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Educational perspective on interreligious relations among Muslims, Christians and Kaharingan adherents in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia

Educational
perspective

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Abstract

Purpose – This paper aims to investigate how do Muslims, Christians and Kaharingan adherents conduct interreligious relations among them in their everyday lives in Central Kalimantan; why do these religious communities observe interreligious relations as such; and what makes this model of interreligious relations.

Design/methodology/approach – The corpus for analysis comes from in-depth interviews with 20 persons, which took place between August and October in 2016 in Palangka Raya city and Kotawaringin Timur Regency in Central Kalimantan Province, Indonesia. The informants were selected from groups believed to be lay members and elites of Muslim, Christian and Kaharingan communities using snowball sampling technique facilitated by local research assistants. These informants are mainly mainstream Muslims, Christians and Kaharingan adherents.

Findings – The way to peaceful and co-existence life lived by religious communities in Indonesia is closely related to its rich treasures and precious tradition of cultural heritage: Indonesian communalism, Indonesian community spirit as seen in terms such as "tradisi hidup bersama," "semangat kebersamaan" and "satu keluarga." Instead of emphasizing the divisive differences among communities with various religious backgrounds, Muslims, Christians and Kaharingan adherents in Central Kalimantan create "third spaces," common grounds shared by these religious communities at individual, institutional and societal levels.

Originality/value – Based on empirical findings, this research argues that the practices of peaceful and co-existence life lived by diverse religious communities in Indonesia relate to their particular social-cultural contexts of rich treasures and precious tradition of cultural heritage in the forms of Indonesian communalism and community spirit. Instead of emphasizing the divisive differences among themselves, various religious communities in Central Kalimantan create third spaces, common grounds between them and are shared by them at individual, institutional and societal levels.

Keywords Central Kalimantan, Educational perspective, Interreligious relations

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

As well exemplified by different religious communities in Central Kalimantan, the peaceful life and co-existence lived by religious communities in Indonesia is closely related to rich treasures and precious cultural tradition, namely, the spirit of communalism as seen in terms such as "tradisi hidup bersama," "semangat kebersamaan" and "satu keluarga." Instead of emphasizing the divisive differences among communities with various religious backgrounds, Muslims, Christians and *Kaharingan* adherents in Central Kalimantan create "third spaces," "the realm of between" and common grounds shared by these religious communities at individual, institutional and societal levels.

The practice of Third Space among religious communities in Central Kalimantan can be seen, for example, in a long-held tradition of *Huma Betang* (great house). This is particularly pertinent among *Dayak* people, the native of Kalimantan. It refers to a large-long communal house with many rooms that are inhabited by several extended families with different faiths from the same clan. Symbolically, it represents togetherness and unbroken family bound and unites all family members regardless of their faith and beliefs.

From an educational perspective, the interreligious relation lived by different religious communities in Central Kalimantan is following the educational views of Ki Hadjar Dewantara, a prominent figure of education in Indonesia and a national hero. In particular, the Dayak community has applied his ideas of *asih* (love), *asah* (nurturing) and asuh (caring) through their tradition of *Huma Betang*.

A growing number of books and articles have been written to contribute to interreligious studies, an emerging field in academia within the past few years. Some Western universities also offer courses and have chairs in the field (Leirvik 2014a cited in Hedges 2014b). Perhaps, Wijsen (2007) is one of the first works that initiate interreligious studies as an academic endeavor, which "marked by relational perspectives both on dialogue and other forms of religious activism" (p. 5). Other prevailing studies include introductory works on the subject by Hedges (2012; 2014a, 2014b), Patel (2013), Leirvik (2014a, 2014b) and Stanton (2014). The recent important contribution to interreligious studies is a volume edited by Cheetham *et al.* (2013).

Undoubtedly, the above-mentioned studies have given shape and voice to the emerging field of interreligious studies. However, most of these studies have focused on the relations between religious communities in Western countries, except for the work by Wijsen (2007) that attempts to develop a theory of interreligious relations from an African perspective. In fact, Asia – with Indonesia as the largest Muslim country in the world – significantly represents a region where diverse and multireligious societies live a peaceful co-existence. Unfortunately, the prevailing literature has not incorporated studies on relations between diverse religious communities in this region into the growing field of interreligious studies. It has not adequately addressed the richness and complexity of the relations between Muslim societies and other religious communities in this region and possible theoretical and practical contributions to interreligious relations.

So, there is a need to develop studies on the growing field of interreligious studies from an Asian perspective. These studies should examine questions about the richness, complexity and uniqueness of religious communities in Asia. Such studies on Southeast Asia, for example, will bring the way of Muslims in this so-called "periphery of the Muslim world" live a peaceful life and co-existence with other religious communities the global audience to understand better Islam and Muslims within various Muslim societies.

