

ARTICLE

Celebrating Difference: Eid al Fitr, Social Cohesion, and Religious Moderation in Magelang, Indonesia

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Abstract

In Indonesia, the celebration of Eid al Fitr in a plural and complex society is not only a religious ritual for Muslims, but can also serve as a social space that strengthens cohesion and tolerance across identities. This study aims to analyse how the celebration of Eid al Fitr in Magelang, Indonesia, fosters interreligious harmony while renewing social attachment across identities through perceptions, values, and religious practices in the midst of diversity. This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through observation of the sequence of Eid al Fitr celebrations, including *takbiran*, the Eid prayer, *halalbihalal*, and house to house visits, as well as in depth interviews with key informants who directly experienced the dynamics of *Lebaran* visits and interreligious relations. The data were analysed iteratively through repeated reading, thematic grouping, and interpretation using Émile Durkheim's framework of social solidarity, particularly mechanical solidarity, organic solidarity, and collective effervescence. The findings show that Eid al Fitr in Desa Pepe functions not only as a spiritual obligation, but also as a social mechanism that strengthens cohesion through shared emotions, norms of respect, and repeated social exchange. The findings also reveal that interreligious harmony is sustained through institutionalised coexistence and the negotiation of boundaries that preserve peaceful relations without blurring the distinct religious identities of each group. This study contributes to the strengthening of the sociology of religion, particularly in understanding religious ritual as a social practice that shapes interaction, identity, and shared life in a plural society.

Keywords: Religious Moderation; Social Cohesion; Social Solidarity; Plural Society

Di Indonesia, perayaan Idul Fitri di masyarakat yang majemuk dan kompleks tidak hanya menjadi ritus keagamaan umat Islam, tetapi juga dapat menjadi ruang sosial yang memperkuat kohesi dan toleransi lintas identitas. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis bagaimana perayaan Idul Fitri di Magelang, Indonesia, menumbuhkan harmoni antar umat beragama sekaligus memperbarui keterikatan sosial lintas identitas melalui persepsi, nilai, dan praktik keagamaan di tengah keberagaman. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi terhadap rangkaian perayaan Idul Fitri, meliputi takbiran, salat Id, halalbihalal, dan silaturahmi dari rumah ke rumah, serta wawancara mendalam dengan informan kunci yang mengalami langsung dinamika kunjungan Lebaran dan relasi lintas agama. Data dianalisis secara iteratif melalui pembacaan berulang, pengelompokan tema, dan interpretasi dengan kerangka solidaritas sosial Émile Durkheim, terutama solidaritas mekanik, solidaritas organik, dan collective effervescence. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Idul Fitri di Magelang tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai kewajiban spiritual, tetapi juga sebagai mekanisme sosial yang memperkuat kohesi melalui emosi bersama, norma penghormatan, dan pertukaran sosial yang berulang. Temuan ini juga memperlihatkan bahwa harmoni lintas agama dipelihara melalui koeksistensi yang terlembaga dan negosiasi batas yang menjaga hubungan tetap rukun tanpa mengaburkan identitas keagamaan masing-masing. Penelitian ini berimplikasi pada penguatan kajian sosiologi agama, khususnya dalam memahami ritual keagamaan sebagai praktik sosial yang membentuk interaksi, identitas, dan kehidupan bersama dalam masyarakat plural.

