

# THE CONTINUITY OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE FROM THE MUGHAL DYNASTY TO CONTEMPORARY INDONESIA

*Mufatihattuttaubah Rorom Ika Putri*<sup>1\*</sup>  
UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia  
[mufa.rip@gmail.com](mailto:mufa.rip@gmail.com)

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**Abstract:** The concept of religious tolerance is not new. Clear evidence that religious tolerance has been implemented since ancient times can be seen in the policies implemented by the Mughal Dynasty. This research aims to explore the practice of religious tolerance from the Mughal Dynasty to Contemporary Indonesia, focusing on the continuity and changes in implementation in each period. The method used is a qualitative-comparative approach that involves analyzing historical documents and academic literature. The results of the study show that religious tolerance already existed during the Mughal Dynasty, it was marked by policies such as *Sulh-i Khul* and *Ibadat Khana* that aimed to unite various religions. In addition, the concept of *Din-i-Ilahi* introduced by Akbar tried to integrate the values of various religious traditions. In Indonesia, similar efforts are made through religious institutions and religious moderation education to maintain interfaith harmony. Both contexts show that tolerance can flourish through inclusive policies and constructive dialogue, although the challenges are different. Commitment to building a harmonious and respectful society remains key in dealing with diversity.

**Keywords:** Continuity, Religious Moderation, Religious Tolerance, Mughal Dynasty, Contemporary Indonesia

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## INTRODUCTION

In the course of civilisation, religion is often misunderstood as a trigger for division, when in fact tolerance and moderation are the essence of human dialogue. History records glorious moments where diversity of beliefs became a source of strength, as happened in the socio-religious dynamics of the Mughal Dynasty in India. Muslim leaders at that time managed to create a harmonious space that accommodated diversity, turning potential conflicts into constructive energy that built civilisation.

The Mughal Dynasty was a kingdom that ruled the Indian subcontinent from

the 16th century to the mid-19th century.<sup>1</sup> The Mughal dynasty held the pinnacle of power in the Indian subcontinent, creating one of the most impressive and impactful eras in South Asian chronicles. Beginning with the leadership of Babur, a great descendant of Timur Lenk and Genghis Khan, the empire not only brought about profound political transformation, but also fuelled a fascinating cultural encounter between Islamic and Hindu traditions. The interaction between these two civilisations gave birth to a new cultural fusion that influenced the social, cultural and artistic life of India for the next few centuries.

The entry of the Mughals into a region steeped in Hindu customs created a platform where two different worldviews needed to adjust and compromise. This process of adjustment did not always go smoothly; there were times when conflicts and feuds arose. More often than not, however, this confluence of cultures led to amazing inventions and breakthroughs in many facets of life. From architectural splendour such as the Taj Mahal that combines the beauty of Islamic and Hindu styles,<sup>2</sup> until the creation of Urdu, which summarises vocabulary from Arabic, Persian and Indian, we can still feel the traces of this cultural contact today.<sup>3</sup>

The Mughals were not just a political power or an architectural mecca, but also a social laboratory that tested the limits of tolerance between civilisations. They succeeded in creating a transformative and innovative social structure in the Indian subcontinent, with an approach that saw religious and cultural diversity not as a daunting challenge, but as a valuable resource that enriched and strengthened the foundations of their civilisation. The complexity of religious relations in the Mughal Dynasty was reflected in its internal dynamics of power. From the very open reign of Sultan Akbar to the more conservative era of Aurangzeb,<sup>4</sup> this empire shows that moderation is not a static concept, but a dialogical process that continues to evolve. Each ruler gave his own colour to interfaith relations, reflecting the lively dialectic between the ideal of tolerance and the real challenges of maintaining social cohesion.

Indonesia, a country with complex cultural and religious diversity, has developed a distinctive model of tolerance, which is reflected in the philosophy of Pancasila. Pancasila, as the foundation of the state, teaches basic values that encourage

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<sup>1</sup> M. Nasihudin Ali, "Kebijakan Politik Pemerintahan Shah Jahan di Kesultanan Mughal," *Mukadimah: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sejarah, Ilmu-ilmu Sosial* Vol. 6, no. 2 (2022): 437, <https://doi.org/10.30743/mukadimah.v6i2.5691>.

