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Paguyuban Sumarah and Interrituality: An Enquiry to the Practice of Interreligious Ritual Participation in *Sujud Sumarah*

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Abstract

Paguyuban Sumarah is one well-known *aliran kepercayaan* in Indonesia existed since the 1930s. The group practised *Sujud Sumarah* as the most essential ritual attended by the whole member of organizations from multiple religious backgrounds and identities, gathering them in a venue of interreligious ritual participation. This paper will discuss the aspect of interrituality in Sujud Sumarah, considering it is practised by multi-religious believers through the discourse-analysis method following the framework of interrituality offered by Moyaert, an interreligious scholar from Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. This research concludes that it is acceptable to define the implementation of *Sujud Sumarah* as an interreligious ritual participation, yet it could not explicitly be categorized as 'inner-facing' or 'outer-facing' interrituality as it was classified by Moyaert. This paper also demonstrated, in general, the fundamental system of belief of *Sumarah* was derived from syncretism and transcendent unity of religions, leading the discussion to be possibly elaborated further in the study of interreligious relations.

Paguyuban Sumarah adalah salah satu aliran kepercayaan terkenal di Indonesia yang ada sejak tahun 1930-an. Kelompok ini mempraktik-kan Sujud Sumarah sebagai ritual paling esensial yang diikuti oleh seluruh anggota organisasi dari berbagai latar belakang dan identitas agama, mengumpulkan mereka di sebuah wadah partisipasi ritual

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antaragama. Tulisan ini membahas aspek interritualitas dalam Sujud Sumarah, mengingat hal itu dipraktikkan oleh penganut multi-agama melalui metode analisis wacana mengikuti kerangka interritualitas yang ditawarkan oleh Moyaert, seorang sarjana studi antaragama dari Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa pelaksanaan Sujud Sumarah dapat diterima sebagai partisipasi ritual antaragama, namun tidak dapat secara eksplisit dikategorikan sebagai interritualitas 'menghadap ke dalam' atau 'menghadap ke luar' seperti yang diklasifikasikan oleh Moyaert. Tulisan ini juga menunjukkan, secara umum, sistem dasar kepercayaan Sumarah berasal dari sinkretisme dan kesatuan transenden agama-agama, sehingga pembahasannya mungkin dapat dielaborasi lebih lanjut dalam studi hubungan antaragama.

Introduction

This paper elaborates further on the interrituality practiced in *Paguyuban Sumarah* –after this referred to as Sumarah–, one of the *Aliran Kepercayaan dan Kebatinan* –after this referred to as *Aliran Kepercayaan* hereafter– exists in Indonesia. Java, in particular, has always become the place of rapid development of a massive number of religious doctrines and practices, possessing different characteristics —especially considering the distinguished concept of Agama and Kepercayaan-. Thus, the discourse of Java invariably initiates a further discussion about the study of religion in the Indonesian context (Picard & Madinier, 2011, p. 12). According to experts, *Aliran Kepercayaan* consists of the framework of life-based on an indigenous construction of a belief system that has been existed for centuries (Arimbawa, 2019; Arroisi, 2015; Pranoto, 2007). Its legitimation, however, only started after the proclamation of Independence of the Republic of Indonesia in 1945 (Picard & Madinier, 2011; Schiller, 1996).

Its practice of *Sujud Sumarah* identifies *Sumarah*; a 'prostration' as an act of surrender by its adherents to fuse their soul (*jiwa*) to the Divine Self. This ritual emerged as, according to *Sumarah*, humans are originated from

God, so every humankind must unite with Him by following certain rules and principles (Lubis, 2019, p. 96). To achieve such a goal, *Sumarah* members routinely practice *Sujud Sumarah*. This *Sujud* is not merely a method of prostration but came in a unique form of ritual joined by people from different religious backgrounds and faith affiliations. Following this introduction, the origin of *Sumarah* will be studied along with its prominent figures, central doctrines it occupies, with a detailed discussion concerning the interritual aspect of *Sujud Sumarah*.

It is crucial to look at several publications regarding, but not limited only to, *Paguyuban Sumarah* to emphasize the originality of this research. The initial research that is considered necessary is the research conducted by Saputro (2009). His article focuses on discussing the theological aspect of this *Paguyuban*, which in particular, enquired the concept of God in the view of *Paguyuban Sumarah*. As Saputro has elaborated *Sujud Sumarah* as a fundamental practice to teach *Manunggaling Kawula Gusti* (the unity between humans and God), he did not, however, discuss the aspect of interrituality in his study.

Widjayanti (2015) conducted the research which has comprehended the ritual aspect of *Sumarah* evidently, compared to the practice of Shalat in Islam and *Aliran Kepercayaan*, *Pangestu*. This study has concluded the detailed stages of *Sujud Sumarah*, even again, yet has examined the feature of interrituality.

Perdana (2018), on the other hand, has reviewed the practice of *Sujud Sumarah* as a part of meditation which has inflicted both physical and mental effects upon its adherents. From Perdana's research, we can arrive at a brief understanding that the *Sujud Sumarah*, similar to common religious rituals, was addressed to sharpen a 'self-awareness' in the self. Let's look at Perdana and Widjayanti's research analogously. Perdana has come in a deeper apperception regarding the *Sujud Sumarah*'s aspect as a ritual element in this *Paguyuban*.