A. INTRODUCTION

Within Eid al-Fitr is commonly understood as a religious celebration among Muslims. In many contexts, non-Muslim residents also take part in the festive atmosphere through greetings, visits, or the sharing of food. Yet such involvement does not always develop into an institutionalised pattern of social relations. Desa Pepe in Muntilan, Magelang, Central Java, displays a more distinctive pattern because interfaith encounters during Eid al Fitr have become a recurring and collectively recognised social habit. Muslim religious rituals are not performed solely as spiritual obligations but also become moments of social encounter that bring people of different faiths together through visits, mutual forgiveness, and the sharing of food. These practices do not remain mere tradition but function as social rituals that mobilise collective emotions in communal gatherings. At the same time, these repeated interactions reinforce shared norms that are continually maintained in everyday life and help strengthen community cohesion (Power 2018; Hopkins et al. 2015; Włodarczyk et al. 2021). In plural societies, celebratory practices of this kind often become important means of sustaining cohesion and tolerance because social relations are shaped through repeated, and mutually recognised interactions (Sumarto and Harahap 2022; Anwar and Muhayati 2021). Within this process, intellectual humility, cognitive flexibility, and the control of aggression play an important role in fostering tolerance as a habit rather than a temporary attitude (Lubis and Sianipar 2022).

The uniqueness of Desa Pepe in Magelang, Indonesia, lies not only in interfaith participation during Eid celebrations, but also in how cohesion flows throughout a full cycle of celebration. At the stage of public ritual, the shared symbols, the rhythm of encounter, and collective emotions strengthen mechanical solidarity through a collective consciousness that affirms the sense of village togetherness. Afterwards, cohesion is sustained through house to house social activity that requires coordination of roles,

ranging from receiving guests, preparing food, accompanying children, to maintaining the ethics of visiting. This shift from shared values to coordinated roles shows how organic solidarity operates within the same communal space. This pattern of transition explains why Eid al Fitr in Pepe does not stop at the level of a ceremonial occasion, but becomes a social infrastructure that continually renews cross identity relations from year to year (Fathoni 2024; Sitorus 2022).

Studies on Eid al Fitr have developed along two major lines. First, some studies read Eid al Fitr as a discourse and practice within Muslim communities, for example in relation to public perceptions of the variability in determining the date of celebration, the role of digital media in social relations, the strengthening of self-reflection, and shifts in values within local traditions (Fikri and Indriana 2024; Datuk and Bengkalis 2025; Yusri 2020). Second, there are studies that position *Lebaran* visits as a mechanism of social reconciliation, although they generally still begin from the assumption of communities that are relatively homogeneous in religious terms (Oktavia 2025). These two lines of research suggest that Eid al Fitr is often understood from the internal horizon of a community. At the same time, the way the ritual builds social attachment across identities has not always been placed at the centre of analysis. Alongside this, educational studies and publication mapping indicate a growing concern with tolerance and religious moderation, particularly in education and public life in Indonesia (Supriyadi et al. 2024; Arifurrohman and Crismono 2025). At the practical level, discussions of moderation also often intersect with the dynamics of social media, which influence how discourses of harmony are constructed and disseminated (Pratiwi et al. 2021).

In Indonesia, several studies have begun to show that *halalbihalal* can cross identity boundaries and become a cross religious social consensus that strengthens communal identity (Rahmawati and Haryanto 2020), while the tradition of *halalbihalal* and shared celebration can function as a basis for

tolerance in multicultural urban spaces (Faidi 2021). Outside Indonesia, Eid al Fitr has also been reported to serve as a space for interfaith dialogue under certain conditions (Casavecchia et al. 2023). However, studies that explicitly formulate how Eid al Fitr rituals produce cohesion through the strengthening of collective emotions and social solidarity at the communal level remain relatively limited. This limitation directs attention to Desa Pepe, Muntilan, Magelang, Central Java, as a context that shows how ritual practices and cross identity interactions work as an infrastructure of social cohesion.

Against the background of this limitation, this study aims to analyse how the celebration of Eid al Fitr in Desa Pepe, Muntilan, fosters interreligious harmony while also renewing social attachment across identities through perceptions, values, and religious practices carried out in the midst of diversity. This study is important because it offers a more concrete understanding that religious rituals do not function only as spiritual obligations, but also operate as social mechanisms that shape cohesion, tolerance, and communal life at the community level. Therefore, this study contributes to strengthening of the sociology of religion, especially by explaining how religion operates as a social practice that shapes interaction, identity formation, and the negotiation of difference, while also providing a basis for strengthening religious moderation rooted in shared lived experience.

