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Managing Sunni-Shia Tensions: Socio-Political and Cultural Peacebuilding in *Sādah Bā 'Alawiyyah,* Indonesia

Moh. Syaeful Bahar[1]; Muhammad Taufiq[2]; Muhammad Fauzinudin Faiz[3]; Dodik Harnadi[4]; Abdul Haq Syawqi[5]

[1]*Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel Surabaya, Indonesia*
[2,5]*Universitas Islam Negeri Madura, Pamekasan, Indonesia*
[3]*Universitas Islam Negeri Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember, Indonesia*
[4]*Universitas Jember, Indonesia*

MANAGING SUNNI-SHIA TENSIONS: SOCIO-POLITICAL AND CULTURAL PEACEBUILDING IN *SĀDAH BĀ 'ALAWIYYAH,* INDONESIA

Moh. Syaeful Bahar[1]; Muhammad Taufiq[2]; Muhammad Fauzinudin Faiz[3]; Dodik Harnadi[4]; Abdul Haq Syawqi[5]

[1]*Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel Surabaya, Indonesia*
[2,5]*Universitas Islam Negeri Madura, Pamekasan, Indonesia*
[3]*Universitas Islam Negeri Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember, Indonesia*
[4]*Universitas Jember, Indonesia*
[1]*Correspondence Email:* *kakbahar@uinsa.ac.id*

Abstract

The Sādah Bā 'Alawiyyah, as part of the Hadhrami Arab diaspora, has historically contributed to the dissemination of Islam in Indonesia. However, limited scholarly attention has been given to how this community internally manages sectarian differences, particularly between Sunni and Shia members. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating how the Sādah Bā 'Alawiyyah community in Bondowoso navigates Sunni–Shia tensions through everyday peacebuilding practices. Employing a qualitative grounded theory approach, data were collected via in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. The study explores three key issues: the structural dynamics of the Hadhrami Arab community in Bondowoso, the interactional patterns between Sunni and Shia Sadah in daily life, and the socio-cultural mechanisms that prevent conflict escalation. Findings reveal that historical memory, intergenerational kinship ties, and ritual continuity function as core resources for building trust and sustaining peaceful coexistence. Rather than relying on formal institutions, the community resolves tensions through informal, everyday strategies that foster mutual respect and cohesion. Conceptually, the study contributes to diaspora and peace studies by introducing the notion of "family-based everyday peace", demonstrating that Hadhrami identity is negotiated not merely through religious authority or social status, but through practical, lived strategies for conflict mitigation within plural settings.

Keywords: *Managing; Sunni–Shia Tensions; Everyday Peace; Peacebuilding; Hadhrami Diaspora; Sādah Bā 'Alawiyyah.*

A. Introduction

The Hadhrami Arab diaspora, particularly the *Sādah Bā ‘Alawiyyah*—descendants of the Prophet Muhammad from Hadhramaut, Yemen—has played a profound role in shaping the Islamic landscape of Southeast Asia, notably Indonesia. Historically, this diaspora has been associated with the peaceful propagation of Islam, spiritual leadership, and cultural adaptability, establishing themselves as respected figures across diverse Muslim communities (Azra, 2021; Elie, 2010; Farid Alatas, 2021; Taufiq, 2022). Their settlements, notably in Java, Sumatra, and Sulawesi, have significantly influenced the development of religious authority, communal ethics, and Islamic education (Alatas, 2021; Taufiq et al., 2025). Within these regions, the *Sādah Bā ‘Alawiyyah* are often portrayed as custodians of religious harmony and moral order, grounded in their spiritual lineage and cultural capital.

