Local Practical Religious Moderation in Indonesia: A Case Study of Churches in Getasan District, Semarang Regency

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Abstract: This paper is a qualitative study that describes the phenomenon of religious moderation in the Getasan District, Semarang Regency, Central Java Province. Many mass media highlight the high tolerance in the Getasan area, which makes it interesting to investigate it deeper related to religious management in the community. By using the analysis of Miles and Huberman and mixing it with the perspective of Citizenship Pluralism, the results showed that Christian religious leaders taught church members about three things, including doctrinal teaching that educated the law of love as their foundation, contextualization by mixing and matching culture in the development of faith and social devotion in terms of religiosity in society. From the perspective of civic pluralism, Christian religious leaders carried out recognition, representation, and redistribution as a way of teaching religious moderation in society, which aims to create social harmony in society. A good understanding of religious moderation, by linking religious texts and religious contexts, then internalizing it into their daily lives, makes church members have an important role in creating harmony in the community in Getasan District, Semarang Regency.

Keywords: Churches, Getasan, Harmony, Religious Moderation

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1. Introduction
Religious moderation is a program that is encouraged to strengthen the diversity in society.¹ In various forums, religious moderation has become the subject of discussion in the realm of its practical implementation. Social media is also used by meaning to socializing the millennial generation.² To spread moderate religious methods to achieve the noble ideals of the nation, namely Indonesian unity, the implementation of religious moderation continues to be pursued in society. Quoting Hans Kung's opinion, that there can be no peace between nations, without peace of religions.³ To create a society that is peaceful, respects differences, and can work together as a nation, moderate religious understanding is one of the keys.

¹ Tim Penyusun Kementerian Agama RI, MODERASI BERAGAMA (Jakarta: Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama RI Gedung Kementerian Agama RI, 2019), 21.
Along with the rolling of religious moderation initiated by the Ministry of Religion, implementation in society continues to be pursued in various sectors. In educational institutions are starting to be actualized through a religious education paradigm that inserts a socio-religious approach, not only a doctrinal approach. The socio-religious approach provides a broader perspective regarding the existence of other religions in the context of nation and state. In another context, religious moderation has also begun to be applied in the Majlis Taklim in Yogyakarta, which was initiated by women, with an emphasis on social studies and activities in society. The initiation that carried out was intended to warding off the entry of extremism studies among Majlis Taklim. On the other hand, the value of religious moderation began to be constructed in pesantren. Pesantren in Rembang has developed an educational model that implements religious moderation. Santri are prepared with special knowledge as an individual provision and general knowledge as a provision to be able to live in the community and be able to make solutions in the community. In the realm of higher education, religious moderation has been internalized in the learning process. Practices in society and learns from a heterogeneous society made it a provision for students to have a broad perspective regarding beliefs and factual conditions in society.

Research from Hale conducted within the scope of the Evangelical Christian Church in Timor (GMIT) stated that this church supports the implementation of religious moderation in the sphere of education. The results of this research led to a learning model in Christian education to shape the perspective and attitude of religious moderation for the Alpha generation. The models offered are individualized learning models, self-directed learning, collaboration, and inquiry-based learning. Another study written by Nisa et al, emphasized that the implementation of religious moderation is very much needed in the digital era, especially for the millennial generation. Complementing this research, the implementation of religious

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moderation needs to be based on culture and local wisdom of the people in the region.\textsuperscript{10}

The implementation of religious moderation in society needs to be proactively supported by the government, community leaders and religious leaders.\textsuperscript{11} The cultivation of religious moderation in schools by religious teachers is important, in order to prevent the paradigm and understanding of radicalism from developing in schools.\textsuperscript{12} This is because Christian Religious Education is a field where many people receive teaching that is useful in applying Christian values in the form of positive values, teaching how to live in peace, accepting other people’s points of view, loving one another, and living side by side.\textsuperscript{13} Thus, Christian Education can be a way to build a moderate and inclusive social life for students.\textsuperscript{14}

The perspective of religious moderation needs to be implemented in every aspect of people’s lives. Research in the village of Bali, South Sumatra produces a reflection of religious moderation in a plural society, by developing religious values and local wisdom.\textsuperscript{15} In Tebatan Village, East Nusa Tenggara, religious moderation has also been developed in the context of church and society, by developing Christian values through pastoral counseling.\textsuperscript{16} A religious moderation culture has also developed in Sipirok, North Sumatra. Factors that strengthen the culture of religious moderation in Sipirok are family factors, cultural factors, and the community’s firm stand against extremism.\textsuperscript{17}

