

## **Interreligious Literature Through Purpur Sage for Strengthening Tolerance Between Religions in Karo Land**

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### **Abstract**

This study aims to answer research problems regarding the implementation of interreligious literacy in the Karo tribe through Purpur Sage, inter-religious tolerance and the implementation of Purpur Sage in the Karo community. This research uses descriptive qualitative method with the theory of Interreligious Literacy (IL) approach. This research was conducted in Barus Jahe, Tanah Karo with research informants consisting of 14 people who were selected by purposive sampling. The research was conducted using a focus group discussion in purpur sage and in-depth interviews. The results of the study were analyzed qualitatively with the triangulation technique to check the validity of the data. The results showed First; literacy is carried out through purpur sage discussing the factors that cause extreme attitudes, namely the shallow understanding of one's own religion and the religions of others, the existence of different interpretations of religious doctrine, cultural differences, and the problem of the majority and religious minorities. Efforts to prevent extreme attitudes are religious leaders sitting together, discussing and finding solutions to the realization of religious tolerance through collaborative dissemination activities. All religious adherents carry out the mandate of religious laws and the government stands above all religions fairly. Second, In the land of Karo, tolerance between religious communities is manifested through dialogue, the forms of dialogue that are carried out such as dialogues of faith and dialogue of works between religious communities without discrimination. Third: strengthening tolerance between people Religion can be done by means of interfaith leaders, people and educators and cultural staff, village government officials and the community gather together in a cultural platform called Purpur Sage. The recommendation from the research is that purpur sage can be used as a forum for interreligious literacy in society as well as can be used as a local and national cultural wealth.

**Keywords:** Interreligious Literacy, Tolerance, Purpur Sage, Karo Community

## Introduction

literacy is a person's ability to know, understand the religion and religious practices of others. Someone who has *interreligious literacy* (IL) can make someone respect religion, understand and respect the religious diversity of other people who are different from their religion. Interreligious literacy is a place to achieve a peaceful life together. IL as a meeting place for adherents of different faiths to learn from each other and recognize different experiences and learn to take the same values from various religious teachings so that they can live in peace together. Inter-religious literacy can be carried out in the form of dialogue between religious communities which aims to share experiences of inter-religious faith with each other. So, with the ability of IL, the community can open space to be open to religious tolerance or open to religious pluralism that is created in harmony. Religious tolerance is the attitude and action of giving freedom to fellow religious people or fellow citizens to practice their beliefs, regulate their lives and determine their lives (Meliati Ake, 2019). Ainna, et al (2018) argue that tolerance must be based on broad insight or knowledge about religious diversity, need an attitude of openness and freedom of thought without violating the rules. Aina made us aware that tolerance between religious communities is a very fundamental thing to be implemented in Indonesia because the Indonesian nation is a country with multi ethnicities, religions and races.

It is undeniable that there are often disturbances in the survival of the community due to the problem of violations of tolerance between religious communities. One of the violations that is always up to date or continues to develop until now is the problem of religious tolerance. There are several records of the experience of the Indonesian people regarding the problem of inter-religious tolerance in Indonesia. For example, the problem of religious tolerance due to conflict. The conflicts that occur are caused by not fully living their own religion, and not respecting the diversity of other religions. M. Nizan, et al, (2021) explained that the problems of religious tolerance such as what happened in Aceh, Sambas, Ambon, Papua and the conflict in Poso were sad experiences. In 2015 there was a conflict in Papua, besides the burning of mosques and acts of violence. For example, the attack on Christians and GIDI against Muslims who were carrying out the Eid prayer 1 Shawwal 1436 H at the Korem 1702-11 Headquarters in Tolikara. Ismail (2014) argues that conflicts with religious nuances become violent because there are provocateurs who convey abnormal logic and spread distortionary issues so that they can affect other groups and eventually lead to conflict. Then, Bennet (2021) stated that religious intolerance and hatred continue to occur throughout the world during the civil rights movement, churches were burned and bombed. Recently, the congregation synagogues, churches and mosques around the world have fallen victim to shootings, bombings, and burning. FBI (2017) reports 22.1% of hate crimes reported in US fueled by religion, second reported 58.1% motivated by bias race/ethnicity/heredity. In addition, in 2018 the Setara Institute has released an index of tolerant cities and related to this the research results of Ricky Santoso Muharam (2020) found 10 cities that had the lowest tolerance index including Sabang, Medan, Makassar, Bogor, Depok, Padang, Cilegon, Jakarta, Banda Aceh and Tanjung Balai.

