

Dialectics of Religion, Culture, and Local Beliefs: The Practice of Religious Moderation in the Sabu Tribal Community of East Nusa Tenggara

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Abstract

Religious moderation is a national program initiated by Lukman Hakim Syaifudin and has been implemented across Indonesia, including on Sabu Island. This outermost island, located in East Nusa Tenggara, serves as a unique case study for understanding religious moderation. This study aims to examine the practice of religious moderation within the Sabu tribe. Data was collected through interviews, observations, and a literature review. The findings reveal that religious moderation has long been a part of the Sabu tribe's cultural fabric. Historically, the Sabu community predominantly adhered to ancestral religions. However, with the arrival of Dutch colonizers, a significant religious transformation occurred, leading to conversions to Christianity, Catholicism, Islam, and Hindu-Buddhism. Despite these conversions, traditional religious rituals remain closely intertwined with local spirituality, known as *Jingitiu*. Furthermore, even though Muslims constitute a minority on Sabu Island, harmonious interfaith relations are evident in daily life. For instance, during the construction of the An-Nur Mosque—the island's sole mosque—the Sabu ethnic community provided substantial support. Similarly, during Eid al-Adha celebrations, the slaughter and distribution of sacrificial meat were conducted with assistance from non-Muslim community members.

Keywords: dialectics of religion, local wisdom, religious moderation, Sabu tribe

Introduction

The dialectics and practices of religious moderation in the Sabu tribe in East Nusa Tenggara are interesting to study. Abrahamic religion and local beliefs in the ethnic group are intertwined, especially in social and religious aspects. This study explores the dialogue between religion, culture, and local beliefs (*Jingitiu*) in the Sabu tribe in East Nusa Tenggara.

Several studies related to ancestral religions in Sabu have been conducted by previous researchers. The tradition of *hengad'do* (kissing the nose), as explained by Bani (2022) and Mangialu (2020), which means humble, can accept other individuals or groups, is one indicator of the practice of religious moderation. Similarly, spirituality towards the gods and

goddesses of the *Jingitiu* indigenous religion can produce ethical values in the lives of the Sabu people (Pada, 2019). Meanwhile, a study conducted by Mega (2023) describes the properties of gods, such as the value of patience and loyalty, became the basis of oral tradition teachings in the ethnic group. Furthermore, the whole ritual tradition shows a harmonious relationship between humans and the creator (Rondo & Hudayana, 2023). Other studies have researched (Putri et al., 2022) the use of local languages, the peculiarities of the local wisdom of the Sabu tribe's (Sekarningrum & Kurniawan, 2023) various religious tradition ceremonies (Sooai & Qisty, 2021) and the relationship between Christianity and *Jingitiu* beliefs, which illustrate the practices of harmony in ethnic

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Sabu (Widjaja, 2022). These studies have not specifically addressed the dialectics of religion, culture, and local beliefs in ethnic Sabu. This article seeks to complement these studies and fill the academic space on the practice of religious moderation on the island of Sabu.

Maintaining moderate religious views and beliefs by avoiding extremism and fundamentalism is the practice of religious moderation (Salzman, 2008; Winter & Hasan, 2016). This involves adopting a balanced approach to religious teachings, allowing for critical thinking and interpretation with respect for one's faith traditions and values, which encourages tolerant attitudes and actions (Latuconsina et al., 2023). As pointed out by Mawikere et al. (2023) and Listianingrum & Zahra (2024), religious moderation is important for promoting tolerance, understanding, and peaceful coexistence among different religious communities.

Religious moderation encourages dialogue and cooperation with people of different faiths, contributing to a more harmonious society (Huda et al., 2020). This approach also fosters mutual respect and acceptance, which in turn increases gratitude toward various religious traditions (Hakim et al., 2023). Ultimately, religious moderation promotes unity and compassion, enabling a more peaceful and inclusive world for everyone (Maulana et al., 2024).