B. METHODOLOGY

A qualitative approach, using a case study design, was employed to examine in depth the practice of religious moderation during the celebration of Eid al Fitr in Desa Pepe, Muntilan, Magelang, Central Java. The study focused on the sequence of celebratory practices, patterns of encounters across identities, and the social rules mutually understood when residents visited one another and exchanged forgiveness. Data were

collected through observation of the series of Eid al Fitr celebrations and in-depth interviews with key informants who directly experienced the dynamics of *Lebaran* visits and interreligious relations. A case study design was chosen because it allows context, practice, and social meaning to be explored in an integrated manner within a single location with distinctive characteristics.

The research was conducted in Desa Pepe, Muntilan District, Magelang Regency, Central Java. The main data were obtained through observation of the sequence of Eid al Fitr celebrations, including the eve of *takbiran*, the Eid prayer, *halalbihalal*, and house to house visiting practices, as well as in depth interviews with residents involved in those practices. Key informants were selected purposively from residents who directly experienced the dynamics of *Lebaran* visits and interreligious relations, namely Ibu E, Ibu Y, and Bapak M. Supporting data were drawn from relevant literature to enrich the context and clarify the study's conceptual position.

To maintain the precision of the case study design, the case boundaries were defined around the practices of celebrating Eid al Fitr and the accompanying sequence of social interactions in Desa Pepe, particularly during the phases of *takbiran*, the Eid prayer, *halalbihalal*, and *Lebaran* visits. The unit of analysis was directed towards observable collective practices and recurring patterns of relations, including the division of roles in receiving guests, serving food, and arranging visiting routes that followed the local social hierarchy. The selection of key informants was positioned as a strategy to capture relevant variations in roles rather than to represent the entire village population. With these case boundaries, the thematic interpretation was intended to explain mechanisms of cohesion at the communal level rather than to produce statistical generalisation.

The analysis was conducted iteratively from the stage of data collection. Observation notes and interview transcripts were read

repeatedly to identify units of information, which were then grouped into themes representing the sequence of practices and patterns of social relations in the Eid al Fitr celebration. These themes were interpreted using Durkheim's framework of social solidarity, particularly mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity, in order to capture how social attachment was produced through recurring practices. At the interpretive stage, the concept of collective effervescence was used to examine the strengthening of shared emotions in public rituals and their impact on cohesion at the communal level, without shifting the case study focus away from the observed practices.

The validity of the findings was maintained through source triangulation across observation, interviews, and literature. The analytical process was documented through field notes and analytic memos, allowing the development of themes to be traced. Interpretive consistency was maintained by rereading the transcripts and matching the themes with relevant observed practices. The identities of informants were anonymised, and interview quotations were presented while preserving confidentiality and the context of speech.

Theoretical Framework

Émile Durkheim's theory of social solidarity is used to examine how community cohesion is formed and sustained through collective practices. Durkheim distinguishes between mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity as two ways in which society is bound together in shared life (Fathoni 2024; Sitorus 2022). Mechanical solidarity rests on shared values and a collective consciousness that makes people feel they belong to the same moral community. Organic solidarity is based on the differentiation of roles and mutual dependence, so social attachment emerges through the coordination of complementary social functions.

In the context of Eid al Fitr, mechanical solidarity can be seen when residents participate in the same communal rhythm and share the symbols of celebration, thereby strengthening the experience of togetherness in public space. At the same time, organic solidarity emerges through the social work that accompanies the celebration, such as arranging visits, receiving guests, preparing food, and carrying out family roles that support one another so that social encounters proceed in an orderly way. The strengthening of shared emotions in collective rituals is also read through the concept of collective effervescence as an emotional energy that deepens people's sense of attachment to the community (Supriadin and Pababari 2024; Noh, Djana, and Abd Fatah 2025). This framework helps connect the celebration of Eid al Fitr with mechanisms of communal cohesion without diminishing the diversity of residents' experiences.