<sup>2</sup> Murdiono, *PENGANTAR SEJARAH PERADABAN ISLAM Periode Awal-Pertengahan* (Malang: UMMPress, 2023), 315.

<sup>3</sup> Derita Murni Zalukhu, "Dinasti Mughal Dan Kemunduran Islam Di India Tahun 1525-1857 M," *ASAS wa TANDHIM: Jurnal Hukum, Pendidikan dan Sosial Keagamaan* Vol 3, no. 2 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.47200/awtjhpas.v3i2.2363>.

<sup>4</sup> Yan Nurcahya, Dandie Hambliana, dan Solehudin, "Kontribusi Kerajaan Mughal Terhadap Perkembangan Islam di Anak Benua India," *Jazirah: Jurnal Peradaban dan Kebudayaan* Vo. 5, no. 2 (2024): 179. <https://doi.org/10.51190/jazirah.v5i02.165>.

respect for differences and strengthen inter-religious harmony. In this context, Pancasila serves not only as a moral guideline, but also as a foundation that directs Indonesian society to coexist peacefully, despite differences in beliefs, cultures and social backgrounds.

Through the principles contained in Pancasila, Indonesia seeks to create harmony amidst diversity, while fostering a shared awareness to maintain the unity and integrity of the nation by continuing to implement religious moderation. Religious moderation is a religious approach that reflects a mindset, attitude and action that prioritises the middle position, adheres to the principles of justice, and avoids all forms of extremism in the appreciation and practice of religious teachings. Quraish Shihab explained that the concept of moderation rests on three fundamental pillars that are interrelated, namely the pillar of justice, the pillar of balance, and the pillar of tolerance.<sup>5</sup> In general, tolerance itself can be defined as an open attitude that respects diversity, allowing for different perspectives, ideas, habits, and beliefs in social interactions.<sup>6</sup>

These principles of tolerance have been manifested in various historical contexts of world civilisation, including in the Mughal Dynasty's system of government which consciously made it a major policy. The fundamental similarity between the tolerance model practised by the Mughal Dynasty and Indonesia lies in the effort to build social cohesion through respect for diversity of beliefs even though each era faces different historical contexts and obstacles in implementing moderation in religious life.

This research is of great significance as it contributes to understanding tolerance as a key strategy to prevent conflict and strengthen social cohesion. Through analysing the evolving practice of tolerance throughout history, this research aims to explore how the practice of religious tolerance has unfolded and evolved from the Mughal Dynasty to modern Indonesia. The main focus is to identify continuities and changes in the practice of religious tolerance, as well as understand how social and political factors have influenced these transformations over time. It is hoped that the results of this research can serve as a reference for creating a more inclusive and harmonious society by respecting religious and cultural differences.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research applies a comprehensive qualitative-comparative methodology, in which the assessment and comparison process is conducted systematically by exploring various historical sources, official documentation, and relevant academic

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<sup>5</sup> Ali Muhtarom, Sahlul Fuad, dan Tsabit Latif, *Moderasi Beragama: Konsep, Nilai, dan Strategi Pengembangannya di Pesantren* (Jakarta Selatan: Yayasan Talibuana Nusantara, 2020), 40.

<sup>6</sup> Dwi Ananta Devi, *Toleransi Beragama* (Semarang: Alprin, 2020).

publications as primary data, thus enabling in-depth analysis of the phenomenon under study through diverse perspectives to produce findings that have a strong contextual foundation and enrich a holistic understanding of the research subject.

The data collection process was obtained through a literature study that involved a comprehensive review of written sources from various libraries and digital repositories. After the data collection stage was completed, the researcher proceeded to conduct an in-depth analysis of all the information obtained through the literature study, which included a systematic review and interpretation of the data to produce comprehensive findings. After data collection, the next step is data presentation, which is done by describing the results of data analysis so as to produce a comprehensive understanding of the research results. This process is followed by drawing conclusions in the form of a brief description of the results of the data analysis that has been described previously.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Religious Tolerance during the Mughal Dynasty

During the Mughal Dynasty, religious tolerance became one of the important aspects in building social stability and harmony in India. The dynasty, known for its inclusive government, developed policies that allowed various religions, such as Hinduism, Islam, and other religions, to coexist in a pluralistic society. Religious tolerance was not only practised in the political realm, but also reflected in cultural and social policies that supported plurality of beliefs.