Religious moderation is very important in the context of the modern world. It helps individuals and communities of different religions talk and work together, which can build relationships and remove barriers (Maulana et al., 2024). Individuals can increase moderation in their beliefs and actions to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for everyone, regardless of their religious affiliation.

In addition to benefiting the individuals involved, it also benefits society as a whole, as it creates a sense of unity and an important understanding of how to coexist peacefully. Religious moderation fosters a sense of empathy and compassion towards others, as well as a spirit of cooperation and respect for one another.

According to Mishra & Kumar (2014), religious moderation can address how individuals or communities work together to overcome common challenges, promote peace, and increase understanding in a diverse and multicultural world by facilitating dialogue and cooperation. Ultimately, religious moderation is not just a personal decision but an important step towards a more peaceful and inclusive society for everyone (Tarman & Tarman, 2013).

To understand the complexities of society and foster mutual understanding, it is imperative to study the dialectics of religion, culture, and local beliefs. According to Bar-Tal (2000), examining how factors of religious moderation interact and impact each other enables people to identify the sources of conflict and tension and find opportunities for cooperation and reconciliation. A method that combines different disciplines makes it possible to appreciate the various perspectives and values that make up the world, recognising the humanity that unites the principles of togetherness. The study of religious moderation can serve as a bridge between different communities, encouraging conversation and respect for one another in a globalised society.

Everyone should actively seek opportunities to talk and cooperate with people of different faiths to achieve the goal of religious moderation (Smith, 2008). This can begin by breaking down barriers and removing misconceptions in respectful discussions with people from various religious traditions (Andrabi, 2020). On the other hand, seeing differences as a source of division, it is also important to recognise and celebrate the diversity of beliefs and practices within human communities. A community can create a more welcoming and harmonious society for all by embracing pluralism and encouraging inclusiveness, as demonstrated in the Manggarai Society- NTT (Adon & Avi, 2023).

As a method of analysis, dialectics offers a framework for understanding the complex interactions and relationships between different religious groups in the Savannah region. By examining the tensions and contradictions within and between religious traditions, dialectics can help reveal the underlying

patterns and dynamics that shape interfaith relations. This theoretical method allows for a more in-depth investigation of the dynamics of conflict, power and resolution that emerge in religious conversation and cooperation (Andrabi, 2020; Miller, 2017). Dialectical analyses can be used to gain a deeper understanding of the components that contribute to the success or difficulties of interfaith initiatives in the region (Neufeldt, 2011).

Dialectics can also explain how historical, cultural, and political factors influence interactions between religious groups in Sabu tribal communities. By studying the complexity of these relationships, an individual or community can better understand the sources of conflict and find a path to peace and reconciliation. Ultimately, dialectical analysis provides a broad framework for studying interfaith dynamics and enhancing mutual understanding among the various religious communities present in the region.

This method allows us to see not only the surface-level relationships between different religious beliefs but also the underlying power dynamics and structural inequalities that can lead to conflict. By using a dialectical lens, it will be able to uncover the beliefs and values that underlie interfaith relationships and seek to build bridges that allow people to share and cooperate with each other. This approach can help navigate the complicated religious diversity of Savannah, where historical grievances and political tension are present (Lopez, 2019).

Moreover, dialectics can achieve more peaceful and just coexistence among all religious communities in the region by understanding and comprehending the different phases of interfaith dynamics. In this process, a willingness to face difficult truths, open discussion, and mutual respect for one another are indispensable (Huang, 2014). Ultimately, by using a dialectical approach to interfaith relations, we can build a culture of acceptance and cooperation that transcends religious differences and supports a shared vision of peace and solidarity in Savannah. According to

Basoeki & Puspandari (2018), bonding unity and solidarity in Sabu through ongoing dialogue and cooperation is one way of building a culture of peace.

This study specifically wants to see how the practice of religious moderation involves various religious beliefs, cultures, and local beliefs of the Sabu tribe in East Nusa Tenggara.

