

## Fiqh Hybridity in a Pluralistic Society: The Case of the *Saprahan* Tradition in Pontianak, Indonesia

Hijrian Angga Prihantoro<sup>1\*</sup>, Dandung Budi Yuwono<sup>2</sup>, Muhammad Lutfi Hakim<sup>3</sup>,  
Koeswinarno<sup>2</sup>, Muh. Isnanto<sup>2</sup>, Hendri Gunawan<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional, Jakarta, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup>IAIN Pontianak, Pontianak, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: hijrian.prihantoro@uin-suka.ac.id

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**Abstract:** In contemporary Islamic socio-legal scholarship, a central issue concerns the functioning of Islamic jurisprudence within culturally diverse societies, where indigenous traditions and religious norms are in continual interaction. This study examines the *Saprahan* communal dining tradition as a socio-legal site wherein Islamic norms and local cultural practices are negotiated within the multiethnic and multireligious context of Pontianak, West Kalimantan, Indonesia. The research frames *Saprahan* through the theoretical lenses of hybridity and coexistence fiqh (*fiqh al-ta'ayush*), highlighting its dynamic role in facilitating interethnic dialogue and fostering interfaith social cohesion. Employing a qualitative socio-legal case study approach—including ethnographic observation, in-depth interviews, and documentary analysis—the findings reveal that *Saprahan* operates as a ritualized social practice structuring interaction among diverse ethnic communities through shared dining arrangements that emphasize equality, reciprocity, and collective participation. These practices enable the negotiation of Islamic norms alongside local cultural values, resulting in what this study terms fiqh hybridity: a dynamic socio-legal process through which Islamic normative principles and customary traditions are mutually adapted within quotidian social interactions. By situating *Saprahan* within contemporary debates in Islamic socio-legal studies, this research demonstrates how local traditions serve as practical arenas for the interpretation and hybridization of Islamic norms in pluralistic social environments.

**Keywords:** Fiqh Hybridity; *Saprahan* Tradition; Pluralistic Society; Pontianak-Indonesia

### Introduction

In contemporary multicultural societies, research exploring the interplay among religion, culture, and ethnicity constitutes a dynamic and complex discursive domain, marked by epistemological debates and centered on the manifestation of these concepts within the public sphere (Bhatt, 2023; Qian, 2020). Pontianak, a city located in West Kalimantan, is characterized by its diverse ethnic and religious communities and possesses a rich array of local traditions (Halim et al., 2021; Rachmadhani, 2018), rendering it a dynamic social laboratory for examining this phenomenon. The *Saprahan* tradition<sup>1</sup>—a communal dining practice performed while sitting cross-legged around a shared, elongated meal arrangement—is believed to originate from inclusive Islamic values that emphasize equality, unity, and mutual respect (Hastiani et al., 2020; A. E. Putri et al., 2021). The concept of identity negotiation, as articulated by sociologists and cultural anthropologists such as Stuart Hall (2016) and Anthony Giddens (1984), posits that identity is not a fixed entity but rather a socially constructed process that is continuously renegotiated within contexts of practical interaction. In this context, the *Saprahan* tradition constitutes a

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<sup>1</sup> Based on regional typology, there are dialectal variations in the naming of this tradition, including *Beseprah*, *Basaprah*, and *Besaprah*. Referring to an academic manuscript prepared by the Dinas Kebudayaan dan Pariwisata Kota Pontianak in 2016, the term used for the city of Pontianak is *Saprahan*.

local religious and cultural expression that is not monolithic; rather, it remains open to adaptation and reinterpretation in ways that reflect the realities of local pluralism. From this perspective, *Saprahan* can be understood as a social arena wherein Islamic teachings and local cultural practices are continuously interpreted and enacted through everyday communal interactions. Consequently, analyzing this practice provides a valuable entry point for examining how Islamic normativity is negotiated, embodied, and sustained within the lived realities of a pluralistic society.

Research on Malay culture in West Kalimantan has predominantly focused on its historical aspects and the intrinsic values it embodies (Akbar & Sukmawati, 2019; Firmansyah, 2023; Wahab et al., 2020). Nevertheless, there remains a paucity of studies investigating how locally rooted religious cultural practices serve as mediums for negotiating multiethnic identities and promoting multireligious coexistence. Existing scholarship on the *Saprahan* tradition primarily addresses its symbolic significance, ceremonial roles, and ethical dimensions within Malay culture, yet offers limited insight into its function as a social arena where interethnic and interreligious interactions are negotiated in everyday communal life. This lacuna prompts critical inquiries: How are Islamic norms and local cultural traditions interwoven to shape patterns of social interaction in multiethnic and multireligious contexts? In what ways can local culture, grounded in Islamic principles, be negotiated as a foundation for social coexistence amid ethno-religious diversity? These questions are particularly salient given prevailing narratives in Indonesian interreligious studies, which frequently emphasize conflict and tension (Daffa, 2025; Regus, 2020; Suwarno, 2005), rather than the cultural mechanisms that underpin sustainable peace. Furthermore, the *Saprahan* tradition challenges theoretical assumptions concerning the relationship between religion and exclusivism. While some social science research posits that religion often functions as a barrier to cross-ethnic interaction (Hopkins, 2011; Sanders, 2002; Warner, 1997), this tradition demonstrates that religious diversity can, conversely, foster interethnic inclusivity. Thus, an examination of *Saprahan* provides a valuable opportunity to understand how Islamic normative values are enacted through local cultural practices that facilitate quotidian interethnic engagement within a pluralistic social milieu.