See in the previous research, the topic of interrituality is yet comprehended related to *Paguyuban Sumarah*. In this article, the authors

discuss *Paguyuban Sumarah* more comprehensively. Will come in a fresh-advanced discussion relevant to the aspect of interrituality as it is practiced by *Paguyuban Sumarah* in their *Sujud Sumarah*, answering the research question of how *Paguyuban Sumarah* convenes interrituality in *Sujud Sumarah*.

This research uses discourse analysis, constructing identities, relationships, beliefs, and knowledge systems in language use. As this method combines a textual interpretation, it focuses on the ideology in the discourse, including the recreation and transformation of relations of domination (Engler & Stausberg, 2012, p. 134). In this context, the discourse analysis method will comprehend the construction of interrituality in the practice of *Sujud Sumarah*. As the *Sujud* is seen as the discourse assembled particularly by *Paguyuban Sumarah*, it will conse-quently derive a distinguished concept and practice of ritual compared with another religious community. The method is suited for this research, following Titus Hjelm's explanation that discourse is constitutive -that is, it constructs social reality and relationships (Engler & Stausberg, 2012, p. 135). In addition to becoming constitutive, discourse also owns a function and practice, committing both society's social change and reproduction (Engler & Stausberg, 2012, p. 135). To sum up, there are at least three elements constructed in the discourse: Social identities, social relationships, and most importantly, the system of knowledge and belief (Engler & Stausberg, 2012, p. 136).

Thie paper comprehends the concept of interrituality offered by Marianne Moyaert. Marianne is a full professor in Comparative Theology at Vrije Universiteit (VU) Amsterdam and has engaged in plenty of research in interreligious relations, with interrituality as one of her interest subjects. interrituality is how interreligious encounters are concretized in the performance of embodied ritualized practices (Moyaert, 2019, p. 6). In a more academic sense, Marianne quoted Grimes (2015, 2017) interrituality is the term ritual studies scholars use to describe rituals that transpire in the spaces between traditions.

Interrituality conforms to a ritual practice between lumina (the bridge). People may come in and out, as the participants were initially affiliated to different religious beliefs and traditions (Grimes, 2017). Interrituality, therefore, is a specified framework designed to enquire about interreligious ritual participation. A further broad comprehension concerning Interrituality will be discussed in the next section as it will be a platform of analysis of this research.

Understanding Interrituality

Ritual is an essential and universal aspect of human religious experience; it owns a value of an expansion of worshippers' sense of the ancient genesis, dignity, and enigmatic suggestiveness of the faiths and aspirations expressed, as well as helping to promote communal unity and loyalty (Ferm, 1945, p. 685). Interrituality, however, should not be defined as an 'ordinary' or 'traditional' ritual practice. Ritual is indeed a 'system of the process' arranged according to custom or law in force in a society related to various events occurring in society (Koentjaraningrat, 1990, p. 190); dominated a chain of words, acts, objects, specific places, and clothing equipped before the series of the ceremony (Suprayogo, 2001, p. 41). Interrituality, on the other side, is more than that simple definition and practice; it goes beyond a traditional form of religious worship to open broader hospitality to religious others.

Many people worldwide participate in religious rituals, including ceremony, traditions, and festivals in their particular affiliations. The study of Interrituality is believed to own a great potential as a positive mechanism for religious adherents. Following Kujawa-Holbrook's argumentation (2018), interrituality contributes to mutual understanding and the building of a more inclusive climate within an interreligious context and potentially in other educational and civic settings.

In general, Interrituality likely supports an effort to strengthen interreligious harmony between societies. Similarly, Interrituality also builds a universal bridge in another related aspect (Moyaert, 2018).

Marianne Moyaert classified two kinds of Interritual practice depending on the context in which ritual occurs. The intention reinforces the ritual sharing, the character of the ritual, and the religious communities comprised. It may be implemented either in a responsive and outer facing. On the other hand, it is also possible to be carried out in inner-facing following the sequence of extending hospitality (Moyaert & Geldhof, 2015, p. 1). Now we are going to discuss deeper about these two classifications.

The outer-facing interreligious ritual participation is conducted when adherents of multiple faith traditions show up together for prayer, ceremony, festival, celebration, or worship in response to several external events or even threats. The ritual may address, for instance, a global disaster; tsunami, earthquake, pandemic -as we are confronting COVID-19 Pandemic at the moment-, a commemoration of the victims of world war, or to earnestly inaugurating a new academic year in the school. As such, the 21st March international day for eliminating racial discrimination and the August 17 Indonesian independence day celebration can also be an event for the interreligious ceremony (Griera, 2019, p. 40; Moyaert & Geldhof, 2015, pp. 1–2). See Figure 1.
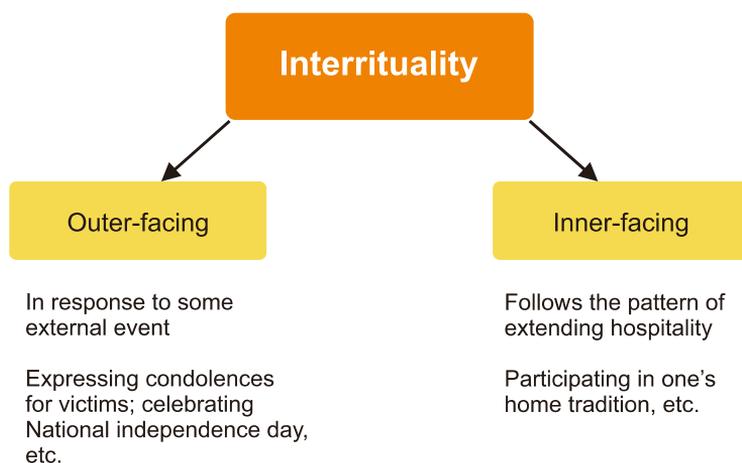
Figure 1.
Classification of Moyaert's Interrittuality