In this regard, this research offers to contribute to the field of interreligious studies from the Asian perspective. To this end, it analyzes interreligious relations among different religious communities in Indonesia based on data generated through interviews with Muslim, Christian and Kaharingan communities in Indonesia.

1.1 Focus of the study

In doing so, this research focuses its analysis on the performance of interreligious relations between Muslims and other religious communities (Christians, and the adherents of local religion of Kaharingan) in two cities of Palangka Raya and Kotawaringin Timur, Central Kalimantan province, Indonesia. This is not only because Indonesia is the country that we live in but also it is highly pertinent to our topic. Indonesia, the largest Muslim country in the world, has a long tradition of peaceful co-existence of religions. It is a country with multi-

ethnic and multi-religious societies, containing hundreds of ethnic groups and vernacular languages. Its centuries-old association and encounter between ethnic groups and beliefs have created a nation that is united in diversity.

Central Kalimantan province was chosen as the *locus* of the study because it constitutes distinctive characteristics of Indonesia's diverse religious communities that live a peaceful life and coexistence. This is seen, among other aspects, in the fact that these different religious communities observe relations that promote peace, tolerance, non-violence, inclusiveness, acceptance of local culture and blending with local tradition and wisdom without losing fundamental beliefs of their faiths. In the city of Palangka Raya and Kotawaringin Timur Regency, mosques are built exactly next to churches and Kaharingan temples, Muslim cemeteries are located exactly next to those of Christians, households are inhabited by family members with different religious backgrounds (Islam, Christianity and the local religion of Kaharingan), and community members of diverse religious backgrounds are actively and peacefully engaged in shared social, cultural and religious activities.

1.2 Research questions
This research attempts to develop the Indonesian perspective on interreligious relations by asking questions: What are the Indonesian perspective and model of interreligious relations? Does it have anything to contribute to the current state of interreligious studies and, more importantly, to the solving of the problems facing contemporary global society? To answer these questions, this research asks the following specific questions. How do Muslims, Christians and Kaharingan adherents conduct interreligious relations among them in their everyday lives in Central Kalimantan? Why do these religious communities observe interreligious relations as such? What makes this model of interreligious relations?

1.3 Argument
Based on empirical findings, this research argues that the practices of peaceful and co-existence life lived by diverse religious communities in Indonesia relate to their particular social-cultural contexts of rich treasures and precious tradition of cultural heritage in the forms of Indonesian communalism and community spirit. Instead of emphasizing the divisive differences among themselves, various religious communities in Central Kalimantan create Third Spaces, common grounds between them and are shared by them at individual, institutional and societal levels.

Several previous studies were used as references in this research separately, such as interreligious relations by O'Sullivan (2017); Cranenburgh *et al.* (2014), Clark and Button (2011); Ahamer *et al.* (2011), Naja and Baytiyeh (2016); Ljujic *et al.* (2017), Miller (2017). Educational perspective by Lehner and Wurzenberger (2013), McKenna *et al.* (2017); Tyurina and Troyanskaya (2017); Curşeu *et al.* (2012); Beck (2017), Patnaik *et al.* (2013); Husain and Nazim (2015), Aharony (2014). The originality for this paper shows the comprehensively interreligious relations among Muslims, Christians and Kaharingan Adherents in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia: an educational perspective.

2. Theoretical framework
This research requires a theoretical framework suited to the task above. Hence, a relevant theory developed by some scholars to understand interreligious relations is taken up here. In this research, we apply the Third Space concept to the analysis of interreligious relations among religious communities in Indonesia.

The concept of "Third Space" is developed from the perception of interpersonal relations which is initiated by Martin Buber with his notion of "the realm of between" (Buber, 1987, 2002)

and challenged by Levinas (1998) (Leirvik, 2014b, p. 17). Their understanding of human relations is further elucidated by Edward Soja and Homi Bhabha by developing their notion of "Third Space." It refers to a form of liminal or in-between space where the "cutting edge of translation and negotiation" occurs (Bhabha, 1994; Rutherford, 1990 in Meredith, 1998). According to Bhabha (2004 in Leirvik, 2014b, p. 17), Third Space defines human relations as the production of cultural meaning which goes beyond the issues of the I and the You. He writes: "The meaning of the utterance is quite literally neither the one nor the other"[. . .]:

> is the 'inter' –the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the in-between space- that carries the burden of the meaning of culture [. . .] [. . .] by exploring this Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of our selves.

The Third Space offers the development of openness and hybridity, namely, "a kind of superior cultural intelligence owing to the advantage of in-betweenness, the straddling of two cultures and the consequent ability to negotiate the difference" (Hoogvelt, 1997, p. 158 in Meredith, 1998: 2). It is a movement from "either/or" polarity ("Either I or You," "Either Us or Them") to "both/also" common platform ("Both I and You"; "I and also You").

