



## The Religious Moderation in Kei Community, Maluku Indonesia: Upholds Local Wisdom, Religion, and Nationality as Vital Aspects

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**Abstract:** Religiosity experiences moderation through encounters with sublime local cultures inherent in the Kei community in Maluku, Indonesia. This makes it worthy of research, especially regarding the integration of custom and religion. Kei culture was formed by the collective memory of their ancestors from Bali, Java, Banten, and other tribes in the archipelago. Conflicting gaps may arise due to paradoxes in cultural and religious life. This paper highlights the paradoxes and gaps between religious egalitarianism and traditional authority structures. It reports on interviews conducted with religious and traditional leaders, social and religious practitioners, and observations made during customary and religious activities in the Kei Islands. Data shows that religious followers' attitudes towards culture have a different quality. However, inclusion through traditional ceremonies is still maintained but the caste layer in custom has internal religious affairs. Likewise, in terms of national life, they have self-meaning as an open society. This paper concludes that accepting customary law can potentially create distortions and exacerbate the problem of changing diversity in life. If customs are managed well, they may stay within and outside the Kei community. Further research is necessary to explore how to rejuvenate the connection between traditional law and religion each time.

**Keywords:** Culture, Kei Community, Local Wisdom, Nationality, Religion

**Abstrak:** Pengalaman religiusitas moderasi melalui pertemuan dengan budaya lokal yang luhur melekat dalam komunitas Kei di Maluku, Indonesia. Hal ini membuatnya layak untuk diteliti, terutama mengenai integrasi adat dan agama. Budaya Kei terbentuk oleh ingatan kolektif nenek moyang mereka dari Bali, Jawa, Banten, dan suku-suku lain di Nusantara. Kesenjangan yang saling bertentangan dapat timbul karena paradoks dalam kehidupan budaya dan agama. Makalah ini bertujuan untuk menyoroti paradoks dan kesenjangan antara egalitarianisme

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agama dan struktur otoritas tradisional. Kajian ini melaporkan hasil wawancara yang dilakukan dengan para pemimpin agama dan adat, praktisi sosial dan keagamaan, dan pengamatan yang dilakukan selama kegiatan adat dan keagamaan di Kepulauan Kei. Data menunjukkan bahwa sikap antar pemeluk agama terhadap budaya tidak memiliki kualitas yang sama, meskipun inklusi melalui upacara adat tetap terjaga namun lapisan kasta dalam adat memiliki urusan internal agama. Demikian juga dalam hal kehidupan berbangsa, mereka memiliki makna diri sebagai masyarakat yang terbuka. Tulisan ini menyimpulkan bahwa menerima hukum adat berpotensi menciptakan distorsi dan memperburuk masalah perubahan keragaman dalam kehidupan. Jika adat istiadat tidak dikelola dengan baik, mereka dapat terkikis dari dalam atau luar komunitas Kei. Penelitian lebih lanjut diperlukan untuk mengeksplorasi bagaimana meremajakan hubungan antara hukum tradisional dan agama setiap saat.

**Kata Kunci:** Kei Komunitas, Budaya, Kearifan Lokal, Kebangsaan, Agama

## Introduction

The relationship between religion and culture is often seen as contradictory. The interaction between the two is considered as two opposing sides of the same coin. Religious doctrine and practice may not always align with cultural viewpoints and behavior. However, it cannot be denied that the two complement each other in shaping people's lives (Leskova, 2019; Santoso, 2022; Uctuvia, 2021). The people of the Kei Islands, Southeast Maluku, Maluku, and Indonesia have a cultural system called "larvul ngabal," which organizes the lives of their people in an orderly manner based on customary law. This system is considered a common heritage and is upheld in high regard. When a law is upheld, it is considered to have improved; in Kei, the known proverb *Ain Ni Ain* is a life value that means "one another," but it encompasses a broader meaning of togetherness (Tiwery, 2018). The norm of life binds individuals and groups together to help each other, even among people of different religions. Traditionally, this concept of helping each other is called *Maren* and *Yelim*. *Maren* assists others by giving objects or food, while *Yelim* aids relatives or collaborates to provide energy or services. It is not just limited to social or cultural affairs but also extends to building places of worship. For instance, the Taar Christian from Taar Village, Tual City group, once helped build the Hur Mosque in Tual; vice versa, the Muslim group helped improve the church. For example, the Christians from Taar Village in Tual City once helped build the Hur Mosque, namely the great mosque of Tual City, and in return, the Muslim group assisted in improving the church.