The problems of intolerance as described above occur because of the shallowness of one's IL ability, so that it has the potential to cause inter-religious conflicts that lead to serious levels of problems ranging from intolerance to religious radicalism. So, Indonesia with multi-religious and multi-religious backgrounds can potentially lead to conflicts which then breed resentment and lead to tensions between religious communities due to difficult problems to resolve (Asnath N. Natar, 2020). Eko Digdoyo (2018) explains that there are dominant factors causing the increasing tension between religions, namely the occurrence of problems of attacks

on churches, discrimination and intimidation against minority groups. In this regard, Marz Wera (2019) emphasized that although freedom of

religion has long been touted in the Republic of Indonesia as stated in the Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, in reality religious freedom in 24 provinces is in a threatened position. Examples of problems according to Marz Wera (2019) and have occurred over a certain period of time, for example, throughout 2016 and even 2017 Komnas HAM noted that there were 97 cases related to religious intolerance. It is suspected that these cases will continue to increase in 2017. In 2018 there was an increase, namely in June 2018 totaling 109 cases. Marz Wera, et al (2018) revealed various cases that received attention and drained the energy of all parties to sit down together to open a dialogue room. First, the case of the forced disbandment of religious activities or the Spiritual Awakening Service (KKR) which took place at Sabuga ITB Bandung in 2016 to coincide with the Christmas celebration for Christians. Second, the case of accusations of blasphemy against the former governor of DKI Jakarta Basuki Tjahaja Purnama coincided with the political context in early 2017 which left a grudge for some people and even had an effect on volume demonstrations. Third, the reports of several NGOs against Habib Rizieq who were deemed to have tarnished the teachings of Catholic Christianity. Fourth, the video of Ustad Abdul Somad which was judged by several NGOs to be insulting to Catholic-Christian religious symbols and other issues such as the recent suicide bombings. This shows that the serious problem faced by this nation is the problem of pluralism to the point of increasing intolerance. All of these problems certainly need to be reflected by all parties, Indonesian citizens who adhere to Pancasila as the basis of the State to carry out an appropriate form of dialogue between religions in Indonesia. So, based on these problems, interreligious dialogue between religious communities is needed. Inter-religious dialogue is one of the steps or strategies in strengthening religious tolerance. Raimundo Panikkar (Hamidulloh, 2018) emphasizes that dialogue can develop inclusive awareness that touches on two things, first, the existence of one's awareness of the subject of another's faith. Second, dialogue can direct the cooperation of all parties to solve common humanitarian problems in society. Therefore, it is necessary to have a common point that binds together so that we can work together towards peace. So, there is no world peace without the peace of religions and there is no peace between religions without dialogue between religious people.

Peace or tolerance of religious communities can be achieved through local cultural methods or habits owned by the community. One of the methods in question is Purpur Sage which is found in the local culture of the Karo tribe. Purpur Sage (Ria Ebregina, 2021) is one of the strategies or models of conflict resolution between all conflicting parties so that they can finally achieve peace. So, conflict resolution and restoration of damaged relationships can be restored with a cultural peace called Purpur Sage which is found in the culture of the Karo tribe. Purpur Sage (Ria Ebregina, 2021) is carried out by the Karo tribe in reconciling disputes between family members, between one person and another who has been in conflict. Purpur Sage aims to create peace (reconciliation) and restore conditions or family relationships that have been damaged due to conflicts or disputes. Purpur Sage aims to build harmonious relations, maintain social balance, improve social relations in a communal society and also build a good religious atmosphere and be carried out within the framework of dialogue for the purpose of peace.

The description above leads the researcher to determine research problems, namely

1) How is interreligious literacy in the Karo ethnic community? 2. What is the form of religious tolerance in the Karo ethnic community? Sage in the context of interreligious literacy in the Karo people? is Purpur describes the implementation of Purpur Sage in the context of

interreligious literacy in the Karo community. This research is important, because this topic is up to date and contextual at this time because of the echo of religious moderation launched by the government so that all Indonesian people apply it together. The target to be achieved through this research topic is that the community can jointly implement religious tolerance so that the Indonesian people remain intact and united without being threatened by problems between religious communities. Therefore, the author conducted a study entitled "Interreligious Literacy Through Purpur Sage for Strengthening Tolerance Between Religious People in Tanah Karo".

## Literature Review

### *Interreligious*

Literacy Literacy is the skill of listening, speaking, writing, reading, and critical thinking (Suherli Kusmana, 2021). Literacy *rooted* in the word *literate*, which is basically interpreted as an effort to familiarize (familiar) with literature, meaning educated and educated (Zaenal Abidin, 2020). Literacy is the creation and interpretation of texts by paying attention to social, historical, and cultural situations. Achmad Munjid stated that there are three models in studying religions (Achmad Munjid, et al. 2016), namely: a) Monoreligious, is a model of religious studies that only studies the religion adopted; b) Multireligious is a model of religious studies that does not only study the religion adopted, but also other religions; c) Interreligious, namely a model of religious studies that emphasizes the aspect of dialogue between religious communities. In the context of learning, Nur Aliet al (2021) stated that IL refers to the knowledge needed to identify different religions and accept the application of different beliefs either within one religion or between different religions. So, Interreligious literacy (Abu-Nimer, et al, 2016) is part of intercultural education and, like intercultural education, aims to build understanding, tolerance, and social cohesion to "actively shape the relationship of different peoples" religion".

