

## **Religious Segregation in Rural Urban Community: The Experiences from Cihampelas District, Indonesia**

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### **Abstract**

This paper examines religious segregation in Desakota communities, especially in Cihampelas District, West Bandung Regency, West Java, Indonesia. The method used in this paper is a qualitative method through collecting data from literature review, observation, and interviews. The results of the research show that segregation of religious areas has taken place in this place from 1970 until now. The identity of religious organizations is essential for community members to determine where they will live and the social treatment they will receive. Conflicts and clashes became commonplace in the sacred pattern of the community in the Cihampelas District in the 1990s. Therefore, the social and economic changes that have occurred in society have changed many things, including the way of the religion of the people. In addition, there were significant changes in religious and religious patterns in the people in this region; before the 1990s, their sacred designs tended to be exclusive; meanwhile, after the 1990s, until now, the religious and religious patterns of society were more inclusive or characteristic types. This change in spiritual practice has created a neutral sacred zone with community members who are pluralist in faith in that area.

**Keywords:** Conflict; inclusivism; neutral zone; religious segregation; rural urban community.

### **Abstrak**

Tulisan ini mengkaji segregasi agama pada masyarakat Desa-kota, terutama di Kecamatan Cihampelas, Kabupaten Bandung Barat, Jawa Barat, Indonesia. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode kualitatif melalui pengumpulan data dari studi pustaka, observasi, dan wawancara. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa segregasi keagamaan telah terjadi di tempat ini sejak tahun 1970 hingga sekarang. Identitas organisasi keagamaan sangat penting bagi anggota masyarakat untuk menentukan di mana mereka akan tinggal dan perlakuan sosial yang akan mereka terima. Konflik dan bentrokan menjadi hal yang biasa dalam pola kehidupan masyarakat di Kecamatan Cihampelas pada tahun 1990-an. Oleh karena itu, perubahan sosial dan ekonomi yang terjadi di masyarakat telah mengubah banyak hal, termasuk cara beragama masyarakatnya. Selain itu, terjadi perubahan signifikan pada pola religi dan keagamaan masyarakat di wilayah ini; sebelum tahun 1990-an, desain keberagaman mereka cenderung eksklusif; sedangkan setelah tahun 1990-an hingga sekarang, pola keagamaan masyarakat lebih bersifat inklusif. Perubahan praktik keberagaman ini telah menciptakan zona sakral yang netral dengan anggota komunitas yang pluralis dalam keyakinan di area tersebut.

**Kata kunci:** Konflik; inklusivisme; zona netral; segregasi agama; masyarakat pedesaan perkotaan.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The plurality of religions and religious understandings within the internal stronghold of religious communities in Indonesia is a historical fact. Religion for a society like this will come with a plural understanding; religion is not merely a matter of divinity, belief, and way of life (Kurnia, 2020). Religion is also closely related to historical-cultural issues (Niam, 2020). This can be seen from establishment of various institutions and religious institutions in society. Problems will arise if the diversity of religions and cultures in Indonesia is used as an excuse for religious conflicts to occur in society, as is often the case today

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(Azra, 2008; Mietzner & Muhtadi, 2020). Religion does have a strong potential as a trigger for conflict in society because religion has two contradictory sides but is one unit (Abdel-Fadil, 2019; Hasan, 2017). Like a currency, at one point, faith can become a unifier. Still, on the other hand, religion is present as the root of conflict in society and leads to bloodshed or the destruction of a community.

Religion appears as a driving force for conflict in society through issues of social, economic, and cultural change (Haynes, 2020). The influx of modernization, globalization, and industrialization has entered urban areas, and rural communities are now starting to feel the effects (Jamaludin & Novari, 2022). Changing the function of land in rural areas that used to be rice fields into industrial sites is the result of the arrival of modernization in rural areas. The opening of factories and housing has stimulated the influx of immigrant groups resulting in religious and cultural assimilation between residents and immigrants. Social, economic, cultural, and religious changes in developing rural areas have changed rural communities' mindsets and sacred patterns (Stronge et al., 2020). The design of religiosity that used to be communal and the association has changed towards an individualist and functional religious practice as a feature of urban society. This change in sacred patterns has created a separation of pastoral areas in the community based on the concept of theology and the affiliation of religious organizations that have developed in that area (Herzog et al., 2020). The values of religious fanaticism are felt, and the symbols of religious organizations are deliberately attached as a feature of religious identity attached to the region; this results in a powerful sense of competition and conflict.

Like the case that occurred in Cihampelas District, West Bandung Regency. Reflection of a rural area that has changed towards an urban community or what is commonly called a rural area. The village is transitioning because it is located in the border area of Bandung City and Cimahi City. McGee calls an area like this Desakota (McGee, 2022). Village characteristics *are* characterized by the existence of agricultural areas that are still large and densely populated (Ortega, 2020). In the Desakota area, the village features are agriculture, and the characteristics of the city are dense residential areas, high mobility, and various types of work and living side by side (Chen, 2017; Hong, 2022). The observation results show that religious segregation is quite felt in the people of Cihampelas District, West Bandung Regency. Religious identity has become so crucial in determining the choice of place to live in this region, but over time and the social and economic changes that have developed in this region have provided many significant changes to the religious and religious patterns of society so that they have an impact on the development of patterns of religious segregation towards which is even better.

