

# Concepts and Practices of Religious Moderation in Kei Local Wisdom

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## ABSTRACT

Religious moderation based on local wisdom is spread throughout Indonesian archipelago, one of which is that of the Kei ethnic group in Southeastern Maluku. This paper deliberates concepts and practices of religious moderation based on Kei local wisdom, as it is still practiced today. Due to the strong bond of the uniting local wisdom, the people live in harmony regardless of their differences in faith. It is *Ain ni Ain's* philosophy of life and the customary law of Larvul Ngabal that allow of it. The first means "one has one", getting all the Kei together in a strong bond of brotherhood. The latter, the customary law of Larvul Ngabal, serves as a guidance in intercommunity relations. Both have been tested as tools of social reconciliation when the religious conflict across Maluku spread to the Kei Islands. The principle of non-violence that became the spirit of *Ain ni Ain* and Larvul Ngabal succeeded in disintensifying the conflicts. The practice of religious moderation is implemented in the wisdom of *fanganan* (empathy), *yelim* (helping each other), and *maren* (mutual cooperation). All of the three are practiced in interreligious relations, such as in the construction of houses of worship and commemoration of religious holidays that last to this day and contribute to the harmonious life of the people of Kei.

**Keywords:** Religious Moderation, Local Wisdom, Kei.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Kei refers to a customary territory whose people firmly hold their customary law called *Larvul Ngabal* to this day. *Larvul Ngabal* contains provisions of customary law which consists of seven articles which are later developed into 24 articles and divided into 3 sections of law (criminal, ethical, and civil) (Rahail, 1993). In addition to the law of *Larvul Ngabal*, the Kei people embrace the philosophy of life of *Ain ni Ain*. This philosophy plays a uniting role in the socially and religiously diverse Kei community (see Tiwery 2018 and Rahail 1993).

When religious conflict hit Maluku, the Kei Islands were briefly affected for 71 days following the conflict eruption. It was recorded that on March 31, 1999, the first eruption occurred in Tual and then spread to other Kei areas until June 1999. Compared to other Maluku regions, religious conflict in Kei erupted the latest and subsided the fastest. The reconciliation process was carried out effectively using the traditional approach of Larvul Ngabal and *Ain ni Ain*. Between July 1999 and February 2000, a reconciliation process took place

which succeeded in ending the conflict (lihat Topatimasang 2004). Traditional leaders from various customary areas (*ohoi*, *rat-schaap*, and *lor*) together with religious leaders went directly to oversee the reconciliation process using a traditional approach and Kei's local wisdom.

The effectiveness of the approach of resolving conflicts through custom in Kei shows that the people still adhere themselves to the custom and the kinship system. According to the Maluku Baileo Network Foundation, Kei is "the last strongest traditional stronghold in Maluku". In accordance with the Kei principle "agam ni babilun adat" (religion based on custom), traditional approach has the necessary power to solve religious problems (Elmas 2004:99). With it the temporarily disturbed harmony could be reestablished in proper time.

The Kei community is bound by territories where values are shared that create strong emotional relationships in the physical as well as in the sociocultural environment (Waileruny 2011). As a local identity, the Kei uphold their local wisdom. In regard

with this, as Sabara (2016) asserts values of local wisdom in the form of traditions and social norms in society can functionally strengthen the cultural system which is then believed and recognized as an important element for social cohesion. The three religious groups in Kei (Islam, Christianity and Catholicism) as mentioned by Muchtar (2013) are part of a social group with a crucial role in the socioreligious aspects of life for its members, including to create and maintain harmonious life.

Kei's local wisdom stimulates the presence of a spirit of religious moderation which is embodied in concepts that are firmly held and fully implemented. It is common in Kei, when Muslims build mosques, their Christian and Catholic brothers are involved in the construction. On the other hand, when Christians want to build churches, Muslims are enthusiastic to help. Kei's local wisdom is one of the cultural assets owned by the Indonesian people in strengthening religious moderation which requires four indicators. They are tolerance, non-violence, national spirit, and accommodative to local culture (Kemenetrian Agama RI, 2019).

Local wisdom which is part of local culture is the identity or cultural personality of a community that makes them able to absorb and process culture into their own cultural character (Wibowo dan Gunawan, 2015). Local wisdom is a reflection of the local knowledge of a community in responding to situations in their environment and social situations (Sabara, 2015). Local wisdom also shows the implementation of intelligence possessed by certain community groups obtained through community experience. In other words, local wisdom is the result of reflection on the experiences of certain communities that are not necessarily experienced by other communities (Daniah, 2016).