Research Method

The Sabu tribe in East Nusa Tenggara is the subject of this qualitative research. This study aims to reveal the dialectics of religious moderation in the Sabu tribe of East Nusa Tenggara. This article's main objective is to understand the practice of religious traditions involving religious traditions, culture and local beliefs (*Jingitiu* indigenous religion) in the Sabu tribe. The key informants in this research are Islamic religious leaders, traditional leaders, community leaders, cultural leaders, government leaders, and members of the Sabu tribe.

The data extracted from the informants are related to the practice of religious moderation internalised by the Muslim community and the Sabu tribe community, who adhere to the ancestral religion in their daily lives (Benefiel, 2005). This research, as explained by Silverman & Patterson (2022) and Wellfelt (2020), was conducted through literature review analysis, document study, interviews, and direct observation of the Sabu tribe community's social practices.

Results and Discussion

Socio-religious Setting of the Savunese

The Sabu region is famous for its many different religious practices and religions that coexist peacefully. The region has a variety of spiritual traditions, including local *Jingitiu*, Christian, Catholic and Islamic beliefs. Savunese people (the people from Sabu) have long embraced a culture of tolerance and acceptance of all religions despite differences in beliefs and customs. This inclusive spirit has helped foster a sense of unity and harmony among the various religious communities in the region (Kawangung, 2019; Susanto & et. al, 2022).

With various interfaith events and celebrations taking place throughout the year, this sense of unity is further strengthened. These events allow people of different faiths to come together, share traditions, and learn from each other. In addition, religious leaders in the Sabu region often work together to solve social problems and promote peace and understanding. These cooperative efforts by different religious groups have played an important role in maintaining peaceful coexistence between different religions in the region (Pajarianto et al., 2022).

Religious Diversity in the Sabu Region

Religious diversity is an important part of daily life in the Sabu region. The region is inhabited by people of various religions, including the local *Jingituu* faith, Christianity, Catholicism, and Islam, as well as a small portion of Hindu-Buddhism. Because of this diversity, people of different faiths and religious backgrounds come together to share their customs and beliefs. This has created a rich tapestry of cultural exchange and discussion. The people of Sabu have learnt to coexist peacefully, respect each other's beliefs, and find common ground in their shared humanity despite religious differences (Mangialu, 2020).

This cultural acceptance and understanding of religious diversity enriches the culture of the area. It also serves as a model for other communities who want to accept and appreciate differences, as practised by the people of Sabu (Idris et al., 2024). By accepting each community's different customs and beliefs, Sabu has become a good example of how people can come together in diversity. The spirit of tolerance and respect rooted in this area strengthens social relations and creates a sense of peace and bonding among its inhabitants (Shariff et al., 2014).

The Sabu region continues to thrive as a beacon of multiculturalism and a place of peaceful coexistence. This practice may encourage other communities to follow suit in building a more tolerant and inclusive society. The following religious data in Sabu demonstrate this.

Table 1
Population by Religion and Belief in Sabu Raijua Regency

No	Religion/Belief	Male	Women	Total
1	Christian	44,329	42,955	87,284
2	<i>Jingituu</i> Indigenous Religion	2,819	2,268	5,087
3	Catholic	1,367	1,357	2,724
4	Islam	454	480	934
5	Hindu	3	2	5
6	Buddhism	1	0	1
7	Confucian	0	0	0
	Total	48,973	47,062	96,035

Source: Sabu Raijua Regency Population and Civil Registry Service (2023).

According to Sabu's socio-religious history, the region was formerly an ancestral religion (*Jingituu* belief). Later, due to the influence of Dutch colonialism, many of them became Christians and Catholics, and a small number embraced Islam brought by migrants on the island (Duggan, Geneviève and Hagerdan, 2018).

Minimising Conflict and Building Religious Moderation Practices in the Savunese Tribe

To illustrate the complex relationships between different belief systems and how they shape social dynamics. There are examples of cooperation and mutual respect among different religious communities in Sabu, although differences in religious practices can sometimes lead to conflict.