*Interreligious Literacy (IL)* is a religious study model that passionately and optimistically understands religions (Zuyyina Candra Kirana, 2020). IL is formulated to cover deficiencies in understanding religions which are usually still closed to the kinds of beliefs held by citizens. Through IL participants learn in encounters in recognizing faith experiences, taking lessons from the same values contained in all religious teachings for peaceful living together. To realize that hope, Mahathir (2014) stated that a joint commitment from all stakeholders of religious education is needed as regulated in the 1945 Constitution. Abu-Nimer, M., Smith, RK (2016) emphasized how the importance of building intercultural and interreligious competence in order to create peaceful and cohesive society.

The literature on IL tends to focus on three aspects, namely, first, the factors that cause extreme and radical behavior. Second, the act of blocking sites and inclusive religious education by government forums, educational forums, and social media platforms designed to prevent extremism and silence 'intolerant movements' that encourage radicalization. Third, the influence of radicalism, extremism and intolerance on democratic practices, youth identity crisis, and the impact of ideological disparities in social networks. Extreme attitudes caused by factors such as social, religious and cultural conflicts can trigger intolerance (Eko Digdoyo, 2018).

There are four main things as a source of social conflict originating from religion, namely Differences in Doctrine and Mental Attitudes, Differences in Ethnic and Racial Adherents of Religion, Differences in Cultural Levels, Problems with Majority and Minorities of Religious Groups. Extreme attitudes can become obstacles to religious tolerance (Eko  
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Digdoyo, 2018), which can lead to Fanaticism and Radicalism, the Spread of One Religion to People of Other Religions, and also syncretism. These extreme attitudes can be prevented through efforts to foster tolerance and religious harmony (Digdoyo, 2018) including: a) Increasing the effectiveness of the functions of local wisdom and community religious institutions, b) Increasing community religious insight, c) Promoting humanist social cooperation across religions, cultures, ethnicities and professions, d) Enriching insight and experience regarding harmony through social programs and in the world of education, f) Meetings of interfaith leaders on an ongoing basis are a form of fostering religious communities that are not only carried out when conflicts occur. In building tolerance between religious communities, A. Ubaedillah and Abdul Rozak share five principles that serve as guidelines for all religious adherents in their daily lives, the principles (Ricky Santoso Muharam, 2020) namely a) There is no single religion that teaches adherents to be evil, b) There are similarities that religions have, for example the teachings about doing good to others, c) There are fundamental differences taught by religions. Among them, differences in scriptures, prophets, and procedures for worship, d) There is evidence of religious truth, e) It is not permissible to force someone to adhere to a religion or a belief.

### ***Tolerance between religions***

Tolerance comes from the Latin, namely "*tolerant*", is leniency, gentleness, lightness and patience. Eko Digdoyo, (2018), also stated that tolerance in social, cultural and religious contexts means attitudes and actions that prohibit discrimination against groups that are not the same or are not generally accepted by society. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) views that tolerance is an attitude of "mutual respect, mutual gain, and mutual respect in the midst of cultural diversity, freedom of expression, and human character". Tolerance has a meaning, namely the establishment of human relations based on an attitude of accepting differences, mutual understanding, respect, and respect for equality in the practice of religious teachings, as well as cooperation in life together (Aulia Rahmawati and Joko Tri Haryanto, 2020). Indicators of attitudes and behaviors of religious tolerance (Moh. Zaina Arifin, 2018) are providing opportunities for others to worship according to their respective religions, Not imposing will, beliefs and beliefs on people of other religions, being open to other religions, being fair towards adherents of other religions, Accepting the opinions of other people of different religions. Tolerance between religious communities is achieved optimally if interfaith is able to carry out dialogue. Marz Wera, (2019) said that the era of openness encourages and even opens a very wide space for adherents of religious beliefs to be able to make dialogue a basic attitude to bind interfaith cooperation. Through dialogue, people share their experiences of interfaith faith. Referring to Paul Paulus VI, Darren Cronshaw in his research explains that there are four models of interfaith dialogue (Cronshaw, D. 2021) that can be done are 1) *The dialogue of life, beginning with fostering friendship and hospitality without agendas*, 2) *The dialogue of action, collaborating on local issues together*, 3) *The dialogue of spiritual experience, including sharing shared rituals, prayers, worship or retreats*, 4) *The dialogue of understanding, relating to changing beliefs and doctrine*. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out interreligious-intercultural dialogue efforts using several requirements (Asnath N. Natar, 2020), namely a) Everyone involved in the dialogue must be open to full sincerity and honesty, b) Each party participating in the dialogue must have a view that the other party has a dialogue using sincerity and honesty, c) Each party participating can define who he or she is. In other terms, a person must understand and know who he is (self-identity, culture and religion), d) Each party participating needs to approach the dialogue without making assumptions that are too fast when there are differences of opinion. In other words, dialogue can be carried out without prejudice or without pretensions. Everyone needs to listen openly and sympathetically, e) Dialogue must be based on truth, and the belief that every

culture and religion has its own truth.