This study is critical because, so far, reflections on religious segregation have rarely been studied in the Southeast Asian region, especially in Indonesia. Several studies on religious segregation, for example, have been carried out in India (Susewind, 2017), Nigeria (Muhammad et al., 2015), Israel (Agbaria, 2018), Northern Ireland (Borooah & Knox, 2015), and the United States (McCord et al., 2017). This is sociological because the regions of South Asia, Africa, Europe, and America are the leading destinations for groups of asylum seekers to settle after they leave their territories which are in conflict resulting in socio-political tensions between natives and immigrants. These studies show that there is a void in the study of religious segregation, especially in Southeast Asia, which will be filled through this study. In addition, other studies related to religious segregation focus on smaller institutions, for example, educational institutions. Works by (Bagley, 2019; Borooah & Knox, 2015; Rowe & Lubienski, 2017) show studies related to religious segregation in schools with diverse students. They suggest that there is a need for a practical model, such as peace education, to address discrimination in the educational environment.

Therefore, this paper will examine religious segregation in the Desakota area, especially the experiences that occurred in the people of Cihampelas District, West Bandung Regency, West Java. This

research is expected to contribute to religious studies in the contemporary era, especially religious issues following Indonesia's multi-religious characteristics. In addition, this research offers an alternative empirical perspective regarding religious segregation, which has so far been frequently studied in the South Asian, African, European, and American regions through the experience of religious segregation and its resolution process in the rural areas of Indonesia.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The research in this paper uses qualitative methods (Silverman, 2015). This qualitative method is based on the need to obtain raw data and information (natural). Three techniques are used in data collection: *first*, literature review; *second*, observation; and *third*, interview. Sources in the literature review include works and concepts on religious segregation, Desakota, and Indonesian pluralism in various reputable books and journals. Other sources include research reports on conflicts in the Cihampelas area. The data collection process was also carried out through observation by visiting activities such as recitation and seminars for religious mass organizations in Cihampelas, namely the Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, and Persatuan Islam (PERSIS). To explore and understand religious segregation, interviews were conducted with government officials, administrators, and congregations of the NU, Muhammadiyah, and PERSIS religious organizations in Cihampelas District, West Bandung Regency, West Java, Indonesia.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Religious Pluralism in Indonesia: Between Reality and Delusion**

In the current era of globalization, religious communities face new challenges that are no different from what they have experienced before (Majeed, 2018), especially religious pluralism and religious conflict both internally and externally, which are natural phenomena that must be faced. In the past, spiritual life was relatively more peaceful because religious communities were like camps isolated from the challenges of the outside world. On the other hand, today, with advances in technology and science, humans have begun to critically question various phenomena in life, including religious issues that have started to emerge. It seems bold and troubling (Luckmann, 2022).

Indonesia's multicultural and multi-religious condition requires its people to face the reality of pluralism that occurs in society (Parekh, 2001). The difficulty of separating race and religion issues is the central point of social problems, so the challenge of pluralism must be adequately understood by every member of society so that they can live in security and peace. However, many of the views circulating in the community about the concept of pluralism are misinterpreted. Many understandings that are not pluralism are interpreted as pluralism, as explained below:

*First*, pluralism is considered cosmopolitanism—a situation where a diversity of religions, races, and nations live side by side in one location. *Second*, pluralism cannot be equated with relativism. Relativism is an understanding that states that any religious doctrine must be declared valid or, strictly speaking, "all religions are the same." *Third*, pluralism is not syncretism either. They are creating a new religion by integrating certain elements or as a component of the teachings of several religions to be made an integral part of the new religion (Ramstedt, 2019).

Suppose he quotes a statement from Alwi Shihab, who tries to explain the concept of religious pluralism according to him. In that case, religious pluralism must show a fact about the existence of

pluralism but what is meant is active involvement in the reality of this pluralism. Each adherent of religion must recognize the truth and rights of other faiths and be involved in efforts to understand differences and similarities to achieve harmony in diversity (Shihab, 2005, pp. 42–43). Therefore, it needs to be underlined that if the concept of religious pluralism is to be implemented in Indonesia, it must fulfill one condition, namely a solid commitment to each religion. In interacting with various faiths, a pluralist must be open to learning and respecting his dialog partners and, most importantly, must be committed to the religion he adheres to.

To find out the concept of religious pluralism in Indonesian society can be seen from the concept of freedom of religion that is understood by the community or the constitutional position of freedom of religion in the eyes of the government because this religious freedom is very closely related to the understanding of the concept of pluralism in society (Munhanif, 1996). Explanation of the TAP MPR regarding P4 emphasized that freedom of religion is a fundamental human right; it comes from God and is not a gift from the state or even a class (Tap MPR, 11/1998). Therefore, the government, like the assertion of former president Soeharto when giving a speech at a friendly event with participants in the MUI working meeting on March 8, 1984, that the government does not interfere in internal religious matters, whether related to the issues of interpretation, practice or institutionalization of the religion of each religious community. The former head of state also emphasized in the commemoration of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday at the State Palace on September 8, 1992, that we in Indonesia do not recognize official and unofficial religions (Effendi, 2018, p. 111).