This study seeks to address the identified academic gap by examining the *Saprahan* tradition in Pontianak as a manifestation of cultural, Islamic, and ethno-religious hybridity, which exemplifies the convergence of religious values, local wisdom, and societal imperatives for social harmony amid ethnic and religious diversity. In this context, hybridity refers to the socio-cultural process through which Islamic values are interpreted, negotiated, and articulated via culturally embedded local practices within a pluralistic social framework. This process of meaning-making demonstrates that the Islamic values inherent in the *Saprahan* tradition do not function as sources of exclusivity; rather, they serve as mechanisms for promoting social harmony. Consequently, the study of *Saprahan* provides a critical platform for reexamining prevailing theories on religion and multiculturalism, thereby enriching the discourse on religious pluralism through the perspective of local culture. Utilizing an interdisciplinary approach that integrates theories of hybridity and *fiqh al-ta'āyush* (coexistence fiqh) (Bhabha, 1994; Selim, 2015; Shariati, 2009), this research contributes conceptually to understanding the role of local cultural preservation in fostering harmonious multiculturalism. The theory of hybridity elucidates the cultural negotiation processes through which Islamic values interact with local traditions, while the concept of *fiqh al-ta'āyush* provides a normative Islamic framework outlining principles of coexistence and social harmony in pluralistic societies. Practically, the findings of this study may offer an alternative narrative model for managing interreligious relations in other regions confronting similar challenges related to multiethnic diversity and multireligious coexistence.

## Literature Review

The *Saprahan* tradition, culturally known as *nyaprah*, among the Malay communities of West Kalimantan has garnered considerable scholarly interest, particularly within the disciplines of cultural studies, anthropology, and the study of religious rituals. Numerous investigations have documented *Saprahan* as a symbol of customary practice and social cohesion within Malay society. Riansyah (2023) emphasizes the role of the *Saprahan* tradition in reinforcing familial and communal bonds, illustrating how

it functions as a medium for fostering social harmony during various religious and communal events. Similarly, Hemafitria et al., (2018) and Hasmika (2021) examine how this tradition, as practiced by local communities, can be situated within broader efforts to promote an inclusive national identity. In relation to local wisdom, Eka Putri (2020), Basri (2024), and Amalia Putri et al. (2024) advocate for the integration of this tradition into the educational curriculum, recommending its instruction in schools throughout the West Kalimantan region. While these studies provide valuable insights into the cultural significance and educational potential of *Saprahan*, they predominantly concentrate on its symbolic and pedagogical dimensions, offering limited analysis of its role as a social space where cultural practices intersect with wider religious and pluralistic social dynamics.

Within the field of Islamic studies, Mualimin (2020) endeavors to contextualize the *Saprahan* tradition within the framework of Islamic *da'wah*, positing that this practice embodies the principles of brotherhood and decorum emphasized in Islamic teachings. Additionally, Sari and Kurniawan (2025) analyze the ritualistic aspects of *Saprahan*, situating it within the broader context of Muslim-Malay culture as an expression of religious moderation. In the domain of Islamic legal discourse, Artawan et al. (2025) investigate the values inherent in *Saprahan* as a mechanism for conflict resolution within the Pontianak Malay community, assessing the extent to which these values correspond with the principles of justice and security in Islamic law. More specifically, Jariah et al. (2024), utilizing the framework of *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*, contend that the *Saprahan* tradition represents a secondary necessity (*hājīyyāt*) as it complements the marriage ceremony, which is regarded as a primary necessity (*darūriyyāt*). Furthermore, the etiquette and regulations governing communal eating and seating during *Saprahan* are classified as tertiary needs (*taḥsīniyyāt*) that enhance the aesthetic and propriety of the ritual. Despite these important contributions, existing Islamic scholarship on *Saprahan* predominantly emphasizes normative interpretations or ritual classifications, thereby leaving the social negotiation of Islamic legal and ethical principles through this practice within a pluralistic context insufficiently explored.

The aforementioned studies suggest that the *Saprahan* tradition has not yet been comprehensively analyzed through the framework of hybridity to elucidate how local cultural practices and Islamic teachings coalesce to create a “third space”—a negotiable domain within diverse social realities. This research seeks to investigate the forms of hybridity that arise from the intersection of cultural locality and Islamic sharia norms in response to a pluralistic social context characterized by multiethnic and multireligious dynamics. A notable gap in the existing literature is the insufficient examination of *Saprahan* as a manifestation of living fiqh—defined as a dynamic interpretation and application of Islamic norms that address plural social realities across ethnic and interfaith boundaries. This gap underscores a significant scholarly oversight concerning the role of *Saprahan* as a medium for negotiation between Muslim-Malay communities and other Muslim and non-Muslim groups within Pontianak’s multiethnic and multireligious environment. In this study, living fiqh refers to the practical enactment of Islamic norms within everyday social practices, whereas fiqh hybridity denotes the process through which these norms interact with local cultural traditions to produce adaptive forms of religious expression in pluralistic societies (Yanti et al., 2025; Roziqi et al., 2025).

Distinct from prior research, this study offers a novel contribution by conceptualizing the *Saprahan* tradition as a form of “fiqh hybridity” embedded within local cultural practices. It examines how this tradition facilitates multiethnic negotiations and promotes interfaith coexistence in the public sphere. Moving beyond interpretations that regard *Saprahan* solely as a cultural artifact, this research positions it as a dynamic site where Islamic legal and ethical principles are articulated, interpreted, and enacted in the daily lives of ethnically and religiously diverse communities in Pontianak. By doing so, the study advances scholarship on *fiqh al-ta'āyush* (coexistence fiqh), enriching the discourse with empirical evidence grounded in the sociocultural context of Southeast Asian Muslim communities. This research situates *Saprahan* at the nexus of Islamic jurisprudence, cultural hybridity, and plural social relations, thereby underscoring the analytical importance of local traditions for understanding the application of Islamic norms within heterogeneous societal settings.