The internalization of the fruits of reflection in the character of religious tolerance (Hamidulloh Ibda, 2018) is first, inter-religious peace. Second, be open and receptive to the beauty of religious differences. Third, respecting individuals and differences of different religions. Fourth, respect each other's religion. Fifth, the seeds of religious intolerance are fear and indifference. Sixth, the seeds of religious tolerance are love and affection. Seventh, if there is no affection, there is no religious tolerance. Eighth, who know to appreciate the goodness in other people and situations have religious tolerance. Ninth, religious tolerance means facing difficult situations together. Tenth, religious tolerance for the inconvenience of life by letting go, light, and let others.

### ***Purpur Sage in the Karo***

*Purpur* means to throw away something that is not good and useless. While *sage* means leveled. Based on this understanding, *purpur sage* defined as a peace ceremony between people in conflict according to the Karo tribe. For example, reconciling disputes between fellow family members, between one person and another, disputes between villages and also in peace between husband and wife who are experiencing family conflict. The purpose of this ceremony is to make peace (reconciliation) and restore a disturbed situation caused by a dispute (Ria Ebrejina, 2021). Efforts are being made to reassemble good relations or peace (reconciliation), namely by holding deliberation ( ) between the disputing parties in the presence of each of the *runggu* Luthfi Ramadhan, et al, 2021).

*Purpursage* is carried out by both parties in conflict by doing *runggu* which is witnessed by *sangkep nggeluh* from both parties. The events that will be held in *purpur sage* (Ria Ebrejina, 2021) are a) *Persada Man*, which means eating together. *Persada man* is a peace ceremony where the warring parties eat together in the same container (usually a plate). side dish is *manuk sangkep*, namely: specially fried chicken and all parts of the body are still intact and equipped with a

boiled chicken egg. 2) *Nuploadken Lau Simalem-malem*, which means to drink, feed or feed "lau", which means water. "*Simalem-malem*", meaning full of peace. c) *Nabei*, is a peace ceremony by giving *sabe* or Karo traditional clothes to parties who are in conflict.

### ***Review Purpur Sage Based on the Social Capital Approach***

James Coleman (1999) defines social capital, namely social capital is not a single entity but consists of a number of entities with two the same elements, all of which consist of aspects of social structures that facilitate certain actions of actors, whether individuals or

legal entity actors in that structure. In accordance with what Coleman said, *Purpur Sage* has aspects of social structures consisting of various community groups that can facilitate conflict resolution actions, both conflicts due to civil and criminal issues. *Purpur Sage* is known among the Karo tribe in North Sumatra but is believed to be able to resolve conflicts between cultures and religions. In other words, *Purpur Sage* is a forum for resolving conflicts that exist in communities of different religions. So, the social capital presented by Coleman is contained in the *Purpur Sage* because it can alleviate various forms of conflict in society. In addition, social capital is operationalized in the form of equipment, institutions and social values that grow in society. In the *Purpur Sage*, the important equipment systems are *kalimbubu*, *sembuyak*, *anak beru*, traditional leaders and even religious and government figures, for example the police if needed are present in the ceremony to resolve family conflicts and even interreligious conflicts. ceremony *Purpur Sage* has social values such as honesty, cooperation,

mutual forgiveness, reconciliation, mutual respect/respect for differences, mutual acceptance of differences, respect for differences of opinion, mutual cooperation and other social values. Referring to the perspective of Alam S and Henry (2008), the function of *Purpur Sage* can be analyzed operationally through indicators that *purpur sage* functions as an instrument to achieve common goals, a means of indicating identity, guarding social norms, unifying different social units, and guiding behavior.

## Research Method

This study used qualitative approach. The researcher presents the results of the data or the object of study in the form of a narrative. The theoretical approach used in the research is the Interreligious Literacy (IL) approach, which is a religious study model that passionately and optimistically understands religions (Zuyyina Candra Kirana, 2020). Interreligious Literacy (multireligious) is essential and fundamental for the continuity of human interaction and the healthy continuity of socio-cultural relationships and human interactions.