While in the context of inner-facing, ritual sharing is done following a value of hospitality. Indeed, interritual activities in this context will be different from confessional worship. While traditional rituals strengthen the identity of a particular religion and strengthen the bonds between its communities, inward-facing interrituality increases friendliness to 'outsiders' or 'strangers' by inviting them to visit and even engage in the ritual. The invitation symbolizes an eagerness to go beyond a 'confessional barrier' between religious identities. Marianne emphasizes the importance of hospitality in interrituality, showing the right note that, regardless of differences –disagreements, misunderstandings, and even conflicts– interreligious solidarity is always the most favourable option (Moyaert & Geldhof, 2015, p. 2).

A certain requirement should be considered as inner-facing interritual practice, as this kind of interrituality differs from an outer-facing interrituality. Outer-facing interrituality engaged guest and a host, and it is available to be carried out by anyone depends on the situation. For instance, a Christian guest celebrates Shabbat of Jewish host, or a Hindu host invited a Muslim guest to participate in Puja, and so on. Those ceremonies may occur in either a sacred place of 'host' –mosque, church, synagogue, etc.– or at home (Moyaert & Geldhof, 2015, p. 3). Accordingly, some adjustments may be made following the presence of the 'guests' even though it will be some standards asserted by the 'host' that should be followed (Hoffman, 1990).

The inner-facing interrituality also opposes a great challenge as it is required to find the right balance between the 'host's commitment' to the tradition and an openness to welcome the 'guests'. Therefore, each religious affiliation will be demanded to provide their foundation and reasoning to engage in interritual hospitality. For both 'host' and 'guest', it is reasonably burdensome to negotiate what is allowed to do, and what should not be done in Interreligious ritual participation. Somehow, too much openness may be seen as a violation of the sacredness of 'host's religion, while at the same time, an excessive commitment may block the practice of interrituality (Moyaert, 2017; Moyaert & Geldhof, 2015, p. 3).

Related to such an issue, Marianne wrote that interreligious encounters taking place in a fragile hermeneutical and theological space, fraught with the risk of misunderstanding and failure, certainly holds true for ritual sharing across religious borders (Moyaert & Geldhof, 2015, p. 3). Interritual participation possibly initiates a conflict with the obedience of a particular religious tradition and commitment. The 'outsider' and 'insider' perspectives are crucial to conform to the framework of interreligious relations in general (Maulana, 2021; Maulana et al., 2020, 2021). Interrituality, hence, is full of risk practice; strongly suggested not to be done except they want to involve an improper behavior. Rituals can unite and build communities, even beyond religious differences, but they can also divide and even reinforce the distance between religions (Moyaert, 2011, pp. 1–3, 2014).

Apart from the complexity of interrituality, it is affirmed that at the time the proper harmony between the commitment and openness is found, interreligious ritual participation possibly penetrates far than any endeavour of interreligious dialogue, contacting mankind at a deeper affecting grade (Moyaert & Geldhof, 2015, p. 3)

Paguyuban Sumarah is one of the *Aliran Kepercayaan* -the term which is officially used to comprise various syncretic forms of mysticism in Indonesia (Caldarola, 1982, p. 593). It was founded by R. Ng. (Raden Ngabei) Sukirno Hartono/Sukinohartono in Yogyakarta, December 27, 1935, just several months after he claimed that has been guided by a 'revelation' on September 8, 1935 (Basuki, 2007, p. 19).

Paguyuban is a word that defines a kinship-based association in Bahasa; while *Sumarah* is a Javanese means 'to surrender' or 'to submit'; which as Geertz explained it, *Sumarah* means 'to surrender to God's will' (Geertz, 1959, p. 309). Based on this terminological construction, *Paguyuban Sumarah*, as *Aliran Kepercayaan* aimed to be a community of people who submitted themselves to the 'Tuhan Yang Maha Esa' -The One Almighty God (Lubis, 2019, p. 95). At the time Sukino founded *Sumarah*, he was not alone. There were also Hardo and Sutadi. both are

the occupant of Yogyakarta; Hardo was a barber, while Sutadi was a highly educated staff of the Colonial Government (Choy, 1999, p. 115).

In its early years, *Sumarah* may be considered to be a 'loose' organization; struggled altogether with another Indonesian to achieve Independence. There was no strict regulation for the members, besides the activity of meditation comprising magic of self-defence art, known as Kanoman (Choy, 1999, p. 115).

This magical practice was about the scope of wizardry; including how to protect the body from weapons, knives, and guns, for instance. The occultism was taught mainly to the youth members and regarded as fundamental to fighting the Dutch, especially when Indonesian own equalized military armaments with them. Another group of *Paguyuban* was instructed Kesepuhan, a kind of metaphysical teaching regarding the 'spirit of surrender' to the struggle of Independence (Choy, 1999, p. 115).

