because neighborhood units (RT) had not yet been established, and the structure was still in the form of community groups (KRW).

In 1985, the village head at that time, Mr. Warsono, divided Rejoagung into smaller units called "RT" (neighborhood association) to facilitate coordination. That year, it was divided into 17 RTs, which also became the groups for the *Patuwen Brayat* worship. Each group was named Matius, Yokanan, Petra, Gideon, Daniel, Samuel, Markus, Andres, Elkana, Timotius, Filipus, Paulus, Stefanus, Elia, Abraham, Yakobus, and Lukas.⁴⁰

Based on various viewpoints expressed by the sources regarding the participation of the Muslim minority in the *Patuwen Brayat* activities, it can be concluded that their actions are based on a sense of humanity and communal solidarity. Their involvement has never been coerced by either the church or the village government. This aligns with Mr. Gatoto Susanto's statement that Muslim participation in the *Patuwen Brayat* worship is purely voluntary, with individuals taking initiative even in preparing for the events. Although not all Muslims in Rejoagung participate in the *Patuwen Brayat* activities, this is understood by the community, recognizing that matters of belief should not be enforced. The spirit of communal cooperation and mutual respect has effectively fostered religious harmony in Rejoagung. The diversity within the community does not lead to conflicting social conditions among its members.

Besides the *Patumen Brayat*, which is a social phenomenon involving the participation of Muslim-Christian communities in Rejoagung, the tradition of "*unjung-unjung*" is also still practiced in the village. This tradition continues to be observed when either religious community celebrates their respective major festivals. For instance, if a Muslim family is celebrating *Eid al-Fitr*, they will still prepare snacks

⁴⁰ Natalia, "Jemaat Greja Kristen Jawi Wetan Rejoagung Kecamatan Semboro Kabupaten Jember Tahun 1945-2018," 39–40.

⁴¹ Gatot Susanto, interviewed by the author, Jember 11 August 2022.

and treats as a gesture of hospitality to their guests, whether they are Muslim or Christian, although typically the guests are their Christian relatives. Despite being Muslims, familial relationships in Rejoagung remain intact. Conversely, when Christians are celebrating Christmas, Muslim residents also visit their Christian relatives' homes. This practice is based on Mr. Yosua's explanation.

"If it's their holiday, I also visit my relatives' homes because they are still my relatives; similarly, during *Eid al-Fitr*, they also do the same for me."⁴²

Besides discovering facts about the involvement of Muslims from Rejoagung in *Patuwen Brayat* and the continued tradition of *unjung-unjung*, researchers also found evidence of interfaith marriages in the village. According to interviews conducted in Rejoagung, there are married couples who maintain their respective religious beliefs. One such example is the nephew of Mr. Sudarmanu, where the husband is a Muslim and the wife is a Christian. Additionally, Mr. Sumarsono's inlaws also reflect this diversity, with his father-in-law being Christian and his mother-in-law being Muslim.

In summary, the social-religious relations established in Rejoagung between Christians and Muslims include interfaith marriages, Muslim participation in *Patuwen Brayat* activities, and the tradition of *unjung-unjung*.

Analysis of Social Relations in the Christian-Muslim Community in Rejoagung

The social relations between Christians and Muslims in Rejoagung, both in community and religious aspects, are harmonious. As a traditional community that adheres to existing customs and social norms, the residents of Rejoagung continue to uphold these values to this day. Some customs that are still practiced include the Slametan on August 17th, unduh-unduh ceremonies, and wedding customs that adhere to Javanese rituals and culture. In terms of social-religious

⁴² Yosua, interviewed by the author, Jember, 04 November 2022.

relations, researchers found various forms of interaction among the residents of Rejoagung, including interfaith marriages, Muslim participation in *Patuwen Brayat* activities, and the tradition of *unjung-unjung*.

Interfaith marriages between Muslims and Christians in Rejoagung are not a new dynamic in Islamic law; rather, they have existed since the time of Prophet Muhammad. Normatively, Muslim men are permitted to marry women from *ahl al-Kitāb*, namely Jewish and Christian women, based on Q.S *al-Māidah* verse 5. This allowance forms the basis for early generations of Muslims and has been widely practiced by scholars.⁴³

Referring to the hadith evidence, the issue of interfaith marriage generates two perspectives: one argues its permissibility, while the other considers it makruh (undesirable but not forbidden). Among those who disapprove is the Companion Ibn Umar. Conversely, the permissibility stance is supported by the statement of Jābir bin Abdullāh, "Women from ahl al-Kitāb are lawful for our men, and our women (Muslims) are forbidden for their men." However, Jābir also stipulated that this permissibility applies only to Muslim men marrying women from ahl al-Kitāb; it is not permissible for Muslim women to marry men from ahl al-Kitāb according to his narration.

The difference between these two perspectives is fundamentally grounded in the Quranic verses: Surah *al-Baqarah*, verse 221, which prohibits marrying polytheistic women, whereas Surah *al-Māidah*, verse 5, legitimizes interfaith marriages but restricts them to Muslim men marrying women from *ahl al-Kitāh*. There exists a narration from Ibn 'Abbās concerning these two Quranic verses. Ibn 'Abbās said:

"When this verse (al-Baqarah: 221) was revealed, then the Muslim community refrained from marrying women from Ahl al-Kitāh, until after the revelation of the verse (al-Māidah: 5) when the Muslim community (was allowed) to marry women from the Ahl al-Kitah."

⁴³ Sawaun, "Pernikahan Lintas Agama Dalam Perspektif Hadits."