This research was conducted in Barus Jahe, Karo Regency from May to July 2022. The research subjects were selected by purposive sampling. The informants assigned in this study were 14 people consisting of various religious groups from Islam, Protestantism and Catholicism. Sources of research data consist of primary data, namely 1) Inter-religious literacy through *Purpur Sage* on religious people in Karo land, 2) religious tolerance in Karo land, 3) Implementation *Purpur Sage* in the context of interreligious literacy in religious people in Karo land. While the secondary data sources are information and documentation as well as research and documentation related to "Interreligious Literacy Through *Purpur Sage* For Strengthening Tolerance Between Religious People in Tanah Karo". techniques

Data collections were carried out by conducting focus group discussions through *Purpur Sage* and continued with interviews with research informants. To expedite the research process and to achieve maximum research objectives, the researcher prepared a research instrument in the form of an interview guide containing Interreligious Literacy through *Purpur Sage* for Strengthening Tolerance Between Religious People in Tanah Karo. Data analysis was carried out by means of data reduction, data presentation, and research conclusions. Data analysis was carried out with stages starting from data transcription, data identification, data classification, data interpretation as well as describing data so as to produce conclusions from each research object. To determine the validity of the research data, data examination techniques were carried out, namely the Triangulation criteria, namely 1) researchers compared and re-checked the degree of confidence in the information obtained through the results of data regarding Interreligious Literacy Through *Purpur Sage* For Strengthening Tolerance Between Religious People in Tanah Karo, 2) researchers checking the degree of trustworthiness of data sources with the method used, 3) researchers carefully checking the results of data (facts) with various theories 4) researchers conducting audits so as to produce credible research results.

## Results and Discussion

### *Inter-religious literacy through Purpur Sage in religious communities in the Karo lands*

Inter-religious literacy through *Purpur Sage* in religious communities in Karo lands has discussed the factors that cause extreme attitudes. The factors causing extreme attitudes were described by informants FS, RM and KS who are also religious leaders and supported by eleven other informants who stated that extreme attitudes occurred because *first*: one's shallow understanding of religious teachings, both one's own religion and the teachings of other

religions so that they consider their own religion. the most correct one resulted in a narrow sense of nationalism. Eko Digdoyo (2018) has reminded this that tensions between religions can arise due to a lack of understanding of other religions. The lack of religious understanding and the low implementation of *Interreligious Literacy* (IL) capabilities for religious people in society can trigger the emergence of religious problems so that they can injure religious freedom. In addition, in the literacy process it was revealed by informants FS, MS, DB and PG that the trigger for the *second extreme attitude*; there are different interpretations of religious doctrines and cultural differences between traditional societies and modern societies where these two types of people have different points of view and habits regarding something even about religion. Differences in views or interpretations of a wrong religion can lead to extreme attitudes that cannot be dammed so that it triggers conflicts between religious communities. It turns out that cultural differences in community groups who are not the same religion in an area or region can be a driving factor that contributes to the creation of conflict between religious groups in Indonesia (Eko Digdoyo). Furthermore, DB, ST, PG and MS explained that the *third* is that the religious majority and minority aspects can be a factor causing extreme attitudes where the majority consider their own religion the most correct to follow. On the other hand, minorities do not have much voice in determining policies and are vulnerable to being ignored in the community. In this regard, Eko Digdoyo (2018) notes that of course, Indonesia, which is multi-cultural and multi-talented, is the pride of its national identity, but on the other hand, it can trigger conflict if it is not wise to respond to this phenomenon.

The efforts made to prevent these extreme attitudes were described by FS, DS, RM, and KS, namely religious leaders sitting together to discuss and find solutions to the realization of religious tolerance through dissemination activities carried out collaboratively by both traditional and community communities. modern. The four interfaith leaders stated that extreme attitudes could be prevented by means of all religious adherents respecting and implementing the mandate of religious laws and the government standing above all religions or groups fairly. Therefore, Mahathir Muhammad Iqbal (2014) asserts that to realize this hope requires a joint commitment from all stakeholders of real religious education as regulated in the 1945 Constitution. If the 1945 Constitution is not implemented properly, extreme attitudes can become obstacles in realizing tolerance between religions. These obstacles are if the community shows excessive fanaticism towards other religious people, there are religious figures who are not *role models* in carrying out religious life. Marz Wera (2019)

to give an example, namely that there are clergy who are diligent in proclaiming sacred things but under the guise of filling the void in their pockets. The four religious leaders added that the realization of tolerance would be hampered if the religious community themselves lacked communication and social interaction with one another. The leader of Islam, Catholicism and Protestant Christianity (GBKP) simultaneously stated that "harmony among religious people will be created if every religious community seeks to fully explore the teachings of their own religion, communicate with each other, respect and respect differences without criticizing religion. another". This statement was supported by informants SK, MS and YB who came from representatives of religious educators, namely, to achieve harmony between religious communities "religious leaders are willing and willing to play a role as mediators and role models in the community and often sit together through forums or Communication Forums between People. Religion (FKUB) where all religious leaders in the forum gather to design the embodiment of tolerance among religious people in society". Actually, if there is an interfaith communication forum, it can open a very wide space for adherents of religious beliefs to be able to make dialogue a basic attitude to bind an interfaith collaboration (Marz Wera, 2019).