In this case study, Durkheim's theory is positioned as an interpretive lens at the communal level to connect celebratory practices with broader patterns of social integration. This framework is used to examine how public rituals and social exchanges during *Lebaran* function as a recurrent infrastructure of cohesion from year to year. Its use is not intended to replace a reading that emerges from everyday interaction, but rather to clarify how the meanings and actions of residents resonate into collective attachment. In this way, solidarity is understood as the outcome of orderly and observable social practices, rather than merely as a normative conception.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section discusses how the celebration of Eid al Fitr in Desa Pepe, Muntilan, takes place not only as a religious ritual, but also as a social space that brings together residents across identities. The findings show that the sequence of celebrations, *halalbihalal* practices, and *Lebaran* visits create patterns of interaction that strengthen social cohesion, solidarity, and

interreligious harmony. To interpret these findings, this discussion employs Émile Durkheim's framework of social solidarity to explain how shared emotions, collective norms, and recurring social relations operate within a plural society.

1. Sequence of Rituals and Spaces of Encounter

The celebration of Eid al Fitr in Pepe, Magelang, Indonesia, is an important occasion that is not only religious in nature, but also rich in social and cultural values. Every year, the people of Desa Pepe welcome Eid al Fitr with great enthusiasm. The eve of *takbiran* is marked by the sound of takbir from the mosque, while children take part in a torch parade. The communal experience created through the torch parade and *takbiran* strengthens a sense of togetherness because residents move together under the same symbols. The following day, the Eid prayer held in the local government field and at the village mosque becomes a space that brings together all residents, both those who live in the village and migrants who have returned home.

This sequence forms a communal rhythm that shapes how residents gather in the same space, experience the same atmosphere, and move within the same symbols. At moments like these, collective emotions tend to grow stronger because the experience of togetherness is felt simultaneously and repeatedly, so social bonds are not only thought about, but also deeply experienced (Hopkins et al. 2015; Włodarczyk et al. 2021). The presence of returning migrants widens the circle of encounter, intensifies relational networks, and renews the commitment to togetherness that has been passed down over time. This pattern is consistent with findings that collective rituals can strengthen networks of social support and reinforce community ties through repeated encounters (Power 2018). From this point, Eid al Fitr appears as an initial social infrastructure that prepares cross identity cohesion before visits and social exchanges take

place within the family sphere. This ritual rhythm shows that interfaith cohesion begins to be built from the moment residents experience simultaneity and togetherness in public space.

Within Durkheim's framework, the sequence of Eid al Fitr rituals can also be understood as a way for the community to renew its collective consciousness through symbols that are experienced together. Takbir, the torch parade, and the Eid prayer are not merely a sequence of events, but a moral expression of the togetherness of residents as one village community. The intensity of encounter at these moments reinforces the sense of "we" that forms the basis of mechanical solidarity, while also preparing the ground for the social work that follows. This shows that cohesion does not suddenly emerge during house-to-house visits, but is prepared through the renewal of shared symbols and emotions in public space.

After the Eid prayer, the public space does not stop functioning as a ritual stage, but becomes the starting point of residents' social movement. Greetings, handshakes, and repeated exchanges turn a mass encounter into a closer form of relationship, which is then continued through visits from house to house. The shift from the field and the mosque to the family sphere marks the movement of cohesion from a simultaneous shared experience towards more intimate relational work. In this way, the sequence of rituals not only creates a communal atmosphere, but also prepares the social infrastructure for *halalbihalal* and cross-identity social visits

2. Halalbihalal and the Practice of Moderation as Social Relations

After the Eid prayer, *halalbihalal* becomes the main way residents meet one another from house to house. In these visits, greetings, handshakes, and requests for forgiveness are regarded as natural actions, and are then followed by simple hospitality and the exchange of food. These practices organise neighbourly relations within an atmosphere of familiarity, so that respect does not stop at words but is visible in how

guests are received, food is served, and time is given. Within the framework of solidarity, such repeated actions deepen collective consciousness and reinforce shared norms of togetherness.