Local wisdom is a marker of the identity of a community, which shows that the community has a cultural identity as a civilized society. Local wisdom becomes a cohesive force that glues elements across religions and beliefs. In the context of various relationships, local wisdom functions as an arena and a space for dialogue to resolve various issues, even as a medium for reconciling social conflicts among groups. Local wisdom becomes the glue of fusion for a community that functionally encourages the foundation of a sense of togetherness. At the same time it can be optimized to ward off various possibilities that can reduce or damage the bonds of communal solidarity. Local wisdom grows from shared awareness that makes a community integrated. Local wisdom forms patterns of thought and social relations which are the result of the synthesis and integration of socio-cultural and socio-religious elements (Jati, 2013).

Local wisdom is a guide for local people to behave in social interactions. Living life with a moderate

attitude is generally required by local wisdom, including in Kei. Moderate attitude, if implemented in the relation of religious diversity, will present an attitude of religious moderation. Tolerance is the result of moderate attitudes in religion. Moderation is a process while tolerance is the result. A moderate person may disagree with an interpretation of religious teachings, but he will not openly blame others who disagree with him. Someone who is moderate must have an alignment with a religious interpretation, but he will not force it to apply to other people (Kementarian Agama RI, 2019). Religious moderation is an attitude that is implemented in active tolerance. Active tolerance as described by Walzer (1997), of what is called the "tolerance regime". That is, first, to accept and acknowledge that other people have rights. Second, it is not only limited to show acknowledgment, but also openness to others, or at least curiosity to understand "the other" person better. The third is to support, care for and celebrate differences. It could be not because of the reason that diversity is *sunnatullah*, but also it is opportunity to better form and shape human development.

Active tolerance which is meant as the implementation of religious moderation is not passively allowing differences, but an active proexistence attitude in differences which requires cooperation to achieve the common good (Osman, 2006). Furthermore, according to Nurcholish Madjid, (1999) active tolerance is "the true affinity of diversity in the bonds of civility". The attitude of active tolerance makes religion functional as an adhesive tool for social cohesion. There are several aspects that need to be considered by its adherents, that is, the collapse of sectoral or group egos, being not extremes and having mutual respect, as well as the emergence of collective consciousness as one community even in differences (Mashudi, 2014).

Thus, this paper aims to explore the concepts and practices of religious moderation in local wisdom by unraveling the concepts of local wisdom that are synergistic with the spirit of religious moderation. Furthermore, it describes the religious moderation practice in social interaction in the Kei community, in Maluku Province, as evidence of the strength of local wisdom in forming a society that is moderate in religion.

Methodologically, this paper is based on several studies in the Kei Islands during the last three years (2018-2021). The data collection was conducted by interviewing local leaders who are considered to understand Kei culture and inter-religious relations in Kei. Observations were made on the daily practice of the Kei people which reflected religious moderation. A study of documents from writings relevant to the issue was used as data complementaries.

## 2. DISCUSSION

### 2.1 *The Concept of Religious Moderation in Kei Local Wisdom*

Kei territory comprises 22 regions with autonomous sovereignty as a little kingdom (Hooe, 2012). The 22 Little kingdoms called *raat* then formed two alliances that often conflicted, that is, the Lor Siu and Lor Lim alliance. Both of these large customary groups has its own local history, sociopolitical order, kinship relations, and rules of customary law (Rahail, 1995). The long conflict between the two ended with a peace agreement that resulted in consensus, which was later treated as Kei's local wisdom which to this day remains effective.

Kei local wisdom, if systematized, shows a systematic series starting from the concept of the unity of humanity called *Ain ni Ain* which literally means "one has one" or unity by accepting the others as brothers (Kudubun, 2016). *Ain ni Ain* is a concept of the unity of humanity because it comes from one source. This philosophy is a traditional expression of the Kei people which has been passed down over generations both in written and oral form. The phrase that describes *Ain ni Ain* is Kei's ancestral message, "*manut en mehe ni tilur, funt en mehe ni ngifun*" (*eggs from the same fish and the same bird*), *Ain ni Ain's* philosophy of life plays a role in uniting the people of the Kei Islands plural in social, linguistic and religious aspects. On the basis of the collective consciousness created long ago, the people of the Kei Islands are truly aware that their local wisdom should be lived and actualized in their lives (Tiwery, 2018).