However, beneath this image of integration and harmony, internal divisions—particularly of a sectarian nature—have continued to shape the social dynamics of Hadhrami Arab communities. One of the most critical cleavages lies in the theological differences between Sunni and Shia members within the Sadah themselves. While these differences are often downplayed in public discourse, they have, at times, surfaced in ways that threaten communal cohesion. In some areas, such as Sampang, Madura, sectarian tensions have erupted into overt conflict and violence, leaving a lasting impact on intergroup trust (A'la et al., 2018; Dodi, 2021; Hilmy, 2015; Siddiq et al., 2023). Conversely, other Hadhrami communities have demonstrated the capacity to sustain peaceful coexistence despite similar sectarian cleavages. One such example is found in Bondowoso, East Java, where Sunni and Shia Sadah families maintain an enduring social harmony, despite potential for sectarian tension.

This divergence of outcomes raises a crucial scholarly question: what mechanisms allow certain Hadhrami Arab communities to maintain peace amid deep theological divisions, while others descend into conflict? Addressing this question is especially important in the context of Indonesia—a country that embraces both religious pluralism and a strong communal identity yet remains vulnerable to the politicization of sectarian differences. The

peaceful coexistence of Sunni and Shia Sadah in Bondowoso serves as a compelling case for examining the role of informal, localized peacebuilding practices in mitigating conflict.

To situate this inquiry within the academic literature, it is important to note that most existing studies on the Hadhrami diaspora have focused on macro-level historical, socio-economic, and political dimensions (Brehony, 2017; Farid Alatas, 2021; Jacobsen, 2020; Sumait et al., 2020). These studies tend to foreground the diaspora's elite status, economic contributions, and transregional networks, offering valuable insights into their broader historical positioning. Other scholars have delved into intra-community contestations—such as status disputes between Sadah and non-Sadah (De Jonge, 2021, 2022, 2023), or theological clashes between Salafi and Shia factions (Rijal, 2017). While these analyses have provided rich detail on power dynamics and ideological fault lines, they often overlook how conflict is managed—or avoided—on a daily basis through lived practices and community-level strategies.

For instance, De Jonge's investigations have focused primarily on authority struggles within the Hadhrami Arab diaspora but stop short of analyzing how such struggles are negotiated in everyday social settings (De Jonge, 2021, 2022, 2023; Mesraini & Yunus2023). Similarly, Rijal's exploration of Sunni–Shia disputes reveals the depth of theological contestation but fails to examine how community members prevent these disagreements from escalating into violence (Rijal, 2017). These limitations reflect a broader gap in the literature: a lack of attention to the informal, bottom-up mechanisms through which diasporic communities regulate internal diversity and sustain social cohesion. While sectarian contestation is acknowledged, the mechanisms of peace remain obscured.

This study addresses that gap by focusing on the specific strategies employed by the *Sādah Bā ʿAlawiyyah* in Bondowoso to sustain coexistence between Sunni and Shia members. Rather than analyzing formal peacebuilding frameworks or state interventions, this study emphasizes "everyday peacebuilding"—a concept developed by Roger Mac Ginty (2014), which refers to the micro-level practices through which individuals and

communities manage conflict in their daily lives. These practices include avoidance of contentious topics, ritualized displays of politeness, and strategic ambiguity in identity presentation. Such practices are often unspoken but are crucial to sustaining peace in divided societies.

To analyze these dynamics, the study draws on three key theoretical frameworks. First is Johan Galtung's foundational notion of peace as not merely the absence of violence, but as the presence of just and harmonious social relations (Galtung, 2018). This conception allows for an understanding of peace as an active, ongoing process rather than a static condition. Second is Oliver Richmond's theory of local peacebuilding, which highlights the importance of indigenous norms, agency, and relational knowledge in creating sustainable peace (Richmond, 2008, 2010, 2013). Richmond argues that peace is most effectively maintained when it is rooted in local culture and community ownership, rather than imposed by external authorities. Finally, Mac Ginty's concept of everyday peace provides the methodological and analytical lens to capture informal and interpersonal modes of conflict mitigation (Mac Ginty, 2014; Richmond & Mac Ginty, 2015). Together, these frameworks provide a robust basis for understanding the processes through which peace is constructed and maintained in Bondowoso.