Building on the preceding discussion, this study conceptualizes the *Saprahan* tradition not merely as a cultural practice but as a significant empirical site for examining the interaction among Islamic

jurisprudence, cultural hybridity, and pluralistic social relations. In multicultural settings such as Pontianak, where ethnic and religious diversity fundamentally shapes everyday social interactions, local traditions often function as arenas in which normative religious principles are interpreted and enacted within culturally embedded practices. By analyzing *Saprahan* through the integrated frameworks of hybridity and *fiqh al-ta'āyush*, this research elucidates how Islamic legal and ethical values are negotiated within communal cultural forms that promote multiethnic participation and interreligious coexistence. This approach allows the tradition to be understood as a dynamic embodiment of Islamic normativity, continuously reinterpreted in response to plural social realities (Rohman et al., 2025), thereby contributing to broader scholarly debates concerning the evolving relationship among Islamic law, culture, and multicultural social life.

## Method

This study adopts a case study methodology within a qualitative research paradigm, concentrating on the *Saprahan* tradition among the Malay-Muslim community in Pontianak, West Kalimantan. The case study approach was chosen for its capacity to provide an in-depth examination of how the *Saprahan* tradition functions as a dynamic cultural practice in response to the city's ethnic and religious diversity. Data were collected over a three-month period, from March to early June 2025, employing three primary methods: (1) direct observation to document both procedural and symbolic dimensions of the tradition; (2) in-depth, face-to-face interviews with 13 informants conducted between April 27 and June 5, 2025; and (3) document analysis, which involved reviewing various sources, including manuals on the *Saprahan* tradition, customary texts related to *Saprahan*, and literature concerning Malay customs and interreligious interactions in Pontianak. Informants were selected through purposive sampling based on their institutional roles, cultural authority, and level of engagement with the *Saprahan* tradition. Additionally, further participants were identified through snowball sampling during the fieldwork phase.

**Table 1. Overview of informant details.**

No.	Code	Position	Ethnicity	Interview Date	Interview Location
1.	Kk1	Kadriyah Sultanate	Malay	27/04/2025	Office
2.	Kk2	Kadriyah Sultanate	Malay	29/04/2025	Café
3.	Fk	Religious Harmony Forum	Malay	30/04/2025	Office
4.	Ta	Indigenous Figure	Dayak	02/05/2025	Office
5.	Ma	Malay Cultural Customary Assembly	Malay	06/05/2025	Office
6.	Ac1	Academicians	Malay	28/04/2025	Office
7.	Ac2	Academicians	Malay	01/05/2025	Café
8.	Ac3	Academicians	Dayak	28/04/2025	Café
9.	Pk	Department of Culture and Tourism	Malay	02/05/2025	Office
10.	Pa	Steering Committee	Malay	29/04/2025	Office
11.	MI1	Local Residents	Chinese	01/05/2025	Store
12.	MI2	Local Residents	Javanese	04/06/2025	Café
13.	MI3	Local Residents	Maduranese	05/06/2025	Café'

Table 1 presents a detailed overview of the informants involved in this study, specifying their institutional affiliations, ethnic backgrounds, and interview locations. The informants' diversity mirrors the multiethnic social context in which the *Saprahan* tradition is practiced, including representatives from Malay, Dayak, Chinese, Javanese, and Maduranese communities. This diversity was intentionally incorporated to capture perspectives on the *Saprahan* tradition not only within Malay-Muslim institutions but also among members of other ethnic groups who engage with or participate in *Saprahan*-related social events in Pontianak. Importantly, several informants from Dayak and Chinese backgrounds—groups locally associated with non-Muslim communities—were included to provide insights into how *Saprahan* is perceived and experienced beyond the Malay-Muslim community. Their inclusion enriches the analysis

by highlighting the interethnic and interreligious dimensions of social interactions surrounding the tradition.

The theoretical framework of this study is anchored in the concepts of hybridity and coexistence fiqh (*fiqh al-ta'āyush*). Hybridity theory, as articulated by Homi K. Bhabha (1994), offers a lens through which to understand acculturation and the negotiation of cultural and religious identities within pluralistic societies via the creation of a “third space.” Concurrently, the concept of *fiqh al-ta'āyush* offers an Islamic jurisprudential framework for adapting religious norms to foster peaceful coexistence within diverse interfaith communities (Jirari, 1996; Selim, 2015; Shariati, 2009). The integration of these two concepts generates a novel analytical construct—fiqh hybridity—which enables the study to capture not only the cultural and ritualistic aspects of the *Saprahan* tradition but also to reveal deeper socio-legal hybridities within the multiethnic and multireligious context of Pontianak. This framework thus facilitates an examination of the interpretation and practice of Islamic normative principles within culturally embedded local traditions characterized by interactions among diverse ethnic and religious groups.

## Results and Discussion

The researchers analyze the findings through the framework of hybridity theory and examine the concept of *fiqh al-ta'āyush* to demonstrate how the *Saprahan* tradition arises from processes of cultural blending, is negotiated within a multiethnic context, and serves as a medium for multireligious coexistence. Consequently, the findings are organized into three primary themes: (1) the hybridity of local culture and Sharia norms within the *Saprahan* tradition; (2) multiethnic negotiation in the practice of *Saprahan*; and (3) multireligious coexistence in *Saprahan*, particularly regarding its transformation from a neutral cultural form to a widely embraced cultural expression.