Even though the explanation above indicates that in this country, there will no longer be issues regarding religious rights, even as a country that is neither based on religion nor secular, this means that the state is obliged to provide services to all faiths and not to interfere too much in the diversity of the people. However, when drawn at the level of reality, this guarantee is far from the truth because it turns out that people's perceptions of religious freedom do not fully guarantee the implementation of religious rights (Anshari, 2020). For example, some people think that only six religions are officially recognized in this country (Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism). Then what about the position of indigenous religions, such as Kaharingan in Kalimantan and Bedouin in Banten, which are the original religions of Indonesia and have been adhered to by the people for hundreds of years. The misperception in society that only official faiths are allowed to exist has taken its toll on local religions, such as adherents of the Kaharingan religion, the second-largest religion in Central Kalimantan (Effendi, 2018, p. 113).

The latest case being discussed by the media is the case of Ahmadiyya vs. radical Islam, where the peak of all conflicts was riots in Cikeusik, Pandeglang, Banten Province (Irawan et al., 2022). This indicates that religious conflict does not only occur in the external area of religion but can also occur internally within the same sacred area. Even though, as we all know, the existence of the Ahmadiyya congregation has existed in Indonesia since the colonial era, why is this violent conflict only happening now. What has caused the change in views that are taking place in Indonesian society today about the meaning of tolerance.

The examples of these cases reflect how the freedom to embrace religion has not been adequately realized. And there are still many similar cases that the writer cannot mention one by one. In addition, the government must guarantee every citizen's freedom to embrace religion, as stated in the 1945 Constitution (Husni et al., 2022). The government and society should be able to recognize people's right to change religions. Because of the law, *sunnatullah*, when "some come, some go, some are born, and some die," that's the correct expression for religious rights.

Suppose we are happy to accept the arrival of new adherents to our religion. In that case, we also have to be open-minded and respect other people to get new followers to their religion, those from other faiths, or our own. But in reality, the freedom to change beliefs is still difficult to accept; if this happens, it will usually correlate with one particular religion's mission and preaching. Suspicion will arise between adherents of various faiths, resulting in religious conflicts (Intan & Bangun, 2022).

Another problem is that pluralism, which has not gone well in this country, is the right to adhere to a religious ideology or sect different from the understanding held by the majority of each religious community. Because usually, this problem is more sensitive than religious differences. With the excuse that it will cause unrest among the people or religious sects on the part of the majority, they tend not only to make it infidel but also to influence the authorities to ban religious views or denominations that are considered sinful and deviant. Attitudes like this are contrary to freedom of religion; this is precisely what happened in the case of Ahmadiyah (Nurdin et al., 2019).

The problems described above are closely correlated with the current condition of pluralism in society, where Indonesian culture has been brainwashed by old theologies claiming that only their religion is the most correct. This exclusive theology is well-developed in monotheistic religions (Durkheim, 2001). Claims of truth give birth to the phenomenon of one religion becoming a threat to other religions (Aragon, 2022). But even inclusive theology is not enough because it tends to place one's religion higher than other religions, so pluralistic theology is suitable to be developed in a society like this, which acknowledges the existence of other religious truths. As quoting a statement from Budhi Munawar Rachman:

Civil Society cannot be realized when people still understand religion exclusively and consider their faith to be the truest; a religious believer needs to transcend his religion, make his religious values more comprehensive and universal, and prioritize human values in his belief (Rachman, 2000).

In addition to developing the concept of pluralistic theology, it must also be instilled in society that humans have uniqueness, characteristics, behavior, and attitudes. And that we must be able to acknowledge differences. Because it is this attitude of respect that encourages the formation of an open-minded orientation because the contradictions between the value system that is believed and the value system that other people think can still be seen the similarities. This wise attitude is the key to reconciling pluralism (Ramstedt, 2019).

The above is confirmed by a quote from Abdurrahman Wahid, who asked religious leaders around the world in general. Indonesia, in particular, educates its followers to accept the reality of differences in religion, belief, language, and culture by encouraging everyone to develop relationships based on these differences (Bourchier & Jusuf, 2022). That is a glimpse of pluralism in Indonesia. From the explanation above, we can see that the concept of pluralism developing in Indonesian society is still closed because the idea of theology created between religious adherents is still exclusive or inclusive theology, not pluralistic.

### **Desakota Community**

Various types of villages can be distinguished based on multiple classifications. Judging from the main livelihood activities of the town can be divided into farming, fishing, tourism, and craft villages. In terms of its ability, the city is divided into: *first*, self-help villages, where most people fulfill their daily needs from the natural products they process themselves. *Second*, self-help villages have more advanced conditions than self-help villages. The community can already sell excess production to other areas, and interactions with other towns exist. *Third*, self-sufficient (modern) villages, namely villages that have been able to develop all their potential optimally (Antlöv, 2003).

In terms of potential, villages can be divided into villages with high, medium, and low potential. Towns that are close to cities experience faster development compared to other villages. These villages became the buffer zones of the city. Urban life arrangements easily influence rural areas on the outskirts of cities. McGee calls the place “Desakota” to distinguish it from suburban areas or urban fringe, which has shown the characteristics of urban areas dominantly (McGee, 2022).

Several academics are trying to bring the Desakota concept to life. Desakota is a term introduced by McGee, a geographer from the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, in the 1990s. This term was adopted from the results of McGee’s research in Indonesia (McGee, 1998). According to McGee, Desakota is outside the peri-urban area where commuters live. The distance from the city center ranges from 30 to 50 kilometers. Its characteristics, among others, are marked by the existence of farming areas that are still wide and densely populated. In Desakota areas, village characteristics, namely agriculture, and urban characteristics, namely dense residential areas with high mobility and various jobs in urban areas, coexist (T. G. McGee, 1991).