This phenomenon can be analysed through the framework of religious moderation. Religious moderation emphasises balance in religious life, namely an attitude that avoids excess, upholds tolerance, and respects difference (Nisa et al. 2021). The *halalbihalal* practice carried out by the people of Desa Pepe after the Eid prayer reflects the implementation of these values. In this tradition, residents visit one another, exchange forgiveness, and share special Eid dishes without distinguishing social status. This confirms that religiosity does not stop at the ritual dimension, but also contributes to strengthening of social solidarity. This finding aligns with studies of interreligious *halalbihalal* in Yogyakarta, which show that *Lebaran* encounters can function as a social consensus that strengthens tolerance and communal identity (Rahmawati and Haryanto 2020). The dimension of mutual forgiveness is also related to the repeated work of interpersonal reconciliation during Eid al Fitr (Gunawan 2020). At the level of lived experience, spoken forgiveness becomes a sign of restored relations and the reaffirmation of communal norms of togetherness. The yearly repetition of forgiveness and visits renews the moral commitment of residents to preserve harmony after the holiday.

In this context, *halalbihalal* serve as a social mechanism that transposes the sacred atmosphere into neighbourly relations, thereby building social connectedness is built through concrete actions. House-to-house encounters transform tolerance from a passive attitude into relational work that is practised, negotiated, and maintained. These practices also give residents room to renew their social position without altering their respective religious identities. In this way, religious moderation appears as a discipline of social interaction that links ritual and cohesion, rather than as a definition that stands alone.

What is particularly interesting about Pepe is its diverse population, as many residents of Pepe are Christians. There is also a church and a Christian school in the village, namely Van Lith School. Even so, the Muslim community's celebration of Eid al Fitr is not disturbed in any way. Residents even walk around the village to visit one another, including non-Muslim residents who are regarded as village elders. This phenomenon has become an ordinary part of life in Desa Pepe as a form of practising religious moderation.

Visits to non-Muslim elders suggest that social relations are not determined solely by shared faith, but also by recognition of the moral authority within the community. The figure of the elder is understood as a point of respect that transcends identity boundaries, so the route of *Lebaran* visits follows a social hierarchy regarded as natural. This form of recognition stabilises interreligious interaction by providing a shared reference for the ethics of visiting and for maintaining a peaceful atmosphere. At the same time, this practice broadens the horizon of togetherness: Eid al Fitr is understood as a communal moment that other residents may touch without requiring them to alter the boundaries of their own beliefs. At this point, the practices of visiting and showing respect function as part of the social work that strengthens cohesion across identities.

Religious moderation began to stand out as a policy term in 2019 but in social practice, it appears as the way residents balance religious commitment with respect for those who are different. This balance is underpinned by an attitude that avoids excess, recognises the rights of others, and rejects violence and discrimination in the name of religion (Nisa et al. 2021; Pajarianto, Pribadi, and Sari 2022). Within this framework, tolerance does not mean blurring religious teachings, but arranging ways of relating so that they remain fair, peaceful, and mutually respectful (Mubarok and Sunarto 2024). In Desa Pepe, this logic appears as a form of

neighbourly ethics that preserves each group's beliefs while maintaining a safe space of encounter (Matasak et al. 2024). Thus, religious moderation is better understood as a relational practice that is continuously tested in everyday life, rather than merely as a normative definition that stands on its own (Prakosa 2022). It is precisely through the pattern of *Lebaran* visits and *halalbihalal* that interfaith connectedness is maintained as a concrete ethic of neighbourly life.

3. Collective Rituals, Solidarity, and Shared Emotions

For the people of Pepe, who come from different religious backgrounds, the celebration of Eid al Fitr is always an important moment that shows how social cohesion is produced and maintained. In Émile Durkheim's perspective on social solidarity, society is held together through mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity (Fathoni 2024). During Eid al Fitr, mechanical solidarity can be seen in shared human values such as mutual respect and respect for difference, even among people from different religious backgrounds (Gunawan 2024). These shared values nurture a sense of togetherness that serves as the basis for social cohesion at the village level.