It should be noted that the Sabu people were originally residents who adhered to the local beliefs of *Jingituu*. Due to the arrival of the colonizers, many formally embraced Christianity, although rituals and beliefs could not be completely separated from the initial beliefs. Not only Christians, some locals also adhere to Islam.

The region's religious diversity has led to extensive cultural exchanges and conversations, allowing people to share traditions and beliefs across borders. Savunese have shown fortitude and a willingness to engage in interfaith discussions to improve understanding and

harmony within their community despite the challenges that may arise from their religious diversity. Among the various religious groups in Sabu, the sense of unity and inclusion has increased due to the open attitude towards discussion and cooperation (Mangialu, 2020).

People of different faiths can work together and learn from each other to build bridges and overcome prejudices, creating a more tolerant and peaceful society. This can be seen from the participation of all residents, regardless of religion and belief, during the construction of the mosque in Sabu. Those involved in the construction of the mosque are not only Muslims, but also non-Muslim residents. They came to help lift development materials with modest wages. Even if this is not the case, they also provide food in moderation for other workers, even though the activity is intended to build other people's places of worship.

As a result, Savunese communities can celebrate their differences while finding common ground, strengthening their bonds and encouraging a culture of acceptance and understanding.

A commitment to peaceful coexistence, respect for diversity, and an emphasis on dialogue and cooperation are features of religious moderation in the Sabu region. These methods are reflected in the way religious leaders and communities interact with each other in an effort to find common ground and enhance mutual understanding.

Overall, the practice of religious moderation in Sabu demonstrates how different religious traditions coexist peacefully and with mutual respect. They have created a supportive environment where everyone is valued and respected by collaborating to achieve common goals (Powers, 2010). The practice of religious moderation in the region has clearly helped build strong bonds and a sense of unity that transcends religious differences. This can be seen in the festival of religious cultural arts traditions of the Sabu tribe.

Religious Festivals and Rituals that Promote Interfaith Harmony

The various religious festivals and rituals

celebrated by people of different faiths are examples of religious moderation in the Savannah region. These festivals not only give people the opportunity to think about faith and worship but also to talk about and understand religious differences. For example, members of the Jingitiu Belief and Christian communities perform the *Pehera Jara* tradition and the *Pedo'a* dance every year.

The *Pahere Jara* dance was created in the Sabu tribe, specifically in Wadualla Village, Liae Subdistrict, because of a sense of joy and pride in what was achieved, for example, success in harvesting. The community usually welcomes or thanks them with the *Pahere Jara* dance. According to Ama Haba, the *Pehere Jara* dance originated from Liae, as explained below.

Ama Haba said that the *Pahere Jara* dance first appeared in the Liae area, or now Liae Subdistrict when locust pests attacked the plantations and farms of the Liae people. The community was worried because locust pests damaged the harvest. Therefore, to repel the pests, traditional parents at that time performed a dance called the *Pahere Jara* dance, in which they used horses as a tool to repel locust pests (Interview, 26 April 2024).

Pahere Jara dance repels locust pests and is also an entertainment event for the local community. It is held only on a horse-mounted platform with sleighs on the legs and headdresses, accompanied by *gong* and drum music.

The festival not only encourages people of different religions and local beliefs but also offers a venue for cultural exchange and respect for one another. People of different faiths can better understand each other's beliefs and practices by sharing traditional food, music, and customs. Ultimately, the festival reminds fellow community members to unite around a vision of humanity that is inseparable from religious and cultural differences.

Social Relations as a Space for Religious Moderation

Not far from the Seba-Sabu Raijua harbour are a market, a port, and the An-Nur Mosque. This mosque connects the Muslim community

with the Jingitui community of the Sabu tribe. When Islam met with the indigenous religion of the Sabu tribe, the process was very complex and diverse. According to Lapidus (1990), the history of Islamisation of the Sabu tribe began when traders and missionaries brought the religion to the island.