The main challenge for the Kei community is how capable customary law and life norms, as well as all social devices that the ancestors pass down, can survive and guarantee a harmonious life in the principle of kinship and uncontrolled attachments. Institutionally, three competing authorities are in place in the socio-political and cultural life of the Kei community. Three authorities are equally strong and have potential conflicts of interest in the future, all three have indeed become a pillar in the life of the Kei community. Religious, state, and customary authority have their respective roles despite the potential to fight over the role in the future. State and religious institutions continue to develop, while customary institutions remain stagnant. The state, through the structure of government, which is hierarchical from

the center to sub-districts and villages, is a projection of power that continues to strengthen because it is supported by a large budget and is supported by political power. The religious authority, having an institution, and their respective religions' strong doctrine can also continue to strengthen.

In contrast, the customary authority, although recognized, is quite effective, but the institution's future still needs to be determined. Suppose the state authority is institutionalized in the educational system. In that case, educational institutions, with their curriculum and religious institutions also have a network of doctrine systems and teachings that continue to strengthen.

How is the regeneration of customary law itself, during life in a collective shadow in the Kei community, both from the historical aspects, myths, prohibitions, norms, and philosophy of life developing traditionally. Although it has been manifested in written form, the law of Larvul Ngabal grows orally. The Kei people themselves are still confident in the system they have because the customary circle does not only survive because of the aspects of norms and ethics that continue to be turned on but also trust in the threat of misery if it is violated (Welerubun, 2015). With the increasing mainstreaming of formal education and the growth of reasoning and rationality among generations, it's hard to determine how long customary beliefs' magical element can survive. Likewise, the opportunities and symptoms of Puritanism from religions because big religions tend to carry out purification. Then, how about how religious moderation can be mediated by Larvul Ngabal customary law, as well as Maren and Yelim as a node and from togetherness as a form of Unity of the Kei Community in Tual City, and the entire customary territory of the Kei Islands.

Religious life expresses collective life manifested through collective action (Durkheim & Zemskova, 2018). Amid traditions that continue to be internalized in the life of society at large, other traditions—especially religion—are rediscovered, and new traditions have been created simultaneously (Kokaisl, 2012). In other words, religious life lives on in the collectivity of society. Durkheim then points to the fact that there will always be a need for ways to explore the collective feelings and representations of any society (Durkheim & Zemskova, 2018). Intellect, action, and identity can also play a role (Carlisle, 2017). Its essence remains in each individual's religious beliefs and practices (Packard & Ferguson, 2019). Even when religious life is undergoing drastic transformation, individual beliefs and practices can remain stable (Packard & Ferguson, 2019). Therefore, religious beliefs and practices become two important things.

Social life is often accompanied by paradoxes which are more the result of social construction than social reality (Sharma & Bansal, 2017). Paradoxes are closely related to boundaries (Lee & Bean, 2010). This paradox is nothing new. Rather, it is rooted in liberalism, shaping mainstream planning practices and modes (Winkler, 2012). Social paradox is a counter-intuitive phenomenon (Yao et al., 2019). In difficult situations, social paradoxes related to human presence can also be created where crises do not prevent humans from exercising their brotherly instincts but give them enough reason to use them further (Canete, 2021). Social paradoxes can simultaneously create sympathy (Nescolarde-Selva et al., 2019). Zhu (2021) also reveals another social life paradox: if we encourage individual differences, we accumulate social wealth faster, but inequality becomes larger; if we prevent individual differences, we must accept social development more slowly or accumulate social wealth more slowly. Paradoxes can

end when attention is focused in different directions, such as changes throughout ongoing social movements (Useem & Goldstone, 2021).