In other words, Third Space creates hybridity of we/us while maintaining a difference of each to achieve shared common platforms. It is a new form, not simply an amalgamation, of separate cultures, that transcends, but contains, various identities creating "Third Space" (Bhabha, 1994; Mandaville, 1990). For example, hybridity is a new form of separate entities within a society: religion, local wisdom, globality (Bakhtin, 1981; Bhabha, 1994).

The Third Space is an antidote to essentialism – "a belief in invariable and fixed properties which define the 'whatness' of a given entity" (Fuss, 1991, p. 11 in Meredith, 1998). From this perspective, identity or culture is not pure and essential, rather fluid and society or community, not state, plays as an agent in building and maintaining social identity. It is "a space intrinsically critical of essentialist positions of identity and a conceptualization of "original or originary culture":

> [. . .] the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity to me is the "Third Space", which enables other positions to emerge (Rutherford, 1990, p. 21 in Meredith, 1998, p. 3).

The Third Space is a space of new forms of cultural meaning and production which creates a blurring of "the limitations of existing boundaries and calling into a questioning of established categorization of culture and identity" (Meredith, 1998, p. 3). It is "an ambivalent site where cultural meaning and representation have no primordial unity or fixity." It is "a transculturation, the ability to transverse cultures, translate, negotiate and mediate affinity and difference within a dynamic of exchange and inclusion." It involves on-going revision, negotiation, adaptation and transformation of norms, identities and culture to reconcile and overcome antagonistic binarism, and develop inclusive and multifaceted society.

There is criticism of Third Space that this concept is problematic as it neglects "to adequately conceptualize the historical and material conditions that would emerge within a colonial discourse analysis framework" (Parry, 1996; Mitchell et al., 1997 in Meredith, 1998, p. 3). Despite this criticism, we believe that Third Space is a relevant and useful theory to understand human relations, which do not merely contain the polarity of two opposing sides which lead to tensions and conflicts, but rather transcend this binarism which creates cooperation and coexistence for public interests. Applying this theory to this study on interreligious relations in Indonesia, we formulate that different religious communities in Indonesia develop relations that transcend the binary of I and You and Us and Them

Questions	Muslim	Christians	Kaharingan	Indicator
How do Muslims, Christian and Kaharingan adherents conduct interreligious relations among them in their everyday lives in Central Kalimantan?(Narratives)	• "Personally, for us (Muslims) here, all residents here are relatives, either they are Christians or Kaharingan adherents, either they are native or immigrants"We normally visit each other, especially on great religious days like Ied al-Fitr and Christmas or weekly religious services though we have different faiths. It is common here families have members with different religious beliefs. We are brothers and sistersIn our neighborhood, there are some religious communities. There are Muslims; there are Christians; there are Kaharingan adherents. However, we regard them as neighbors and relatives who should help and respect each other"I have known him since my childhood and I get along with his family. He and I have different religions, but for me he is a friend. No problems""We all seek	• "Here we (Christians) live side by side with other religious adherents, namely, Muslims, the adherents of native Dayak beliefs and other religious communities. We consider them relatives who live as family members" • The residents in this neighborhood are varied in terms of religion and ethnicity. There are Christians; there are Muslims; there are Kaharingan followers. There are Javanese, Banjarese, Dayaks and Bataks. All are my good neighbors. Surely, we as neighbors help each other and keep this neighborhood safeI have many Muslim friends. Though I and they have different religions, they are my friends. I have a Muslim friend whom I have be friended for a long time as we were at college. We get along at work and in everyday life	• "Indeed, we are native people here. However, we regard other religious adherents such as Muslims and Christians as our relatives. They are also our neighbors" • Indeed, people here have different religions. We have Muslims and Christians here. It is normal. We do not have any problems with different faiths. For me, they are relatives, brothers and sisters	The statements argues the way to peaceful and co existence life lived by religious communities in Indonesia related to its rich treasures and precious tradition of cultural heritage; if the statements corresponding to the good statements based on their meanings

Table 1.
Questions posed and
indicator

Table 1.

Questions	Muslim	Christians	Kaharingan	Indicator
	for Paradise, but we are not certain whether enter the Paradise or not. Instead, we may enter the Hell and other religious adherents enter the Paradise. So, we do not need to attack and fight each other, do we? Religion is about faith in everyone's heart. What is obvious is blood ties, brotherhood and family bound among different religious adherents. This is what we have to take care of""Yes, we (people) here adhere to some faiths. However, all religions in principle teach virtue, no religions command wrong. So, there is no use if we fight each other because of different faiths, let alone we are brothers and sisters"			
How do Muslims, Christian and Kaharingan adherents conduct interreligious relations among them in their everyday lives in Central Kalimantan?(Practices)	• "On Sundays, the parents of my wife visit us on their way to their church. They are Christians. I also visit them. We maintain a good relationship. My wife is a *muallaf* (a convert to Islam)"	• "It is common among us to visit each other. My uncle is a Muslim and my sister is married to a Muslim. How cannot I visit them?" • "When we have a wedding party, we invite all residents, including our	• "I come from a family whose members have different religions. Some are Christians, others are Muslims. My brother is a Muslim. I often visit them. We help each other. No problem"	