These teachings influence the tribe's beliefs and rituals. In addition, Islamic principles have impacted the social norms and community dynamics of the tribe. This has shaped the way people interact with each other and with their environment. Despite the influence, the Savunese combined Islamic beliefs with their indigenous beliefs, creating a rich cultural layer that is still in use today.

According to Amin (2022), the main principles of social relations found in the Qur'an include strengthening brotherhood (*ukhuwah basyariyah*) and connecting silaturahmi [QS. al-Hujurat (49): 11-12], helping each other (*ta'âwun*) [QS. Al-Madinah (5): 2], positive thinking, and understanding differences (*ta'âruf*) [QS. Al-Hujurat (49):13, as well as the practice of tolerance (*tasâmuh*) towards non-Muslims (Saihu & Cemal^aahin, 2020).

Human relations (*hablu min al-nâs*), or social relations, are an indicator of the Qur'anic teachings. Huong T. Bui (2020) says that the pattern of social relations is the pattern of relationships formed between individuals over a relatively long time, which forms a pattern called the pattern of social relations. There are two patterns of social relations, according to him. The first is associative, which is a process of cooperation, accommodation, assimilation and acculturation that tends to converge; the second is dissociative, which is a process of cooperation, accommodation and assimilation that tends not to converge.

The people of Savu have long followed the teachings mentioned in the Qur'an. For example, when the Muslims on the island started to build mosques, the Sabu people, who were mainly Christians, Jingitui and Catholics, helped a lot to transport sand from Seba-Sabu beach. Around 1888, H. Ahmad Al Boneh, a trader from Pontianak (West Kalimantan), brought Islam to the island. Prior to this, Ahmad Al Boneh traded

in Belu, Timor Island. He then sailed and settled down when he heard that there were many horses and cattle in Sabu. In addition, in that year, he established a small *surau*, which is now the forerunner of the Jamik An-Nur Mosque (Kori'un, 2019). H Yasin explains this as follows:

An-Nur Mosque was built and expanded around 1953, and it was not very big. They started making the foundation by taking stones and sand from the sea, involving the Sabu community as labourers... (interview, 24 April 2024).

In addition, the economic route builds social relations between the Jingitui community and the Muslim community of the Sabu tribe. The traditional market of Nagata Sabu Barat is a place where people gather and buy various basic needs (Dhema, 2024). Apart from the market, traders also sell daily necessities on the roadside. Sabu residents sell fish, vegetables, betel nuts, food, and other basic necessities.

The people of the Sabu tribe have formed mutually beneficial associative cooperation. Hermansyah (2020), stated that there has been a social dialectic process between local practices and Islamic elements. The behaviour shown by the Sabu tribe shows the relationship between individuals and the social community as a whole (Ahmadi, 2008; Hadibroto et al., 2023). In their daily lives, they work together to achieve mutually beneficial things.

This practice is commonly known before the Islamic holiday of Eid al-Qurban. Raising buffaloes, goats, cows, buffaloes, horses, sheep, and pigs is one of the ways of life for the islanders. Before the Islamic religious ceremonies on the island, local Muslims buy animals such as cows, goats, and buffaloes, and some are bought by people from outside the island. Muslims in Sabu slaughtered 23 cows and 1 goat around the An-Nur Seba-Sabu mosque, as in the Eid Qurban celebration in 2024. The sacrificial animals came from 1 cow donated by the local government of Sabu Raijua, 1 cow from the NTT Provincial Government, 1 cow from the Sabu Raijua Police, one cow from Dompot Du'afa, and the rest from the congregation of Annur Seba-Sabu Raijua Mosque.