### The *Saprahan* Tradition: Hybridity of Local Customs and Sharia Norms

In Pontianak, the *Saprahan* tradition has been preserved across generations by the Kadriyah Sultanate as part of the commemoration of Islamic holy days (Kk1, 2025). Subsequently, this tradition was formally recognized as a cultural identity of the Pontianak community by the Pontianak City Government through Decree No. 60105/MPK.E/KB/2017, issued on October 4, 2017. This formal acknowledgment is analytically significant, as it illustrates the process through which a local cultural practice becomes integrated into the institutional frameworks of political authority and Islamic cultural identity. Consequently, *Saprahan* functions not only as a ceremonial tradition but also as a social space where cultural identity, religious symbolism, and local political legitimacy converge. At this juncture, *Saprahan* came to embody a manifestation of Malay-Islamic identity within both traditional and formally recognized frameworks of authority. From the perspective of Bhabha's theory (Bhabha, 1994), hybridity does not merely involve the blending of two cultural elements; rather, it produces a “third space” — an interstitial realm where meaning, power, and identity are dynamically reconstituted. According to Bhabha, hybridity signifies the emergence of cultural meanings and identities that are perpetually negotiated rather than fixed. Within this conceptual framework, *Saprahan* can be understood as such a third space, wherein local Malay customs and Islamic norms intersect to generate new cultural meanings that are neither solely traditional nor exclusively religious.

Based on the accounts of informants (Ac1, Ac3, and Kk2), *Saprahan* is affirmed as a manifestation of local wisdom in the presentation of a diverse array of dishes, characterized by the deliberate arrangement of varied menus intended for communal sharing. This culinary diversity can be categorized into two primary groups: first, dry foods without broth, including various fruits (e.g., bananas and oranges) and traditional cakes such as *juada ayam*, *bingke*, *sri pandan*, and *madu kandis*; and second, dishes with broth or a moist textures, such as *sayur dalca*, *semur daging*, *opor ayam*, *pacri nanas*, and similar preparations (Dinas Kebudayaan dan Pariwisata, 2016). Beyond mere culinary variation, this assortment symbolically reflects the coexistence of distinct socio-economic and ecological backgrounds within the Pontianak community. The researchers identified that these classifications correspond to the social structure of Pontianak, which, from an anthropological perspective, is shaped by residential location and modes of subsistence. Specifically, the Pontianak population is divided into two groups: inland communities and riverine

(coastal) communities (Avé, 1983; Maunati, 2011). Informants indicated that these culinary distinctions are widely acknowledged within the community as emblematic of the historical livelihoods of inland agricultural groups and riverine fishing communities. Accordingly, the arrangement of dishes in *Saprahan* functions as a cultural mechanism through which these divergent social identities are symbolically represented and integrated within a shared communal ritual. Thus, the two typologies within the *Saprahan* tradition not only reflect culinary preferences but also embody the indigenous identity of the local population (Ac3, 2025). Dry foods are associated with inland communities engaged primarily in agriculture, whereas brothy or moist dishes are linked to riverine communities whose primary occupation is fishing (Kk2, 2025; Ac2, 2025).

The culinary tradition of the *Saprahan* functions not merely as a social practice but as a symbolic convergence, tension, and fusion of two distinct cultural identities: the inland agrarian community and the riverine (coastal) fishing community. Dry dishes, including fruits and traditional cakes, signify the agrarian inland society, whereas brothy dishes represent the riverine fishing community. Food, as a symbolic medium, enables the performative expression of cultural identity (Stajic, 2013). The researchers observed that *Saprahan* exemplifies how local cultural elements are mediated through culinary symbols—symbols that are dynamic and continuously negotiated within social practices in public spaces (Brulotte & Di Giovine, 2016). Within this third space, the meaning of food transcends exclusivity to any single group; instead, it becomes a site where identity is reconstituted and remains open to ongoing dialogue. The identities of the inland and riverine communities, previously regarded as dichotomous, are fused within the context of collective celebration. Rather than reinforcing identity boundaries, the *Saprahan* tradition cultivates an identity hybridity that surpasses the agrarian versus coastal binary. Several informants noted that the communal sharing of diverse dishes during *Saprahan* events symbolically signifies the unification of communities from varied geographical and occupational backgrounds. In this context, participants interpret culinary diversity not merely as a variety of foods but as an embodiment of the collective identity of Pontianak society. Consequently, the integration of inland and riverine culinary elements does not efface their distinct identities; rather, it situates them within a shared ritual context wherein their differences are rendered complementary rather than oppositional.

The culinary symbolism within the *Saprahan* tradition exemplifies cultural hybridity at the level of social identity, while simultaneously revealing hybridity in the interplay between local customs and Islamic religious norms. Given that food functions as an expression of identity (Murcott, 2025), and that the Malay community in Pontianak is predominantly Muslim, the *Saprahan* tradition extends beyond a mere local cultural practice; it is profoundly imbued with Islamic elements, wherein Sharia principles are manifested through various symbolic systems. A key component of *Saprahan* is the recitation of prayers in Arabic—the language of the Qur'an, Islam's holy scripture, and a symbol of sacredness in Islamic rituals (Kk1, 2025; Pa, 2025). Furthermore, the recitation of the "Doa Rasul," a form of *tawasul* (the practice of seeking closeness to God by invoking a revered intermediary—such as the Prophet Muhammad or righteous saints—in supplication) invoking the lineage of the Sultan of Kadriyah tracing back to the Prophet Muhammad (see Figure 1), reinforces the spiritual nexus between local tradition and Islamic dimensions (Ac1, 2025). In this regard, the Islamic elements integrated into *Saprahan* do not merely represent the Islamization of a preexisting cultural tradition, nor simply the localization of Islamic practices. Rather, they constitute a reciprocal negotiation whereby Islamic ritual norms are interpreted through indigenous cultural forms, while local customs simultaneously attain religious legitimacy through their association with Islamic teachings.