From the various perspective that have developed regarding religious moderation, in literacy, there have not been many contributions from the perspective of Christians and church members in actively implementing practically in society. The
Religious Moderation Mozaik book which was initiated by the Directorate General of Christian Community Guidance at the Ministry of Religion is one of the theoretical contributions of Christian theological education practitioners. Reviews related to theoretical theological exposures and practical narratives are put forward to implement religious moderation in the church and Christian theological education. In the view of Albertus Patty, a priest who is also active in interfaith network activities, stated that religious moderation refers to the Greek philosophy of sophrosunes. Patty emphasized that moderation means being open to the dynamics of diversity and being a bridge for various interests. In this case, moderation means balancing, not synonymous with the middle way, and is more of an ethical moral virtue. However, the model of religious moderation that was carried out by church members have not been reviewed practically. This paper will provide the best practices of religious moderation that has been carried out by church members and have developed well in the Getasan area. Getasan District is important to research, because this area borders directly on Salatiga City, which is the most tolerant city in Indonesia. Getasan residents are mostly active in Salatiga and transmit their local wisdom to Salatiga. On the other hand, in the social harmony index in Central Java, Getasan is in the top three in managing diversity, so that every Christmas and Idul Fitri holiday is always covered by television and print media nationally.

Getasan itself is one of the districts in the Semarang Regency government. The location is on the slope of Merbabu Mountain which geographically makes many villages were winding, up and down roads, and are cool, typical of villages in the mountains. Sociologically, farmers and breeders dominate in terms of their livelihoods. In terms of belief or religion, many people embrace Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Catholicism, Hinduism, and also Kejawen. Even though many religions are developed in society, there is a lot of news in electronic media related to the portrait of tolerance in Getasan. To see the reviews of media workers by simply browsing the internet. One of the intriguing writings is on the Kompasiana page which invites you to study tolerance in Getasan. Some had become viral news when the Governor of Central Java visited to see for himself the portrait of tolerance in preparation for

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It is interesting to study the role of church members in realizing religious moderation in society so that tolerance could be created in society.

2. Research Methods
This research is a type of research with a qualitative approach, namely research based on the philosophy of post-positivism, where the truth is by the essence of the object, is used to examine the condition of the natural object, where the researcher is the key instrument and the research results emphasize the meaning rather than generalization. The objectives of this study is to reveal as much as possible of the data and information about religious moderation in church. This research is not directed at false conclusion, does not test as an accepted-rejected hypothesis, but rather emphasized data collection to describe the actual situation that occurred in the research location mandala.

Data analysis of this study was carried out before entering the field, during entering the field, and after completing the field. Nasution in Sugiyono, states that data analysis has started since formulating and explaining problems, before going into the field, and continues until the writing of the research results. To make it easy to understand, this research will use an interactive model analysis from Miles and Huberman, which is dividing the steps in data analysis activities into several parts, namely data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification. The data that has been collected through observation and interviews will then be reduced based on the type of data which will then be verified and validated. The verified data is then presented for further comprehensive description.

3. Result and Discussion
Geographically, Getasan District is bordered by Temanggung Regency and Magelang Regency on the west side. On the east side, it is bordered by Tengaran District, Boyolali Regency, and Salatiga City. The north side is bordered by Tuntang District and Banyubiru District, while on the south side is Boyolali Regency. Almost all villages in Getasan area are located on the slopes of Mount Merbabu. No wonder the roads are always uphill, downhill, and curved when traveling from village to another. However, on the other hand, this geographical location is an attraction for visiting

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villages in the Getasan region. The natural beauty and charming scenery catch the attention of many local tourists in this area. This could be seen on weekends, many people arrived in the Getasan area, to unwind.\textsuperscript{27}

In terms of demographics, based on data from the Central Bureau of Statistics of Semarang Regency, Getasan District has a population of 50,625 people from various age groups.\textsuperscript{28} The majority of the population has occupations as farmers who manage their fields for growing a variety of vegetables and fruits. Agricultural harvest from Getasan is the main supplier of vegetables in the surrounding area. The products of this land then became an attraction for tourists to visit and buy fresh vegetables and fruit. It is not surprising that farmers offered the sensation of picking vegetables and fruit for tourists visiting their area. In terms of belief, residents in Getasan District embrace Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Buddhism, Hindu, and Kejawen. All religions and beliefs exist in the Getasan area. BPS data for Semarang Regency shows that the number of places of worship is sequentially dominated by mosques, prayer rooms, Christian churches, monasteries, Catholic churches, and temples.\textsuperscript{29} This shows the diversity of beliefs in the Getasan community.

