



## **Negotiating Legal Pluralism: Syncretism of Islamic Law and Balinese Adat in Pegayaman Village**

**Irawan\*, Zayadi, Made Saihu, Darwis Hude, Nasaruddin Umar**

IAIN SAS Bangka Belitung, Indonesia

IAIN SAS Bangka Belitung, Indonesia

Universitas PTIQ Jakarta, Indonesia

Universitas PTIQ Jakarta, Indonesia

UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, Indonesia

\*irsyamsudin@iainsasbabel.ac.id

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### **ABSTRACT**

Pegayaman, the sole Muslim village in Bali surrounded by Hindu communities, offers a unique context for exploring the interaction between Islamic law and local Hindu cultural traditions. The study examined how Islamic law is negotiated and practiced in the context of Hindu cultural dominance. Using an empirical legal research framework with a socio-legal approach, data were collected through field observations and in-depth interviews with Muslim traditional leaders, religious figures, residents, and migrants. The findings indicated that syncretic practices in Pegayaman do not undermine the Islamic creed ('aqidah) but rather reflect a process of internalizing and negotiating Islamic values within the local cultural context. Rooted in the *base meme* philosophy emphasizing cultural heritage, tolerance, and social harmony, these practices manifested in religious celebrations and social rituals. From an Islamic legal perspective, such adaptations may be regarded as '*urf sahīh* provided they do not conflict with Sharia principles. Thus, the study highlighted the significance of contextualizing Islamic law in pluralistic societies, demonstrating that cultural accommodation need not imply theological compromise.

**Keywords:** Syncretism; Islamic Law; Local Wisdom; Hindu-Muslim Interaction;

### **ABSTRAK**

Pegayaman, satu-satunya desa Muslim di Bali yang dikelilingi oleh komunitas Hindu, menjadi konteks unik untuk mengkaji interaksi antara hukum Islam dan tradisi budaya Hindu setempat. Studi ini meneliti bagaimana hukum Islam dinegosiasikan dan diperaktikkan di bawah pengaruh dominasi budaya Hindu. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian hukum empiris dan pendekatan *socio-legal*, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi lapangan dan wawancara mendalam dengan tokoh adat Muslim, pemuka agama, warga lokal, dan pendatang. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa praktik sinkretis di Pegayaman tidak melemahkan akidah Islam, melainkan merefleksikan proses internalisasi dan negosiasi nilai-nilai Islam dalam konteks budaya lokal. Berakar pada filosofi dasar yang menekankan warisan budaya, toleransi, dan harmoni sosial, praktik-praktik ini tampak dalam perayaan keagamaan dan ritual sosial. Dari perspektif hukum

Islam, adaptasi tersebut dapat diklasifikasikan sebagai ‘urf *sahīh* selama tidak bertentangan dengan prinsip syariah. Studi ini menegaskan pentingnya pemahaman kontekstual dalam penerapan hukum Islam di masyarakat majemuk, menunjukkan bahwa akomodasi budaya tidak selalu berarti kompromi teologis..

**Kata Kunci:** Sinkretisme; Hukum Islam; Kearifan Lokal; Interaksi Hindu-Muslim;

## Introduction

Muslim minority communities living within predominantly non-Muslim societies face complex challenges in maintaining their religious identity while engaging in local cultural adaptations. These adaptations often involve elements derived from non-Islamic traditions, raising important questions about their acceptability within the normative framework of Sharia. Such cultural syncretism<sup>1</sup> can be understood either as a contextual expression of *ijtihād* and legal pluralism or as a potential threat to core Islamic principles, particularly *tawhīd*. Despite the significance of this issue, it has often been overlooked or narrowly interpreted in Islamic legal discourse, where syncretism tends to be dismissed as deviation rather than acknowledged as a legitimate socio-legal response to pluralistic realities.<sup>2</sup> Addressing this challenge requires an interdisciplinary approach that combines legal, theological, and anthropological insights.