Collectivity is part of this local culture (Puspitasari et al., 2020). At the same time, this local culture also has an important position as capital to create identity and social harmonization in building a better collective quality of life (Suprapti et al., 2019). Local culture produces experiences of varying quality (Trovo & De Carvalho, 2016). Not only that, but local culture can also influence the transformation process with various functions (Fuadi, 2024; Warsewa, 2017, 2023). It is undeniable that reformulation of local culture can also occur. This reformulation involves reconciling national identity with new norms related to local and regional integration, which does not mean replacing nationalism (Stacul, 2014). With the continuous clash of localization and globalization, the transmutation and development of local culture continue to advance (Yu et al., 2021). Ultimately, ethnic and cultural boundaries become blurred, so social memory is gradually lost (Yu et al., 2021).

Writing reflects qualitative research conducted by interview and direct observation techniques in the city of Tual and its surroundings; informants who are speakers are cultural actors, traditional leaders (kings and traditional stakeholders), religious leaders, government officials, youth leaders, and harmony practitioners. Observation was carried out in an important place in the city of Tual, a historic place in Kei Kecil, and other traditional events. Posts are presented in a thick, dense narrative based on the results of manual data processing, MDAP (Manual Data Analysis Procedure). Presenting result data through descriptive analysis provides a clear, insightful, and easily understandable representation of the findings.

The article was written with an approach to maintaining local wisdom, religion, and national commitment; in this case, the Kei tribe underwent a long process to become a strong and unique entity in Indonesia. Local wisdom is the original wisdom or knowledge of a community that comes from the noble values of cultural traditions to regulate the order of community life (Affandy, 2019; Septemiarti & Dasyah, 2023; Sibarani, 2012). Local/traditional wisdom is part of helpful ethics and morality humans to answer questions moral what to do and how to act especially in environmental management and natural resources (Timisela et al., 2017). In contemporary Indonesia, the category 'religion' has been appropriated by the word religion, which does not have any equivalent in Austronesian languages. Some academics are also redefining the notion of religion (Maarif, 2017; Wibisono, 2020).

Such dissociation between religion and custom (agama and adat) entailed certain consequences worth considering. Whereas custom practices are followed since they have been handed down from generation to generation (Arliman, 2018; Febriawanti & Mansur, 2020; Hurgronje, 1996; Mulyadi, 2013), in religion, they are held to be motivated based on prior belief. And while different religion makes exclusive claims about being the truth, attributing the predicates 'true' and 'false' to adat would be a category mistake. Lastly, custom, as a fixed set of practices inherited from one's ancestors, is tied to a particular ethnic group, contrary to religion, which explicitly aims at transcending ethnic and national boundaries (Picard, 2017).

## Results and Discussion

### Moderation of religiosity and the perspective of Kei culture

There are at least four indicators of religious moderation. First is a national commitment, the second is tolerance, the third is anti-violence, and the fourth is accommodative to local culture (Akhmadi, 2019; Islamy, 2022; Tim Penyusun Kementerian Agama RI, 2019). Regarding national commitment, the Kei community has never had problems with the Republic of Indonesia since the proclamation of independence. As happened in Maluku's other regions, Kei did not have a history of the past like the South Maluku Republic Movement (RMS). Kei was free by efforts to reject the Republic of Indonesia as an archipelago community and was quite open to the arrival of different tribes from outside Kei. In customary, the City of Tual and Southeast Maluku Regency are homogeneous in terms of life for customs, although from the aspect of settlements relatively segregated based on religion. Since the beginning of the arrival of the Abrahamic religion has been divided into the concentration of religious followers. Tual Village is a center for Muslim adherents, Taar is a Christian (both are in Tual, Dulah Island), and Langgur Village is a Catholic Center.

In terms of diversity, it has become an initial written agreement that the Kei Society upholds customs as a unifying, the law of Larvul Ngabal as a cultural perspective regulation to regulate the lives of each other (Tiwery, 2018). Then, after custom, the norm of religious law binding in an internal adherent, last is the law of the state as a positive law. Referring to the third indicator of religious moderation, namely anti-violence, in this case, the Kei tribe greatly avoided blood spilled, and the death of humans without rights is taboo. It must be resolved with traditional ceremonies (Rauf, 2008). Originally, the human body was respected as ownership of each other. Ain Ni Ain has also been regulated by the law of Larvul Ngabal (Kudubun, 2016). At least seven verses in the Nev Nev law represent a form of criminal law in Kei customary law. All forms of violence are prohibited, including both verbal and physical harm to people's lives. Understanding Kei through the third indicator of religious moderation, namely accommodative to local culture, in this case, it can be fully understood that all adherents from various religions receive customs well, especially Catholic adherents, a little loose in Muslims, Christians are also the same. Prioritizing customs in many affairs.