Figure 1. Doa Rasul: A genealogical chart tracing the lineage of the Kadriyah Sultanate back to the Prophet Muhammad.  
Source: Research team documentation.



Figure 2. Participants seated cross-legged during the *Saprahan* traditional ceremony.  
Source: Documentation of the Kadriyah Sultanate.



Figure 3. Ceramic utensils used in the *Saprahan* tradition.  
Source: Documentation of the Kadriyah Sultanate.

The local culinary lexicon associated with *Saprahan* – including terms such as *bingke*, *sri pandan*, *dalca*, and *pacri* – operates as a semiotic system that reflects the transformation of socio-cultural structures (Köpping et al., 2006). Within this context, the people of Pontianak, through the *Saprahan* tradition, embody hybrid identities formed through negotiation between local customs and shared social spaces. Thus, *Saprahan*, as a marker of Pontianak’s cultural identity, is not a product of static inheritance but rather an ongoing process of “becoming” within a dynamic and interactive cultural environment. This perspective is supported by the testimonies of Fk, Ma, and Ac1:

“[Fk] *Saprahan* should not be regarded solely as a static cultural heritage of the Pontianak community. [Ma] Rather, it represents the outcome of a dynamic process that continuously evolves within a fluid cultural context, which remains receptive to change. [Ac1] Consequently, the identity of *Saprahan* is constructed through active social interaction and inclusive adaptation among the diverse ethnic groups residing in Pontianak.”

The Islamic dimension of the *Saprahan* tradition, analyzed through the framework of hybridity, constitutes an interstitial cultural space – a symbolic domain where local customs and sharia norms converge. Within this space, these elements not only coexist but also generate a novel, hybrid, and dynamic identity (K1, 2025; Fk, 2025). Islamic symbols, including prayers in Arabic, the Doa Rasul, and dining etiquette perceived as embodying the implementation of the Prophet’s sunnah, represent Sharia norms contextualized within local culture. Practices such as sitting cross-legged (see Figure 2) and eating with the

right hand are similarly regarded as manifestations of the prophetic etiquette (*adab*) of eating, as prescribed in the Sunnah (Pa, 2025). Moreover, the use of tin and glass utensils to serve various dishes in *Saprahan* reflects an adherence to the Prophet's teachings, particularly the prohibition against using vessels made of gold and silver (see Figure 3). Collectively, these elements exemplify how Islamic teachings are embodied within the *Saprahan* tradition (Fk, 2025). From the perspective of hybridity, Table 2 illustrates that Islamic symbols in the *Saprahan* tradition do not operate in their original, unaltered form (e.g., as formal religious practices) but have been recontextualized as integral components of local customs. This recontextualization engenders new layers of meaning, wherein the sacredness of Islamic teachings is reframed through aesthetic interpretations within Malay local culture.

**Table 2. Hybridity in the *Saprahan* tradition.**

Local Customs	Sharia Norms	Hybridities
The use of Malay as a cultural identity.	Praying in Arabic.	Religious or customary ceremonies that incorporate both Malay and Arabic demonstrate a fusion of local languages with the Islamic liturgical language.
Respect for the Kadriyah Sultanate family.	<i>Tawasul</i> in the recitation of the "Doa Rasul" (genealogy of the Kadriyah Sultanate, tracing its lineage back to Prophet Muhammad).	The legitimacy of local power, represented by the Sultanate, was established through Islamic lineage, creating an authority that was both rooted in local culture and religiously legitimate.
Local fruits, pastries, meat dishes prepared with local spices, and beverages served are all guaranteed to be halal.	The commands of Sharia regarding the consumption of halal food and beverages.	Local culinary traditions that adhere to halal principles contribute to the formation of a food identity that aligns with Sharia law.
Sitting cross-legged during the <i>Saprahan</i> event.	The prohibitions of Sharia concerning eating and drinking while standing.	Local dining and drinking etiquette align with Islamic teachings, creating manners that simultaneously reflect both local customs and Sharia values.
The use of ceramic utensils in the <i>Saprahan</i> event	Sharia prohibitions on the use of gold and silver utensils.	The adaptation of local cutlery (ceramics) in accordance with Islamic values demonstrates a cultural selection influenced by religious principles.

The researchers identified the *Saprahan* tradition as an exemplar of a process characterized by "hybridity without discrimination," wherein the Muslim-Malay identity does not result from the dominance of one culture over another but rather emerges through historical negotiation. Within the *Saprahan* tradition, Islamic norms do not operate as a closed system; instead, they undergo localization by incorporating interpretations deeply embedded in the local culture. It is within this framework that the hybrid identity of the Muslim-Malay community in Pontianak develops, as members internalize Islamic values through cultural forms that are both familiar and institutionally integrated within their social structure (Nordin et al., 2025). Consequently, this tradition constitutes a third space in which the meaning of Islamic values is continuously negotiated – not imposed hegemonically but co-created within a flexible and multivocal cultural context.

### **Multiethnic Negotiations within the *Saprahan* Tradition**

In practice, *Saprahan* gatherings involve communal dining arrangements wherein individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds – including Malay, Chinese, Dayak, Javanese, and Maduranese – convene to share food within a shared ceremonial space. These practices exemplify the interaction between Islamic ritual elements and local customs within everyday communal life (Muzainah et al., 2025). The hybridity observed between local customs and religious norms represents a cultural phenomenon characterized by processes of encounter, negotiation, and transformation of values between two distinct yet mutually influential entities (Rosen, 1994). Within this framework, hybridity can be conceptualized as a process through which cultural and religious norms intersect to generate new social meanings. The *Saprahan*

tradition thus serves as a tangible alternative model demonstrating that the norms of Sharia are not practiced in their original form but are instead embedded within the context of local customs and values (P. A. Putri et al., 2024). This hybridity creates an interstitial cultural space wherein Islamic identity and meaning are interpreted in a contextual and culturally specific manner. Consequently, Islam does not function as a hegemonic force that displaces local wisdom; rather, it operates as a value system amenable to articulation through indigenous cultural expressions (Bruinessen, 1999). This process reveals that Islamic interpretation in Pontianak is neither monolithic nor static; instead, it is diverse, flexible, and deeply intertwined with the social and historical structures of the local community.