Hindu-Muslim syncretism in Pegayaman Village, Bali the sole Muslim village surrounded by a Hindu-majority society offers a compelling case study. Contrary to dominant assumptions about syncretism's harmful impact on religious orthodoxy, the Pegayaman experience demonstrates the potential for syncretism to generate dynamic and innovative cultural-religious expressions. The phenomenon transcends simple interfaith blending, instead representing a tripartite convergence of religious systems, philosophical outlooks, and cultural practices.<sup>3</sup> Syncretism in this context is deeply embedded within the village's prevailing cultural matrix, shaping the community's living traditions and worldview.<sup>4</sup> This multidimensional character of syncretism requires a high degree of religious literacy among its adherents, involving a critical engagement with intercultural

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<sup>1</sup>Plutarch, *Moralia Vol 5*, ed. Jeffrey Henderson, 7th ed. (London: Hardvard University Press, 2003), <https://archive.org/details/moraliainfiftee05plut/page/n10/mode/1up>.

<sup>2</sup>Zoltán Szombathy, “A Trust from the Ancestors: Islamic Ethics and Local Tradition in a Syncretistic Ritual in East-Central Sulawesi,” *Die Welt Des Islams* 61, no. 4 (2021), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27108493>.

<sup>3</sup>I Ketut Ardhana, “Bali In A Multiculturaland Globalised World: Religion, Tolerance, Solidarity and Harmonious Life,” *Journal of Visual Languages & Computing*, 2020.

<sup>4</sup>I Wayan Rupa et al., “Multiculturalism in Paradise : Emerging Ethnicity , Religion , Belief and Tourism in Bali By” 13 (n.d.).

theological encounters and the capacity to distinguish between permissible cultural adaptation and the preservation of core doctrinal tenets.<sup>5</sup> Consequently, syncretism should not be simplistically defined as mere religious blending (religio-religio synthesis), devoid of cultural nuance, or inherently negative as a presumed indicator of doctrinal corruption.

Earlier academic discourses on syncretism such as the work of Satiri,<sup>6</sup> have problematized the symbolic convergence between *tawhīd* and non-Islamic beliefs, interpreting it as cultural shirk, especially when it produces *muhdathāt* (illegitimate innovations) that potentially blur divine unity.<sup>7</sup> Such critiques echo similar cases of religious hybridization, including Brahma Samaj and the Ramakrishna Mission in India,<sup>8</sup> Baha'iyyah<sup>9</sup> and *Dīn Ilāhī* in Iran,<sup>10</sup> the Druze<sup>11</sup> in the Middle East,<sup>12</sup> and *Agami Jawi* (Islam *Kejawen*) in Indonesia.<sup>13</sup> While syncretism continues to face opposition in the Middle East, some contemporary Muslim thinkers have reinterpreted it as an unavoidable and sometimes enriching manifestation of pluralism.<sup>14</sup> Other scholars—such as Hariyanti,<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Lana Indralak, “Sufi Islam and Syncretism in Java: And Its Implications for Local Secularism,” *Prajñā Vihāra* 22, no. 2 (2021): 55–67, <https://assumptionjournal.au.edu/index.php/PrajnaVihara/article/view/5947>.

<sup>6</sup>Iwan Satiri, “Kritik Al-Qur'an Terhadap Sinkritisme (Analisis Tentang Sakralisasi Simbol Tauhid),” *Repository Institut PTIQ Jakarta* (Institut PTIQ Jakarta, 2021).

<sup>7</sup>Wicaksono Adi, “Seni Rupa Dan ‘Fundamentalisme’ Agama,” *Dekonstruksi* 6, no. 01 (2022): 21–64, <https://doi.org/10.54154/dekonstruksi.v6i01.89>; Tasrifin Tahara, Andi Batara Al Isra, and Surahmat Tiro, “Cultural Resilience and Syncretism: The Towani Tolotang Community’s Journey in Indonesia’s Religious Landscape,” *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies* 10, no. 4 (2023): 233–46, <https://doi.org/10.29333/ejecs/1863>.

<sup>8</sup>Anis Malik Toha, *Tren Pluralisme Agama Tinjauan Kritis* (Depok: Perspektif Kelompok Gema Insani, 2015).

<sup>9</sup>Sethi Amarij Singh and Pummer, *Comparative Religions* (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1979).

<sup>10</sup>Solomon Alexander Nigosian, *World Faith* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1990), [https://archive.org/details/worldfaiths0000nigo\\_g9k0](https://archive.org/details/worldfaiths0000nigo_g9k0).

<sup>11</sup>Druze adalah komunitas keagamaan yang berada di Timur Tengah. Kelompok ini berasal dari ajaran Islam murni kemudian tercampur dengan agama lain dan filsafat Yunani

<sup>12</sup>Carl Skutsch, *Encyclopedia of the World’s Minorities*, 1st ed. (New York: Routledge, 2005), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203935606>.