*Ain ni Ain* as the concept of universal human consciousness, is explained in the concept of *lar ba ba* (springing blood). It means that humans actually come from the same blood source which then radiates into scattered descendants. As brothers, humans come from the same ancestor, therefore respect towards the ancestors as a binder and reminder of the brotherhood of fellow humans. Kei people understand God as a person who gives life and life, while ancestors are understood by them as those who give birth and inherit everything to support and protect the lives of their descendants. The pairing of God and ancestors symbolizes the juxtaposition of religion (God) and customs (ancestors) in their belief system. Hence, religion and custom are combined and give birth to harmony in people's lives despite different religions (Sabara, 2019).

Religion is understood as the way to heaven and customs as the way for all to live in harmony and peace. Because it comes from one ancestor, so all of one blood so it is impossible to shed blood. Religion (Islam, Christianity, Catholicism) is understood as a new thing, while adat has existed long before the Kei people knew

religion about 100 years ago. The ancestors of the Kei people have laid down adat as the basis for building a peaceful life. Religion is carried out by each according to the teachings, but customs are still applied to these three communities; Catholicism, Christianity and Islam, because of that the Kei people have remained intact and peaceful, until now. For the Kei people, ancestors are not only as their geneological cause, but also as the guiding and unifying power of the harmonious society that lives in peace despite religious differences. In various moments, ancestral power has proven to be effective as a cause for the reconciliation process of conflicts that have occurred, including that in 1999.

This *Ain ni Ain* philosophy has shaped the character of the Kei people from the first because this expression contains positive noble values. The traditional expression *Ain ni Ain* helps build a tolerant society, love each other, respect each other, unity and unity, brotherhood and peace. This expression is interpreted as a form of brotherhood which in its meaning refers to the solidarity of the Kei community towards each other both in happy conditions and especially in difficult conditions.

The philosophy of *Ain ni Ain* was then elaborated in the customary law of Larvul Ngabal which regulates criminal, civil, and decency provisions. *Larvul* means red blood and *ngabal* means spear from Bali. This customary law came to replace the old law which is usually called the *Dolo* law which is more based on nature rule. The law of *Larvul* was established in Ohoi Elar Kei Kecil by nine rats (Ur Siu) and the law of *Ngabal* was established in Ohoi Lerohoiim Kei Besar by five rats (Lor Lim). Furthermore, after going through the war process, the two alliances agreed to make peace by combining the two laws into *Larvul Ngabal* law (Rahail, 1993, Kudubun, 2016, Silubun 2020).

As an elaboration of the philosophy of *Ain ni Ain*, Larvul Ngabal's law contains the recognition of human rights, in the form of the right to life, property rights, and human rights that must be respected. *Larvul Ngabal* Law which consists of seven main articles and their explanations (Silubun, 2020). Social relations are regulated in detail, that is, not to commit violence, not to take the rights of others, not to interfere, and to maintain mutual respect. The Law of Larvul Ngabal makes Kei a customary territory which is still held and culturally binding on the Kei community, regardless of religion. The Law of *Larvul Ngabal* is structurally institutionalized down to the smallest government unit, that is, the ohoi (village) and has proven to be effective as a cultural approach to prevent violence, reconcile conflicts, and build a living spirit of tolerance in diversity of beliefs.

*Ain ni Ain* is the key word in reading the social relations of the Kei community. *Ain ni Ain* is a humanist value that unites the Kei people so that they feel that

they are truly one. *Ain ni Ain* as the basis of values, then Larvul Ngabal as the normative foundation that regulates human relations. *Ain ni Ain* and Larvul Ngabal are the souls and cultural awareness of the Kei people regardless of their religion and wherever the village is. *Ain ni Ain* is a kinship bond while Larvul ngabal is a traditional bond.

The philosophy of *Ain ni Ain* and the law of Larvul Ngabal is reflected and embodied in the life attitude of the Kei people who are full of empathy, in local wisdom Kei is called *fanganan* which literally means feelings of affection. Wisdom or compassion encourages social sensitivity and empathy to move to help those who need help, even in matters relating to religion. *Fanganan* is an affective impulse in the consciousness of the Kei community which ultimately gives birth to feelings that are moved to help each other. Implementation in social action helps each other. Empathy makes the Kei people unable to remain silent when they see their brother in distress (interview, Efrain Silubun, 12/03/2021).