The *Saprahan* tradition in Pontianak represents a concrete example of hybridity, functioning not only as a form of religious expression but also as a social mechanism for mediating ethnic diversity (Riansyah, 2023). Employing Bhabha's hybridity theory, *Saprahan* can be conceptualized as a "third space" wherein Islamic legal norms and local cultural practices intersect and are continuously renegotiated. The recitation of prayers in Arabic, the incorporation of Islamic symbols such as the Doa Rasul, and specific dining etiquettes do not render this tradition exclusive to the Malay-Muslim ethnic group. Instead, through an inclusive cultural framework, *Saprahan* serves as a site of interaction among diverse ethnic groups—including Chinese, Dayak, Javanese, Sundanese, and Maduranese—who are invited to participate and whose presence is valued (Artawan et al., 2025). The involvement of these various communities transforms *Saprahan* from an exclusive cultural ritual into a shared social institution, wherein Islamic symbols are interpreted within a pluralistic communal context. The phrase "one Sultan for all ethnicities" encapsulates a politico-cultural principle whereby the authority of the Sultanate operates as an integrative symbol capable of transcending ethnic boundaries while preserving the cultural legitimacy of Malay-Islamic traditions (Ac1, 2025). Consequently, this tradition not only reinforces Malay-Islamic identity but also fosters harmony among ethnic groups in Pontianak through values of fiqh that are inclusive, adaptive, and dialogical in response to a multicultural social reality.

Islamic practices manifested through various symbols within the *Saprahan* tradition are not executed in an exclusive or orthodox manner; rather, they are contextualized within inclusive local values. Although imbued with rich Islamic nuances and symbolism, this tradition remains accessible and inclusive, occurring within a shared communal space that welcomes all ethnic groups without discrimination (M11, 2025; Ta, 2025). The hybridity between fiqh and local culture in the performance of the *Saprahan* tradition concretely embodies the principle of *Tiga Kaki Tungku*. Historically, the philosophy of *Tiga Kaki Tungku* symbolizes the balance among the three major ethnic communities in Pontianak—Malay, Chinese, and Dayak—each playing a vital role in maintaining social stability (Prasojo, 2017). The fiqh hybridity within the *Saprahan* tradition functions not merely as a rigid legal norm but as a cultural framework capable of negotiating social diversity. Through this approach, *Saprahan* serves not only as a religious celebration but also as a manifestation of social cohesion (Pk, 2025; M13, 2025). Consistent with this interpretation, Kk1 (2025) and Ac3 (2025) assert that:

*"[Kk1] The concept of Kaki Tungku, which symbolizes the foundation of a shared communal life, is concretely realized in the social dynamics where the Chinese and Dayak ethnic groups are considered integral members of the Sultanate's social and spiritual fabric rather than mere guests. [Ac3] At this point, the values of Islamic sharia embedded within the Saprahan tradition underscore that Islamic consciousness in Pontianak functions as a unifying force—anchored in Malay culture yet transcending ethnic divisions in an egalitarian and harmonious way."*

In this study, fiqh hybridity is understood as the contextual interpretation and application of Islamic normative principles within culturally diverse social practices. Within the *Saprahan* tradition, Islamic normative values underpinning ritual practices are not implemented in an exclusive manner; rather, they are expressed through flexible and inclusive modalities. A concrete example of this inclusivity is the allowance for each ethnic group—Malay, Chinese, Dayak, Javanese, Sundanese, and Maduranese—to present and serve their own traditional dishes (Kk1, 2025). This practice exemplifies a space of cultural negotiation, wherein fiqh does not impose a narrowly defined "shar'i" culinary standard but instead permits interpretive flexibility that accommodates diverse tastes and cultural identities (Fk, 2025). The participation of all ethnic groups in the *Saprahan* celebration illustrates that this local tradition functions as

a meditative, rather than hegemonic space (M13, 2025; Pk, 2025). The allowance for different ethnic communities to contribute their traditional dishes reflects the adaptability of Islamic legal principles, particularly emphasizing halal consumption over the enforcement of a uniform culinary standard. Consequently, *Saprahan* operates as a mediating space where ethnic identities and Islamic ethical norms intersect, serving as a unifying rather than divisive force. Thus, the hybridity of fiqh within the *Saprahan* tradition not only reinforces local Islamic identity but also symbolizes social harmony, uniting diverse communities around a shared communal table (Ma, 2025).

Observations from *Saprahan* gatherings indicate that participants do not conceive of their identities as fixed within a singular ethnic or religious framework; rather, they understand their identities as relational and continuously shaped through social interaction. In this regard, Stuart Hall's concept of identity as a process of "becoming" provides a useful framework for understanding how the *Saprahan* tradition persistently redefines communal belonging within the multicultural context of Pontianak. Hall's perspective enables us to appreciate that religious practice is neither monolithic nor static but is instead dynamic, contextual, and influenced by power relations, colonial histories, and local diversity—thus remaining open to ongoing transformation and difference (Hall, 2016). Within this framework, the hybridity of fiqh should not be understood merely as a synthesis of Islamic law and local customs (Solihin & Fauzi, 2025); rather, it constitutes a continuous negotiation between the normative traditions of Islam and the socio-cultural realities of Muslim communities situated within ethnically and historically diverse settings (Ac1, 2025; Fk, 2025). Consequently, traditions such as *Saprahan* should not be viewed simply as cultural accommodations of sharia associated with a particular ethnic group; instead, they represent expressions of local cultural identities that are perpetually "becoming" through intercultural engagement (Alhusni et al., 2025).