At around 1950, a young doctor, Surono, also from Yogyakarta assigned *Sumarah* and inherit the leadership of the *Paguyuban*. It was also a time when *Sumarah* was officially established as an organization (Stange, 1980, p. 11). During his reign, Surono tried to reverse the mystic value of *Sumarah* -either Kanoman and Kesepuhan- to a 'surrender' practice that is seen as more similar to Christianity. This attitude seemed to commence internal conflict between the management of *Paguyuban*; Surono on one hand with Sukiino and Hardo on another. The dispute ended up in an open hostility in 1966 following Surono's allegation that he could only obtain revelation and moved the headquarter to Jakarta. The conflict has resulted in the global vote confronting Surono, with the result, finally, Ary Murthy, the business analyst became the new head of *Sumarah*. The headquarter was eventually migrated to Yogyakarta once more (Choy, 1999, p. 115).

In 1986, Zahid Hussein substituted Arymurthy. Since then, *Sumarah* is considered as one of the most prominent national movements within the sphere of *Kebatinan*; on account of their leaders have been notably involved within the umbrella associations of *Aliran Kepercayaan* in a national level (Stange, 1980, p. 12).

In 2010, the Indonesian Government affirmed that *Sumarah* adherents are around 2733 persons from multiple backgrounds, spread in the entire Java (Ensiklopedi Kepercayaan Terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa, 2010, p. 523). Paul Stange, however, has noticed that the possibility of the figure of the devotee of the *Paguyuban* reached perhaps 8000 populations; which amazingly, he reported this unit in his Ph.D thesis which was written more than 40 years ago (Stange, 1980, p. 15). Besides the data difference, it is assumed that safe to say that *Sumarah* is quite accommodated and developed. Their status, in addition, altogether with another *Aliran Kepercayaan* were also constituted stronger following the recommendation of the Constitutizonal Court of Indonesia that besides 6 religions which have been officially recognized by the Government of Indonesia -Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism-, that it should be a 'seventh category' created to be in the Identity Cards (Kartu Tanda Penduduk) for the adherents of *Aliran Kepercayaan*. The recommendation of the Court will indicate further change in the Indonesian Constitute of Religious Freedom (Aryono, 2018; Hakiki, 2011; Jufri & Mukhlish, 2019; Marshall, 2018; Sirait et al., 2015).

Understanding *Paguyuban Sumarah*'s System Organization as *Aliran Kepercayaan*: A Venue for Interreligious Communities

As it was mentioned earlier, *aliran kepercayaan* owns a particular framework of belief and practice. A similar basis is also applied to *Sumarah*; the *Paguyuban* provided spiritual meditation based on outward obedience in the form of a ritual called *Sujud Sumarah* to Tuhan Yang Maha Esa as 'The One True God' (*Ensiklopedi Kepercayaan terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa*, 2010, p. 523). The meditation is attended under the lead of the Guru or Pamong, the 'religious-spiritual leader' who is considered as the most responsible person in delivering the teaching of *Paguyuban* (Geertz, 1959, p. 328; Romano, 2013, p. 18).

As a common *aliran kepercayaan*, the membership of *Sumarah* is not limited to any religious background. As *Sumarah* believes that the

differentiation of religious identities was derived from Single Ultimate Truth and aimed for a single shared goal, the *Paguyuban* refutes any form of 'religious fanaticism' (Arymurthy, 1980, pp. 2, 5, 115). According to this, Stange wrote that *Sumarah* is a brotherhood dedicated to total meditative surrender. It is not fanatical, but grows from and relies on the Truth which benefits all." (Stange, 1980, p. 12).

To unite the plural religious identities of its Adherents, *Sumarah* conceptualized Sasanggeman. It is document consists of 9 principles and was authorized as the statutes of *Sumarah* in April 1940 and revised in Solo, 1947. Sasanggeman stands not as 'sacred scripture' but instead as 'guide and reference' for the member of *Paguyuban Sumarah* (Romano, 2013, 237). As it will be provided here, the document seems crucial to be a basic law of *Sumarah* as an 'Interreligious Community' uniting its adherents who came from multiple religious affiliations.

The document began with a declaration that *Sumarah* is an association dedicated to material and spiritual peace through the practice of meditation and total Surrender of God (Romano, 2013, p. 238). The preamble was continued with the list of the nine principles are: 1) The members of *Paguyuban Sumarah* believe in the existence of God, Creator of the Cosmos, and acknowledge the teachings of the Prophet and the Holy Books; 2) They commit to be constantly aware of themselves and the will of God, avoiding egoism and arrogance. They believe in the truth of the Ultimate Reality (*Kasunyatan*), and they practice meditation (*sujud*), as a means of self-surrender (sumarah) to God; 3) They strive towards bodily health, peaceful hearts, and clean spirits, and to refine their character in words and deeds, in feeling and thoughts; 4) They work to strengthen the solidarity of human beings through love and compassion; 5) They commit themselves to increasing their sense of responsibility in life and to taking to heart the needs of others, observing their duties as citizens, and aiming towards the independence, dignity, and prosperity that can bring peace and harmony to the world; 6) They promise to do what is right, to obey the laws of their country, and respect other human

beings. They further promise not to denigrate the beliefs of others, but rather act on the basis of love so that all spiritual and religious groups may develop towards the same end; 7) They are determined to avoid evil actions -hurting, hating, sinning, etc.; all their speech and actions are to be unpretentious and truthful, and to be performed patiently and accurately, without haste or strain; 8) They endeavor to develop diligently in both spiritual and worldly spheres; 9) They will not be fanatical and will rely on the truth of the Ultimate Reality, which in the ends benefits people (Geertz, 1959, pp. 343–344; Romano, 2013, p. 328; Stange, 2009, pp. 367–368). As we can see, the last vow concerns an interdiction to the religious fanaticism, confirming once more the statute of *Sumarah* as a 'venue' for Interreligious Communities. It does not matter what God you believe in or what kind of sacred tradition you belong to; as long as you admit these 9 Sasanggeman vows, you are welcome to join *Sumarah*. Sasanggeman is also considered crucial to direct its adherent's focus to the *Sujud Sumarah*, determining the ultimate beliefs and goals intended; The Almighty God (*Ensiklopedi Kepercayaan Terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa*, 2010, p. 523; Stange, 1980, p. 12, 2009, pp. 367–368).