Maharaja Sultan Akbar (1556-1605) was known as one of the most tolerant rulers in the history of the Mughal Dynasty. One of his main policies was *Sulh-i Khul*, which means 'universal tolerance'. The politics of *Sulh-i Khul* consisted of religious tolerance, social tolerance, and economic tolerance, which were reflected in the policies in place at the time.<sup>7</sup> This policy emphasised that all people, regardless of religion or ethnicity, were treated equally and had equal rights under Mughal rule. Sultan Akbar realised the importance of creating harmony among different religious groups, especially between Muslims and Hindus, who were the majority in India.

The implementation of this Politics of *Sulh-i Khul* or universal tolerance paved the way for systematic success in expanding territories. The Mughal Empire gained control of strategic areas such as Chubdar, Ghond, Chitor, Kashmir, Bengal, Bihar, Gujarat, Orissa, Deccan, Gawilgarh, Narhala, Ahmadnagar and Asirgah.<sup>8</sup> Sultan Akbar overhauled the government structure by establishing a comprehensively

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<sup>7</sup> Dr Solihah Titin Sumanti M.Ag, *Sejarah Peradaban Islam* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2024).

<sup>8</sup> Yan Nurcahya, Dandie Hambliana, dan Solehudin, "Kontribusi Kerajaan Mughal Terhadap Perkembangan Islam di Anak Benua India," *Jazirah: Jurnal Peradaban dan Kebudayaan* Vo. 5, no. 2 (2024): 180. <https://doi.org/10.51190/jazirah.v5i02.165>.

organised military system that included complex administrative divisions. The local government system was run by a *sipah salar* (chief commander) with sub-districts headed by a *faudjar* (commander).<sup>9</sup> The uniqueness of the government lies in the multiethnic composition of the bureaucracy, with officials coming from various backgrounds such as Iranians, Turks, Afghans, and native Indian Muslims, which created a cosmopolitan and inclusive system of governance.<sup>10</sup> This policy continued into the reign of Aurangzeb, strengthening the institutional and geographical foundations of the Mughal empire.

One of the first steps Sultan Akbar took to implement this policy was to abolish the *jizyah* tax, a tax previously levied on non-Muslims. This decision was taken in order to secure political stability and create inter-religious harmonisation. At that time, Mughal society consisted of various religious groups, including Muslims and Hindus, so the abolition of the *jizyah* was aimed at reducing the economic burden on the non-Muslim community and at the same time demonstrated Sultan Akbar's commitment to the principles of equality and social justice for all his subjects, regardless of religion.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to fiscal policy, Sultan Akbar also focused on the education sector and public services to strengthen the principle of tolerance. Sultan Akbar established madrassas that not only served Muslims, but also provided equal access to education for all levels of society, including non-Muslims.<sup>12</sup> Through the establishment of these educational institutions, Sultan Akbar sought to create a more educated society and mutual respect between religious groups.

In addition, Sultan Akbar also endeavoured to abolish the tradition of slavery, which he considered contrary to human values and justice.<sup>13</sup> These reforms reflected Sultan Akbar's efforts to build a more just and egalitarian society, where all people had equal rights, regardless of their social status, religion or ethnicity.

On the other hand, Sultan Akbar established the *Ibadat Khana*, an interfaith discussion forum that brought together religious leaders from different traditions to create a space for interfaith dialogue and solve problems of life and governance based

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<sup>9</sup> Dede Efrianti Lubis, Ahmad Muhajir, dan Zaini Dahlan, "Peradaban Dan Pemikiran Islam Pada Masa Dinasti Mughal Di India," *Islamic Education* 1, no. 2 (31 Oktober 2021): 41-46, <https://doi.org/10.57251/ie.v1i2.49>.

<sup>10</sup> Lubis, Muhajir, dan Dahlan.

<sup>11</sup> Andriani Tenri dkk., "Sejarah Pemikiran Ekonomi Islam: Kontribusi Daulah Mughal Terhadap Pembangunan Ekonomi," *Mauriduna: Journal of Islamic Studies* 5, no. 5 (2024): 570-83, <https://doi.org/10.37274/mauriduna.v6i1.1405>.