### **The Religious Life of the Cihampelas Community: A Transition Area**

Cihampelas sub-district is an area undergoing transition because it is located on the city’s border. McGee calls places like this Desakota. This Desakota is an area outside the peri-urban area where commuters live; the distance between the Desakota area and the downtown area is around 25-50 kilometers. And according to the Google Map, the distance from the Cihampelas sub-district to UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Cibiru, Bandung City is about 44 kilometers, and the distance from the Cihampelas sub-district to the center of Bandung is about 20 kilometers. The characteristics of the urban village area are marked by the existence of agricultural regions that are still large and densely populated (McGee & Robinson, 1995). In the Desakota area, the parts of the village, namely agriculture and the characteristics of the city, namely dense residential areas, high mobility, and various types of work, live side by side.

For the Cihampelas sub-district, West Bandung Regency. The characteristics that become a Desakota region have been fulfilled. Cihampelas Subdistrict has become a connecting area between the rural and Cimareme industrial regions in the last ten years. The West Java government’s policy of opening various toll roads in multiple regions, including the Seroja toll road, has significantly impacted developments in the Bandung City area, Bandung Regency, and West Bandung Regency.

The areas in Bandung Regency and West Bandung Regency aspire to become buffer zones for Bandung, such as the conditions of Tangerang, Bekasi, and Bogor, which are buffer zones for the city of Jakarta (Henny & Meutia, 2014). Many of these buffer areas are still in rural areas, such as the Cihampelas sub-district. The influx of modernization, globalization, and industrialization has made this region experience many social, cultural, and religious changes. The level of the economy that continues to increase is matched by the growth of educational, health, and religious facilities and infrastructure, changing the mindset and pattern of life of the Cihampelas sub-district community.

### **The Religious Life of the Community in Cihampelas District, 1960-1990**

In the early 1940s, the Cihampelas sub-district was not yet an area with high religious enthusiasm; not many Islamic boarding schools were established in this area; the Cihampelas sub-district was just a common area that did not have the charismatic kiai figure it is today. The religious pattern of the Cihampelas sub-district community, especially in the Cihampelas and Citapen villages, already reflects the NU tradition there. Still, organizationally it has not officially joined the NU organization.

The community's religious activities are concentrated in the Citapen Village area because ten of them there is a well-known Kiai named, Musa, this Kiai pioneered Islamic spiritual teachings. Many people came to participate in Musa's grandson's recitation. But when the number of congregations began to grow, Musa's grandfather was tested in his household. He remarried, had a second wife, and moved his domicile to his second wife's village. Because it made the recitation congregation no longer able to be appropriately managed until finally, it was replaced by Haji Basuni (Irod, Interview, 17 December 2022).

Haji Basuni works as a merchant and trades between islands until his business reaches Sumatra. The study was handed over to his son-in-law Master Aceng (in Indonesian is Ustadz). This recitation community is named Al-Furqon. In addition to the recitation community, Al-Furqon is building educational facilities at the basic school level (Madrasah Ibtida'iyah—MI). During Master Aceng's leadership, Al-Furqon changed the direction of the da'wah model that used to carry traditionalist Islam and altered to the Qur'an and Sunnah movement and spread many traditions that were commonly carried out by the community but were not affiliated with any religious organization. Master Aceng's uncompromising attitude, especially during the era of President Soeharto's leadership, which tended to be repressive towards Muslims, caused him to be caught in a criminal case and imprisoned on charges of inciting and insulting the government during the 1980s elections. After leaving prison several years later, Master Aceng went Al-Furqon and settled in Sukabumi. Since being abandoned by its figures, the existence of Al-Furqon has become unclear both in principle and in its affiliations. Being affiliated with NU is not said to be affiliated with Muhammadiyah or PERSIS. Until now, the existence of Al-Furqon has been like suspended animation.

The fall of Al-Furqon has brought many changes to the surrounding community. Local events began to appear in various regions, including in the Babakan Kubang district of Cihampelas Village. A new agent named Buya Ure appeared with a traditionalist Islamic preaching model or NU, although organizationally, he was not a member of the NU organization. This Buya Ure began to replace the position of Al-Furqon. Many residents of Cihampelas Village turn to Buya Ure to study. Usually, he holds studies on tuesday mornings. Buya Ure studies are only held in small mosques in the Babakan Kubang area. A few years later, Buya Ure died, and the fate of his studies was continued by Haji Anwar.

Haji Anwar is a reasonably successful trader in Cihampelas Village. But because his profession as a trader made him not focus on his da'wah activities. Until finally Haji Anwar took the initiative to marry his daughter to a young man from the Gununghalu (the northern region of West Bandung Regency) area named Kiai Asep Burhanuddin. With the support of the facilities and infrastructure from Haji Anwar, it was Kiai Asep Burhanuddin who continued Buya Ure's recitation in the Babakan Kubang area. From what was originally just a tiny recitation community, it turned into a very well-known Islamic boarding school called the Darul Falah Islamic Boarding School. In subsequent developments, the Darul Falah Islamic boarding school became a portrait of NU's existence in the Cihampelas sub-district (Tori, Interview, 12 December 2022).

In the region of Rongga, one of Cihampelas sub-districts, the Qur'an Sunnah movement emerged, led by the studies of Kiai Haji (KH) Uwes Ma'mun, commonly called *Ajengan* Uwes. He comes from Rongga, and the study pattern he spreads is preaching through the Qur'an and Sunnah, which is different from the traditional Islamic tradition or NU in the Babakan region of Kubang as taught by Buya Ure. In 1963, when Kiai Uwes had already pioneered the Al-Qur'an and As-Sunnah movement, he met Master Mangku, a minister of salt for the Cililin region.