### **Local Wisdom of Kei**

Togetherness through the strong traditional bonds in the Kei community, kinship bonds can melt religious fanaticism and behave intimately because of blood relations. With this perspective, tolerance between religious believers can be seen and felt. Conflict can be suppressed; awareness arises from revitalizing the law of Larvul Ngabal to overcome the influence of the Ambon riots. Values and actions that provide space for harmony are the Yelim and Maren systems (Umarella et al., 2016). The two concepts are similar to cooperation, helping each other, especially those tied to kinship. Yelim is a form of assistance provided as goods or objects at socio-cultural and religious events. Whereas Maren, assistance is provided through services, or staff helps together (Umarella et al., 2016).

Maren and Yelim are carried out not only to marriage, and death between relatives but also to religious affairs to the construction of houses of worship. The behavior of mutual assistance in establishing an Islamic house as an unwritten obligation for most Christians is providing wood and energy assistance to build the Huriyah Mosque in the middle of the city. Muslim adherents had also carried out Yelim and Maren in the previous time when the Taar people renovated the church. Some villages around Tual, for a full week, helped renovate the church in Taar. These values are part of the life

norms contained in the law of Larvul Ngabal; the Kei community believes that these customary values can maintain order and intimacy among the population, as well as instill a sense of cooperation (Maren tradition) and foster awareness of the community to maintain the harmony of nature through The Hawear system that optimizes the use of natural resources wisely and sustainably (Ayu, 2017). In short, cultural and customary factors can be relied upon to maintain an environmental balance that supports the existence of a conducive and harmonious situation.

According to Sibarani (2012), local wisdom is the maturity of the community at the local community level that is reflected in the attitude, behavior, and perspective of a conducive community in developing the potential and local resources of materials and nonmaterial that can be used as strengths in realizing changes in a better or positive direction. Then, Sibarani also explained that local wisdom covered various mechanisms and ways to behave and act as outlined in a social order. There are five cultural dimensions of local wisdom: First, local knowledge; second, local culture; third, local skills; fourth, local resources; and fifth, local social process.

Understanding more deeply about local wisdom in the Kei community can be seen through the Sibarani perspective on prosperity and whether that value can guarantee welfare. The Kei community lives in a circle of myths; between prohibitions and punishment, the norm is the prospect of preventing natural damage. Sasi (Renjaan et al., 2013) is a system of prohibition that is sacred through traditional ceremonies, from installing and maintaining Sasi signs to the Sasi release ceremony (open the prohibition sign). Usually, making Sasi is intended to regulate the natural cycle to be productive, for example, in sea areas, agriculture, and plantations. The Sasi concept is made to protect ownership in the scope of the community, not on private goods; in practice, it is expanded to protect wider assets (Warawarin et al., 2017).

Indicators that reflect other local wisdom, according to Sibarani, are hard work, discipline, education, health, cooperation, gender management, preservation, creativity gratitude. The tradition of Maren and Yelim is another form of cooperation. Regarding gender sessions, women occupy the most important space in Kei culture, their bodies are respected in such a way as a symbol of the source of life, fertility, and protection. While the preservation and creativity of culture, as explained earlier, the custom of the Kei community is the identity and spirit of their lives, lived in various ways and fought to be regulated in government regulations. In this case, the Ohoi Regional Regulation is being processed in Tual City, and the revision process is in Southeast Maluku Regency. Ohoi is a regulation to accommodate local wisdom regarding the election to the village (Ohoi=Village). In contrast to other villages in Indonesia, the Kei community knows the position of traditional villages as hereditary institutions (Narwadan & Fofid, 2020).