The sacrificial animals are slaughtered by Islamic religious leaders in the area, while the skinning and slicing of the meat is largely assisted by the local community, most of whom are Jingitiu believers and Christians. This abundance of sacrificial animals is not only given to Muslims but also to non-Muslims, such as Jingitiu believers and non-Muslims. Even people who helped skin the sacrificial animals received the head and feet of the cow. H Yasin explains the following about the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslim communities:

For a long time, the Muslim community and the local community, especially the Sabu tribe, have established a good relationship. After that, they got married. H. Ahmad Al Bone is known to have children and a wife from the indigenous people of Sabu. This is seen when non-Muslim people from Sabu (both those who are still traditional and those who have converted to Christianity) skin sacrificial animals and enjoy the heads of cows while celebrating Eid al-Adha. Sacrificial animals like cows are also purchased from non-Muslims, especially from the Jingitiu people. The sacrificial committee of An-Nur Mosque usually sacrifices very good cows and goats donated by Muslim community members; however, there are also contributions from the local government of Sabu and the governor, who is not Muslim. Usually, around 20 to 30 cows are slaughtered during the Eid al-Adha celebration. If there is no assistance from non-Muslims, it will take a long time to peel it. With their help, the process from slaughtering to the distribution of sacrificial meat only takes one day. In addition to distributing the sacrificial meat, the committee also shared meat with people who are not Muslim (interview with H Yasin April 2024).

Social facts on Sabu Island indicate that the teachings of the Qur'an regarding social community are truly being implemented. In religious ceremonies, the community respects, appreciates, and collaborates with one another, just as they do during Eid al-Adha, a significant Islamic holiday. Although Muslims on Sabu Island are a minority, they are able to collaborate with others.

Hadibroto et al. (2023) concluded from the three concepts that there are three foundations of symbolic interaction: the meaning of human behaviour, the importance of self-concept, and the relationship between individuals and society. As stated by Husin (2021), the members of the Sabu tribe have shaped and transformed their "identity" within society through their thoughts and social actions while conducting religious ceremonies. Actually, an inclusive and grounded Islam is built upon local culture and the ancestral religion of Jingitiu (Shihab, 1993; Sila, 2023).

The relationship between Islam and the Jingitiu belief is depicted in the Qur'an Surah Al-Hujurat verse 13, which greatly respects the existence of humanity, consisting of various nations and tribes, so that they may get to know one another. This verse indicates the importance of mutual respect and honouring one another among humans, regardless of ethnicity and race.

Although the Sabu tribe has a strong sense of identity, it also cultivates a sense of unity and solidarity among its members. According to Amin (2013) the fusion of tradition and Islamic beliefs, this has created a distinct cultural layer that sets the Sabu tribe apart from other indigenous communities in the region. This combination allows them to pass on their beliefs and customs to the next generation, ensuring that their heritage remains intact in the face of the challenges of the times (Singh, 2020).

In addition, the Sabu tribe's ability to adapt and develop their religious practices demonstrates their commitment to remain relevant and connected to the world they experience. They are able to maintain their sense of identity while embracing new technologies and concepts, thanks to their flexibility. The Sabu Tribe's ability to balance tradition with innovation has garnered respect beyond their community and admiration within their own community. The Suku Sabu continues to grow and become a dynamic cultural force in the region as they uphold their principles and remain tolerant of change (Singh, 2020).

The cultural identity and religious harmony of the Sabu tribe are very important to its members. (Darajad, Syarifuddin & Wula, 2023).

By upholding their traditional practices and beliefs, they can maintain a sense of togetherness and a strong connection with their ancestors. (Timoa et al., 2022). If they have a strong connection to this cultural heritage, they will be better able to strengthen their sense of identity and gain the strength and resilience to face external pressures. By upholding their traditions and principles, the Sabu tribe can remain true to their roots while addressing the challenges that arise in contemporary society.

In addition, the Sabu tribe's commitment to religious harmony ensures that every member can practice their beliefs freely and without fear of discrimination. This inclusive spiritual approach helps the Sabu tribe unite and understand each other, resulting in a peaceful and harmonious community where everyone is respected and valued.

Another factor that strengthens the practice of religious moderation is the role of religious leaders and traditional chiefs. Religious and community leaders in the Sabu region can collaborate to build a more peaceful and inclusive society by addressing these challenges and opportunities (Ludji & Lauterboom, 2015). Religious figures and community members in the Sabu region can work together to foster a more peaceful and inclusive society by emphasising social integration, community service activities, and religious teachings that promote harmony and tolerance.