If the diversity of beliefs that exist in society couldn't be managed properly, it would become a boomerang for inter-religious harmony. The condition of a plural society is one of the markers of socio-cultural wealth for the Indonesian nation in general and the local area in particular. Indeed, it cannot be denied that there are elements from the community groups who have pushed in to divide the existing harmony in society. People who adhered to certain religious extremes often used their identity politics to inspire people with the understanding that attack other religions. The seeds of religious-based extremism have led the Indonesian Government through the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia to promote the concept of religious moderation for the Indonesian people.\textsuperscript{30} The declaration of religious moderation in the context of religious plurality in Indonesia shows the government’s commitment to seriously manage religious harmony in society.

Religious dynamics in society required creative efforts in its management. Religious offenses that occur in society can trigger conflict in society. The religious moderation that has been rolled out by the government is a bridge to create interfaith peace. Socialization and literacy related to Religious Moderation are important to continue to strive, to provide knowledge and information for the

\textsuperscript{27} Fibry Jati Nugroho, “KENDUREN SEBAGAI RUANG MERAWAT KEINDONESIAAN,” in Prosiding Pelita Bangsa (Jakarta: STT Pelita Bangsa, 2021).
\textsuperscript{28} BPS Kabupaten Semarang, Kecamatan Getasan Dalam Angka 2018 (Ungaran: Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Semarang, 2018).
\textsuperscript{29} Semarang.Semarang.
\textsuperscript{30} Direktorat Jenderal Bimbingan Masyarakat Kristen Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, Mozaik Moderasi Beragama Dalam Perspektif Kristen.
millennial generation. Social media literacy is very effective in transmitting moderate attitudes towards religion so that it can equip the millennial generation with ethics, politeness, and religious attitudes in the public sphere.\textsuperscript{31} Literacy in the world of social media has a dual effect, for the messengers and message recipients, so it can be an alternative solution to equip millennials about Religious Moderation.

In other contexts, religious moderation needs to be packaged and delivered in a relevant form based on the existing social situation of the community. In the context of rural communities and still tend to be traditional, the socialization and implementation strategy of religious moderation requires a different model with a touch to the millennial generation. The model for implementing religious moderation needs to look at the segmentation of society. In rural communities, local wisdom and local culture could be an entry point for implementing religious moderation in the community. In his research in Boyolali Regency, Legowo stated that the harmonization that occurs in society has binding elements, namely history, culture, and local wisdom that exist in the region.\textsuperscript{32} The role of the religious elite in promoting religious moderation is vital. Religious elites have an important role in maintaining tolerance between religious groups. Religious elites could become a channel for ideas and an extension of the government to promote religious moderation. Among the people who still maintain their culture rigidly, religious and community leaders could use local wisdom as a bridge in cultivating and maintaining tolerance in society.\textsuperscript{33} Therefore, it is necessary to explore local wisdom in a society, so that it can be used as a tool to promote religious moderation in society.

In implementing religious moderation in society, awareness of diversity needs to be deeply instilled in society. Citizenship pluralism is a concept proposed by Zainal Abidin Bagir and friends. Conceptually, civic pluralism offers three things that could be implemented in raising awareness in society. Recognition, Representation, and Redistribution are proposed to be a concept to help apply moderation in society.\textsuperscript{34} Recognition or identification is a basic concept in carrying out the diversity process in society. In this concept, recognition is more than just tolerance. If tolerance tends to accept other groups or religions, but let them live alone. Recognition goes deeper than that. Another group or other recognized in all its


\textsuperscript{34} Zainal Abidin Bagir et al., \textit{Pluralisme Kewargaan: Arah Baru Politik Keragaman Di Indonesia} (Bandung: Mizan Pustaka, 2011), 42.
essence and can live side by side, without confronting, discriminating, and disturbing other groups in carrying out their worship, beliefs, and religious culture.35

Representation is an effort to present other groups in the framework of community life. The presence of other groups in elements of society is crucial, to get to know each other, to see and participate in the progress of society. Representation is a form of representing community groups, either symbolically, descriptively, substantially, or directly. Representation of religious groups in society could shape active participation and dispel assumptions about other groups.36 If this representation could be created in society, then it would be followed by redistribution, which involves the distribution of the resulting policies into a social contract to be able to live together in a community. This concept turned out a conceptual model proposal in developing a life of religious moderation in society.37