The problem in the election of village heads is also a potential conflict if not managed properly. So far, the customary approach is very thick, the recommendation of who will be determined as the village head in the hands of the king. The king in Kei's customs is the highest leader of several traditional villages, in charge of many *rastchab*. *Rastchab* is likely a system that has been around for a long time, but its name can be adopted from the Dutch language. *Rastchab* is an institution above the village, the circle of consistence between Orangkai, in organization, the village head is usually *ex-officio* Orangkai. So, the village head, who is administratively at the village level, is also an Orangkai in customary institutions (Ngabalin, 2019b, 2019a).

## Relationships Between Religious Believers are Tied to Maren and Yelim

The Ambon conflict influenced the Kei Islands; a collision of one point in the city of Tual was believed to have first happened and provoked tension in other places in Kei (Laksono, 2004). One village was said to have been severely damaged, and several others had experienced an attack on Kei Besar. Tension and conflict did not last long; unlike Ambon, Kei began the hostility difference three months after the incident. The Chairperson of the MUI, known as the High Priest at the Al Huriyah Grand Mosque, invited the Catholic priest leaders and Christian priests to go around the village in the city of Kei.

The relationships between religious believers here can be read through three dimensions of harmony: tolerance, equality, and cooperation (Ulum, 2022). The dimension is consent from several theories about harmony, especially the definition of religious harmony in PBM No. 8 and No. 9, the Minister of Home Affairs with the Minister of Religious Affairs in 2006 concerning establishing a Worship House. For the Kei community, tolerance is a legacy from ancestors; they must maintain what has been given by elders in the past. Not only must we be tolerant, but the design of life together socially and culturally must pay attention to the values tested; Kei must live the same way as the ancestors' wishes. As Margareth Sutton said, tolerance is the ability and willingness of an individual and the public to respect and be careful of the rights of small/minority groups where they live in regulations formulated by the majority. The norm of tolerance in the Kei community is not only built in the norms of this but in daily actions must reflect appreciation and respect for adherents of other religions. If you do not have time to attend a particular religious celebration, usually also integrated with traditional activities, for example, at the commemoration of Dik Sakmas Nen Day, women who inspire the unification of larvul and ngabal law. Indeed, they visit each other, and congratulations on holiday activities are not special because it has been plural for a long time.

Relationships between religious followers in Kei are not built with minority and majority concepts but are designed into settlement segregation models; religious followers are concentrated in traditional villages identical to the percentage of Muslim-Christian-Catholic settlements designed to provide equality. The segregation may begin with the arrival of a major religion; in this case, it was agreed that Islam entered first in the Kei Islands, although it was still debated the arrival of Islam arrived first in Tayando or Kei Besar, then entered the Catholic at the request of a German businessman Protestant Christian named Adolf Langen. Note in several churches in Kei, on July 1, 1888, two Missionary Jezuïten (Jesuits), Johannes Kusters and Johannes Booms, came, initially difficult to accept until the coming of the cholera outbreak in the Kei Islands, precisely in Ohoingur became the entrance to Christian teachings Accepted. Modern treatment is effective in overcoming cholera outbreaks; when the traditional medicine of Kei fails to overcome endemic diseases, killing many people, the patience of two missionaries attracts many people to embrace Catholicism. Getting results was also inseparable from the Ambon Resident's support at that time, D. Heyning, even continued by his successor, GMMC Van Hovel, by visiting Ohoingur (Aritonang & Steenbrink, 2008). Christians entered after Catholicism had developed in Langgur Village, a traditional village now associated with a Catholic Center.

Charles Tarantein, Village Head, is also a very influential person in Taar Village, is a descendant of the Christian carrier in Tual City, believes based on the note that Lobak Arob Daniel Taratein was the first evangelist in Ambon on March 13, 1889. He brought Protestant Christianity to the village of Taar, and finally, the village was known as one of the many Christian centers on the islands. The three religions

experienced segregation of adherents; for example, in three traditional villages, Taar was known as the majority Christian center in Tual Dulah Island, while Langgur Village is located in Kei Kecil as a Catholic Center. In contrast, Tual Village is located on Dulah Island and is known as a Center for Adherents Islam.