<sup>13</sup>Darori Amin, *Islam Dan Kebudayaan Jawa* (Yogyakarta: Gama Media, 2000).

<sup>14</sup>Munzir Hitami, “Nilai-Nilai Pluralisme Dalam Tafsir Nusantara,” *Nusantara; Journal for Southeast Asian Islamic Studies* 17, no. 1 (2021): 8, <https://doi.org/10.24014/nusantara.v17i1.13826>.

<sup>15</sup>Hariyanti Hariyanti, “Expression of Tolerance in the Religious-Multicultural Society of Jayapura, Siak Regency,” *Jurnal Studi Agama Dan Masyarakat* 20, no. 1 (2024): 59–66, <https://doi.org/10.23971/jsam.v20i1.7927>.

Jirnaya,<sup>16</sup> Faizah,<sup>17</sup> Styowati,<sup>18</sup> and Rahminar,<sup>19</sup> have explored syncretism as a form of cultural resilience that supports the inclusion of Muslim minorities.<sup>20</sup> Conversely, Anacin highlights the risk of syncretism facilitating the erosion of local religious identity when cultural adaptation becomes excessive.<sup>21</sup>

The particular article proposes a new theoretical lens for understanding syncretism, viewing it not merely as symbolic or theological hybridity but as a form of legal-cultural negotiation. In this view, syncretism reflects the adaptation of Islamic law within a pluralistic social order, where law is not applied in isolation but interpreted through dynamic interactions with local customs, belief systems, and societal structures. By analyzing the lived experiences of religious syncretism in Pegayaman Village, this study constructs a typology of syncretic practices. Also, this study investigates how these practices serve as mechanisms for negotiating peaceful coexistence, interfaith harmony, and the contextual application of Islamic legal principles in Hindu-majority settings.

## Method

The research was an empirical legal study, conducted on the Pegayaman Muslim one of the minority communities in the province. Among this community, the Pegayaman Muslim adheres to the local religion, a belief that is practiced for syncretism. According to customary law, it is a local religion that determines the validity of their religious practices. Therefore, an in-depth study of the local religion as a symbol of culture is crucial as a respect for human rights in achieving non-discriminatory law.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>I Ketut Jirnaya, “Sinkretisme Hindu-Islam Dalam Mantra: Sebuah Kasus Dalam Teks Usada Manak,” *Adabiyyat: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra* 14, no. 2 (2015), <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajbs.2015.14206>.

<sup>17</sup>Khairani Faizah, “Kearifan Lokal Tahlilan-Yasinan Dalam Dua Perspektif Menurut Muhammadiyah,” *Aqlam: Journal of Islam and Plurality* 3, no. 2 (2018): 213–27, <https://doi.org/10.30984/ajip.v3i2.722>.

<sup>18</sup>Reny Setiyowati, Luthfi Rahman, and Novi Lieana Anggraeni, “Tradisi Sesaji Rewanda Dalam Perspektif Sakralitas Dan Profanitas Emile Durkheim,” *Empirisma: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Kebudayaan Islam* 33, no. 2 (2024): 439–64, <https://doi.org/10.30762/empirisma.v33i2.2126>.

<sup>19</sup>Fitria Shalza Rahmania et al., “Keselarasan Kearifan Lokal Dengan Nilai Keislaman Pada Tradisi Labuhan Gunung Kombang Di Kabupaten Malang,” *Jurnal SMART (Studi Masyarakat, Religi, Dan Tradisi)* 6, no. 1 (2020): 113–25, <https://doi.org/10.18784/smart.v6i1.805>.

<sup>20</sup>Shofiah Fitriani, “Keberagaman Dan Toleransi Antar Umat Beragama,” *Analisis: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 20, no. 2 (2020): 179–92, <https://doi.org/10.24042/ajsk.v20i2.5489>.

<sup>21</sup>Carljohnson G. Anacin, “Syncretism in Rituals and Performance in a Culturally Pluralistic Society in the Philippines,” *Social Science Journal* 52, no. 1 (2015): 40–45, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.soscij.2014.08.005>.