Organic solidarity can be seen when residents with different roles and backgrounds complement one another throughout the rhythm of the celebration, from receiving guests and preparing food to accompanying children as they go around the village. This interaction does not erase differences, but organises social interdependence so that encounters can proceed in an orderly and safe way. This experience is reflected in residents' word , who view *Lebaran* visits as a continuation of everyday neighbourly life. This account shows that the social roles of residents are closely connected during the festive moment.

It is *Lebaran* after all, we have lived as neighbours for a long time, we do not disturb each other, so during *Lebaran* like this we still visit one another. There are even families in which some members are Muslim and some are not. (Personal Interview with E, 17 June 2025).

This quotation shows how solidarity is understood as the normal condition of living together and is expressed through repeated visits. These visits form a strong social network, so religious difference does not become a barrier, but rather a source of social richness that strengthens community integration (Latif and Ahmad Ar. 2021). Within such a network, social cohesion does not emerge as a slogan, but as the result of actions that are continuously repeated during the celebration. The relationships that form grow stronger because they are lived collectively, not regulated from the outside.

From the perspective of classical sociology, Durkheim also viewed religion as a social bond that generates collective solidarity (Sitorus 2022). The Eid prayer and *halalbihalal* during *Lebaran* create collective effervescence, namely a shared emotional atmosphere that gives rise to collective consciousness (Supriadin and Pababari 2024). These shared emotions deepen people's sense of attachment to the same community, making identity boundaries more fluid during communal moments. At this point, Eid al Fitr can be read as a social ritual that produces solidarity through shared emotional experience.

The social traditions that accompany Eid al Fitr also convey a message of inclusiveness, as relationships are renewed through *halalbihalal*, mutual forgiveness, and the sharing of food. These practices reduce social distance between groups without requiring any blending of religious rituals. The simultaneity of ritual, repeated encounters, and intense social exchange makes solidarity appear as a binding experience rather than a mere idea. Thus, this subsection confirms that interfaith cohesion in Pepe is produced through a combination of collective rituals and social exchanges that are continually renewed.

4. Shared Norms and Collective Consciousness

Lebaran visits and *halalbihalal* in Pepe show how social norms support cohesion. Residents follow proper practices, such as visiting older people first, bringing food, and accepting hospitality as a form of respect. Practices of this kind reveal a collective consciousness that shapes how residents appear, greet one another, and maintain relationships during moments of intense social interaction. Within the framework of mechanical solidarity, shared values of respect, kinship, and togetherness form the basis for actions repeated year to after year.

Every *Lebaran* it is like that, we visit those who are older, bring food, and when we get there we eat as well, sometimes until we are completely full, because every house tells us to eat, he he he. (Personal Interview with Y, 17 June 2025).

This quotation shows that visits are bound by a norm of respect for elders, while also shaped by the obligation of hospitality, understood as part of social propriety. The phrase “told to eat” indicates that hospitality is not an extra gesture, but part of the social rules that maintain familiarity and reduce social distance. In this kind of atmosphere, solidarity is built through concrete, repeated, and easily recognisable actions. Thus, cohesion is sustained through habits that organise relationships, not only through statements of value.

During *Lebaran* it is indeed like that, there are also non-Muslims who prepare cakes at home, or at least snacks for children, because people will definitely come, especially the children. (Personal Interview with M, 17 June 2025).

This account shows that interreligious involvement operates through institutionalised norms of hospitality, such as preparing snacks, because visits are assumed to happen. When residents prepare to receive guests, they also reaffirm the structure of village relations so that social encounters can take place in an orderly and safe way. At the level of organic solidarity, different social roles complement one another in the work of

celebration, so cohesion does not rest only on shared values, but also on the coordination of action. In this way, this subsection confirms that shared norms and social work during *Lebaran* function as an infrastructure of cohesion across identities.