In addition to adherents of three religions, another Hindu entity is considered part of the longest belief in the Kei community; most of them come from the Tanimbar Kei area. Hinduism in the community of Kei lives in a more traditional order than Bali and Java, previously did not have an institution, including houses of worship routinely, until the need for recognition by the state demanded an institution, so they joined the PHDI (Parisada Hindu Dharma Indonesia). In the modern era, Hinduism Kei was revitalized in Balinese Hinduism, theologically adhering to Tri Murti to be said as Hindu Dharma. Original Hinduism of the Kei Tribe centered on Tanimbarkei Island, about three hours using a fast boat from Kei Kecil; the adherents also developed in part in Langgur and Tual City, they also came from the Tanimbarkei Island.

The segregation model met two indicators of tolerance, acceptance, and appreciation or respect for one another. However, the true spirit of tolerance itself is a kinship system inherited throughout the history of Kei into a large entity. This tribe is believed to together reduce the value of attachment in the bound genetic circle. Segregation is carried out to guarantee equality, which is revealed from several Kei figures; for that, we need an understanding of the concept because in Kei the caste social system. The conception of equality encounters testing in this case, there are at least three sub-indicators in understanding equality: first about the absence of discrimination, between superiority and inferiority, then the second is the same opportunity, while the third is protection. At present, the democratic system opens such a large space for all elements to perform themselves and play a role in political life. The direct election system does not prevent the community among the Kei community from becoming a regional leader, either as the mayor, regent, or deputy, as well as a representation in the Regional People's Representative Council. The political process reflects equality in the city of Tual but paradoxes in the quality of life of the Kei people in the Larvul Ngabal Customary Law, which has its social system.

Kei customary institutional institutions, standards designed for hundreds of years, including the division of roles in the structure. The principle of role division can be seen in each element of the hierarchy. Society contributes functionally so that all members can carry out their functions properly. At least the functional requirements of the social system according to Parsons (2013) social systems must be structured in such a way that they can operate in harmonious relationships with other systems (between subsistence); 2) To maintain its survival, the social system must get the necessary support from another system; 3) The social system must be able to meet the needs of its actors in a significant proportion; 4) The social system must be able to give birth to adequate participation from its members; 5) Social systems must be able to control potentially interrupted behaviors; 6) If in the system there is a conflict it will cause chaos, therefore it must be controlled; 7) For its survival, the social system requires language.

With this functional structural approach, it is understood regarding the system of systems that exist in the customary law of Kei, placing a circle of the division of hereditary roles. Some terms must be explained in advance, for example in institutions from the king, traditionally passed according to the beginning of the division of customary territories. The customary region in the Kei Islands is divided into two blades, Ursiu Lorlim (Nine King's Union) and (Five Kings); in the Maluku language, it is also called Patasiwa Patalima. Under the king's structure, a traditional village union called Ratschab is adopted from



the Dutch language. Then, as well as Orangkai (literally may be interpreted as rich people, but practically are the owners of rights as village heads from generation to generation), Mata Rumah, this term is somewhat biased in modern times but can be understood by traditional actors to the present. The people are considered able to know and have wisdom at the village level. Along with the equalization of the Village Government System in the Republic, the people also concurrently as the Village Head (OHOI) (Ayu, 2017). The position of the village head is also played for generations which are determined by the recommendation of the King. The position of the village head also in the current era of the Indonesian government has the potential to be internal conflict related to who is the appropriate family member to continue the government. It is then regulated in the Ohio Regional Regulation. The traditional pattern in the division of social functions internally Islam is also included in the management of the Al Huriyah Tual City Mosque, until now unwritten, which is entitled to become the Mosque's High Priest, the Kabalmay clan. The relatively open position is precisely in the political institution of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, elected through democracy of direct elections by the people.