Questions	Muslim	Christians	Kaharingan	Indicator
	• "I am often invited to the wedding party of Christians and Kaharingan people. I come [to the party] as a neighbor. Yes, normally, the meat was cooked by a Muslim and put in a separate place. When I have come to the wedding place, I know where to sit" • "Normally, the invitation time is from 9 AM to 2 PM. All guests, especially Muslims, can eat food and drinks served during this allocated time. After that, the inviting family has a special party, which is attended only by its relatives according to their own culture" • "We are often invited by our *Kaharingan* or Christian neighbors to their wedding party. We come. We give them an envelope (of money). We also eat food, which is provided in a separate room and is cooked by a Muslim"	Muslim relatives and neighbors. We understand that Muslims do not eat pork and drink alcohol. Therefore, we only provide cows and chicken. We ask a Muslim to slaughter them. These are cooked by Muslims and sometimes put in a certain room, next to the house of the inviting family so that our Muslim invitees feel comfortable" • "On Christmas and Ied al-Fitr (*lebaran*), we normally visit each other and help each other by providing what is needed. On *lebaran*, we visit our Muslim brothers and sisters saying 'Selamat lebaran, mohon maaf lahir dan batin' (Happy lebaran, wish you forgive us). Our Muslim brothers and sisters also do the same at Christmas" • "Those places of worship started to be built in the same year. The money comes from the Government of	• "The establishment of different houses of worship at one location was meant to show harmony among us. Those houses of worship at the location look good. There are no problems with this. There are no problems with relations among religions here. This is only found in Antang Kalang. It is rare. It looks peaceful. [People with different religious backgrounds] respect each other. No problems"	

(continued)

Table 1.

Table 1.

Questions	Muslim	Christians	Kaharingan	Indicator
	• "When there is a party, like a wedding party, our Christian and Kaharingan neighbors are also invited to the party [in addition to Muslim neighbors]. They come and give hand [to the inviting family]. However, the food is served in a normal way [according to Islamic law]; it is not prepared uniquely because they have no problems with our food" • "We visit the Kaharingan or Christian family that has lost its family member [and say condolences] though we do not enter their house and do not get involved in the funeral procession. We donate food or money to help to ease the burden of the family of the dead" • "Yes, we visit our Christian brothers and neighbors in their houses at Christmas. I have Christian relatives. Yes, I say 'Merry Christmas' to them. It is normal"	Kotawaringin Timur. However, the mosque was the first one to be used though it was initially a small one. After all parties agreed, other places of worship were used, too. The establishment of various houses of worship at one location was conducted due to unity among religious communities here. There are Muslims, Christians and Kaharingan adherents. At least, we (Christians) participated in digging ground [for the establishment of the mosque] or we did this or that, we helped by providing the water pump machine, etc. In short, we help others. So, all people of different religious backgrounds came. A strong unity and harmony were seen among them" • "At the event of MTQ, Muslims managed technical jobs. We helped them arrange chairs, tables, security, etc. Everyone is involved"		

creating the Third Space based on common grounds of communalism and shared cultural identities where all religious groups coexist and cooperate in fruitful and peaceful ways.

3. Method

In this research, the corpus for analysis comes from in-depth interviews with 20 persons, which took place between August and October in 2016 in Palangka Raya city and Kotawaringin Timur Regency in Central Kalimantan Province, Indonesia. The informants were selected from groups that believed to be lay members and elites of Muslim, Christian and Kaharingan communities using a snowball sampling technique facilitated by local research assistants. These informants are mainly mainstream Muslims, Christians and Kaharingan adherents. In this research, the sample are qualify data saturated. Data saturation is a condition where the data obtained no longer gets information added even though there are new cases added, this happens because there is information saturation. This means that each addition of the next case will provide a little more information than the previous case. Then, if the case is added continuously, then the addition of cases will reach the saturation point (saturation), where the marginal benefit of information that can be given from the addition of the next case is equal to zero (Murti, 2010).

The relevant collected data are analyzed by following three levels of sociocognitive discourse analysis. Sociocognitive discourse analysis focuses on how participants' perspectives relate to their "subject positions in social situations or situational contexts" (Fairclough, 2002, p. 87, 122 in Wijsen, 2013, p. 72) and "more particularly to their interests in reproducing or transforming the societal order" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 65 in Wijsen, 2013, p. 72). Therefore, sociocognitive discourse analysis distinguishes participants' perspectives into three relational dimensions: the individual dimension (micro perspective), the institutional dimension (meso perspective) and the societal dimension (macro perspective) (Fairclough, 2001, pp. 25–164; 2001, pp. 20–21 in Wijsen, 2013, p. 72). Translating these into this study of interreligious relations, we distinguish when informants speak for themselves as individual believers (micro-level), when they speak for their religion as the adherents or followers of religious institutions, and when they speak for their society as members of a community and citizens of a country. Questions and answers of this interview would be posed in Table 1.