<sup>22</sup>Ali Sodiqin and Anwar M. Radiamoda, “The Dynamics of Islamic Constitution: From the Khilafah Period to the Nation-State,” *Journal of Islamic Law* 2, no. 2 (2021): 138–67, <https://doi.org/10.24260/jil.v2i2.241>; Jumarim, Ilyya Muhsin, and Muhammad Chairul Huda, “The Interplay of Fiqh, Adat, and State Marriage Law: Shaping Legal Consciousness of Sasak Women,” *Al-*

The research used an ethnographic method. By using this method, it is expected to find out the legal behavior of a particular group or community.<sup>23</sup> This method used in exploring a community that is themed with Islam. Theoretical data analysis followed the path of James P. Spradley using ethnographic data interpretation methods. The research conducted between January and March, when one of the practices of syncretism was demonstrated through the tradition of parading the *Sokok* (Prophet Muhammad's birthday), *mapag tuyé*, dan *burde*. This data used for analysis of its components in the study of cultural meaning systems.<sup>24</sup> The social values and rules that are used as references in these legal acts.<sup>25</sup> Thus, the theories used for data analysis were the 'urf theory<sup>26</sup> and Culture Acculturation.

## Findings and Discussion

The Hindu-Muslim syncretization in Pegayaman Village, Bali, was examined out not only based on the historical background of the arrival of Muslims in Pegayaman but

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*Ihkam: Jurnal Hukum Dan Pranata Sosial* 19, no. 2 (2024): 27–52, <https://doi.org/10.19105/alkam.v19i1.10522>; Medhy Aginta Hidayat and Mohammad Afifuddin, "Gender Negotiation, Religious Identity, and Social Identity among Female Pilgrims (Ebhu Ajjhi) in Rural Madura," *Jurnal Studi Agama Dan Masyarakat* 20, no. 1 (2024): 23–32, <https://doi.org/10.23971/jsam.v20i1.7648>.

<sup>23</sup>Fokky Fuad Wasiatmadja, *Etnografi Hukum: Budaya Hukum Masyarakat Cina Jelata*, Edisi pert (Jakarta: Prenadamedia group, 2020); Eka Susylawati et al., "Socio-Cultural Strength: Optimization of Bhuppa', Bhâbhu', Ghuru, and Rato in Establishing Compliance in Madurese Familial Conduct," *Samarah* 8, no. 3 (2024): 1974–93, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v8i3.20299>; Fahmi Fatwa Rosyadi Satria Hamdani et al., "Traditional Law vs. Islamic Law; An Analysis of Muslim Community Awareness in Inheritance Issues," *Al-Ahkam* 32, no. 1 (2022): 109–30, <https://doi.org/10.21580/ahkam.2022.32.1.11000>.

<sup>24</sup>Nelvitia Purba et al., "Revitalization of Socio-Cultural Based Dolanan in the Formation of Children's Character in Javanese Families in Binjai, Indonesia," *El-Usrah* 7, no. 1 (2024): 165–83, <https://doi.org/10.22373/ujhk.v7i1.23054>; Wahyu Abdul Jafar et al., "Philosophical Foundations and Human Rights in the Bajapuik Tradition: Bridging Local Wisdom and Islamic Law in Minangkabau Marriage Practices," *De Jure: Jurnal Hukum Dan Syar'iah* 16, no. 1 (2024): 212–33, <https://doi.org/10.18860/j-fsh.v16i1.27681>; Airin Liemanto et al., "Recognition of the Right to Participation of Tribal Peoples in the Repatriation of Lombok Treasures," *Legality: Jurnal Ilmiah Hukum* 32, no. 2 (2024): 195–220, <https://doi.org/10.22219/ljh.v32i2.33052>.

<sup>25</sup>Wardah Nuroniyah and Bani Syarif Maula, "Muslim Women Adhering to Minangkabau's Bajapuik Tradition in Cirebon, West Java: Compromizing a Gendered Culture in Islamic Law," *Ijtihad: Jurnal Wacana Hukum Islam Dan Kemanusiaan* 22, no. 2 (2022): 135–53, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijtihad.v22i2.135-154>; Iqbal Kamalludin, "Restoration of Pancasila Values Against Criminal Law Reform Strategy in Indonesia Political Perspective of Islamic Law," *Syariah: Jurnal Hukum Dan Pemikiran* 22, no. 1 (2022): 31–47, <https://jurnal.uin-antasari.ac.id/index.php/syariah/article/view/4637>.