### **Interfaith Coexistence within the *Saprahan* Tradition: From Neutral Culture to Popular Culture**

In this study, the concept of a neutral culture does not denote the absence of Islamic elements; rather, it signifies a process of cultural neutralization whereby a tradition grounded in Malay-Islamic values is socially reinterpreted as an inclusive public practice accessible across religious boundaries. Although historically embedded in Islamic norms of hospitality, communal equality, and collective dining, *Saprahan* maintains its Islamic cultural foundation while functioning in contemporary contexts as a socially inclusive ritual space. The involvement of representatives from diverse religious communities—including Islam, Protestant Christianity, Catholicism, and Buddhism—in the *Saprahan* tradition, particularly during official ceremonies organized by the Kadriyah Sultanate or governmental institutions (Kk2, 2025; Fk, 2025; Pk, 2025), exemplifies the transformation of *Saprahan* into a shared civic cultural practice. Interviews with participants from various religious backgrounds reveal that non-Muslim participants generally perceive *Saprahan* not as participation in a confessional religious ritual but as engagement in a civic cultural tradition symbolizing social harmony and mutual respect (Ta, 2025; M11, 2025). This reinterpretation enables the tradition to operate simultaneously as a marker of Malay-Islamic identity and as an inclusive cultural platform within a multi-religious society. From the perspective of *fiqh al-ta'āyush*, such practices may be understood as the lived embodiment of Islamic ethical principles that emphasize coexistence, hospitality, and social equality within pluralistic communities (Shariati, 2009; Selim, 2015). In this sense, *Saprahan* illustrates how an Islamic-rooted cultural tradition can be publicly rearticulated as a civic cultural practice that fosters interfaith coexistence without compromising its Islamic normative foundation.

Beyond functioning as a hybrid expression of religious culture, the *Saprahan* tradition serves a significant role as a forum for public deliberation within the interfaith community of Pontianak. The researchers identified that beneath symbolic activities such as communal dining and prayer recitation exists a socio-political dynamic that embodies the deliberative ethos within Islam—specifically, *mushāwarah* (consultative dialogue). In this regard, the *Saprahan* tradition surpasses the mere hybridity of religious and customary values, developing into a socio-culturally grounded democratic mechanism. As articulated by Ac3 (2025) and Pk (2025):

“[Ac3] *The Saprahan tradition cultivates a dialogical space among ethnic and religious groups, facilitating informal yet effective discussions on public matters such as education, social welfare, and intercommunity*

*cohesion. [Pk] Initiatives for dialogue may be initiated by the Sultan, who embodies cultural and religious authority, but can also be proposed by the community through traditional leaders or esteemed religious figures representing each ethnic group."*

The democratic ethos inherent in the *Saprahan* tradition exemplifies the adaptability of what can be characterized as a humanistic fiqh—a normative orientation within Islamic jurisprudence that prioritizes ethical inclusivity, social welfare (*maṣlahah*), and the regulation of collective life in pluralistic societies (Fannani et al., 2024). Within this conceptual framework, fiqh functions not merely as a set of legal directives governing the transcendental relationship between humans and God but also as a moral and social paradigm that facilitates coexistence within diverse communities. Consequently, the *Saprahan* tradition operates as a dialogical space wherein Islamic norms, customary values, and public interests are negotiated on relatively equal terms, thereby demonstrating that local Islamic culture can simultaneously serve as a unifying force and a medium for interfaith communication (P. A. Putri et al., 2024). Empirical findings further reveal that the implementation of *Saprahan* within the Kadriyah Sultanate is strategically employed as a social mechanism to promote interethnic and interfaith solidarity in Pontianak. In multicultural contexts, identity-based conflicts often arise from symbolic segregation, unequal social interactions, and divergent normative value systems (Worden & Miller-Idriss, 2016). *Saprahan* mitigates these tensions by establishing an inclusive social arena in which Islamic values such as communal solidarity, equality, and deliberation are articulated through cultural practices that are accessible and acceptable to participants from diverse religious backgrounds.

The symbolic structure of *Saprahan* plays a crucial role in mediating social boundaries. The communal dining arrangements—where participants sit in parallel rows and share food collectively—constitute a ritualized performance of equality that temporarily suspends hierarchical distinctions and reinforces a shared social identity. Through these embodied practices, *Saprahan* facilitates direct interpersonal interactions among religious leaders, traditional authorities, and community members from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds. Consequently, coexistence within this tradition should not be understood merely as the result of cultural acculturation; rather, it represents a form of peaceful social negotiation that contributes to the maintenance of stable and deeply rooted interreligious coexistence in Pontianak. As Ma (2025) observes:

*"The Saprahan tradition functions as a cultural mechanism to alleviate social tensions and foster interreligious group cohesion through collective interactions, including sitting in parallel rows during meals, sharing food communally, and involving religious leaders and traditional figures from diverse ethnic backgrounds."*

Currently, the *Saprahan* tradition is frequently celebrated in public spaces and office halls, often manifested as competitions, performances, or annual festivals. It is also featured at traditional food stalls (Pk, 2025; MI3, 2025). The transformation of the *Saprahan* tradition into an element of popular culture demonstrates that Islamic values are not static; rather, they exhibit flexibility and responsiveness to contemporary developments, shaped by the public contexts in which they are practiced (Jirari, 1996). The researchers found that although *Saprahan* is structurally rooted in the aristocratic customs institutionalized by the Kadriyah Sultanate, it has evolved within both religious and national contexts into a fluid, cross-boundary social practice that transcends faiths, communities, and generations. Within the framework of *fiqh al-ta'āyush*, this phenomenon exemplifies the articulation of an "in-between space"—a space where Islamic sharia values are preserved yet reinterpreted in ways that resonate more effectively with younger generations. The researchers observed that contemporary *Saprahan* is no longer merely a ritual; it has become a cultural product subject to continuous reinterpretation. It negotiates religious norms, expressions of local identity, and contemporary sensibilities in a format that is both popular and participatory, thereby actualizing local tradition as a living, dynamic, and relevant cultural practice in the digital age (Ma, 2025; Ac2, 2025).