<sup>12</sup> Muhammad Basri, Nur Saadah, dan Ijar Salna, "Perkembangan Dan Peninggalan Dinasti Moghul Di India 1525-1857," *Pendekar: Jurnal Pendidikan Berkarakter* Vol. 2, no. 1 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.51903/pendekar.v2i1.582>.

<sup>13</sup> Tsania Rizqina, Helmi Mukarromah, dan Rifatul Muazaroh, "Islam di India pada Masa Kepemimpinan Sultan Akbar (1556-1605 M)," *JIS: Jurnal Sejarah Islam* Vol. 2, no. 1 (2023): 46, <https://doi.org/10.24090/jsij.v2i01.7456>.

on religious teachings.<sup>14</sup> The forum serves as a platform for strengthening tolerance and understanding among religious communities, as well as creating a safe space for open discussion of different religious beliefs and practices.<sup>15</sup> Sultan Akbar, known as a tolerant ruler, sought to integrate different religious views to build harmony in India's pluralistic society. By establishing *Ibadat Khana*, Sultan Akbar hoped to create better understanding between different religious communities and reduce existing tensions. This was in line with the *Sulh-i Khul* policy that he implemented during his reign.

In 1582, Sultan Akbar introduced *Din-i-Ilahi*, a synergy of teachings that combined elements from Islam, Hinduism, and several other faiths.<sup>16</sup> Although *Din-i-Ilahi* did not gain a wide following, the initiative reflected Sultan Akbar's efforts to create a religion that promoted tolerance and unity. The concept utilised three approaches, namely a theological approach (Sunni theology), a political approach (part of the political system (part of the constitutional system), and a psychological approach (a personal self with various personalities with various religious knowledge) and a socio-cultural approach (inseparable from the socio-cultural conditions of the society).<sup>17</sup>

*Din-i-Ilahi* has the characteristic of containing the value of monotheism, that is, God. This belief is then made into a politics that the king is God's representative on Earth so that the people must believe and obey what the king tells them. *Din-i-Ilahi* also teaches about manners in eating food, *din illahi* forbids eating meat and tends to be vegetarian. *Din-i-Ilahi* beliefs also include the worship of the sun and fire as the source of life on earth. In addition, *Din-i-Ilahi* also teaches about holy days and the substitution of some greetings.<sup>18</sup>

The *Din-i-Ilahi* tolerance policy initiated by Sultan Akbar faced strong criticism from orthodox Muslims because it was considered to distance him from the teachings of Islam, even this situation was used by some Hindu groups to spread the issue of the Sultan's alignment with Hindus to escape Mughal rule, so that the concept of

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<sup>14</sup> Fiana Shohibatussholihah dan Ahmad Barizi, "THE GREAT ISLAMIC MUGHAL EMPIRE DURING JALALUDDIN AKBAR'S ERA: SULH-I-KUL POLICY DETERMINATION," *el Harakah Jurnal Budaya Islam* 24, no. 1 (2022): 134. <https://doi.org/10.18860/eh.v24i1.14905>.

<sup>15</sup> Fiana Shohibatussholihah dan Ahmad Barizi, 134.

<sup>16</sup> Mas Rangga Yuda dan Deny Yudo Wahyudi, "Sinkretisme Keagamaan: Din Ilahi Sultan Jalaluddin Akbar Sebagai Media Toleransi dan Politik Dinasti Mughal 1560-1605," *Nalar: Jurnal Peradaban dan Pemikiran Islam* Vol. 6, no. 1 (2022): 45. <https://doi.org/10.23971/njppi.v6i1.3728>.

<sup>17</sup> Shohibatussholihah dan Barizi, "THE GREAT ISLAMIC MUGHAL EMPIRE DURING JALALUDDIN AKBAR'S ERA: SULH-I-KUL POLICY DETERMINATION," 135.