### **Paradox of Equality in The Caste System in The Kei Community**

As a big community, the Kei tribe looks like other societies in the modern world, seems egalitarian, and invisible feudalism in daily life. In the Kei community, there are terms of master and slaves are neatly arranged so that even though the weight of the power of the relationship is not the same between villages or even in a broader social environment, the relationship is not erased at all. In this case, it is stated that Larvul Ngabal's customary law and a value system that controls the order in the Kei community consists of noble aristocrats (Mel Mel), landlords (Ren Ren), then enslaved people (Sahaya) or those who are in the lower caste (Iri Iri) (Ngabalin, 2015). The dominance of Mel Mel began with the entry of those mentioned as descendants of Balinese, Java, Banten, and several other tribes in the archipelago; they came as people who carried the value of the order to the Kei community who, at that time did not know the system of order. Ren Ren, one level below Mel Mel, is considered a people who receives and submits to mingling with the system carried. As for Iriiri, the enslaved people were defeated in the war, or those who were lowered by their status because of bad deeds reduced their human rights for violating customs. Iri-iri must now know who they are.

The intercaste relations will appear real when a marriage case that involves two different castes appears. In some places, some rules in terms of related will also be seen, those who come from Iri iri cannot enter the house of Mel Mel, or when their master walks around the Iriiri settlement, it is not allowed to leave the house. This intercasteal relationship is strongly maintained in the Catholic religious community or the Langgur Adat Village. It looks rather loose in the Muslim community, while in the village of Taar, the Christian environment is still strongly maintained. Even a person who has reached the highest career as a priest or priest is ordained only has a proportional place in the church and cannot change the caste level. They can finally be accepted to become a priest or officials in the church was initially difficult but can finally be opened after a traditional ceremony. Regarding understanding equality in the customary jurisdiction of Kei, it can be fulfilled politically in government and the religious structure but has not touched much in the cultural environment.

### **Bonding and bridging of religious followers in Kei**

Cooperation between religious followers, in this case, can be read into two perspectives: through bonding bonds and bridging. Two bonds developed by Ashutosh Varshney: Bonding occurred in the community environment, formed in daily activities (quotidian) while bridging is cooperation or encounter in associated activities. Generally, the association of bridging occurs in professional activities, hobbies, sports clubs, or associations because of the similarity of interests, for example, political interests, economics, or other social activities (Varshney, 2001).

Culturally, the Kei community tends to be homogeneous, even in urban areas; the headlines of the Larwul Ngabal Bumi (Larwul = Larvul) are written on the walls of the walls bordering Southeast Maluku Regency. Opposite the wall was written by Bumi Maren, meaning that the city of Tual was attached to attachment, cooperation, please help, cooperation. Maren was also enshrined in the symbol of the city of Tual, intended to remind the spirit of togetherness as one blood. Maren and Yelim continue to be turned on as the daily spirit of the community, both at the village level or kinship with other villages, adopted into the headlines as symbolic narratives to maintain togetherness. Bonding often occurs in family celebrations, relatives will do Yelim or Maren depending on the needs that are discussed together, or limited to the ability of other relatives will help in what form. Association of relations occurs in various professions, the ties of political interests, and the hobby community or friendship.

Interestingly, caste relations are not a problem if it is related to emotional ties to sports clubs, even at student associations in the city of Tual and outside. Although it did not close the self-esteem story as Mel Mel was briefly disturbed when led by the Chairperson of the Student Association in Jakarta with an Iri Iri background, a figure in Jakarta scolded the youth community for ignoring caste (interview with Ari Kabalmay, 2019). The tradition of Maren and Yelim was phenomenal in the construction of houses of worship, which was carried out in cooperation with different religious adherents. The casting of several parts of the Alhuriyah Mosque, which was renovated a few years ago, was fully supported by a group of Christian adherents from Taar Village, and several other Catholic groups around Tual Village. The actions of Yelim and Maren in the true house of worship in the Kei community occurred in the city of Tual and the Circle of the Kei Islands. Helping the construction of houses of worship with each other is a shared obligation, as a form of solidarity and brotherhood that is upheld.