Interestingly, besides Sasanggeman, *Sumarah* does not occupy canonic teachings. As such, *Sumarah* prompts to utilize its theological system practically without involving any 'written' formulation. *Sujud Sumarah* followed Sasanggeman afterwards; by virtue of the drafted tenet is not to be found, *Sujud Sumarah* accentuated the arousal of self-consciousness is a process conducted naturally, standing on the evidence of arrangement to attendance in the ritual. In other words, the whole 'conversation' during the ceremony is entirely held in the realm of experience. Stange affirmed that:

> "Alternatively meditation may take place in silence, or with only a few pertinent comments, and even conversation is meant to catalyze movement on a path each participant is understood as treading individually. When fragments of the teaching/ learning process find their way onto a paper appreciation of the message is considered to depend on contextualizing it in spiritual practice and inner realization. There is no fixed form of teaching, nor even technique; practitioners and guides find their own styles and this variation is validated by *Sumarah* theory" (Stange, 1980, p. 12).

To fill a gap in the transformation of religious knowledge, the Guru stands for such a sacred task. Geertz found there are four classifications or hierarchies in the *Sumarah* organization structure: Guru, as the highest authoritative member, is mandated to deliver teaching and lead the ritual, disregarding the group of Guru is not formally regulated. Notwithstanding the absence of the Holy Scripture, the Guru leads the meditation by chanting the prayers which the founder and earlier Guru generations dictated. The mantra was recited in a 'High Javanese' (Basa Jawa Alus), like in *Tembang* (Kunst, 1949, p. 122).

Below Guru, there is a group of advanced mystics. This group seems to own a broader understanding of mystic insight in *Sumarah*. The people in this group were ordinary members before being nominated by the local branch of *Sumarah*, and their names were sent to the Headquarter in Yogyakarta. The Headquarters staff, without knowing about the personal identity of the candidate names, will meditate before deciding the member who's going to be promoted. The third level is the members below the second group; they do not have any spiritual qualifications in particular. The last and lowest level of the member is the group of adolescents, gathered between 12 to 23 years of age. This antipodal classification doing their meditation insulated from the rest of the members under the guidance of the Guru (Geertz, 1959, p. 328).

Sumarah, as one of the well-known aliran kepercayaan that exists in Indonesia, is quite appropriately organized and properly structured. In fact, the absence of canonic scripture does not suggest their inability to expand their mystical ideas and institution. As we can find already, the hierarchy of organization displays the coordinated chain of religious teachings of the *Paguyuban*. In the next paragraph, we will go deeper, discerning the core teachings of *Paguyuban Sumarah*.

The Core Beliefs of *Paguyuban Sumarah*

Paguyuban Sumarah owns some fundamental teachings. First of all, we have observed Sasanggeman as remarkably essential. It has been

mentioned above that Sasanggeman came as a 'vow' directing *Sumarah* members to focus on The One Almighty God before becoming a member of *Sumarah*. Following the nine conventions of Sasanggeman, *Sumarah* also believes in Karma and Reincarnation. Karma means 'action' (Lipner, 2012, p. 302) derived initially from Karmaphala in Hinduism. Karma certifies that every good deed or Cuba Karma will obtain similar kindnesses, while the bad deeds or Acuba Karma will cost comparable disasters (Lubis, 2019, p. 95). According to scholars, Karma encompasses an explanation of an individual's current situation regarding their actions in the past. Those acts entail the result in the present or future of a person's life (Norman, 1983; O'Flaherty, 1980, pp. 241–267). The causal system of Karma performs independently without any course of Divine Judgment (Brodd & Sobolewski, 2009, p. 47).

Along with Karma, *Sumarah* also teaches Reincarnation (Lee, 1999, 114; Lubis, 2019, 96). Again, this discipline was derived from Hinduism. In Reincarnation, it is believed that people will experience a 'rebirth' process repeatedly. The body of people may die and decompose, but not the soul. The soul or *jiwa* (sometimes also called *atman*) is assumed to be the eternal reality; it is indestructible. It turns out that the present Karma experienced by a man impacts the forthcoming condition, form, and realms of human life (Juergensmeyer & Roof, 2012, p. 272). The good deeds will lead to a good future, while bad deeds lead to a bad future, influencing how one will reincarnate (Flood, 2016, p. 6).