4. Third space in the narratives of interreligious relations

Central Kalimantan is a pluralistic province with various ethnicity, religion and culture. Nevertheless, diverse communities in Central Kalimantan generally do not problematize these differences within and among themselves so that they live for the shared interests. In particular, these communities do not pathologize religious differences that exist among themselves so that they can live in peaceful ways while maintaining each own particular religious characteristics. In doing so, these religious communities create and maintain narratives that show their ability to develop "The Third Space" between opposing sides of religious claims of truth among different religious communities at an individual level. Rather than contradicting differences among them, the religious communities emphasize and point out a point where they meet and share each other. This Third Space among different religious communities can be found two issues: the narratives and practices of interreligious relations.

Each community embraces the other by developing the narrative of "we" (*kita*), rather than emphasizing the polarity of "I vs you" (*saya dan anda*) and "we vs they" (*kami dan mereka*) and "other people" (*orang lain*). This is seen in the narratives of Third Space that these diverse religious communities develop in their daily lives and interreligious

interaction. At individual level, these points of Third Space are seen in the narratives of how the religious communities speak about each other through the use of particular words or phrases.

These include a common narrative that the different religious communities speak each other as "relatives" (*anggota keluarga*). By developing this narrative, they tell that despite they hold different faiths, religious communities are related as relatives because of the same bloodline and or shared ethnic, social and cultural bound.

A Muslim figure in a multi-religious village of Kotawaringin Timur Regency said: "Personally, for us (Muslims) here, all residents here are relatives, either they are Christians or Kaharingan adherents, either they are native or immigrants."

Christians speak about Muslims and Kaharingan adherents as "family members" (*anggota keluarga*). A Christian community leader said: "Here we (Christians) live side by side with other religious adherents, namely, Muslims, the adherents of native Dayak beliefs and other religious communities. We consider them relatives who live as family members".

Kaharingan adherents also use the word "relatives" (*anggota keluarga*) when they describe Muslims and Christians. A Kaharingan man said: "Indeed, we are native people here. However, we regard other religious adherents such as Muslims and Christians as our relatives. They are also our neighbors".

Also, diverse religious communities in Central Kalimantan also use the narrative of "brothers and sisters" (*saudara*) when they address each other. A Muslim asserted:

> We normally visit each other, especially on great religious days like Ied al-Fitr and Christmas or weekly religious services though we have different faiths. It is common here families have members with different religious beliefs. We are brothers and sisters.

The same pattern of addressing the religious others is found among the adherents of Kaharingan among Dayak people. A Kaharingan adherent said:

> Indeed, people here have different religions. We have Muslims and Christians here. It is normal. We do not have any problems with different faiths. For me, they are relatives, brothers, and sisters.

Moreover, these religious communities create Third Space when they view each other as "neighbors" (*tetangga*). A Muslim *imam* of an urban housing compound in Palangka Raya described those of other religious communities in his neighborhood as "neighbors." He said:

> In our neighborhood, there are some religious communities. There are Muslims; there are Christians; there are Kaharingan adherents. However, we regard them as neighbors and relatives who should help and respect each other.

This narrative is shared by a Christian who said:

> The residents in this neighborhood are varied in terms of religion and ethnicity. There are Christians; there are Muslims; there are Kaharingan followers. There are Javanese, Banjarese, Dayaks and Bataks. All are my good neighbors. Surely, we as neighbors help each other and keep this neighborhood safe.

This construction of Third Space is seen in the narrative of "friends" (*teman*) when they describe each other. A young Christian teacher of a middle school speaks about his colleagues as "friends":

> I have many Muslim friends. Though I and they have different religions, they are my friends. I have a Muslim friend whom I have befriended for a long time since we were at college. We get along at work and in everyday life.

Similarly, a young Muslim called Christians "friends" when he talked about his childhood comrades. He said: "I have known him since my childhood and I get along with his family. He and I have different religions, but for me he is a friend. No problems".

Finally, the religious communities in Central Kalimantan construct the Third Space through the narrative of "we all seek for Paradise" (*Kita semua sama-sama mencari surga*). Dayak Muslims considered that people of religion share the same goal of entering Paradise though they adhere to different religions. A Dayak Muslim said:

> We all seek for Paradise, but we are not certain whether enter the Paradise or not. Instead, we may enter the Hell and other religious adherents enter the Paradise. So, we don't need to attack and fight each other, do we? Religion is about faith in everyone's heart. What is obvious is blood ties, brotherhood and family bound among different religious adherents. This is what we have to take care of.