On the basis of the collective consciousness created long ago, the people of the Kei Islands are truly aware that their local wisdom should be lived and actualized in their lives (Tiwery, 2018). Empathy is implemented in *yelim* (helping each other) and *maren* (gotong royong) (Tildjuir, 2017). If *Ain ni Ain* is the philosophical foundation, Larvul Ngabal's law is a normative binder, *fanganan* is a mirror of consciousness, then *yelim* and *maren* are forms of local wisdom that are practical. Literally in the Kei language, *yelim* comes from the word *ye* which means foot and *im* which means hand. The philosophical meaning is the foot stepping and the hand giving (interview Albertus Jamlean, 13/02/2021). *Yelim* is assistance given in the form of goods or money. Symbolically, *yelim* is carried out through a traditional procession which has the meaning to strengthen blood relations, friendship, fellowship, kinship, and friendship (Azis Kerubun interview, 16/08/2021).

Meanwhile, the form of assistance provided is in the form of services or labor. *Yelim* and *maren* apply at various moments of the life cycle such as wedding celebrations to death. *Yelim* and *maren* are also applied to help relatives or local villagers who want to build houses of worship. In this context, the term *yelim/maren* mosque or church is known. Regarding *yelim*, Albertus Jamlean joked, "Kei people find it difficult to get rich, because there are too many costs for *yelim* to be spent, and for the Kei family, *yelim* is already included in the household budget". The practice of *yelim* and *maren* is what forms the practice of interreligious relations in Kei to have active tolerance in the sense of involvement in cooperation when they have the desire to build houses of worship, celebrate religious holidays, or have personal celebrations.

Kei's local wisdom is not only systemically structured but also institutionalized in the form of social

institutions. As an institution, this institution has a strong enough influence in preserving, caring for and developing local wisdom. In the Kei community, there are known triadic institutions that are quite respected and have influence, that is, traditional institutions, religious institutions, and government institutions. Customs-religion-government is a unit that is an element of social cohesion in society. With regard to religion and customs, the Kei people recognize the term *agam ni babilun adat* (religion based on custom), so that even they differ in religion, but one in blood and customs (interview, Saraju Sarwadan, 25/03/2019). The strong traditional ties that bind people who are divided into three religions are illustrated in the testimony given by Djangut Rahakbauw, an Islamic Religion teacher (interview, 03/23/2019): "Religion is carried out by each according to the teachings, but customs are still applied. in these three monuities; Catholicism, Christianity and Islam, therefore this family remains intact and at peace, until now."

The concept of religious moderation is illustrated very clearly in the series of Kei local wisdom which is systematically contained in the way of life of *Ain ni Ain*, Larvul Ngabal law, *fanganan* expressions, and the practice of *yelim* and *maren*. Kei's local wisdom, especially in the context of building religious moderation, borrows John Haba's term (dalam Rachman, 2007), is as a marker of identity and adhesive element (cohesive aspect) across citizens, across religions and beliefs. Effectively, the local wisdom has been successfully implemented in building social solidarity relationships to live in harmony and peace. Kinship ties and customs are the key words to build harmonious relations between religious communities through a balance of social and cultural order. This, according to Ritzer dan Goodman, (2012) occurs due to the mechanism of socialization of values and norms that occur both directly and indirectly in the community. Conceptually, religious moderation "has been completed" in the guidance of the local wisdom of the Kei community, to later become a guide and integrator of the practice of moderate living in religion.

## **2.2 Religious Moderation Practices in Kei Local Wisdom**

The wisdom of the Kei people's life such as; *fanganan* (togetherness or affection), *Yelim* (help each other) and *maren* (gotong royong) are actively implemented in the social, cultural and religious life of the community. Kei local wisdom is really functional as a formula that binds the social cohesion of people with different beliefs. The practice of interfaith relations is the practice of acceptance that goes beyond tolerance, which is most clearly reflected in the construction of houses of worship. Among the implementations of local wisdom is when the Kei people want to build a house of worship. Pieter Elmas in his writings in the book *Ken Sa*

Faak: Seeds of Peace from the Kei Islands (2004) recounts his experience when he was young, when he joined the MUDIKA organization (Young-Catholic Mudi). At that time, he and members of MUDIKA from his village went to a neighboring village to participate in community service (*maren*) of building a mosque. They worked all day and spent the night in the village to complete the construction of the mosque. When the next morning, they were about to return to their village, the head of MUDIKA said goodbye. At the end of his speech, he said, "custom wants us to come build this mosque, this mosque belongs to all of us, please use it to worship according to your religion".