Reincarnation occupies several comparable terminologies: Punarbhava and Samsara. Punarbhava means 'to incarnate' or 'reappearing' (Monier-Williams et al., 1899, p. 633; Paranjape, 2012, p. 245), while Samsara notifies 'wandering', with the connotation of the 'transmigration of the soul' and 'cycle of successive existence' (Juergensmeyer & Roof, 2012, p. 272). *Sumarah* believes that Reincarnation occurs because *atman* is still 'manipulated' by worldly pleasure, so it returns, again and again, to be reborn in the world, averting themselves from *Brahman* -The Ultimate Reality-. As long as the person's *jiwa* is still obsessed with the temptation

of life, they will reincarnate again, trapped in an infinite loop of the life cycle. To solve this matter, mankind should be freed from the temptation in a way of meditation (Choy, 1999, p. 144; Pradhan, 2015, pp. 49–50; Sarbacker, 2005, pp. 104–106). A similar principle is also employed in *Sumarah*, as the meditation practice leads mainly to the 'self-realization' of the One Almighty God.

The correlation between Karma and reincarnation can be seen in Figure 2.
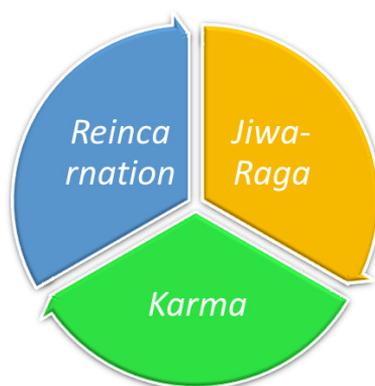

Figure 2
Karma and Reincarnation

Sumarah sees that human and their physical and spiritual realm are subdivided into three different elements: The first element is the physical body and brain, the second is the invisible realm, and the third is the more divine realm. As the faculty of thinking, Brain owns two capacities: either to collect remembrance or communicate with God. Mainly, *suksma* administers the passion; *jiwa*, controls the faculty of thinking, and unsubstantial soul; and *rasa*, the deeper feelings. Somehow, the more elusive and sublime world is hidden near Masjid al-Haram (The Holy Mosque of Muslims). As Lee commented, it is quite interesting to know that even *Sumarah* Belief is different from Islam, but yet they use Islamic terminology (Choy, 1999, p. 114). Furthermore, see Figure 3.
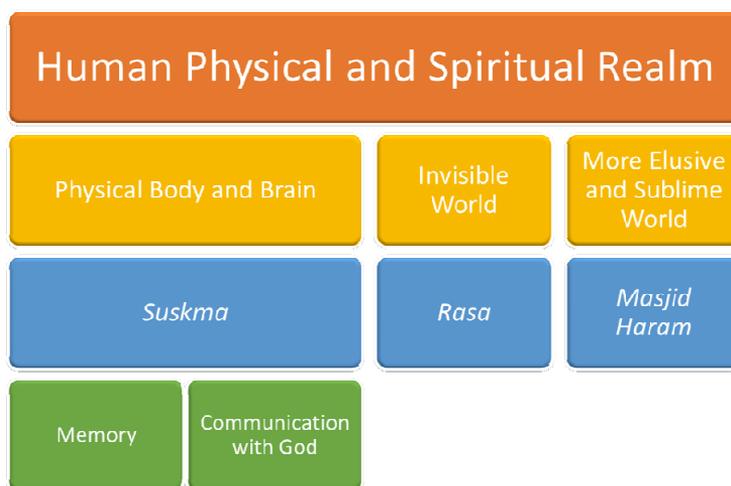
Figure 3
Sumarah's Scheme of Human Physical and Spiritual Realm

Sujud Sumarah: The Core Ritual of *Paguyuban Sumarah*

There is no *Paguyuban Sumarah* without *Sujud Sumarah*, let say. It is a ritual that became not only the core of the religious practice in the *Paguyuban* but also an act performed, distinguishing itself from another *Aliran Kepercayaan*. It is done under the supervision of Guru, with an aim to pray to One Almighty God. Suppose Sujud Sumarah is implemented after a while, passing the level of 'Jiwa Raga' (Soul and Body). In that case, *Sumarah* adherents hold that they will receive a true revelation (*dawuh*) from God (Lubis, 2019, p. 90).

There are four levels of *Sujud Sumarah*: *Sujud Raga*, *Sujud Jiwa Raga*, *Sujud* Tetap Iman, and the final stage is *Sujud Sumarah*. *Sujud Raga*, the first stage of *Sujud* symbolizes the unity between God and the human body (*Raga*) of the *Sujud* participant. To begin, the adherents of *Sumarah* posit themselves silent and quietly, minimalizing any unnecessary movement while controlling their way of breath (*Ensiklopedi Kepercayaan Terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa*, 2010, p. 64). Afterwards, the body will

be replaced by 'imagination' (angan-angan) to practice *Sujud*. If the adherents have successfully diverged their 'imagination' from their 'consciousness', their focus will shift from brain to soul (*Jiwa*); resulting in a 'lose' of their consciousness for a while during the duration of *Sujud*. The practice of this level of *Sujud* is aid while doing *dhikr* -uttering the names of God- (Suwarno, 2005, p. 223). See Figure 4.

After accomplishing *Sujud Raga*, it will be a higher level of ritual named *Sujud Jiwa Raga*. Following the divergence of 'imagination' (angan-angan) from 'consciousness', the 'imagination' will stay side by side, altogether with *rasa* (Lubis, 2019, p. 4). Both 'angan-angan' and 'rasa' will carry on the *Sujud* simultaneously, implementing the first key of the practice of *Sujud Sumarah*, as, in this stage, the adherents of *Sumarah* is considered to be 'united' with God in the form of 'self-surrender'; *Sumarah*. The dawuh from God can also be received in this earliest phase, marked by the presence of a 'sudden voice'. However, it should be noted that the adherents are demanded to stay sharp and careful, as the 'voice' may also possibly be the 'fake revelation' that came from Evil and not from God. To prevent the deception and gain the true *dawuh*, they are required to repeat the Sujud again and again in any place and time, so they will be accustomed to (Widjayanti, 2015, p. 67).