In the life of the community in Getasan District, awareness of living together was well cultivated. The existence of many religions and beliefs in the Getasan area requires awareness to be able to manage them properly. In many beliefs, Christianity ranks second in the Getasan District area. Religious tolerance and harmony in the Getasan area cannot be separated from the role of Christians. The role of Christian religious leaders in sowing the seeds of tolerance can be seen as successful, this is evident from the fact that church members can take part and become peacemakers in community life. In the lessons and utterances conveyed by Christian religious leaders who become the inspiration and motivation of church members to be able to apply religious moderation in society. On several occasions,38 This statement has a deep meaning related to the theological, sociological, and national dimensions. To examine deeper, the basic Christianity that colors church members in their religious life in the Getasan area is:

The Law of Love
The Christians congregating in local churches that are members of the Getasan District Inter-Church Cooperation Agency uphold unity based on Bible truth. Christian religious leaders in the Getasan area regularly hold meetings to equalize perceptions, and as a place to share stories of service to their church members. One of the lessons agreed upon in the context of living together as part of the community, as well as being part of the church community, is the law of love. The law of love is the foundation of the Christian life. The law teaches about two things, that are love God your God with all your heart and love your neighbor as yourself. In various communal

37 Bagir et al.
gatherings of Getasan Christians.\(^{39}\) The implementation of Christian educations on the Law of Love has a significant impact on social life. Love that is not only expressed in words but is carried out in everyday life becomes an added value in the Christian faith.

As stated by many residents, the Head of Sumogawe Village, who has the second largest population in Getasan Subdistrict, said that the love standard possessed by church members has its characteristics. Apart from being devout and devout in worship, they are also actively involved in community activities in their area. This activeness and concern then become one of the stimuli for living peacefully in the community.\(^{40}\) Loving fellow human beings, in Christianity, is a manifestation of loving God. This dimension of faith and belief then contributes to his life in society.

**Mix and Match with Local Wisdom**

The lessons that are often instilled by church leaders in the Christian life which is always mixed by local wisdom. A friendly church with local wisdom is the hallmark of Christian life in the Getasan area. In various activities of the villagers, the church always takes part in these activities. The church and its residents are always involved in one of the cultural activities in the village, namely *Kembang Kuningan Ritual*. The tradition that developed in Polobogo Hamlet is a ritual to honor the village elders as the first inhabitants of the village. The involvement of church members in this cultural tradition maintains the harmony of community life.\(^{41}\)

Appreciation of local wisdom is a principle that is carried out by church leaders, to teach tolerance to its citizens.\(^{42}\) The teaching that continues to land Christian doctrine in the local culture is a long process and effort of Christian theology which begins to explore its religious texts and social contexts, then formulates them into the lessons and utterances of social life.\(^{43}\) One of the local values adopted into teaching in the life of the church in Getasan is *tepo sliro lan biso rumongso*. Local wisdom that teaches mutual respect and can have high social sensitivity is always taught to church members and is implemented in community life.\(^{44}\) These local values are encapsulated in Christian lessons, so that church members are not deprived of their culture, as well as become provisions for

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\(^{39}\) Mardi.  
\(^{40}\) Marsudi Mulyo Utomo, “Wawancara Dengan Bapak Marsudi Mulyo Utomo, Lurah Desa Sumogawe Getasan” (Kabupaten Semarang, 2019).  
\(^{41}\) Jino, “Wawancara Dengan Kepala Dusun Polobogo” (Kabupaten Semarang, 2019).  
\(^{42}\) Heri Santoso, “Wawancara Dengan Gembala Sidang GJKI Polobogo” (Kabupaten Semarang, 2019).  
community life. The life of the church, which is mixed with local wisdom, makes its contribution to the harmonization of society.

**Emphasizes Social Piety**

One person's faith is a private sphere that does not need to be forced on others. However, his piety in carrying out his faith can be enjoyed and be seen by those around him. In the life of the church in the Getasan District area, these values are instilled by church leaders to their church members. The life that can be seen and enjoyed by others, can automatically carry the fragrance of the name of God whom he worships. The value of having social piety is a manifestation of one's spiritual piety. This teaching is always echoed in joint events between churches in Getasan District, or meetings in local churches.

When examined further, the social piety taught by the leaders of the Christian congregation in Getasan District is also a link with local values that exist in the local community. The typical hospitality of the people on the mountain slope becomes a social asset that can be raised to become a provision for managing tolerance in the community. One of the distinctive values adopted by Christian religious leaders in Getasan District is the issue of *ngajeni lan nepake*. The distinctive values of the local community are then developed into local theology, to be able to teach the congregation's way of life that can be well-located itself in the community. The good lessons of church leaders become a strong foundation during the threat of teaching and speech received by church members from outside the local community.