Nevertheless, some members of religious communities in Central Kalimantan develop the narratives of "bad Muslims," "bad Christians" and "bad Kaharingan people." In this respect, some Muslims speak that some Christians who are engaged in "Christianization" by attempting to convert those who already adhere to a religion using social aid and charity. A Muslim said:

> Surely, there are some Christians who attempt to Christianize those who already adhere to a religion (Islam), especially new converts to Islam (*muallaf*) who still have a weak faith in Islam, by giving them food and money to start a business. This has caused a bit of tension within our society.

Meanwhile, some Christians speak about Muslims as "terrorists" and "intolerant." Referring to the cases of bombing done by certain groups of Muslims, a Christian in Kotawaringin Timur said: "I think that Muslims are involved in recent bombings in Jakarta, Europe and the USA. They are less tolerant of other religious communities".

Kaharingan adherents said that Muslims are "radicals," and "do not respect *adat* (local and customary norms)." A Kaharingan young man said:

> Basically, we are open to those who come and stay here, no matter their ethnicity and religion. Yes, including Muslims. But, I see some of them are radicals and others are not engaged with local customs and norms.

However, these religious communities perceived that such "bad people" do not represent the majority of religious communities in Central Kalimantan. In this regard, they point to a small number of people who are outside their communities. Muslims identify the Christians who attempt to convert those who already adhere to religion as a minority compared to the Christian majority that remains refrain from using aggressive ways of proselytization.

Similarly, when Christians speak about Muslims as "intolerant" and "terrorists" and Kaharingan people say about Muslims as to have not followed customary law and local culture, both point at those who are outside the Muslim community in Central Kalimantan, who do not represent the Muslim majority in Indonesia and around the world.

The construction of Third Space in multi-religious communities in Central Kalimantan above is further articulated when they speak about religion and religious organizations at institutional level. In this context, adherents of different religions no longer speak about the superiority of one religion over another or the polarity between one religion and another one or among religions. The religious communities emphasize no more the polarity between "our religion is good" and "your religion is bad." Instead, they attempt to construct a space between religions where all have a common platform and shared objectives.

In this respect, this Third Space is constructed in the narrative of "all religions command good" (*semua agama mengajarkan kebaikan*), which is shared by different religious communities in Central Kalimantan. For example, a Dayak Muslim said:

> Yes, we (people) here adhere to some faiths. But, all religions in principle teach virtue, no religions command wrong. So, there is no use if we fight each other because of different faiths, let alone we are brothers and sisters.

Furthermore, in their effort to avoid polarity based on religion and ethnicity, the religious community in Central Kalimantan develop the narratives of Third Space at a societal level. First of all, this societal Third Space is seen in the narrative of "our people" (*orang kita; oloh itah*). Through this narrative, they argue for commonalities among different religious communities and embrace each other as people who are united by blood and culture. Regardless of their religion, someone is considered as to belong to "our people" because of their shared blood and culture. At the communal level, this is seen in the expression of "we are family" (*kita keluarga*) that despite they adhere to different religions, each community or individual belongs to the same blood and culture.

This sense of belonging to one community is further elucidated in a wider context of Central Kalimantan province through the narrative of "we are the people of Kalimantan" (*Kita orang Kalimantan*). Being Kalimantan people means belonging to Kalimantan with adherence to its shared values, philosophy and culture despite diverse religions embraced by its people.

From an educational perspective, Ki Hadjar Dewantara, a prominent figure of education in Indonesia and a national hero. In particular, the Dayak community has applied his ideas of *asih* (love), *asah* (nurturing) and *asuh* (caring) through their tradition of Huma Betang.

Finally, the Third Space is asserted through the creation of the narratives of the citizen of a nation: "we are Indonesians" (*kita orang Indonesia*) and "we are citizens of Indonesia" (*kita warga negara Indonesia*). These societal Third Space narratives necessitate the responsibility that "we are supposed to love each other," breaking the religious lines of Muslim zones, Christian zones and Kaharingan zones, and being united as the citizens of Indonesia.

5. Third space in the practice of interreligious relations

The creation of Third Space among religious communities in Central Kalimantan is not only seen in the narratives described above but also is identified in the practice of interreligious relations in their daily lives. These religious communities not only speak about the narratives of Third Space but also put them in practice as they interact with each other. At the individual level, the ways these practices of Third Space are conducted through visits of family members or relatives with different religious backgrounds in daily lives. It is common among the people of Kalimantan, particularly among Dayak communities, that a family has members with different religious backgrounds (Kaharingan, Islam and Christianity). Realizing that religion is a personal choice, they do not view religious differences among family members problematic. Instead of pointing out one's religion superiority over another's or degrading one's religion, these religious communities opt to look more at something that binds them, rather than at what divides them as family. In this context, they find family relations as binding their family members with different religious backgrounds. Therefore, to maintain this family bound the religious communities in Central Kalimantan visit each other despite their religious differences.