### ***Tolerance between Religions Religious***

tolerance has indicators, namely the establishment of human relations based on an attitude of accepting differences, mutual understanding, respect for, and respect for equality in the practice of religious teachings, as well as cooperation in life together (Aulia Rahmawati and Joko Tri Haryanto, 2020). In the land of Karo, tolerance between religious communities is realized through one way, namely dialogue. Informants RM, FS and KS, PG and ten other informants stated that inter-religious tolerance can be realized if dialogue is created. The informant said, "Dialogue between religious communities can be a strategy in which all religious leaders with their charismatic authority sit side by side through traditional cultural forums or seminar activities". Eko Digdoyo, (2018), also stated that if there is tolerance in social, cultural and religious contexts, there are attitudes and actions that prohibit discrimination against groups that are not the same or are not generally accepted by society. The FS and KS informants, who are also Islamic and Catholic religious leaders, explained that the forms of dialogue that can be carried out are dialogues of faith and dialogue of works between religious communities without discrimination between one another. The contents of the dialogue include information about the teachings of a religion, conventions on religious rules, concern for young people because of the risks of using narcotics and drugs and mutual cooperation activities, and so on. Informants DB, ST, SK, YB stated that the principles of inter-religious dialogue were implemented with the principles of openness, togetherness, prioritizing common interests, wanting to live in peace together in society. Each party participating in the dialogue must have the view that the other party in the dialogue uses sincerity and honesty. Dishonesty and suspicion will hinder dialogue (Asnath N. Natar, 2020). This statement was firmly supported by the Chairperson of the Karo Regency Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) and also the Catholic Pastor, both of whom stated: "The main principle in dialogue will be realized and smooth if religious people do not blame each other for religious differences but seek equality because religion should not be forced." Zuyyina Candra Kirana (2020), states the same thing that through *Interreligious Literacy* participants learn in encounters in recognizing faith experiences, taking lessons from the same values contained in all religious teachings for peaceful living together. In addition, FS conveys practical steps in carrying out inter-religious dialogue so that it can be carried out smoothly and can be carried out, namely

"The government at the regional, local and national levels invites religious leaders and traditional or cultural leaders to gather together through a cultural forum or forums." inter-religious communication forum". The MUI Chair also added that "to achieve dialogue between religions and for the sake of tolerance, what is needed is for all religious leaders to sit down and discuss, together, exchange ideas without cornering and provide equal opportunities and space to all people of different religions. in dialogue". In line with this view, Asnath N. Natar, (2020) also emphasized that every participating party needs to approach dialogue without making assumptions that are too fast when there are differences of opinion. In other words, dialogue can be carried out without prejudice or without pretensions. Finally, Informants DB, MS and supported by twelve other informants stated that the agreement produced through the dialogue was valid and binding on all religious communities fairly and equitably so that inter-religious tolerance was created in the community.

Fourteen research informants who came from religious leaders, religious educators and representatives of interfaith communities simultaneously stated about religious tolerance. Inter-religious tolerance is "an attitude of mutual respect between people of other religions, not interfering with the interests of other religious communities and religious people trusting each other in the One God. Religious tolerance attitudes and behaviors that can be carried out by each religious community include respect for other people's religious differences, honesty, and

mutual trust. This was emphasized by the Chairman of the MUI Karo Regency that to achieve religious tolerance, all religious communities carry out the "TRILOGY" of religious harmony, namely 1) Internal harmony between religious communities, 2) Harmony between religious communities, and 3) Harmony between religious communities and the government. He also added that the values that can be used as benchmarks that a person performs tolerant attitudes and behaviors between religious communities include "practicing their respective religions

correctly, respecting people who practice worship according to their beliefs, being able to work together between different religious communities in society, diligent in worship and not picky in socializing in society. Moh. Zaina Arifin (2018) has supported this statement that indicators of attitude and behavior of tolerance become real if someone gives an opportunity for others to worship in accordance with the teachings of their respective beliefs, does not impose their will, trust or belief on others, is open towards other beliefs, being fair to other beliefs and respecting the opinions of other people of different religions.