The behavior of helping each other in establishing a house of worship has become an unwritten obligation. Villagers who want to build houses of worship will notify the surrounding villages according to custom. If there is no notification, the villagers will be offended because they feel they are not considered as relatives. On the appointed day, people from all over the regions would come with *yelims*, which in practice, in the context of building houses of worship, came to be known as three types of *yelims*. They are village *yelims*, clan *yelims*, and individual *yelims*.

When the Great Mosque of Tual City was built, the Christian Taar people came to provide material and labor assistance. On the other hand, Muslims from Tual and surrounding areas also performed *yelim* and *maren* when the Taar community renovated the church. One pastor said, when repairs were made to the ceiling in his church, Muslims came unsolicited to offer help, "they did all the things they could do, and we felt very helped by that". The pastor said (Sabara, 2019). In Puau Kei Besar, the best practice for the construction of houses of worship also takes place, the most recent is the construction of the Jami Wardan El Mosque in Banda Eli Village. In the construction of the mosque, people from neighboring villages who are Christians and Catholics are actively involved in the whole series of building the mosque. According to the Head of FKUB of Southeast Maluku Regency, Arifin Difinubun (interview, 15/02/2021) narrated about the construction of a mosque in one of the villages in Kei Besar, the Muslim population in the village is very small and is surrounded by Christian and Catholic villages. However, what is interesting is that the Christian and Catholic communities are very enthusiastic in the success of the construction of the mosque. There are many other stories about best practices in building houses of worship in the Kei Islands region.

The interesting thing according to Arifin Difinubun's narrative is that the provisions regarding the construction of houses of worship in the PBM are not given much concern. According to Arif

In, the PBM provisions only regulate if there are problems in the construction of houses of worship, and

so far there has never been a problem, so the construction of houses of worship proceeds according to the consensus and local wisdom of the local community. FKUB parties are still involved through the notification of construction, invitations to lay the first stone, until the inauguration of the house of worship. The most recent best practice is the construction of the Al-Manafi Mosque in Dian Pulau Village, the construction of which involved various elements of religious communities. Non-Muslims were totally involved in the construction, even joining the development committee.

The practice of religious meditation is described in the testimony of Reverend Hobertin Yosep (interview, 16/03/2019), a GPM pastor from Ambon who has served eight years at Elim Ohoidertawun Church.

"During the eight years I served at Kei, I had so many positive impressions, especially in the good relations that existed with people of different religions. People help each other in times of joy, especially when they are sad. If there are people who need help, without the person asking, in the term "casting their voices out", it is enough just to see or hear, they come for help. One of the most memorable experiences was when we church members were renovating the church ceiling. Seeing us busy in church, Muslim brothers without being invited, I underlined without being invited to come to offer help, they do all the things they can do, and we feel very helped by that"

Saraju Sarwadan, one of the imams of the mosque in Kei, recounted the atmosphere of fanganan, *yelim* and *maren* between Muslims and Christians when there was grief between them.:

When someone dies, whether that person is Muslim or Christian, we all help each other by taking our respective roles. If the deceased is a Muslim, then the Christian brothers will take on their role by preparing all kinds of burial equipment, starting from preparing boards, digging graves and others, *dong* (they) do this in order to give Muslim brothers the opportunity to focus on holding the *kifaat* corpse. Likewise, when the deceased is a Christian brothers, we Muslims are busy making coffins, digging graves and all things related to burial, let the Christian brothers focus on the worship of blessing the corpse. Likewise, when the Muslim *katong* holds a tahlil event until the seventh night, Christian brothers are also busy helping the implementation of the event. Their mothers usually come to cook while bringing the ingredients for the banquet. Their fathers are also busy gathering wood for cooking, arranging chairs and others. Likewise, we do the same when they do the same event during the worship service in the nights after death."

Throughout our observations on several activities, Muslims and Christians mingle and chat without any barriers as if there is no religious distance that separates

them. At the meal, everyone enjoyed the banquet without any awkwardness or worry, especially from the Muslims. When the researcher asked a veiled mother about who cooked this food, she answered; "Sir, don't worry, this food is halal for Muslims, it was cooked by Muslim and Christian mothers, with cooking utensils taken from Muslim mothers' homes". When Christians hold a celebration, they make a separate banquet, for Muslim food to be cooked and served in the homes of their Muslim families. A Muslim mother said: "When Christian brothers and sisters have an event, they always ask their Muslim families to cook separately and Muslim guests to eat in their homes, the dining area is not separated from the table, but made in another house". When a Muslim finds a pig caught in a snare that he puts in his garden, then he immediately calls their Christian brother to take the pig, usually the Muslim tells their Christian brother; "This is ose pung (yours) sustenance, take it, please".