There was a discussion between the two with the theme of wanting to make people aware of religious habits or traditions that deviate from Islamic teachings, such as the *tahlilan* tradition. The *tahlilan*

at that time was part of the death ceremony, *hijina, duana, tiluna, tujuhna*, etc. In the past, banning *tahlilan* was quite a horrendous incident. Apart from *tahlilan*, this area has a community tradition, namely the Qur'an at the cemetery.

Reciting verses from the Qur'an in burials is carried out to pray for the deceased; this tradition is carried out starting from the time the funeral process is over; the deceased's family will hire the services of Salafiyah students who live in Cihampelas sub-district to read the Qur'an until it is finished. Or graduation, provided tent facilities are built around twelve graves for the students to sit and read the Qur'an. To get the services of reading the Qur'an, the family left behind must pay a certain amount of money to the students, although there is no target for the fee. But they are based on sincerity and appropriateness of the amount of money given. Meanwhile, the family left behind will hold a *tahlilan* event at their home starting from the first, second, and so on until seven days after the death of their family member.

Kiai Uwes opposed such traditions in his preaching pattern; his actions resulted in Kiai Uwes being frequently summoned by the police because his actions were considered troubling to the residents. Then the head of the Cimahi branch of Muhammadiyah heard the news, Colonel Jumingan Dandim 0609 Cimahi. And he ordered Kiai Uwes to set up the Cililin branch of Muhammadiyah. So in 1965, the Cililin branch of the Muhammadiyah organization was founded, chaired by Kiai Haji Uwes Ma'mun and his secretary Master Sutarman. When Kiai Uwes declared Muhammadiyah, the effect it had had on the recitation congregation. Many of Kiai Uwes' recitation congregation left the recitation, but with the passage of time and patience from Kiai Uwes, the people around the Rongga area finally accepted the teachings of the Al-Quran and As-Sunnah. In the future, the Rongga area will become known as the basis of the Muhammadiyah community in the Cihampelas sub-district (Undang Abidin, Muhammadiyah, Interview, 13 December 2022).

The struggle of Kiai Uwes and his family in teaching the Al-Quran and As-Sunnah movements is not only by developing recitations but has begun to penetrate the world of education by establishing a boarding school called Ulumul Quro. The son of Kiai Uwes, Mr. Nu'man, initially became an administrator for the Muhammadiyah organization in Sayati, Bandung City. Still, after he stopped being an administrator, he returned home and founded the Ummul Qura Foundation. Still, this Ulumul Quro was not registered as an asset to the Muhammadiyah organization but as a family asset big Kiai Uwes. Ulumul Quro had become a reasonably advanced pesantren in the early 1980-the and 2000s, but until now, the situation has continued to decline. Researchers heard this due to internal conflicts between the Kiai Uwes extended family in the management of this pesantren which caused its development not to go well.

The Al-Qur'an and As-Sunnah movement spread in the Cihampelas sub-district and not only developed in the Rongga area but began to apply also in the Muhajirin area of Mekarmukti Village when Haji Ohim's family and his wife started to settle in the area in early 1975. In the atmosphere then, there were still many salak trees, coconut trees, and gardens belonging to residents. Not yet visible religious activities that stand out in this area are all still NU traditions, said Hajah Euis to researchers (Hajah Euis and Haji Ohim, PERSIS, Interview, 21 October 2022). There is a small prayer room called the Muhajirin prayer room; "my husband and I often worship and meet some residents there." Incidentally, our religious understanding has led to the movement of the Al-Quran and As-Sunnah, but at that time, we had not officially become PERSIS organization members (Hajah Euis, Interview, 21 October 2022).

We were entrusted with developing the Muhajirin prayer room, and Haji Ohim was appointed chairman of the Mosque Prosperity Council (DKM) in a few years; around 1980, I started to get interested in the recitations organized by the PERSIS congregation of the Cimahi branch, if Haji Ohim was originally before he married his mother, he was a Muhammadiyah youth leader for completing Religious Teacher Education (PGA) and State Islamic Judge Education (PHIN) in Yogyakarta and immediately received



instruction from Muhammadiyah figures who happened to teach at PHIN. When you finished teaching, you liked to recite the Qur'an at Kiai Uwes Rongga because you have the same understanding. Finally, you met Hajah Euis and got married; we both agreed that we would preach according to the teachings of the Qur'an and As-Sunnah (Hajah Euis, Interview, 21 October 2022). So in 1992, after a long struggle, she finally established a PERSIS Istri.

The biggest challenge I faced while preaching PERSIS in Cihampelas Village was changing the mindset of the people who still often perform rituals that they say are the teachings of Rasulullah, like the habits of mothers who often hold a seven-month Thanksgiving event when a family member is pregnant, even though according to my understanding I was not exemplified by Rasulullah. Then the *tahlilan* event starts from the first, third, seventh, forty to one-hundredth day every year; if there is any evidence, where is the argument if worship must be based on the Al-Qur'an and As-Sunnah, not based on heredity or habits (Hajah Euis, PERSIS istri, Interview, 12 November 2022).