### ***Purpur Sage as a forum for Interreligious Literacy in the Karo Tribe***

Religious tolerance can be achieved when religious leaders and traditional cultural leaders gather together through a cultural forum or communication forums between religious communities. The container of culture in question is through *Purpur Sage*. implementation *Purpur Sage* is carried out in the context of interreligious literacy for religious people in the Karo land. *Purpur Sage* is one of the cultural treasures that exist in the Karo people and is culture and belongs to all people of all religions. Informants FS, JB, RM, KS explained that "interreligious literacy between religious communities can be done through a forum" that exist in the culture of an area (local)". Achmad Munjid, et al (2016) also emphasized that through an interreligious approach can bring benefits, namely helping someone to introduce themselves to people of different religions and cultures, building common principles in creating security and peace in society. So, FS is also the Chairman of MUI the Karo land said in an interreligious meeting in *Purpur Sage*: "Strengthening Inter-religious tolerance can be done in the way that we do, namely

interfaith leaders, people and educators and cultural staff, village government officials and the community gather together in a cultural vessel called *Purpur Sage*. Inside *Purpur Sage* everyone gathers, discusses, dialogues openly to learn from each other about each other's religion. This is one of the strategies between religious adherents' different people to understand each other's religious teachings so as to prevent misperceptions about the conception of other religions. What is considered in this interreligious literacy is not to sharpen the differences, but to find common points that can be realize that each other as brothers who respect each other. Therefore, religious people being more tolerant, respecting differences in humanist principles, and without criticizing other religions".

The results of research observations conducted by the research team on July 24, 2022 shows that religious leaders, whether Islam, Catholic, Protestant Christianity (GBKP), educators, community and village officials who come from interfaith are actively involved to discuss together in an inclusive dialogue on the issue of religious tolerance. Literacy interreligious dialogue that occurs in an attitude of mutual honesty and trust between religious adherents which contains a discussion about

the causes of extreme attitudes, efforts to prevent extreme attitudes, the manifestation of tolerance and preservation of the cultural richness of *Purpur Sage* in society. Everyone present at event *The Purpur Sage* in the context of interreligious literacy has the view that it is very useful if all religious leaders, society and government sit together, discuss or dialogue

together to find alternative solutions to prevent intolerance problems in society. Of course, one of the forums in facilitating meetings between religious adherents is by using cultural habits owned by people such as *Purpur Sage* in the Karo tribe. Abu-Nimer, M., Smith, RK (2016), reminds if dialogue interculturalism can be successful if there is a community that is aware of the other, comes to communicate, cooperate, and build the structure of a multicultural society”.

*Purpur Sage* has an implementation process and the fourteen informants, all of whom are Karo people who come from interfaith leaders, explain the *Purpur Sage*, namely a) *Persada Man*, which means eating together in one container where those who have disagreements eat together. In this process, all parties establish an attitude of togetherness, brotherhood, peace as fellow beings who both have the spirit as "humans" created by God. The process of eating together can be seen when eating rice together which means “*Nggo Ersada Tendina*” which means their souls have united through eating together. 2) *Nuploadken Lau Simalem-malem* which means drinking water from the same container. Water is a symbol that means cooling or calming the hearts of people in conflict or conflict. The meaning of *Si Tupload-tuploaden Lau* which means bribing each other, giving drink to others in *Purpur Sage* where water is a cooler, so that the anger or emotion between the warring parties becomes lost or cold. Water has a special meaning in the customary process, namely logically "humans cannot live without water". So, by feeding each other water, we can achieve mutual peace in this life. 3) *Nabei* is giving traditional clothes. The traditional clothes called *Uis* are given to people who are involved in problems. So, with new clothes, the people involved in the problem have new thoughts and views, that is, they have realized their mistakes and apologized for the mistakes they had made. In addition, the granting of *uis* is also a sign of unity, self-giving which is manifested in the typical clothes of the Karo people. This process is

a sign of mutual forgiveness so that mutual respect occurs which leads to the realization of mutual tolerance.

*Purpur Sage* was attended by personnel who had important roles and tasks to produce a peace agreement. This was stated by RM, FS, KS, JB and ten other informants, namely the social apparatus or structures that played a role in implementing Sage were the people who were chosen to solve the problem. The equipment consists of, the warring parties, *Kalimbubu*, *Sangkep complaining*, *Anak beru*, Children of Kuta, *Mondaya/Sembuyak*, and also the local government. There are some who have important role is that *AnAnak Beru* acts as a sponsor of the meeting, namely preparing the meeting place, food in traditional events and acting as a mediator in the *Purpur Sage*. *Kalimbubu* acts as a giver of advice or *Nalu Nalu Anak Beruna*, which means giving instructions and an invitation to do good, and *Senina Sembuyak* acts as a place for each conflicted person to express their heart where they convey what requests or requirements they want in the *Purpur Sage process*. Informant RM, a religious leader from Protestant Christianity added that in *Purpur Sage* there is a religious value attached, namely the Karo people place *Kalimbubu* in the highest position known as God (*Dibata Ni'idah*). This has been true since the time of the ancestors of the Karo tribe, namely believing in the existence of God. Long before knowing the existence of religion, *Kalimbubu* played a role as well as a special director or adviser so that if there were parties who did not want to make peace, it was feared that someone was experiencing "*Geluhma Mekelesa*" or someone was experiencing difficulties in life, because they had rejected the word *Dibata* (God). This belief indicates that since the ancestors of the Karo people have existed, since then the Karo people have been religious.