A Dayak Muslim said:

On Sundays, the parents of my wife visit us on their way to their church. They are Christians. I also visit them. We maintain a good relationship. My wife is a *muallaf* (a convert to Islam).

A Kaharingan adherent told about his visit of relatives with different religious backgrounds:

I come from a family whose members have different religions. Some are Christians, others are Muslims. My brother is a Muslim. I often visit them. We help each other. No problem.

This practice is confirmed by a Christian. He said: "It is common among us to visit each other. My uncle is a Muslim and my sister is married to a Muslim. How cannot I visit them?"

Another practice of Third Space is seen in the wedding party conducted by different religious communities in Central Kalimantan. It is common among these religious communities to invite each other to a wedding party. When a Christian or Kaharingan man gets married, his family invites its village people to attend the wedding party regardless of their religion and ethnicity, including Muslims. What is important is food, what kind of food and how it is prepared and served for guests. To this end, the family conducts a certain way of food preparation and service which can be enjoyed by all guests with different religious backgrounds. Interestingly, realizing that Muslims do not eat pork and any pork-derived food, the inviting Christian or Kaharingan family conducts special food preparation and arrangement that conforms to Islamic food regulations. A Christian described:

When we have a wedding party, we invite all residents, including our Muslim relatives and neighbors. We understand that Muslims do not eat pork and drink alcohol. Therefore, we only provide cows and chicken. We ask a Muslim to slaughter them. These are cooked by Muslims and sometimes put in a certain room, next to the house of the inviting family so that our Muslim invitees feel comfortable.

When they are invited to a wedding party by a Christian or Kaharingan family, Muslims generally come and understand this special food preparation and service. A Muslim asserted:

I am often invited to the wedding party of Christians and Kaharingan people. I come [to the party] as a neighbor. Yes, normally, the meat was cooked by a Muslim and put in a separate place. When I have come to the wedding place, I know where to sit.

A Muslim imam added that the inviting Christian family normally allocates a special time of invitation for the public and Muslims in addition to time for its family members. He said:

Normally, the invitation time is from 9 AM to 2 PM. All guests, especially Muslims, can eat food and drinks served during this allocated time. After that, the inviting family has a special party, which is attended only by its relatives according to their own culture.

A Dayak Muslim described:

We are often invited by our *Kaharingan* or Christian neighbors to their wedding party. We come. We give them an envelope (of money). We also eat food, which is provided in a separate room and is cooked by a Muslim.

Similarly, Christians and Kaharingan are invited by Muslims to attend a Muslim wedding party. However, different from that of non-Muslim wedding parties above, in Muslim' wedding parties food and drinks are prepared and served according to Islamic rules of food and drink for Christian and Kaharingan guests do not have any problems religiously and culturally with the served food and drinks. Unlike Muslims, Christian and Kaharingan communities relatively have no food and drink restrictions. A Muslim said:

When there is a party, like a wedding party, our Christian and Kaharingan neighbors are also invited to the party [in addition to Muslim neighbors]. They come and give hand [to the inviting family]. But, the food is served in a normal way [according to Islamic law]; it is not prepared uniquely because they have no problems with our food.

The individual practice of Third Space is also seen in the way the religious communities respond to one's death and his funeral process. Religious communities say condolences to the family of the dead with a different religious background. However, a religious community is not engaged in the ritual process of the funeral of the dead. In other words, they show sympathy but avoid ritual aspects of funeral and mourning taking the third way of engaging in funeral aspects which are considered not to contradict their religious beliefs. This includes donating to ease the burden of the family of the dead. A Muslim described:

We visit the Kaharingan or Christian family that has lost its family member [and say condolences] though we do not enter their house and do not get involved in the funeral procession. We donate food or money to help to ease the burden of the family of the dead.

Moreover, this practice of Third Space is identified in the visits among religious communities in certain religious days such as Ied al-Fitr and Christmas. In these special days, they do not show disrespect to each other, do not get involved in ritual aspects of the days, but rather express happiness and get engaged in non-ritual aspects of the days. This includes saying "Happy Ied" (*Selamat Idul Fitri*) and "Merry Christmas" (*Selamat Natal*), helping setting up a stage of celebration, and maintaining the security of the village or housing neighborhood from possible social disorder.

A Christian said:

On Christmas and Ied al-Fitr (*lebaran*), we normally visit each other and help each other by providing what is needed. On *lebaran*, we visit our Muslim brothers and sisters saying "Selamat lebaran, mohon maaf lahir dan batin" (Happy lebaran, wish you forgive us). Our Muslim brothers and sisters also do the same at Christmas.

A Muslim remarked:

Yes, we visit our Christian brothers and neighbors in their houses at Christmas. I have Christian relatives. Yes, I say "Merry Christmas" to them. It is normal.