Another habit that residents like is to do pilgrimages to graves considered sacred only to hope to receive blessings. And residents often carry out events such as *Mauludan*, *Rajaban*, and *Shalawatan*, which are filled with holding gatherings reading *tahlilan* and finally eating *tumpang* together. In our opinion, all these traditions will burden the poor, even though religion should not be burdensome his people. We want to change all these ritual traditions so that people understand more about the teachings of the Al-Qur'an and As-Sunnah correctly.

But our struggle was not easy because many community members could not accept our da'wah, so once a resident visited our house, he was screaming at us. We were accused of bringing a new religion, there was even a time when he wanted to fight and father, but the same mother was prevented from doing so. Citizen sentiment does not end there. When we made and installed the sign precisely in front of the house. The following day the sign was removed and thrown into the Citarum River. But we continued to fight, and now we have a boarding school and a school that we named At-Takwa.

### **The Religious Life of the Community in Cihampelas District, 1990-Present**

From the description above, it can be seen that in 1960-1990, the religious condition of the Cihampelas sub-district community was in a growth and development phase. The existence of traditional Islam at that time became the majority community in the Cihampelas sub-district community. Traditions and rituals usually carried out by the NU community are rules that the people of the Cihampelas sub-district must carry out. The emergence of the Al-Qur'an and As-Sunnah movements, which Kiai Uwes Mak'mum preached in Rongga and the Haji Ohim family in Muhajirin, marked the beginning of the entry of the Muhammadiyah and PERSIS organizations in this region. Clashes that were small to violent confrontations between traditional Islamic groups represented by the NU community and reformist Islamic movements represented by the Muhammadiyah and PERSIS groups began to occur, resulting in societal conflicts that emerged starting from the individual level began to turn into conflicts that communal.

If you look at the religious condition of the Cihampelas sub-district community from 1990 to the present, there have been many changes in line with the changing needs of the social setting that occurred in this region. Cihampelas District, which in 1960-1990 was a representative of a traditional village with an exclusive system of conventional religious patterns of society. Exclusive religious attitudes are usually small in quantity, isolated and underdeveloped, and still hold high sacred values for occult or sacred social institutions. Each member of this type of society shares the same religion. Therefore their membership in

organizations and institutions is the same. Religion incorporates its sacred influence into the value system of a society. During the 1960-1990 period, Cihampelas Village was still dominated by traditional Islamic groups, so all religious understandings in the community were still the same; they were still strong in sacred values, including charismatic religious leaders. It is only natural that joining a religious movement considered new and contrary to existing traditions will be opposed and cause conflict in society.

However, over time and with changes in the social conditions of the Cihampelas sub-district community in the last ten years, the face of Cihampelas village, which used to be included in the traditional village category, has changed to a pre-industrial village or in McGee's language calls it Desakota (McGee, 1991). This area is experiencing a period of transition with geographical characteristics that still have many rural parts, namely a large amount of agricultural land but in a social life system, leading to an urban form of society with diverse livelihood characteristics and a relatively high level of community mobility.

The characteristics mentioned by McGee about the Desakota area are very suitable for the current conditions of the Cihampelas sub-district. The construction of road facilities and infrastructure and the structure of the Saguling reservoir has made this area the main route for vehicles to pass between regions. If people want to travel to the Cililin and Gununghalu, West Bandung areas, they must go through them. Strategic conditions, both geographically and economically, have made many migrants stop and settle in the Cihampelas area. The business creativity of the Cihampelas village community increases every year, along with the increasing education of the community members. The latest data shows that the people of the Cihampelas sub-district have graduated from junior high and high school on average.

Many people in the Cihampelas sub-district work as factory workers in the Cimareme and Soreang industrial areas. This has led to an increase in the type of livelihood of the Cihampelas sub-district community, which is no longer dominated by agriculture. There are many educational facilities in the Cihampelas area, making this area the center of education for the surrounding sub-districts in West Bandung Regency. Both formal and informal education.

In 1960-1990, many religious figures in the Cihampelas sub-district opened educational foundations with various affiliated religious organizations, such as Kiai Asep Burhanuddin, who built the Darul Falah Islamic Boarding School, which was affiliated with NU in the village of Cihampelas, Babakan Kubang. The Kiai Uwes Makmun family made the Umul Quro Islamic boarding school in the Rongga area, which the Muhammadiyah tradition characterizes and the Haji Ohim family founded the At-Takwa Islamic boarding school in the Baru Makkarmukti village, which is affiliated with PERSIS.

The development of the three pesantren can be felt as increasing or declining as seen since 1990-present. Adequate educational facilities and infrastructure in the Cihampelas sub-district have changed the religious paradigm of the community, which used to be of the only type and full of nuances of conflict. Now it has changed to the inclusive type, a religious model usually owned by pre-industrial villages such as the Cihampelas area (De Ligt, 2023). In this type of society, religion gives meaning and ties to the value system, but at the same time, the sacred and secular environment is more or less still distinguishable. The patterns that apply to social actors are still supported by religion, but in daily activities, religion is of little value in an inclusive society.

Religious values in this society focus on integrating individual behavior and forming self-image. Most members of this community are members of an influential religious organization, which usually also manages educational and health facilities for the community. If there is a spiritual conflict here, it is only an inner conflict because it is based on religion alone. Therefore it is not too visible because it does not take the form of a violent confrontation.