<sup>26</sup>Rosalina Bukido et al., "Harmonization of Customary and Islamic Law in the Gama Tradition of the Muslim Mongondow Community of North Sulawesi," *Ijtihad: Jurnal Wacana Hukum Islam Dan Kemanusiaan* 22, no. 2 (2022): 239–54, <https://doi.org/10.18326/IJTIHAD.V22I2.239-254>; Usman Al Farisi et al., "Negotiation Between Customary Law and Islamic Law: The Practice of Palang Pintu in The Traditional Marriage in The Betawi Muslim Community," *De Jure: Jurnal Hukum Dan Syar'iah* 15, no. 2 (2023): 268–85, <https://doi.org/10.18860/j-fsh.v15i2.21241>.

also on the philosophy of the community. Most of the socio-religious activities of the Pegayaman community are based on the philosophy of their mother tongue, which in Balinese terminology is called the *base meme* philosophy. This *base meme* philosophy is the foundation that brings together Muslims and Hindus in the space of religion with a philosophy of life, culture with culture, and one tradition with another. This uniqueness is found in traditional ceremonies, identity lending (cross-cutting affiliation), and art. These three forms of syncretism are discussed in the following sections.

From a *syari'ah* perspective, syncretism is an inevitable phenomenon in the formative stages of any religion, deeply intertwined with prevailing cultural and social frameworks. As noted by Droggers<sup>27</sup> dan Kamstra<sup>28</sup> this process reflects the inevitability of religious adaptation, where new faiths negotiate with existing traditions to establish themselves. Example of Islamic Syncretism;<sup>29</sup> in Hajj Rituals: Pre-Islamic Practice; Pilgrims performed *tawāf* (circumambulation) in complete nudity. After Islamic Reform: Preserved the ritual structure but introduced *ihrām* (sacred garments), maintaining spiritual solemnity while respecting human dignity, Sacrificial Rites (*Udhiyah*): *Jāhiliyyah Custom*: Offerings were placed before idols. *Islamic Transformation*: Retained the act of sacrifice but reoriented it toward *tawhīd* (monotheism), replacing idolatrous symbolism with divine unity. This framework challenges rigid orthodoxy by showing how Islam historically negotiated culture not through erasure but through ethical transformation.<sup>30</sup>

This syncretized socio-religious activity not only shows the functioning of the philosophy of life but also presents a model of syncretism in the form of active involvement (active engagement) amidst diversity and differences, active tolerance, that is an effort to understand others through a constructive understanding, as well as an effort to find a common commitment among various commitments (encounter commitments) between Muslims and Hindus in Pegayaman, which is framed in the dominant culture *base meme*.

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<sup>27</sup>André Droggers, *Syncretism in Religion*, 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 2005).

<sup>28</sup>Jacques.H Kamstra, *Encounter or Syncretism: The Initial Growth of Japanese Buddhism* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967).

<sup>29</sup>Satiri, “Kritik Al-Qur'an Terhadap Sinkritisme (Analisis Tentang Sakralisasi Simbol Tauhid).”

<sup>30</sup>Muhammad 'Ali Al-Shabuni, *Rawa'i' Al-Bayan Tafsir Ayat Al-Ahkam Min Al-Qur'an, Jilid 1* (Qohirah: Dar al-'Alamiyah, 2014).

### **Mapag Tuye (Ecology of Subak and Sacrifice to God)**

*Subak* for the Pegayaman community is not just an irrigation system, but also a concept of life. In the view of the Pegayaman community, *Subak* is a direct depiction of Hindu philosophy *tri hita karana* (three causes of well-being), are *parahyangan* having a good relationship with God, *Pawongan* relating well to fellow humans, and *Palemahan* having a good relationship with nature. As acknowledged by R1:

Tradition of can bet means the process of channeling water sources for irrigation of rice fields is a practice of Hindu philosophy, that is *tri hita karana*. Well, in substance, the philosophy is no different from the conception of *brotherhood* in Islam, that is *Hablumminallah* (having a good relationship with God), *Hablumminannas* (relating well to fellow humans), and *Hablumminal 'alam* (connected well with universe), this is where the meeting point (encounter commitments). In the Hindu tradition, *Mapag Tuye* (inviting water) is a practice of Hindu teachings as a form of devotion to *Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa* (God Almighty in Hindu terminology), who do it with holy sacrifice, sincere, and selfless. In the tradition, a *mantra* is recited to accompany the path, such as the *mantra* about *Bhatara Gangga* as a goddess or *Bhatari* who resides in the Ganges River. We know that, in Hinduism, the Ganges River is a holy river as a water source that can carry water to all corners, including rice fields. Here, Hindus usually serve various kinds offer (offerings). There is *Banten* using it, which uses a black duck or black chicken and after that continues with praying with the regent. Indeed, Muslims carry out the same traditions and with the same goals. The difference is that if Hindus bring offerings, Muslims bring various foods, such as *ketupat*, *lontong*, fruit, *opor*, and so on, and are not intended as offerings, but are eaten together which is preceded by reading *yasin* and *tahlil* as a form of gratitude to Allah SWT for the abundance of good fortune, so there is no syntax here. The system uses the Balinese Hindu *subak*, but the embodiment uses the Islamic Pegayaman *subak* culture. This is apart from being an expression of gratitude, it is also in the context of maintaining traditions that are taught by our predecessors.<sup>31</sup>

The same understanding was also acknowledged by R2, who stated:

Performance of rituals *Mapag Tuye* between Hindus and Muslims in Pegayaman does not affect the faith at all. On the contrary, because this activity is a form of gratitude to Allah SWT, who has bestowed sustenance in the form of water, then agricultural activities run. Then, why it has the same term as Hinduism, because based on a "base meme". In the past, our mothers and parents taught us this, so as good descendants we voluntarily continue this tradition, apart from being a form of gratitude to Allah SWT, but also as an effort to appreciate from our parents have inherited. "Whether this is called unique or not, we will definitely continue this tradition, because the benefits it produces are so many.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>R1, Interview (Pangayaman, 2024).

<sup>32</sup>R2, Interview (Pangayaman, 2024).

Another syncretism is in the form of a process, like Hindus, this tradition started from *Ngendag*, which is a ceremony in Banjar involving the first cupping in the paddy fields or fields carried out by both religious communities. Even before *Ngendag* implemented the party. *Klian Banjar* (Head of the hamlet) appointed one of the residents to convey information to the Pegayaman Village officials so they could watch the ceremony lay down. Tradition lay down and can bet, are interrelated, that is, they both maintain natural harmony. For that reason, can bet will only be implemented after the tradition of lay down is completed.

The involvement of Hindus and Muslims in syncretic activities has an impact on the persistence of customs and traditions. The data shows at least 3 general impacts felt by society, namely maintaining traditions, the embodiment of the *base meme* philosophy, and the emergence of cooperation. An informant (R3) stated that the substance of the *mapag tuyé* tradition is an expression of gratitude to God. Although, it is done in a different way. As a newcomer to Pegayaman, I felt, at first it was heretical, but after seeing the traditional activities, I have a conclusion. It is not heretical, because I see, Hindus do it according to their Hindu law and people do it according to their Islamic law.

#### **Cross Cutting Affiliation in Religious Rituals (*Ngejot, Hari Raya, Burde*)**

The syncretism that brings together religion and philosophy of life, culture with culture, tradition with tradition, in Pegayaman, apart from being built based on the *base meme* philosophy, is also based on a strong understanding of religious substance. Even though some religious groups refuse to provide space for syncretist practices as demonstrated in Pegayaman, the fact is that syncretist practices have succeeded in creating a society that is different from most urban Muslims in Bali. One informant (R4) stated that in general, our community traditions are a mixture of Hindu and Muslim traditions, but as Muslims, we choose and adapt which traditions do not conflict with the Sharia.

Three forms of syncretism practiced by the Pegayaman community are tradition of *Ngejot* (sharing food), *Hari Raya*, and *Sokok* (Prophet's birthday egg procession).

Tabel 2. Syncretism Practices

Keywords	Syncretism Practices
<i>Ngejot</i>	Basically, <i>Ngejot</i> is a tradition of Hindus in Bali where the practice of

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*Ngejot* is sharing food with other people (R5).

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*Ngejot* is an offering of food to God through humans to obtain purity of soul. A holy God will only come down or accept the prayer of a holy servant (R6).

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It is an early boost to the Hindu tradition, but in practice, it is also used by Islamic communities because it is useful for building togetherness (R7).