However, some Muslims are reserved to say "Merry Christmas" (*Selamat Natal*) to their Christian neighbors or friends. As a Muslim in Palangka Raya described, saying "Merry Christmas" is not recommended due to a *fatwa* (religious edict) issued by religious authorities such as MUI (*Majlis Ulama Indonesia*; Indonesian Council of Religious Authorities). Nevertheless, this stance is not meant to disrupt the good interreligious relations. It does not result in social and religious disharmony among different religious communities.

At the social level, religious communities in Central Kalimantan conduct Third Space practice in the form of building different religious places of worship at one location. There are some locations in this province in which different religious communities agreed to have places of worship at one location, where some worship places of different religious traditions are built side by side. In Palangka Raya city, for example, there are at least three places where mosques are located next to churches. In other regencies, three or four different houses of worship are located in one place. In Kotawaringin Timur, at Antang Kalang subdistrict, four different houses of worship were built next to each other (a mosque, a Catholic church, a Protestant church and a Kaharingan shrine), while in Pangkalan Bun, three houses of worship sit next to each other (a mosque, a church and a Buddhist temple). The similar arrangement of houses

of worship is found in the regencies of Gunung Mas and Kapuas. Moreover, the religious communities in Central Kalimantan set up cemeteries at the same arrangement. As found in Palangka Raya city, a Muslim cemetery is separated from that of Christians, but located at one piece of land.

A Kaharingan said:

The establishment of different houses of worship at one location was meant to show harmony among us. Those houses of worship at the location look good. There are no problems with this. There are no problems with relations among religions here. This is only found in Antang Kalang. It is rare. It looks peaceful. [People with different religious backgrounds] respect each other. No problems.

A Christian said:

Those places of worship started to be built in the same year. The money comes from the government of Kotawaringin Timur. But, the mosque was the first one to be used though it was initially a small one. After all parties agreed, other places of worship were used, too. The establishment of various houses of worship at one location was conducted due to unity among religious communities here. There are Muslims, Christians and Kaharingan adherents. At least, we (Christians) participated in digging ground [for the establishment of the mosque] or we did this or that, we helped by providing the water pump machine and so on. In short, we help others. So, all people of different religious backgrounds came. A strong unity and harmony were seen among them.

The ability of creating Third Space among religious communities in Central Kalimantan is further identified in the communal support of religious events. This is best exemplified by the communal support of Musabaqah Tilawatil Quran (MTQ; Quranic Recital Competition) in Antang Kalang subdistrict. Held in 2014, formally the MTQ was an annual Islamic event of Kotawaringin Timur, which was held in Antang Kalang subdistrict, whose participants were Muslims. However, it was organized not only by Muslims but also Christians and Kaharingan people of the subdistrict. These non-Muslims were actively involved in organizing the MTQ by volunteering to set up stages, help to provide food and drinks and maintain security and order. Regardless of their religious backgrounds, Muslims, Christians and Kaharingan people worked together to make the event successful.

A Christian said: "At the event of MTQ, Muslims managed technical jobs. We helped them arrange chairs, tables, security, etc. Everyone is involved".

Finally, the practice of Third Space among religious communities in Central Kalimantan can be seen in a long-held tradition of *Huma Betang* (Great House). This is particularly pertinent among Dayak people, the native of Kalimantan. It refers to a large-long communal house with many rooms that are inhabited by several extended families from the same clan. Symbolically, it represents togetherness and unbroken family bound. It unites all family members regardless of their faith and beliefs. It can be found, for example, in Palangka Raya city, next to the Provincial Government House and Provincial House of Representatives.

Commonly, individual or family members with different religious backgrounds live in the Huma Betang and in a regular house of Dayak family. Kaharingan adherents, Muslims and Christians live there peacefully and work together for the shared interests as they are united by a strong family bond. Perhaps Huma Betang is now physically quite rare to find in every clan among Dayak people. However, it is philosophically still strongly adhered and practiced by Dayak people in Kalimantan. A Huma Betang shows a practice of Third Space among Dayak people as they can put aside differences in faith and then turn to points that are shared by all community members to keep family members united under the same bloodline.

From an educational perspective, the interreligious relation lived by different religious communities in Central Kalimantan is following the educational views of Dewantara, a prominent

figure of education in Indonesia and a national hero. In particular, Dayak community has applied his ideas of *asih* (love), *asah* (nurturing) and *asuh* (caring) through their tradition of Huma Betang.

6. Conclusion

Based on the above empirical data on the narratives and practices of different religious communities in Central Kalimantan, this research report argues that the way to peaceful and co-existence life lived by religious communities in Indonesia is closely related to its rich treasures and precious tradition of cultural heritage: Indonesian communalism, Indonesian community spirit as seen in terms such as "tradisi hidup bersama," "semangat kebersamaan" and "satu keluarga".

Instead of emphasizing the divisive differences among communities with various religious backgrounds, Muslims, Christians and Kaharingan adherents in Central Kalimantan create "Third Spaces", common grounds shared by these religious communities at individual, institutional and societal levels.

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