At this point, shared norms function as unwritten rules that reduce the risk of misunderstanding as visit intensity of visits increases. Norms regarding the order of visits, forms of greeting, the ways food is offered and accepted, and respect for elders make social encounters predictable and secure. In Durkheimian terms, this kind of order strengthens collective consciousness because residents feel that they share the same moral standards concerning what is proper. When these standards are observed across identities, mechanical solidarity gains a more stable foundation, while organic solidarity is formed through the coordination of roles that ensures the celebration proceeds in an orderly manner.

The celebration of Eid al Fitr in Pepe, demonstrates a tangible form of social harmony through the practices of visiting one another, sharing food, and exchanging greetings. This harmony does not arise by chance, but is the result of social habits that are continuously maintained within neighbourly relations. Beneath this warm atmosphere, there is social work that ensures encounters remain safe and appropriate for all parties. For this reason, the social cohesion visible during Eid al Fitr can be understood as the product of institutionalised interaction. This pattern recalls findings from multicultural urban settings, where *halalbihalal* traditions and shared celebrations can become a cultural basis for tolerance sustained through social habits (Faidi 2021).

The negotiation of boundaries is an important part of this cohesion. Although residents of different faiths visit one another and respect the celebration of Eid al Fitr, there are still agreed boundaries, such as not holding interfaith prayers during visits. This agreement shows that respect does not have to lead to the mixing of rituals, but rather to the regulation of

relations in ways considered proper. These boundaries function as mutually recognised social rules, so residents know how they are expected to behave when visiting others. This certainty of meaning reduces awkwardness, because each party understands which actions are appropriate and which are not. In this way, the negotiation of boundaries is not a sign of fragile tolerance, but a means through which the community maintains order in relations across identities. Such boundaries also provide social certainty, allowing residents to participate without feeling that their beliefs are being disturbed. In this way, cohesion remains strong because residents understand what may and may not be done in encounters across identities.

Institutionalised coexistence in Pepe, therefore, is not an ideal condition free from tension, but a dynamic space that is continuously negotiated. Social agreements are built flexibly and contextually, grounded in repeated experience and practical knowledge of neighbourly ethics. At this point, religious moderation appears as a relational practice that operates through both acceptance and limitation. This negotiation of boundaries keeps cohesion strong without erasing the distinct religious identities of each group. In other contexts, Eid al Fitr has also been reported to open up space for interfaith dialogue when the ethics of encounter are maintained, even within different social configurations (Casavecchia et al. 2023).

D. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study show that the celebration of Eid al Fitr in Pepe, Magelang, Indonesia, functions not only as a religious ritual for Muslims, but also as a social mechanism that strengthens interreligious harmony and renews social attachment across identities. Through the sequence of public rituals, *halalbihalal*, house to house visits, and the exchange of hospitality, residents reproduce cohesion through shared

emotions, repeated encounters, and commonly recognised norms of respect. In this sense, perceptions, values, and religious practices are not confined to the spiritual domain, but operate within everyday social relations in ways that allow religious difference to coexist with a strong sense of communal belonging.

These findings reflect that social harmony in a plural community is not simply the result of abstract tolerance, but is produced through concrete and repeated practices that make coexistence meaningful, predictable, and emotionally convincing. Eid al Fitr in Desa Pepe shows that religion can work as a source of solidarity when it is lived through neighbourly ethics, mutual recognition, and socially negotiated boundaries rather than through symbolic uniformity. The study therefore suggests that religious moderation is most visible not at the level of policy discourse alone, but in the everyday relational work through which people maintain both difference and togetherness.

The implication of this research is that the sociology of religion can better understand religious moderation by examining how ritual practices generate cohesion, regulate intergroup relations, and sustain communal life in plural settings. The limitation of this study lies in its focus on a single village case and a limited number of key informants, which means that its findings should be read as context specific rather than statistically generalisable. Further research could compare similar Eid al Fitr practices in other plural communities to explore how different local settings shape the relationship between ritual, social cohesion, and interreligious coexistence.

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