<sup>18</sup> Pertiwi dan Setiawati, "Tinjauan Historis Pemerintahan Dinasti Mughal Pada Masa Pemerintahan Sultan Sultan Akbar Tahun 1556-1605 M," 166.

tolerance could not be implemented optimally, so that in the end all *Din-i-Ilahi* activities were then stopped during the reign of Jehangir.<sup>19</sup>

Overall, the *Sulh-i Khul* policy implemented by Sultan Akbar showed a systematic effort to create social stability and inter-religious and ethnic harmony in India. Through the political policy of *Sulh-i Khul*, Sultan Akbar managed to bridge the gap between the Muslim and Hindu communities with his intellectual wisdom, applying the principles of justice that transcended religious and ethnic boundaries. By abolishing the *jizyah* tax, equalising rights, and creating a space for interfaith dialogue, Sultan Akbar did not just ease tensions, but built a solid foundation for the Mughal empire. His clever strategy attracted the sympathy of Hindus, turning potential conflicts into a force of unity, allowing the minority Islamic empire to survive and thrive amidst a majority Hindu population, making tolerance a key instrument in maintaining the stability and progress of the empire.

The Mughal concept of tolerance, especially spearheaded by Sultan Jalaluddin Akbar, made a significant contribution to Muslims by emphasising syncretism and pluralism in a multi-religious society. Through the *Sulh-i Khul* policy, Akbar allowed freedom of worship to all religions and abolished the *jizya* tax for non-Muslims, creating an atmosphere of tolerance that favoured stability and security in Hindustan. His non-violent approach to preaching showed that Islam could be spread through dialogue and persuasion, not force.

In addition, Akbar's model of multicultural integration, involving religious leaders from different backgrounds in discussions and decisions, showed that respect for differences can build a harmonious society. Although this concept has been criticised by the orthodox, its contribution remains relevant as a foundation for Muslims to develop a tolerant and inclusive attitude in social life.

### **Religious Moderation Applied in Indonesia**

Religious moderation is a concept introduced by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, which refers to attitudes, views, and actions that always prioritise balance, are fair, and avoid extremism in religious practice.<sup>20</sup> Quraish Shihab asserts that religious moderation (*wasathiyah*) is not an attitude of doubt or uncertainty in dealing with various issues, but rather an approach that includes arrangements not only for the benefit of individuals, but also for groups, communities and countries.<sup>21</sup> According to Nasaruddin Umar, religious moderation is an attitude that leads to

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<sup>19</sup> Yuda dan Wahyudi, "Sinkretisme Keagamaan: Din Ilahi Sultan Jalaluddin Akbar Sebagai Media Toleransi dan Politik Dinasti Mughal 1560-1605," 46.

<sup>20</sup> Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, *Moderasi Beragama* (Jakarta Pusat: Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama RI, 2019), 17.

<sup>21</sup> M. Quraish Shihab, *Wasathiyah Wawasan Islam tentang Moderasi Beragama* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati Group, 2019).

coexistence in plurality and diversity, both in religious and state contexts.<sup>22</sup> Meanwhile, Lukman Hakim Saifuddin explained that religious moderation is a process that involves understanding and applying religious teachings in a fair and balanced way.<sup>23</sup> The aim of this approach is to avoid extreme or excessive behaviour in religious practice.<sup>24</sup> In the context of a multicultural society such as Indonesia, this moderate attitude is very important, as it allows people to address diversity wisely, and realise justice and tolerance among various religious groups.<sup>25</sup>

Religious moderation is a wise attitude that puts harmony and mutual understanding above narrow fanaticism. Its essence is the ability to uphold personal beliefs while still respecting the diversity of beliefs of others, without being trapped in efforts to justify or blame. This approach rests on the principle of togetherness that promotes dialogue, tolerance, and the reduction of potential conflicts stemming from differences in religious views.<sup>26</sup>

The religious moderation programme launched by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs in 2016 by Minister of Religious Affairs Lukman Hakim Saifuddin is a strategic effort to manage the diversity of religious life in Indonesia. The programme's main objective is to create a harmonious, peaceful and tolerant religious social order in a highly diverse society. By utilising technological advances, the programme seeks to disseminate religious content that is persuasive, reconciling and enlightening, especially for the younger generation. One concrete step is the establishment of the official website portal of the Religious Library in collaboration with the National Library of Indonesia, which is expected to be an educational tool and a guide in facing the challenges of information and technology that have the potential to affect the psychosocial dynamics of society, educators and students.<sup>27</sup>

Religious moderation does not only apply in the context of Islam, but also to all religions. The concept of religious moderation can be understood as a balance in practising religious teachings. This balance is reflected in an attitude that respects and upholds the principles of the religious teachings adopted, while accepting the

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<sup>22</sup> Nasaruddin Umar, *Islam Nusantara Jalan Panjang Moderasi Beragama Di Indonesia* (Jakarta: PT Elex Media Komputindo, 2019), 105.