There was a change or transformation of the religious values possessed by the people of the Cihampelas sub-district from 1990 until now. Researchers see the level of conflict is no longer high. Individual residents who began to localize their residences based on their religious affiliation began to hold each other back. Many migrants in the Cihampelas sub-district teach native people to accept and respect differences. Religious affairs are no longer seen as a coercive and communal imperative. Religious traditions and rituals that used to be between 1960-1990 had characteristics that forced residents to carry them out, such as carrying out seven monthly events, *Tahlilan*, *Sholawatan*, *Rajaban*, visiting graves and reciting the Qur'an at graves, *Qurban* at mosques, etc. Because if you don't carry out these rituals, you will be subject to social sanctions; now, it has undergone many transformations in form and function.

These traditions and rituals have changed their function and position to become a choice. This means that in the past, residents were forced to follow the rules and patterns because it had become a habit that had become standard practice in the community, and if it were not carried out, it would be considered harmful. Now its value and function for society have turned into a choice. In easier words, "If you want to do it, go ahead, and if you don't do it, it's okay; there are no social sanctions that the community must bear." (Tori, Interview, 12 December 2022). Why did this happen? In the 1960-the 1990s, the number of religious facilities and infrastructure in the Cihampelas sub-district was still small, so residents had difficulty carrying out their religious activities and did not have many choices. But now, many facilities and infrastructure for places of worship have been built and established in the Cihampelas sub-district so that residents can choose freely according to the wishes of each individual without any coercion from local leaders or community leaders.

### **Cihampelas District Religious Cohesiveness**

Neutral community or middle way is the most appropriate word to reflect the Muhajirin area in Cihampelas District. Researchers can give a label like that to this place based on observations and facts that researchers find in the field. In the Muhajirin area, an area was formed, a neutral zone (Bridges & Bridges, 2019), a community whose contents were migrants and several extended families of Haji Uu who had a significant role and role in the construction of the Al-Muhajirin mosque in the past. The residents non-explicitly try to build a shared commitment with the same vision and mission, namely simply wanting to live in peace and as much as possible to avoid conflicts caused by differences in understanding or affiliation of religious organizations.

The Al-Muhajirin Mosque is a mosque that has become a symbol of the neutral religious zone in the Cihampelas sub-district. From the past until now, this mosque cannot be claimed as a mosque affiliated with any religious organization. Even though at the beginning of its establishment in the 1970s, there were parties who wanted to make this mosque the initial basis for the establishment of the PERSIS congregation in the Cihampelas sub-district, this was rejected by local community leaders, namely the Haji Uu family and Haji Saefullah (Hajah Euis PERSIS Istri, Interview, 17 October 2022).

Al-Muhajirin mosque symbolizes the religious neutral zone in the Cihampelas sub-district. A place where free people who do not want to be affiliated with any organization gather with the sole intention of worshiping Allah, congregations are free to express themselves without fear of being made into NU, Muhammadiyah, or PERSIS cadres. The name of the Al-Muhajirin mosque, which means migrants, migrants fits perfectly with the objective conditions in it. The location of the mosque, which is close to the Cihampelas Village market adds to the neutral values of this mosque.

Usually, traders, who are primarily immigrants, will stop by and perform prayers at this mosque to perform the morning or noon prayers while using the restroom at the same time. Islamic mass

organizations have repeatedly tried to co-opt and claim the mosque as a mosque of a particular sect but have consistently failed. This mosque has always stood as a neutral zone. Finally, they gave up and founded their mosque. Al-Muhajirin itself, as its name implies, has always been a mosque for immigrants who have always tried to develop a neutral zone full of tolerance, where people who are outcasts from NU, Muhammadiyah, and PERSIS gather there. Or people who, because of their old age or who no longer care about the identity of their religious organization, want to try to worship peacefully there.

Inside the Al-Muhajirin mosque, we will see an interesting religious phenomenon, where congregations can worship according to the jurisprudence they each understand without any interference from other communities. The researcher found that some congregation members secretly recited the Naqsyabandi dhikr (pray) without being rebuked by others. Or when one speaker says *sayyidina* Muhammad while the other only says Muhammad, the two greet each other intimately when they meet. A mosque where one moves his index finger during *tasyahud* while the other congregation doesn't, and after the prayer, they still shake hands with a smile. A mosque where people come to worship as individuals and then return without wanting to get too involved in the affairs, activities, and thoughts of each other congregation.

Al-Muhajirin is a representative of a metropolitan mosque located in a rural area. However, there are not too many congregations; this mosque is more accommodating to differences than other mosques in the vicinity, which are very strong with specific religious organization affiliations. Perhaps it would be better if researchers say that the atmosphere there is similar to the atmosphere of the Grand Mosque, the Prophet's Mosque, or the usual mosques in housing complexes in urban areas. People come from various regions to worship and do not care about differences in technical matters in the implementation of their worship.

This spirit, this philosophy, seems to be commonly known by the people of Cihampelas. Until there were several comments from residents saying that the al-Muhajirin mosque was a mosque, it was not clear, he said. But for people who feel excluded from their religious organizational affiliations, the al Muhajirin mosque is an oasis. They came to Al-Muhajirin and became his *jama'ah*. Older adults whose homes are near the Al-Muhajirin mosque, who went to other mosques for Friday when they were younger, now start Friday there. Like the story of Abah Illi.

In the past, Abah had to walk a kilometer on Fridays to the Kiai Asep mosque at Cihampelas Crossroads... but now I'm not here in Muhajirin, Kiai It's Friday... and it turns out that it's important Friday. At the Al-Muhajirin mosque, it is also sufficient. (Illi, Interview, 7 March 2022).