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**Religious Day Celebration** Similarity of Hindus and Muslims in Pegayaman in *yadnye*, like *Galungan*, *Kuningan*, *Nyepi*, and others, as well as Muslims celebrating Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, Mawlid, and so on. Agreed to tolerance. For example, *Nyepi* coincides with Friday, Muslims carry out Friday prayers but choose the nearest mosque and do not use loudspeakers (R8).

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Perhaps syncretism, such as equality of time and naming ceremony processes, such as *penapan*, *presentation*, and *penampahan*, a tradition used by Hindus when celebrating *Galungan*. Well, Pegayaman Muslims also use the same term during Eid al-Fitr or other ceremonies. The difference is that if *Galungan* uses a lot of pork, Muslims use goat meat (R1).

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Deep syncretic *Penapean* or *pin them* which occurs on the day *Redite Pahing Dungulan* is a holiday *nyakeb* (fermenting) fruit to ripen quickly, Hindus and Muslims in Pegayaman do the same thing. To *Presentation* or make cakes on the day *Soma Pon Dungulan*, namely the day when the Hindu-Balinese community makes snacks and food for the *Galungan* holiday, similar to the Muslims in Eid al-Fitr or others. There is another name *tempering* (slaughter) that falls on the day *Anggara Wage Dungulan*. Hindus slaughter pigs, and Muslims slaughter goats, it happen naturally (R2).

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**Sokok** *Sokok* is *march taluh* (eggs) during the Prophet's birthday celebration. Here, those who were celebrating were all wearing traditional Balinese clothes, like Hindus when it is a holiday. So, it looks like those celebrating is Hindus (R3).

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For *many* very similar *tax* Hinduism, what is the difference? *Tax* is filled with fruits. But, when it is filled with eggs, then it is similar to a festival. The difference is that Hindus recite the Hindu mantra. Meanwhile, Muslims read *asrakalan* (R4).

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If it would say it as syncretic, yes, it is indeed syncretic in the sense that Islamic traditions and Hindu traditions meet, not mixing religions, just mixing traditions as a form of experience from the "*base meme*" (R5).

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The existence of these traditions create a unique traditional order in Pegayaman, which is predominantly Muslim. Even when a small number of Hindus, it is no longer preserve this tradition, but Muslims in Pegayaman preserve it. This fact shows that a deep understanding of religious traditions and substance is needed. Then, a demonstrated by

the Pegayaman community is not considered heretical. This tradition shows the venularization of practices from Hindu traditions to Muslim traditions.

### ***Burde: Art in Harmony and Beauty***

The facts show that the syncretism of Hindus and Muslims in Pegayaman is a means of embodying the dominant culture (base meme). Ethnographic portraits seem to be a special attraction not only for *tamiu* (immigrants), but also, for academics, anthropologists, and so forth. Even syncretism in Pegayaman, not only in the form of religious rituals, customs, and culture, but also in art, for example, art should the Pegayaman community be very passionate about art.

In the tradition of *burde*, the people of Pegayaman wear Balinese (Hindu) clothes and use the tunes of Hindu songs, like in a temple. There appears to be no difference in implementation. Therefore, the difference is, Hindus read *Praise Trisandya*, meanwhile Muslims read *al-Barzanji*. This is acknowledged by Muslim traditional leaders in Pegayaman (R8). According to one informant, he stated that only the model of the song is used, but its meaning does not lead to apostasy at all, especially as all the people of Pegayaman know that art should, this comes from Muslims, as a form of maintaining the *base meme*, tradition, so it is not surprising that its implementation has a strong Hindu color (R1). It is seen from the use of traditional Balinese musical instruments; the arrangements and lyrics of the songs use Balinese (Hindu) styles but contain stories about the history of the life of the Prophet Muhammad (R2).

This form of syncretism has an impact on people's love of celebrations. Tradition *Burde* who comes from Muslims, the Hindu community in Pegayaman also attended and was actively involved in the art performance. This type of ethnography shows that each religious community is welcome to work together and have a deep understanding of each other's differences. At the same time, they always try to find common ground for existing differences.

### **Negotiating Legal Pluralism through the Syncretism of Islamic Law and Balinese Adat in Pegayaman Village**

This research shows that syncretism between religion and philosophy of life, culture, and tradition, even tradition and other traditions, is a significant factor in

presenting syncretism based on regional philosophy.<sup>33</sup> Muslims in Pegayaman do not feel awkward in borrowing terms and even equate their ritual processes with Hindus. Also, Hindus do not feel disadvantaged in using Hindu terminology in Muslim ritual activities. Everyone blends under ancestral teachings which the Pegayaman people call *base memes*. This love and respect for mothers makes two people of different religions feel like they are the same religion.