The practice of religious moderation which is driven by the spirit and value of local wisdom includes aspects of religious, social, cultural, and economic relations. This practice shows a praxis of recognition and acceptance of the diversity that surrounds the society. The reflection of the practice of religious moderation that goes beyond just tolerance and passive coexistence is manifested in the acceptance of different beliefs. Acceptance requires strong will to understand and is realized in the form of constructive cooperation with other different parties. Every human being or different group has equal rights and obligations without having to strip off their identity or uniqueness. Implementation of religious moderation within the framework of active acceptance or tolerance in Kei, in Nurcholish Madjid, (1999), as "true ties in the bonds of civilization". This is shown by the Kei people who practice religious moderation based on the spirit of brotherhood and the value of local wisdom of Kei which is lived as an attitude of living together in differences.

The practice of religious moderation in the Kei community, whether Muslim, Catholic, or Christian, can be described by Walzer's fifth dimension, that is, tolerance is no longer just an acknowledgment and openness to accepting others, but also supports, nurtures and celebrates differences. There are three conditions for active tolerance, as Diana L. Eck (dalam Setiawan, 2013) said that active tolerance is involvement in diversity, active understanding across differences and the realization of commitment shown in general by the Kei community. For religious people in Kei, both Muslim and Christian, the celebration of differences is shown through commitment and active involvement in every religious celebration of other people. As stated by Saraju Sarwadan:

"In activities such as Christmas come, we from Muslim families participate in the celebration. We are

even chosen as the organizing committee. Approaching Christmas, Christmas nuances such as banners are not only full of Christian family settlements, but the whole village is filled with Christmas decorations including our Muslim family settlements."

Ian Kilmas, a young Muslim in Kei (interview, 21/03/2019) recounts the atmosphere of Christmas and Eid celebrations in his village:

We at Kei seemed to have two holidays and everything was festive for the whole village. When our Muslim Christmas on the 25th of the afternoon were busy visiting the Christian family's house, shaking hands and enjoying the food they provided. The food was made by Muslim mothers together with Christian mothers. Likewise, when Lebaran, our Christian family came, we made a banquet in front of the mosque, we set up tents, installed chairs and we all enjoyed eating and drinking together after we finished praying."

On Sunday morning after Christians worshiped, we visited Elim Ohoidertawun Church to conduct an interview, a church mother told us about the atmosphere of Christmas last year

Last Christmas, Muslim Brothers and the Imam also came in to this church and sat together with us until there were not enough seats in the church for everyone to sit down. If it's Eid al-Fitr, Christians gathered in front of the mosque, after the sermon was read, everyone shoke hands and ate together".

The practice of religious moderation in the Kei community is an implementation of the awareness that the relationship of tolerance that exists between people of different religions is an ancestral heritage that must be maintained by strengthening religious understanding that is moderate, inclusive and in synergy with Kei cultural customs. Mutual understanding of each other's religions and understanding the differences that exist and is realized by active cooperation between people within the framework of brotherhood and customs are the key words in an effort to maintain the harmony of religious communities in the Kei Islands.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

The concept of religious moderation is reflected in the systematics of Kei's local wisdom. The philosophical foundation of Kei's local wisdom is *Ain ni Ain* which means brotherhood and the unity of humanity. The philosophy of *Ain ni Ain* is emphasized in *Larvul Ngabal's* law as a normative reference that regulates social relations in society. The philosophical foundations and normative references internalize *fanangan* consciousness which means love. The implementation is the wisdom of *yelim* (helping each other) and *maren* (mutual cooperation). The systematic series of Kei local wisdom both explicitly and implicitly contain messages of brotherhood and unity that

encourage a moderate attitude of religious life in responding to various beliefs. The Kei people have different religions, but the customary system and local wisdom values unite them.

Local wisdom as a conceptual basis is implemented in the practice of religious moderation of the pluralistic Kei community. The practice of religious moderation is the practice of humanitarian empathy and active cooperation that goes beyond tolerance. The practice of religious moderation is manifested in full involvement in supporting and caring for differences. This is shown in the practice of *yelim* and *maren* when building houses of worship and celebrating religious holidays that include social relations between faith communities.

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