Figure 4. *Saprahan* competition involving local communities and students in Pontianak.  
Source: Municipal government documentation.



Figure 5. *Saprahan* dish served at a traditional food stall along the Kapuas River.  
Source: Research team documentation.

Festivals and communal dining associated with *Saprahan* competitions (see Figure 4)—now frequently conducted in public venues—illustrate the transformation of this tradition beyond its original function as a customary ritual. Over time, it has developed into a cultural platform aimed at promoting regional heritage (see Figure 5), with particular emphasis on engaging younger generations (Maryuni et al., 2022). The increasing visibility of *Saprahan* through local television broadcasts, social media dissemination, and digital cultural campaigns has substantially altered its public significance. Media representations reposition *Saprahan* not merely as a traditional ritual but also as an emblem of regional identity and communal harmony for a broader audience (Budiharto & Hafiidz, 2023). Concurrently, this process introduces an aesthetic dimension whereby ritual elements of *Saprahan* are selectively emphasized and staged for wider cultural consumption. This transformation exemplifies how local traditions are reinterpreted within contemporary media contexts (Susanti et al., 2025). Although the festivalization of *Saprahan* enhances its visibility and consolidates its role as a symbol of Pontianak's cultural identity, it simultaneously reconfigures the tradition into a performative cultural spectacle that operates within the dynamics of modern public culture.

The fundamental ethical values inherent in the *Saprahan* tradition—namely communal solidarity, egalitarian participation, and shared hospitality—are preserved through ritualized practices of collective dining and social interaction. Within this dynamic context, *Saprahan* functions as a mediating cultural space where Islamic jurisprudential principles, local customary norms, and media-driven cultural representations converge. This interaction is particularly evident in public *Saprahan* festivals organized by local authorities and cultural institutions, wherein ritual etiquette grounded in Islamic and Malay traditions is both maintained and adapted to contemporary forms of public celebration and digital dissemination (Syarif & Khamim, 2025). Through this process, *Saprahan* not only bridges religion and culture but also facilitates social transformation by translating the ethical essence of *fiqh al-ta'ayush* into a communicative and accessible cultural form within the multireligious public sphere of Pontianak.

## Conclusion

This study examines the *Saprahan* tradition in Pontianak as a cultural practice that reflects the dynamic interplay among Islamic norms, Malay customary traditions, and the participation of diverse ethnic and religious communities. The findings demonstrate that *Saprahan* functions as an inclusive social mechanism that fosters cross-ethnic and interfaith interactions within communal settings. Through ritualized practices, such as collective dining and shared involvement in cultural ceremonies, the tradition symbolically enacts values of equality, solidarity, and mutual respect among participants. These practices cultivate a social environment in which individuals from diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds can engage in collective interactions without emphasizing social boundaries. Furthermore, the study reveals that institutional support from local authorities and cultural organizations has increased the public visibility of *Saprahan* through festivals, competitions, and media promotion. This support has facilitated

the transformation of *Saprahan* from a localized customary practice into a widely recognized cultural symbol representing Pontianak's regional identity. Despite this evolution, the tradition's core social function—promoting communal interaction and reinforcing social cohesion—remains central to its continued relevance within the city's multicultural and multireligious context.

This study contributes to the discourse on coexistence fiqh (*fiqh al-ta'āyush*) within the Indonesian context by examining the *Saprahan* tradition. It argues that fiqh need not be restricted to rigid legal frameworks; instead, it can be interpreted through hybrid and dialogical approaches to address complex and pluralistic social realities. Utilizing a hybridity perspective allows for the recognition of how inclusive fiqh values—such as deliberation (*shūrā*), equality, and solidarity—are manifested in communicative and participatory local cultural practices. In this respect, fiqh transcends a purely normative framework and operates as a social praxis that adapts to diverse identities and societal transformations, a concept herein referred to as fiqh hybridity. Accordingly, this research reinforces the conceptualization of *fiqh al-ta'āyush* as an alternative paradigm for fostering peaceful, pluralistic societies capable of effectively responding to the challenges posed by diversity. Moreover, it highlights the importance of interdisciplinary methodologies in the study of Islamic jurisprudence and culture. This article contributes to ongoing scholarly discussions on Islamic socio-legal practices and cultural pluralism by demonstrating that Islamic normative values are expressed not only through formal legal institutions but also through culturally embedded social practices.

This study acknowledges several limitations. The analysis primarily focuses on the symbolic and social functions of the *Saprahan* tradition, while the political, economic, and institutional dynamics involving stakeholders such as local government, cultural organizations, and media institutions are only partially explored. Future research should adopt a more comprehensive ethnographic approach to examine how various actors negotiate the meaning and organization of *Saprahan* in contemporary society. Furthermore, comparative studies across regions that maintain similar communal traditions would provide valuable insights into the role of local cultural practices in managing diversity within Indonesia's multiethnic and multireligious context.

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## Conflict of Interest

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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