The syncretic rituality, as shown reflects the situation and conditions of celebration (brotherhood), is based on the dominant culture. The experience of the Pegayaman community with its various types of syncretism is an important statement that God does not want one way to practice His teachings. This kind of social-religious ritual activity can be a force to produce social cohesion.

The results show the existence of syncretism in various areas of life are possible because both Hindu and Muslim communities have a deep understanding of the dominant culture. The dominant culture in Pegayaman becomes a substantive model that reflects the reality of relations between ethnicity in the context of local power structures. The product of relations between ethnic groups is determined by the style of relations between local tribes and by of the style the relationship between each tribe and the local power structure.<sup>34</sup> Pegayaman Muslims have a religious understanding, so they can choose which traditions either interfere with Sharia or not. On the other hand, Hindus do not immediately impose Hinduism even though the implementation of the ritual has a strong Hindu color.

Research on tracing traces of syncretism in Hindu and Muslim communities in Pegayaman Village has shown the syncretic traditions and various models of syncretized traditions are implemented. However, existing studies do not analyze the implications of rejecting syncretism, so that it will lead to disintegration among diverse societies. This research shows a pattern of syncretism in a space of pluralism based on the dominant culture's philosophy of life. This kind of syncretism lead to a tolerant society based on local wisdom.

The study reveals a distinct model of Hindu-Muslim syncretism that diverges

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<sup>33</sup>Jirnaya, "Sinkretisme Hindu-Islam Dalam Mantra: Sebuah Kasus Dalam Teks Usada Manak."

<sup>34</sup>Edward M Bruner, "The Expression of Ethnicity in Indonesia. In A. Cohen (Ed.)," *Urban Ethnicity*, 1974.

fundamentally from *Agami Jawi* (Javanese Islam), while the latter exhibits *pantheistic* tendencies, Pegayaman's practices remain firmly monotheistic in orientation. Unlike Java's *kejawen* (which blends Islam with Hindu-Buddhist mysticism), Pegayaman's interactions do not produce new religions or belief systems that preserve theological boundaries while enabling social harmony. *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* in action, the Indonesian national motto (Unity in Diversity) manifests through ritual coexistence with mutual respect cultural adaptability Islamic fatwas accommodating local *adat*.

Indonesia safeguards the right to religious freedom and belief in Constitutional Guarantees in Article 28E (1) and Article 29 (2) of the 1945 and Law No. 39/1999 on Human Rights (explicitly protecting religious expression) State-Facilitated Tolerance: These legal frameworks foster societal tolerance. But, on the other side, the challenge of this practice is potential ideological syncretism. So, the solution is; to strengthening religious literacy particularly for younger generations to distinguish between Healthy cultural adaptation (Pegayaman's pluralism) and Theological syncretism (as seen in *Agami Jawi*'s pantheistic blends).

The results show the benefits of syncretism, involvement, and participation of government institutions and community organizations, both Hindu and Islamic, are needed to continue to support and preserve regional philosophies of life which may be very different from one region to another in Indonesia. The support of these institutions is needed in the transformation of socio-religious thought.

## Conclusion

The syncretic practices in Pegayaman reflected a unique model of interfaith tolerance, rooted in the community's local wisdom and the *base meme* philosophy, which emphasizes social harmony and cultural rootedness. These practices do not violate the core tenets of Islamic creed ('*aqīdah*) but rather align with the Islamic legal concept of '*urf sahīh* (valid customary practice), as they maintain the purity of *tawhīd* and avoid elements of shirk, unlike pantheistic traditions such as *Agami Jawi*. Historically, Islam has accommodated cultural practices by reforming rather than eradicating them, as seen in the preservation of Hajj rituals after the Prophet's reforms. The Pegayaman case exemplifies how Islamic legal principles can operate flexibly in multicultural contexts to promote social *maslahah* (public good). The study encourages a reframing of syncretism from a pejorative label to a legitimate form of legal-cultural negotiation and invites further

research into how the *base meme* philosophy facilitates Hindu-Muslim coexistence. Moreover, it suggests that the Indonesian model of Pancasila pluralism may offer valuable insights for other pluralistic societies worldwide.

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