<sup>23</sup> Lukman Hakim Saifuddin, *Moderasi Beragama: Tanggapan atas Masalah, Kesalahpahaman, Tuduhan, dan Tantangan yang Dihadapinya*. (Jakarta: Yayasan Saifuddin Zuhri, 2022).

<sup>24</sup> Mochammad Nginwanun Likullil Mahamid, "Moderasi Beragama: Pandangan Lukman Hakim Saifuddin terhadap Kehidupan Beragama di Indonesia," *Islamika: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* Vol. 23, no. 1 (2023): 22. <https://doi.org/10.32939/islamika.v23i1.2375>.

<sup>25</sup> *Moderasi Beragama*, 18.

<sup>26</sup> Lutfi Ayu Fadhilah Utami, Tri Sulistiorini, dan Ira Linda Lestari, "Analisis Pentingnya Peran Moderasi Beragama di Era Digital," *Moderatio* Vol. 3, no. 2 (2023): 219. <https://doi.org/10.32332/moderatio.v3i2.802>.

<sup>27</sup> M. Mukhibat, Ainul Nurhayati Istiqomah, dan Nurul Hidayah, "Pendidikan Moderasi Beragama di Indonesia (Wacana dan Kebijakan)," *Southeast Asian Journal of Islamic Education Management* Vol. 4, no. 1 (2023): 80. <https://doi.org/10.21154/sajiem.v4i1.133>.



existence of other perspectives.<sup>28</sup> This is in line with the attitude of tolerance, which includes respect for opinions and beliefs, both among different religions and in the context of different views. Accepting differences is key, as diversity can create a more harmonious life, as reflected in the Indonesian state motto, '*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*,' which means that although different, we are one. Within the framework of religious moderation, it is important to avoid violence and discrimination, by prioritising the common goal of every religion, which is to achieve peace and live in togetherness.<sup>29</sup>

Tolerance is a deep mental attitude that allows a person to appreciate and respect differences without feeling threatened. The essence of tolerance is the ability to give others the freedom to believe, express, and practice their beliefs without coercion or interference, even though those beliefs are diametrically different from our own. Tolerance is characterised by open-mindedness, humility, and the ability to accept diversity as a natural part of human life. This does not mean agreeing or fully accepting the differences that exist, but rather being willing to respect the right of each individual to choose and practice their own beliefs with mutual understanding and empathy.<sup>30</sup>

Pancasila is a fundamental philosophical foundation in building religious tolerance in Indonesia, which not only emphasises freedom of belief, but also encourages mutual respect between religious communities. Through the first precept of Belief in One God, Pancasila emphasises the importance of acknowledging the existence of God and respecting the religious practices of each individual. The second precept of Fair and Civilised Humanity strengthens the spirit of tolerance by upholding human rights, guaranteeing that every individual has the freedom to choose and practice their religion without discrimination. While the fifth precept on Social Justice underlines the principle of equality in religious practice, where there should be no differentiation of treatment based on religion.<sup>31</sup>

With a strong philosophical foundation of Pancasila on religious tolerance, the practice of multiculturalism in Indonesia is evident in the daily life of a very diverse society. Multiculturalism in Indonesia is not just a theoretical concept, but a living and dynamic social reality, where various ethnic, tribal and religious groups interact harmoniously. This diversity is not a source of conflict, but rather a force that strengthens relations between citizens, with Pancasila acting as the main adhesive. In

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<sup>28</sup> Mahamid, "Moderasi Beragama: Pandangan Lukman Hakim Saifuddin terhadap Kehidupan Beragama di Indonesia," 23.

<sup>29</sup> Utami, Sulistiorini, dan Lestari, "Analisis Pentingnya Peran Moderasi Beragama di Era Digital," 220.

<sup>30</sup> *Moderasi Beragama*, 44.

<sup>31</sup> M. Iqbal dkk., "Peran Pancasila didalam Membangun Toleransi Antar Umat Beragama di Indonesia," *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai* Vol. 8, no. 2 (2024): 26377. <https://jptam.org/index.php/jptam/article/view/16441>.

this context, religious tolerance becomes a concrete practice of the national spirit that respects differences, encourages dialogue between groups, and builds a deep understanding that plurality is a blessing that must be nurtured, not a threat that must be feared.