Figure 4
The 4 Stages of *Sujud Sumarah*

The third level of *Sujud* is *Sujud Tetap Iman*. This term implies an uninterrupted (tetap) practice of *Sujud*. In this level, the adherents of *Sumarah* are assumed able to do *Sujud* continuously the 'imagination' (*angan-angan*) have stayed steadily in Jiwa. Thereupon, they possibly receive Dawuh (revelation) without any limit of 'space' and 'time'. Whenever the time and wherever they are, the member of *Paguyuban* will able to arrive at the true revelation (Suwarno, 2005, p. 224).

Last but not least, the ultimate peak of the ritual is *Sujud Sumarah*. This highest stage of *Sujud* is 'unreachable' as one cannot implement it only by practice. Otherwise, *Sujud Sumarah* is God's gift to anyone who has ideally overcome the three earlier phases. In *Sujud Sumarah*, adherents of the *Paguyuban* will be united with God. Indeed, the 'fusion' should not be understood in a literal way; as the amalgam expected is the unity of the 'intention' of Adherents and God. In Javanese terms, the situation is called as -*Jumbuhing kawula Gusti, Manunggaling kawula Gusti-*, while *Sumarah* themselves defines this condition as *Gambuh* (Lubis, 2019, p. 5; Suwarno, 2005, p. 224).

It was affirmed, *Sujud Sumarah* originally stands on the basis of Serat Wedatama, written by K.G.P.A.A. (Kanjeng Gusti Pangeran Adipati Arya) Mangkunegara IV (Khalim, 2008, p. 88; Simuh, 2019, p. 314; Widjayanti, 2015). Some analyses have been done concerning that text, resulting in that the Serat mainly retained the theological concept and the principle of worship (Prasetyo et al., 2019; Putro et al., 2019). Below is the Java text of the manuscript with the English translation:

> "*Samengko ingsun tutur*
> *Sembah Catur supaya lumuntur,*
> *dhihin raga cipta jiwa rasa kaki, ing kono lamun katemu*
> *Tandha nugrahaning Manon.*"

The English translation is below:

> "Now I shall teach
> The four kinds of worship, so that you may acquire them
> Firstly, that of the body, then thought, the soul, and the essence,
> my boy the acquisition of these
> Is a sign of favour from the All-Seeing." (Robson, 1990, pp. 38–39)

The close relationship between the practice of *Sujud Sumarah* and Serat Wedatama shows that the ancient script has inspired the structure of *Sujud Sumarah* as a ritual practice by *Paguyuban*. Thereupon, it is also proper evidence that consolidates the status of *Paguyuban Sumarah* as *Aliran Kepercayaan*, contributing to the existence of the Schools of Javanese Mysticism.

Sujud Sumarah as Interrituality: An Implementation of Interreligious Ritual Participation

Sumarah does not define the concept of God in an explicit way; rather they called God by 'Allah', 'Father', 'Jesus', or 'Sang Hyang Widi Wasa', *Sumarah* determined God as 'The One Almighty God' or 'Tuhan Yang Maha Esa', as it has been observed in the Sasanggeman. The concept is eminently fundamental in constructing the system of organization, realizing the principle of God was written in the earliest part of the vows (Geertz, 1959, pp. 343–344; Paguyuban Sumarah, 1980; Romano, 2013; Stange, 2009, pp. 367–368). Based on this observation, we can see that *Sumarah*, somehow 'transcends' or even 'syncretizes' the concept of God beyond the particular identity. *Sumarah* goes beyond the border of 'God' definition, supplanted it with 'Tuhan Yang Maha Esa' embracing the whole concept of 'Gods'. The comparable approach has been utilized and developed in the Perennialism (Maulana, 2014), as it will be 'The Divine Reality' in the Esoteric dimension shading the Exoteric level of 'Gods' - Allah, Jesus, Brahma, Elohim, etc.- (Schuon, 1984, pp. 38–39, 47; Smith, 1984, p. xii). In the view of Perennialism, these multiple concepts of (exoteric) 'Gods' will be united eventually in the level of (esoteric) 'Divine Reality' (Nasr, 2005, pp. 29–30; Schuon, 2008b, p. 19, 2008a, p. 208; Stoddart, 2010, pp. xxi–xxiv). A simple quote delivered by William Stoddart seems able to explain this concept in brief, that: "…Divine Truth is one, timeless, and universal, and that different religions are but different languages expressing that one Truth." (Stoddart, 2008, pp. 51–52).

In the term of 'Syncretism', *Sumarah* has combined multiple sources of religious traditions. Following the framework of "…weaving together of

various strands of religious thought…" (Ferm, 1945, p. 756), it is clear that the concept of Karma and Reincarnation in *Sumarah*, are teachings develop from Hinduism. On the other hand, *Sujud*, Masjid al-Haram, and dzikr, are concepts ultimately derived from Islam. As such, *Sumarah* fundamental beliefs have blended the different theological foundations to be a new concept of religion. Similar cases are also observable in Gnosticism in Judea-Christian tradition, and Din-I-Ilahi in Islam; As Gnosticism was built upon the basis of Hellenistic-Judaism messages ("Gnosticism," 2005, p. 3508), while Din-I-Ilahi was founded by Akbar, the Emperor Mughal reconciling teaching of Islam, Hinduism, and some of Christianity, Jainism, and Zoroastrianism (Sastri, 2012).