### **Challenges Of Religious Moderation**

Religious internal ties in the Muslim environment have never faced challenges seriously; several times, the movement tends to be hard and can also be muted. Some of these things as a consequence of the dynamics of Muslims outside the Kei Islands, for example, the terms 'Kei Hijrah Youth' and 'Tauhid Flag Parade'; the two movements tend to be the effect of outside polarization, youth Kei Hijrah indeed tends to be Salafi, it looks too Bringing the term Khilafah in his campaign. In comparison, the monotheism flag parade was launched to commemorate the 212 movements in Jakarta. Each element of the Kei community (religious leaders, the government, and traditional leaders) has voiced that the movement should immediately reduce its intensity, not because of religious tendencies but the possibility of undermining the existing order. The Catholic environment, in addition to the number in the city of Tual, is not as much as Muslims and Protestant Christians and tends not to experience significant social turmoil. His adherents are considered the most powerful in maintaining the customary order, supported by Catholic authorities that embrace traditional leaders and respect the values that have been developing for a long time. Even if it is considered a potential tension is a difficulty in changing caste perspectives,

especially among Catholic adherents in Langgur. Until now, those who get an important position in the church and parish do not necessarily melt the social class in front of customs. The challenge for religious moderation lies in how religions with a spirit of egalitarianism navigate social structures and hierarchical cultural systems, as opposed to the nobility of customs that can alleviate theological tensions among religious believers.

While internal relations among Christians are quite interesting, the developing church in Tual is the Synod of GPM (Maluku Protestant Church), which at least has high religious authority in the City of Tual and the Kei Islands. It is difficult to develop denominations differently from GPM, and have has tried by a congregation to go out to make his church, eventually ending with Sasi by the Head of Taar Village. Sasi is a prohibition marker system, sacred for the Kei community because it is not only a customary device but is considered to have consequences for the life fate of violators (Laksono, 2004). Problems in the internal people can also use customary law because it does not conflict with religion.

As a community with a culture that tends to be homogeneous, the city of Tual and the Kei Islands are generally more visible as an order with the dominant culture, for those who eventually choose to live together in the environment must merge into the traditions and culture of Kei. In some cases, it is precisely the problems faced by those new residents in Kei they have a choice of settlement, between customary law and national law. In one or two cases of people from Java having problems with the local community, he chose to resolve customarily, practically a traditional ceremony (Karolius Dumatubun, 12019). Generally, the new people occupy the city of Tual even though Southeast Maluku Regency is subject to and respects customary law.

## **Conclusion**

The Kei and Tual City community holds much cultural wealth, ranging from values and norms, institutions, and life tools with conditions that can regulate the lives of their large communities so regularly and civilized. Three authorities, state government, religion, and customs can support a harmonious life. One another, the three institutions can support or pillars of civilization and empowerment, of course, in the present and future. The institution is quite successful from a hegemonic trap, custom to mediate in various circumstances, and the government continues to adjust its duties to maintain the sovereignty of the state and administrative services. At the same time, religious institutions can simplify various values and customary norms with an adaptation and adjustment process. The paradox between culture, customary values, laws, and religion is striking. The Kei people prioritize their cultural customs over religious identity during conflict or tension, which can create a complex dynamic. However, it's worth noting that religion can also challenge the caste structure within Kei society, which remains deeply ingrained. This interplay between culture and religion has endured for a long time, and they may eventually clash. The caste system may fade, even though most people in the village still strongly adhere to the social hierarchy. Even though most village people still strongly adhere to the social hierarchy, the caste system may fade.

This paper can say that local wisdom formed by customary values and laws can be a medium of religious moderation; the Kei custom conception has enough provisions to encourage the empowerment of social life. Local wisdom sourced from Larvul Ngabal customs, practically in interrelationships in the form of Yelim and Maren to be spirit to protect the social environment, the natural environment, as well

as with the system of prohibitions and philosophy of living together is social capital and can be developed as a social projection of the archipelago. Likewise, it is associated with the commitment of nationality. The community of Kei has a collective memory from the past, before they became a separate tribe. However, they believe that their ancestors come from various ethnic groups in the archipelago, so they still have emotional closeness to Indonesian nationality. Tolerance is so good, despite having a record of at least relationships between people from individuals, ethnic groups, and religions can be carried out so orderly and maintained. Larvul Ngabal's customary law is directed to ensure human honor from the aspect of dignity and body protection so that violence in any form is avoided. And, of course, as a religious community who respects their customs, followers of religion in the city of Tual, especially the Kei tribe, are very accommodating of their culture.

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