The practice of religious tolerance in Indonesia is very important in creating interfaith harmony, and one of the social capital that characterises this nation is the culture of gotong royong. Gotong royong, which means working together, reflects the spirit of national unity, as well as moral values such as togetherness and empathy. A clear example of the practice of tolerance was seen when the service for a Christian who died was held in the courtyard of the Darussalam Mosque, where the DKM allowed the use of the mosque courtyard for the activity after the family asked permission. This shows that Indonesian society prioritises humanity and equality over differences, strengthening the value of tolerance in everyday life.<sup>32</sup>

Another important asset in the practice of religious moderation in Indonesia is the empirical experience of the community in solving religious problems, as seen in the construction of the Nur Musafir Mosque in Batuplat Village, Alak District, Kupang City, East Nusa Tenggara. This mosque was built in the middle of a Christian-majority settlement to fulfil the needs of 279 Muslims who had to travel far to Kupang city to worship. Despite being stalled for four years due to rejection, a permit to continue construction was finally issued by the Kupang City Government. The Mayor of Kupang urged the community to support the project and maintain interfaith tolerance. The successful construction of this mosque reflects the ability of Indonesians to overcome differences and create harmony through dialogue and mutual understanding.<sup>33</sup>

In Balun Village, Turi Sub-district, Lamongan, there is a unique model of religious tolerance, where three religions-Islam, Christianity and Hinduism-live peacefully side by side. The village is known as 'Pancasila Village' or 'Inclusive Village' because of the harmonious social and cultural relations between religious adherents. Residents respect and support each other in celebrating the holidays of their respective religions, and the village organisation includes proportional representation from all three religions. Balun Village is a clear example of how people can maintain harmony despite having different religious backgrounds.<sup>34</sup>

The examples of religious tolerance practices that have been mentioned previously are only a small part of the many examples that exist in Indonesia. This proves that with these practices, tolerance is not only limited to advice, but becomes a real action. This action then develops into a custom that is passed down from

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<sup>32</sup> *Moderasi Beragama*, 67–68.

<sup>33</sup> *Moderasi Beragama*, 69–73.

<sup>34</sup> *Moderasi Beragama*, 75.

generation to generation so that Indonesian society has proven that differences in beliefs are not a barrier to living in harmony, but rather become a social wealth that strengthens the nation's identity.

Religious institutions play an important role in maintaining interfaith tolerance in Indonesia, through moderate and inclusive education, interfaith dialogue, and mediating conflicts. In addition, these institutions strengthen interfaith solidarity and cooperation through social and humanitarian activities. The Ministry of Religious Affairs also contributes to the socialisation of the values of religious tolerance, working with religious institutions, school educators and others to raise awareness of human rights and the protection of minority rights. With this approach, religious institutions and the government together build a more inclusive and harmonious community environment, creating a society that respects each other despite having different religious backgrounds.

In addition to relying on the role of religious institutions, we can also apply religious moderation education, especially interfaith tolerance, to students. Religious moderation education can be organised in various educational institutions, both formal and non-formal, from primary to tertiary levels. The curriculum generally includes an understanding of the concept of religious moderation, diversity of religions and beliefs, religious ethics, and the practice of interfaith dialogue.<sup>35</sup> In addition, religious moderation education can also be integrated in extracurricular activities, such as religious activities, interfaith meetings, and social activities that aim to increase understanding and experience in interacting with individuals from different religious backgrounds and beliefs.<sup>36</sup>

### **A Historical Comparison of Religious Tolerance of the Mughal Dynasty and Contemporary Indonesia**

Religious tolerance in the Mughal Dynasty, especially during the reign of Sultan Akbar, was characterised by an innovative policy known as *Sulh-i Khul*. The concept was a form of syncretism that aimed to unite different religions under the leadership of Akbar, who believed that all religions had the same teachings and could coexist harmoniously. Akbar granted freedom of worship to all religions and abolished the *jizya* tax for non-Muslims, and embraced the Hindu community through mixed marriages and the appointment of non-Muslim ministers.