Social piety taught by church leaders could be seen in the praxis of social life. This teaching was internalized and could be seen in the daily attitudes and speech of its citizens. Church members would automatically turn on their social switches when faced with different age levels. In community meetings, youths without a command would take over all the preparations and kneel down when they pass older people. On the other hand, regarding religious life, if there is a holiday celebration of another religion, church members will change their worship time, the purpose is not to disturb the solemnity of members of other religions. The interesting thing is, if the holidays of other religions coincide at a time when Muslims are fasting, then the celebrations are shifted to the time before or after the fast. This condition has been maintained until now so that harmony between community members is maintained until now. People between religions and different beliefs can live side by side in harmony.

Many parties have felt the religious harmonization in the Getasan District community. In various religious celebrations, many media cover the tolerance lived

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by the people in the Getasan District area. In this seemingly ideal condition, religious leaders carry out their functions properly, by maintaining harmony in society. Christian leaders are one of the elements that take part in maintaining harmony in society. The harmonization that occurs cannot be separated from its role as the initiator in implementing religious moderation in society. Successful religious moderation will create a friendly and harmonious religious life in society. Christian leaders have implemented three important principles in developing religious moderation in society. The principles developed are in line with what has been offered in the Citizenship Pluralism model. Recognition, representation, and redistribution were carried out very well by Christian religious leaders in the Getasan District area.

In the view of civic pluralism, recognition has been carried out by Christian religious leaders, by deepening the richness of their doctrine so that they can be internalized and implemented in their religious life. The law of love which is taught to church members in Getasan District is not only taught and applied literally. However, it has been internalized within the framework of social theology, so that it can be the basis for developing religious moderation in the pluralistic religious life of society. Recognition of the teachings of his faith and recognition of the beliefs of others is important in the process of religious moderation in society. Church leaders in Getasan District have done both things. Confession of the Christian doctrine of the law of love and praxis of loving others becomes a harmonization amplifier in society. Recognition of other religions and beliefs can be seen in the dynamics of worship carried out by church members. Church leaders who do not hesitate to modify their worship services and hours of worship is a form of acknowledgment of the existence of other residents who have other religions and beliefs.

It doesn’t only stop at recognition, but Christian religious leaders have developed a model of representation, where the presence and representation of other parties in various community activities are an important element in implementing religious moderation in society. The existing representation can be seen from the presence of church members in the celebration of religious traditions and other cultures around them. Equality among community members to be able to carry out cultural traditions and beliefs is an important element in preserving harmony in society. This representation can be seen in the church’s involvement in religious and cultural events in society. It does not stop at the involvement of church members in the community but also involves the local community in religious activities and events at the church.

The policies that exist at the hamlet to sub-district level always involve every element of society, including existing religious and belief leaders. In carrying out a social contract to establish a policy of living together, representation and involvement
of all elements of society are important in life together in the community of Getasan District. Policies made in the dimensions of equality and representation of all parties in society also get significant results. People who witness an open, equitable, and fair policy-making mechanism implement in a society run well. Policy redistribution is important in the process of moderating religion and to create harmony in society. Religious moderation in Getasan needs to be maintained and developed for the continuation of tolerance in society. Existing local wisdom needs to be preserved in various community and religious activities. Local wisdom that is known and lived by the community can ward off the development of religious radicalism in Indonesia.

4. Conclusion

The religious moderation introduced by the government through the Ministry of Religion is a very important concept in managing diversity, especially in Indonesia. In rampant extremism, fundamentalism, and excessive secularism in society, the concept of moderation is needed in the management process in society. During these problems, the harmonization of the people in Getasan District is a differentiator during the conflict between groups in society. The harmonization that occurs is inseparable from the role of religious leaders who have a big role in sowing, cultivating, and maintaining this harmony. Religious leaders have always echoed teachings and utterances on religious moderation, which is one of the keys to creating harmony in society.

If Christian religious leaders who have to teach church members do not have a correct understanding of religious moderation, then harmony in society cannot be created properly. In creating religious moderation and harmony in the community in the Getasan District area, Christian religious leaders taught the church members about three things, including doctrinal teaching that teaches the law of love as its foundation, contextualization by integrating culture in developing their faith, and social piety in terms of religiosity in Public. These three things are taught to church members, as the foundation of religious life in the community. From the perspective of Citizenship Pluralism, Christian religious leaders recognize, representation, and redistribution as a way of teaching religious moderation in society, which aims to create social harmony in society. A good understanding of religious moderation, by linking religious texts and religious contexts, then internalizing it into their daily lives, makes church members have an important role in creating harmony in the community in Getasan District, Semarang Regency.

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