It is obvious that *Sumarah* encompasses both 'Syncretism' and the 'Transcendent Unity' altogether in the construction of its mystical elements. *Sumarah*, as it was recorded, founded its roots lie on the traditional esoteric custom (Stange, 1980, 15). Sukino, the founder, has also experienced intimate esoteric teaching from his father since his childhood. Stange wrote that Sukino father's involvement with *Kebatinan* and experiences of village magic formed a basis, childhood set him on the track of esoteric knowledge (Stange, 1980, 38). The youth period experienced by Sukino in his village was indeed full of training with syncretic sects (Stange, 1980, p. 27). As such, his contemplation regarding the dualistic view of *Jiwa* and *Raga*, represents a break not only from the ancestral practices of traditional Javanism, but also from the practices common within Javanese Sufi syncretism (Stange, 1980, p. 43). Considering the whole facts, *Sumarah* has distinctly advanced the 'classic' idea of Javanese syncretism, developing a 'fresh' movement of *Aliran Kepercayaan* since the 1930s.

Transcendent Unity and Syncretism's basis seems to help Sumarah convene *Sujud Sumarah* in a pluralistic atmosphere, welcoming participants from diverse religious affiliations. The membership of *Sumarah*, again, is vacant for everyone. As long as they admitted Sasanggeman, anybody can join *Paguyuban Sumarah* and all of its

activities. Hence, *Paguyuban Sumarah* has been an organization with multi-religious members since the establishment; and *Sujud Sumarah* is a concrete practice of interrituality.

Another testimony demonstrating *Sujud Sumarah* as a venue for an Interreligious Ritual Participation is an interview done by Stange with Sudarno (d. 1982). Sudarno was originally Buddhist but participated actively in *Paguyuban Sumarah*. Interestingly, Sudarno was considered an eager representative and one of the most active Guru of Sumarah in Solo during the 1970s (Stange, 1980, p. 185). This case has shown broader that *Sujud Sumarah* is a good platform for interreligious ritual participation, considering himself a Buddhist who was not only a 'member' but also a Guru leading the *Sujud Sumarah* as a ritual session attended by plural religious communities.

The current data obtained in Madiun has demonstrated an identical argumentation. Grasius Yusef Iskarianto and his wife are Catholics and until this research is written, the spouse has routinely practised *Sujud Sumarah* even before they officially registered as the adherents of the *Aliran Kepercayaan* in 1986. Grasius admitted that although he and his wife are affiliated in Catholicism, the man and wife do not find a discrepancy between the teachings. Even according to them, the doctrine of *Sumarah* and Catholicism are corresponding to one another. Every time he does *Sujud Sumarah*, Grasius discerned that he experienced a 'unity with God' even meeting with the Holy Spirit during the process.

On the other hand, Grasius found that the principle of 'self-surrender' taught by *Sumarah* is concretely was has been taught in Catholicism, so it is not necessary to divide the schedule of worship between the Church and *Sumarah*. *Sujud Sumarah* can be practiced in the Church. Grasius said: "I worship (in the Church) and do the *Sujud* as well I can do both at the same time." (G.Y. Iskarianto, personal communication, March 15, 2020).

Looking closer at the implementation of *Sujud Sumarah* and how it became a venue of Interreligious Ritual Participation, it is understandable that *Sujud Sumarah* is possibly classified as an interrituality considering

several conditions: First, *Sumarah* 'transcends' and 'syncretizes' its teachings advancing existed theological concepts and make it their own. Second, *Sujud Sumarah* is able to be joined by everyone from diverse religious identities, as the membership of *Sumarah* is also freed from any kind of religious affiliation.

If Marianne and Geldhof classified interrituality as 'outer-facing' and 'inner-facing' (Moyaert & Geldhof, 2015, p. 1), the implementation of interrituality in *Sumarah* was unique; as when the adherents of *Sumarah* practices *Sujud*, it does not mean that *Sumarah* becomes their religion. Indeed, the adherents are affiliated to *Sumarah* as the member of the organization. However, they did not discard their 'original' belief as Muslim, Catholic, Buddhist, etc; as Either Grasius or Sudarno showed it, they have still belonged to their previous religious identity. As such, The adherents of *Sumarah* do not only practice *Sujud Sumarah* but still do another ritual according to their basic belief. The implementation of *Sujud Sumarah* as an interreligious ritual participation, yet acceptable even it could not explicitly be categorized as 'inner-facing' or 'outer-facing' interrituality.

Conclusion

It is concluded that *Sujud Sumarah* is possibly defined as a practice of interrituality. The practice has presented a venue for an Interreligious Ritual Participation, joined by the adherents of *Sumarah* who were originally belonged to a particular tradition. However, several tasks remain to inquire deeper about the aspect of interrituality in *Sujud Sumarah*, which in general encompasses Interreligious elements contained in the *Paguyuban Sumarah* as an organization. For instance, it is a demand of a proper comprehension concerning both transcendent unity and Syncretism construction of *Sumarah*, related to the phenomenon of 'multiple religious belonging' of the adherents, and last but not least, the views and values of *Sumarah* as Aliran Kebatinan between another religious community in Indonesia.[w]

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