Sultan Akbar's establishment of the *Ibadat Khana* was a significant step towards strengthening religious tolerance in the Mughal Dynasty. This interfaith discussion forum not only created a safe space for open dialogue, but also demonstrated Akbar's

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<sup>35</sup> Mukhibat, Istiqomah, dan Hidayah, "Pendidikan Moderasi Beragama di Indonesia (Wacana dan Kebijakan)," 84.

<sup>36</sup> Purwati R. dan E. Susilawati, "Mengoptimalkan Kerukunan Antarumat Beragama Melalui Kegiatan Ekstrakurikuler di Sekolah," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* Vol. 7, no. 1 (2020): 53–68.

commitment to integrating different religious views to build harmony in a pluralistic society. By inviting religious leaders from different traditions, the *Ibadat Khana* became an important platform for the exchange of ideas and understanding, which in turn reduced interfaith tensions.

Moreover, the *Din-i-Ilahi* introduced by Sultan Akbar also became a bridge to connect the various religious communities in India. With its theological approach, *Din-i-Ilahi* invites people to understand universal divine values, while its political approach creates social stability by reducing interfaith conflicts. The psychological aspect of *Din-i-Ilahi* encourages individuals to open their minds and hearts to the beliefs of others, while the socio-cultural approach strengthens interfaith interaction in daily life. All of this contributed to the development of greater religious tolerance in the society of the time, creating a more harmonious atmosphere and mutual respect among different religious groups.

On the other hand, religious tolerance in contemporary Indonesia also shows efforts to create interfaith harmony. Through religious institutions and the socialisation of tolerance values by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, people are taught to respect different beliefs. Inter-religious dialogue activities and collaboration in social projects are an important part of this tolerance practice. Although challenges such as intolerance still exist, the commitment to maintaining harmony remains strong.

Religious institutions are crucial in maintaining interfaith tolerance in Indonesia to create a harmonious society. They educate people about the values of tolerance and encourage interfaith dialogue, as well as helping to resolve conflicts peacefully. The Ministry of Religious Affairs also plays a role in spreading these values of tolerance by working with religious institutions and educators. Religious moderation education should be taught in schools, both formal and non-formal, so that the younger generation can appreciate differences. Extracurricular activities that involve interfaith interaction are also important to provide positive experiences in relating to people from different backgrounds.

With the development of technology and the use of social media, we have a great opportunity to spread the message of religious tolerance. Social media allows information about the importance of mutual respect between religious communities to reach many people quickly. When religious tolerance campaigns are conducted on social media, people from different religious backgrounds can engage and share their views. This can help create a better awareness and understanding of religious differences, and encourage mutual respect among individuals of different faiths. Thus, social media can be an effective tool for building harmony and tolerance in a diverse society like Indonesia.

The two contexts described above show that religious tolerance can flourish through inclusive policies and constructive dialogue, although the means and challenges are different. In the Mughal Dynasty, tolerance was led by the king's policies, whereas in Indonesia today, tolerance is more the result of collaboration between the government, religious institutions and civil society in the face of complex social dynamics.

## CONCLUSION

Religious tolerance in the Mughal Dynasty was developed through the Sulk-I Khul policy implemented by Sultan Akbar, uniting various religions by granting freedom of worship, abolishing the *jizyah* tax for non-Muslims, and appointing Hindu ministers. Another significant step was the establishment of *Ibadat Khana* as a forum for interfaith dialogue and the introduction of *Din-i-Ilahi* that integrated universal divine values through theological, political, psychological and socio-cultural approaches, although the concept faced resistance from orthodox circles. Akbar sought to integrate the values of various religious traditions, although this policy was not always well received by all.

Meanwhile, contemporary Indonesia applies religious tolerance through the role of religious institutions in moderate education, interfaith dialogue, and conflict mediation, supported by the Ministry of Religious Affairs that socialises the values of tolerance. Pancasila as a philosophical foundation guarantees religious freedom, human rights and equality, while the practice of tolerance is realised in daily life as seen in Balun Village Lamongan and the case of the Nur Musafir Mosque in Kupang. Although the context is different, in the Mughal Dynasty tolerance was led by the king's policy, while in Indonesia it is the result of collaboration between various parties, both show that religious tolerance can flourish through inclusive policies and constructive dialogue.

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