By actively addressing prejudice and discrimination, religious and community leaders in the Sabu region can help realise a more harmonious coexistence. A future where religious moderation is not only possible but also actively embraced by everyone can be hoped for in this region.

For example, the leaders of the Jingitui, Muslim, and Christian communities in Sabu could come together to discuss shared values and beliefs, fostering a greater sense of solidarity among those they lead. In addition, they can collaborate to solve social issues such as education and poverty, which demonstrates how interfaith cooperation benefits society as a whole.

Promotion of Religious Moderation Based on Local Traditions

One way to promote religious moderation and interfaith dialogue is by establishing interfaith councils or organisations. These groups allow leaders from various religions to come together to speak openly and respect one another. By enhancing understanding and mutual respect, these councils can help eliminate stereotypes and barriers that often lead to conflict and division. In addition, they have the power to act as a strong voice that supports peace and tolerance amid extremism and fanaticism. Religious leaders have the ability to build a more harmonious and connected society through cooperation and collaboration (Jamil & Abdullah, 2023).

These religious and customary councils can also play an important role in addressing social issues and supporting justice and equality by promoting unity and cooperation among various religious communities. The establishment of interfaith councils can also help build a more inclusive and harmonious world where people of all faiths can live peacefully, side by side, and respect one another. Religious leaders can also collaborate to reduce power struggles and divisions.

The formation of interfaith councils can also help different religious groups to communicate and understand each other, fostering unity and cooperation. These councils can address issues such as poverty, discrimination, and violence by working together and finding solutions that benefit everyone. By promoting moderation and religious tolerance, they can build a more peaceful and cohesive community where people from diverse backgrounds can live together and thrive (Mila & Kolambani, 2020).

In addition, interfaith councils can improve the well-being and stability of the region by supporting justice and equality (Adom, 2017). Interfaith councils can build unity and understanding among different religious groups by using an inclusive and diverse approach (Qomar, 2021; Sumbulah et al., 2022). This approach can also remove barriers and stereotypes that may exist. These councils can build a more just and inclusive society where everyone feels valued and respected by

encouraging discussion and cooperation (Supriyanto, 2020; Zahrah & Amaliyah, 2024). Ultimately, interfaith committees can result in a more connected and compassionate community that values diversity and honours the traditions and beliefs that exist within it (Adom, 2017).

Conclusion

The practice of religious moderation in the Sabu tribe in East Nusa Tenggara has been implemented for a very long time. The Sabu tribe's ancestors were originally followers of the ancestral religion (*Jingituu* belief). Then, after the arrival of the Dutch colonial, they gradually converted from the *Jingituu* belief to Christianity, Catholicism, and Islam.

Although the Sabu ethnic community has converted to the Abrahamic religion, their local wisdom values are strongly embedded in various religious ritual practices. The values of mutual cooperation, living in harmony, and tolerance have been practised in daily life. The *Jingituu* community who converted to Christianity and Catholicism, in the spiritual practice of religious art, administratively they have converted to Christianity and Catholicism. However, in the spiritual aspect, they still carry out local traditions. Similarly, in the dialectic with the Muslim community, the social relations between Christians, Catholics, and also adherents of the *Jingituu* Faith are seen in the celebration of Eid al-Adha. The non-Muslim community is involved in skinning and distributing the sacrificial meat to the community in the Sabu area. This phenomenon indicates that the Sabu tribe has practised living in harmony, helping, and respecting each other.

This study can help the development of religious moderation in the Sabu tribe in East Nusa Tenggara. In the future, the study of religious moderation can be carried out through batik artworks typical of Sabu with motifs of the diversity of the archipelago. In addition, research can also be conducted to explore their traditional medicine. It is also interesting to study religious moderation in terms of religious education and local beliefs in the Sabu tribe community.

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