*Purpur Sage* can be used by various social devices or all organs in society to resolve conflicts and achieve peace. JB, FS, KS, RM as interfaith leaders and cultural leaders

emphasized that the most important social apparatus played a role, namely *Sangkep Nggeluh* (*Kalimbubu*, *Sembuyak* and *Anak beru*) second conflicting parties, traditional leaders, religious leaders and the government. For example, to start process through the village apparatus takes the initiative and has an obligatory role as a mediator in resolving conflicts. The mediator will collect the devices or organs that are considered to play a role in carrying out *purpursage* in order to achieve peace between warring people. So, *PurpurSage* functions as a tool of peace between warring people or groups and a tool to strengthen ties of brotherhood, togetherness between members of the community. In the religious aspect, *Purpur Sage* can be used as a tool to glue tolerance between religious communities in society. Informants FS, KS, JB and RM stated that "*Purpur Sage* can be used as a forum for strengthening tolerance between religious communities because the *purpursage* can reconcile the two people or groups who disagree without distinguishing between ethnicity, religion, race and his group. *rungguPurpur Sage* as a forum to repair damaged relationships and as another in *one* or deliberation and consensus. *PurpurSage* is a forum for society (Karo) that functions to free people from conflict and oppression from intimidation of a problem". So, it is clear that *Purpur Sage* is a tool for the Karo people to give each other *lau meciho* (bribing each other with holy water that gives coolness) to strengthen the brotherhood of fellow living beings presented by the same God.

*Purpur Sage* at this time has begun to be rarely done even young people today are starting to not know what *Purpur Sage* is because people's lives have shifted to modern culture. This was conveyed by research informants named JV, MS, JB, ST, DB, PG and eight other informants. *Purpur Sage* has existed since the ancestors of the Karo people and still applies to all people regardless of ethnicity, religion, race and class. *Purpur Sage* is known as a model peace in the Karo community and carried out if there are parties to the conflict or disagreement understanding, both individuals in a society or between groups in society. So, RM, who is also a Protestant Christian pastor, emphasized that "*Purpursage* is one of the sacred tools and models for the Karo people to create a harmony or peace reconciliation in a family or large community in the Karo people". Together with the informant DB, JB, Pastor RM explained clearly that *Purpur sage* has the meaning as a total "release" of a conflict that is rooted in a person with a balance (opponent) or a large community in the Karo people. Usually *purpur sage* will use a container of water "*lau simalem-malem*" which is very clear, and those who are in conflict with each other "*nungahken*" *lau simalem-malem* with one another (*servicing each other*) to completely clear their hearts and minds. After *nungahken lau simalem-malem*, there is advice from *Kalimbubu* or God that is visible to the Karo people (religious leaders and traditional leaders) on both sides who are believed to be "priests" (*Dibata ni Idah*) to sanctify and verbally ratify the peace. After all participants in the process feel relieved because they have "*nungahken*" (bringing water) to each other, a meal will be held together and produce the principle of *lanai lit ido-ido* which means there is no more debt or grudges in the heart, and it is a symbol of togetherness. Considering the usefulness and purpose of this customary culture is strategic in maintaining social relations between religious adherents in society, it is necessary to make efforts to maintain it. One of the efforts that can be done is the community and government or religious leaders reintroducing the *Purpur Sage* to the younger generation. Thus, the *Purpur Sage* can be used as a place for interreligious literacy as well as a local cultural wealth and can even be used as a national culture owned by the Indonesian people.

## Conclusion

Inter-religious literacy through *Purpur Sage* on religious communities in the Karo land contains a discussion of the factors that cause extreme attitudes, namely the shallow understanding of one's religious teachings both one's own religion and the teachings of other



religions, differences in interpretation of religious doctrines and differences between traditional society and modern society and the issue of majority and minority aspects. Efforts made to prevent extreme attitudes are religious leaders sitting together to discuss and find solutions to the realization of religious tolerance through dissemination activities carried out collaboratively by both traditional and modern societies. In addition, all religious adherents respect and carry out the mandate of religious laws and the government stands above all religions or groups fairly.

In the land of Karo, tolerance between religious communities is realized through one way, namely dialogue. The forms of dialogue that can be carried out are dialogues of faith and dialogue of works between religious communities without discrimination between one another. Practical steps in carrying out inter-religious dialogue so that it can run smoothly and can be carried out are "the government at the regional, local and national levels invites religious religious leaders and traditional or cultural leaders to gather together through a forum or communication forums between people. religious". So, strengthening tolerance between religious communities can be done by means of interfaith leaders, people and educators and cultural staff, village government officials and the community gather together in a cultural vessel called *Purpur Sage*. Inside the *Purpur Sage* all gathered, discuss, have an open dialogue to learn together about each other's religious teachings other. Therefore, culture *Purpur Sage* can be used as a forum for carrying out interreligious literacy.

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