In his argument, Imam al-Shafi'i explains that what is not permissible is marrying polytheistic women. During the early development of Islam, the term "musyrik" referred to idol worshippers. 44 The Arab tribes, especially in Mecca and its surroundings prior to the arrival of Prophet Muhammad, were idol worshippers. However, it should be emphasized that only women from ahl al-Kitāb are permissible for marriage to Muslim men. Conversely, if the situation were reversed, meaning if ahl al-Kitāh men were to marry Muslim women, such a marriage would not be permissible. Imam al-Shafi'i stipulates that in such cases, women from ahl al-Kitāb must be ensured to be from the lineage of the Children of Israel.

Meanwhile, among modern scholars in the context of marriage between Muslim men and women from ahl al-Kitāb, the issue that has arisen concerns the quality of women who meet the criteria to be wives. Quraish Shihab asserts that ahl al-Kitāb eligible for marriage are "almuhsanāt min al-ladhina ūtū al-kitāb". The term al-muhsanāt refers to women who are honorable, maintain their chastity, and hold the sacred scripture in high regard.⁴⁵ There is another argument stating that interfaith marriages between Islam and ahl al-Kitāb today are invalid due to the difficulty in meeting the established criteria. However, according to the fatwa issued by the Indonesian Ulama Council during the Seventh National Congress in 2005, another argument prohibits and deems invalid marriages between Muslims and ahl al-Kitāb.

In the context of interfaith marriages in Rejoagung, from the Islamic perspective, there are numerous controversies because scholars hold differing opinions on the matter. However, in cases where the non-Muslim party is the husband, the marriage is considered invalid according to Islamic law.

The second discussion pertains to the involvement of Muslims from Rejoagung in the celebrations and worship of non-Muslims. Some scholars explicitly prohibit Muslims from participating in the celebrations or religious rituals of non-Muslims. However, considering the reality in Rejoagung, an alternative argument can be drawn from

⁴⁴ Sawaun, 352.

⁴⁵ Sawaun, "Pernikahan Lintas Agama Dalam Perspektif Hadits."

Muḥammad Sa'īd Ramaḍān al-Būṭi, who permits a Muslim to offer congratulations to non-Muslims for various joyful occasions and to express condolences for their misfortunes. Additionally, the argument from Yūsuf al-Qarḍāwī, based on Quranic verse al-Mumtaḥanah (60:8), can also be used to justify the existing practices in Rejoagung. However, the participation of Muslims from Rejoagung in non-Muslim religious rituals is not permitted. Nonetheless, not all Muslims residing in Rejoagung participate in the Patuwen Brayat activities; some choose not to partake in these events. Although there is a narration mentioning that Prophet Muhammad SAW once entered the synagogue of the Jewish community in Medina while they were celebrating their festival, this cannot be equated because the underlying motives for that action were different.

Finally, based on the analysis of Muslim and Christian relations in Rejoagung, there are several values that correspond to hadiths. This has been the focus of the living hadith study in this research, aiming to explore which evidences align with the values prevalent in the community. The author identified at least two values from hadiths that are alive in the community. First, the issue of interfaith marriage, which was practiced by a companion during the time of Prophet Muhammad SAW. Additionally, as the second value, there is the hadith concerning the involvement of Muslims in the worship of other communities. These two values demonstrate that the hadiths of Prophet Muhammad SAW continue to be practiced and relevant within the Muslim and Christian communities in Rejoagung. Thus, hadiths related to these two values can be considered alive within the Muslim and Christian communities in Rejoagung.

Conclusion

The Christian and Muslim communities in Rejoagung Village have different backgrounds. The presence of the Christian community

⁴⁶ Abū Bakr ibn Abī Shaibah, *Al-Muṣannaf Fī Al-Aḥadīth Wa Al-Āthār, Jilid 3* (Riyad: Maktabah al-Rushd, 1988), 475.

⁴⁷ Abu Abdillah Ahmad ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad bin Hanbal Al-Syaibani, *Musnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal*, 1st ed. (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turats al-'Arabiy, 2001), 409.

in Rejoagung is due to population migrations from Mojowarno to Rejoagung. Meanwhile, the existence of the Muslim community in Rejoagung is largely attributed to marriages, although precise data regarding the origins of the Muslim community have not yet been identified by researchers.

This study concludes that there are two hadiths that are alive in the Rejoagung community, namely the hadith about interfaith marriage between Muslims and alh al-Kitah, and the hadith about Muslim involvement in the worship of other communities. Further findings relate to the peaceful and harmonious life in Rejoagung, which is inseparable from the spirit of mutual cooperation that grows within each individual, where this concept upholds religious moderation. The forms of social relations between the Christian and Muslim communities manifest in practices such as visiting each other during the celebrations of Eid al-Fitr and Christmas, which are still tolerated due to familial relationships, although involvement in the worship of other religions is considered unacceptable by scholars. Interfaith marriages in Rejoagung face controversy, particularly due to the difficulty in meeting the marriage requirements between Muslims and the *alh al-Kitab*. In cases where the non-Muslim is the husband, scholars agree that such marriages are void.

For further research, the author suggests a comprehensive study on the presence of Muslim minorities in Rejoagung, given the lack of scholarly work on this topic. Additionally, there is a need for further investigation into the historical data regarding the introduction of Islam into the Christian community of Rejoagung by more competent authorities. The author also encourages community members, community leaders, and religious scholars to continue providing guidance and fostering a better understanding of interfaith relations.

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