Al-Muhajirin mosque, a neutral zone in Cihampelas village, is the result of a long evolution; the neutrality of the Muhajirin mosque has a long history. In the past, Al-Muhajirin was not like that. At least when it was founded, it was not intended to be a neutral zone. This mosque was founded by reformers who were always called to return to the Qur'an and sunnah and eliminate superstitions of heresy and superstition.

In the past, this mosque was a symbol of defiance of traditional Islam. A place for people who disagree with NU traditions. They gathered and closed ranks in this mosque. Because of that, in the past, an NU member whose house was near the Al-Muhajirin mosque when he went on Friday, went to Darul Falah, where Kiai Asep was, even though he had to walk one kilometer to do this. Haji Uu, then they don't dare. The history of the neutrality of the Al-Muhajirin mosque began with internal conflicts between congregations; at the beginning of its establishment, the Muhajirin mosque was only a tiny prayer room made of bamboo, founded by the Haji Uu and Haji Saefullah families in the 1970s. Then Haji Ohim and his wife joined in prospering the prayer room. After four renovations, the mosque was finally expanded in

terms of the building and the land. So the Al-Muhajirin mosque was realized as it is today. For the management of the mosque, it was initially handed over to Haji Ohim and his wife, Hajah Euis.

At the beginning of his tenure as chairman of the Mosque Prosperity Council (DKM), Haji Ohim had a target of holding Friday prayers at the Muhajirin mosque; even though there were only ten worshipers, Friday prayers were still held, although at first, the local people laughed at them, but over time the congregation grew. Haji Ohim acted as an imam and preacher at the same time. He pioneered recitation for men and women and for communities that gathered 30 people.

When there were many congregations, Haji Ohim's family wanted to make the Al-Muhajirin mosque affiliated with the PERSIS organization, but this was rejected by Haji Uu's family, especially his wife Haji Nunung. As a result of this incident, Haji Ohim's family finally withdrew from activities at the Muhajirin mosque and concentrated on forming the PERSIS *jamiya* in the Cihampelas area. The followers of Haji Ohim affiliated with PERSIS were also disappointed; they then separated. They do their studies in residential homes. Later, they built their mosque in the At-Takwa district and left the Al-Muhajirin mosque. Feeling abandoned by the PERSIS congregation, the Al-Muhajirin side, represented by Haji Uu's extended family, also felt hurt. So even though these two groups sometimes still say hello, they are not as close as before. Their relationship froze. Sometimes when asked about his former friend, they avoided it.

However, if pushed out the expression of their disappointment with each other. Occasionally they reveal the ulcers of their former close friend, although they correct it and repeat it in a gray language as if they regret talking about their former close friend (Yayat, Al-Muhajirin, Interview, 21 October 2022). After the death of the Haji Ohim family, there was a vacancy in the al-Muhajirin mosque which later had to be filled. In contrast, the Haji Uu family, whose background was a trader, did not have the capacity and ability to manage the mosque at that time, so they were quite overwhelmed managing it. Hence, they needed help from other people. Then came a migrant named Haji Marsa, who was trusted by Haji Uu's family to manage the mosque. Haji Marsa's leadership did not last long because he was involved in a conflict with the Haji Uu family; after that incident, Haji Uu's family never again asked for help from other people to build and manage the mosque until Haji Uu died in 2014. Since then, the Muhajirin mosque has become one of the only neutral zone mosques in the Cihampelas sub-district.

The phenomenon of the neutral zone in the Cihampelas sub-district, represented by an area called Al-Muhajirin is one of the proofs that there has been social change in the area, which in turn has led to religious transformation. Cihampelas District, which used to be characterized by rural areas, is now starting to have characteristics of urban areas. Relations among its citizens lack depth and closeness. The life system becomes individualistic—most people live in various professions. And society is no longer homogeneous. This change has led to a transformation of the people living around the area. They try not to disturb each other and attempt not to interfere too much in other people's affairs, including in matters of religious way.

## **CONCLUSION**

The religious pattern of the Cihampelas sub-district community from 1960 to 1990 represents the exclusive spiritual pattern of traditional village communities. Exclusive religious attitudes still hold high sacred values towards things that are unseen or sacred community institutions. Every member of this society shares the same religion. Therefore their membership in organizations and institutions is the same. Religion incorporates its godly influence into the value system of a community. During the 1960-1990 period, Cihampelas Subdistrict was still dominated by the Islamic group Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), so all religious understandings in society were still the same, still strong towards sacred values, including

charismatic religious figures. Therefore, when new religious movements such as Muhammadiyah and PERSIS, which contradict existing traditions, enter the area, their existence is opposed and creates social conflict.

However, significant changes occurred in the Cihampelas community from 1990 until now, when the religious pattern of the Cihampelas sub-district community became inclusive. In this society, religion gives meaning and ties to the value system. The ways that apply to social actors are still supported by faith, but religion is not very valuable to society in daily activities because it is more inclusive. Religious values in this society focus on integrating individual behavior and forming self-image. This means that if there is a spiritual conflict, it is only an inner conflict based on differences in religious understanding; it is not visible because it is not in the form of a confrontation. Based on their religious affiliation, each localized group began to restrain themselves. Many migrant residents in Cihampelas teach residents to start accepting differences and respecting each other. Therefore, religious affairs are no longer seen as a coercive and communal obligation.

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