This theoretical elaboration is particularly relevant in the context of diasporic communities, where identity, legitimacy, and authority are continuously negotiated across generations and geographic boundaries. In the case of the *Sādah Bā 'Alawiyyah*, kinship, ritual performance, and shared memory serve as powerful resources for maintaining intra-communal trust. Rather than resolving theological differences, the community in Bondowoso appears to have developed a social compact that allows for the containment of those differences within acceptable boundaries. This dynamic — whereby theological divergence does not translate into social rupture — offers a valuable site for sociological and peace studies research.

Thus, the present study seeks to examine how the *Sādah Bā 'Alawiyyah* in Bondowoso navigate sectarian difference through informal, culturally embedded strategies of peacebuilding. It aims to analyze the structure of

Sunni–Shia relations, the nature of everyday interactions, and the role of local cultural mechanisms in preventing conflict escalation. By doing so, the research not only contributes to the growing literature on diaspora and peace studies but also offers insights into how local communities can model peaceful pluralism in ways that are both contextually grounded and globally relevant.

B. Method

This study employed grounded theory methodology, a widely recognized approach in qualitative studies aimed at generating theoretical insights directly from field experiences rather than testing pre-established hypotheses (Charmaz, 2014; Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021). The decision to use grounded theory was driven by its capacity to develop theoretical explanations rooted in lived social interactions, which is particularly valuable in understanding peacebuilding and conflict resolution dynamics (Autesserre, 2017; Rwandarugali & Ngeta, 2022). Through this approach, the study was designed as an exploratory investigation into the everyday experiences of the *Sādah Bā 'Alawiyyah* community in Bondowoso, East Java.

The focus on the *Sādah Bā 'Alawiyyah* was deliberate, as their position as Sayyid or Habib—descendants of the Prophet Muhammad—endows them with significant religious authority and cultural influence within Hadhrami communities. This privileged status enables them to play critical roles in managing sectarian relations, making them essential actors in understanding how inter-sectarian tensions are negotiated. Informants were selected based on their social embeddedness and representation of both Sunni and Shia perspectives. All participants were long-term residents of Bondowoso and actively engaged in the same neighborhoods, some of them holding leadership or gatekeeping roles that allowed them to represent broader community views beyond their personal experiences.

Data collection spanned three months and combined multiple qualitative techniques. Participant observation served as the core method, with the researcher attending religious rituals, family events, and public gatherings
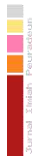
where Sunni and Shia Sadah regularly interacted. These observations were documented through detailed field notes that captured verbal and non-verbal exchanges, spatial arrangements, and contextual dynamics. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with six key informants, covering themes such as theological differences, kinship relations, and conflict mitigation strategies. Complementary insights were obtained through informal conversations in domestic and communal spaces. Although these informal exchanges were not recorded, they were meticulously documented and provided valuable perspectives—especially when informants were more forthcoming in casual settings than in formal interviews. The triangulation of observation, interview, and informal dialogue strengthened the trustworthiness and depth of the data.

Data analysis followed the systematic coding process central to grounded theory. The first step, open coding, involved breaking down field notes and interview transcripts into discrete codes that captured relevant concepts, such as genealogical pride, ritual practice, or perceptions of difference. These codes were then grouped into categories like kinship ties and religious tolerance. The second stage, theoretical coding, identified relationships between categories and allowed the construction of broader themes that explained the mechanisms of peaceful coexistence. The final stage, constant comparative coding, involved iterative comparisons between Sunni and Shia accounts, and between formal and informal data, to refine the emerging theory. This process led to the identification of a core category: the normalization of sectarian difference through genealogical continuity and everyday interaction.

The entire analytical process was guided by Johan Galtung's conceptualization of peace as a proactive and dynamic social condition, rather than a mere absence of violence(Galtung, 2018). This allowed the research to focus on how peace is actively maintained within the Sadah community through symbolic, ritual, and verbal practices. Furthermore, concepts from local peacebuilding and everyday peace (Mac Ginty, 2014; Richmond, 2008, 2010; Richmond & Mac Ginty, 2015) were employed to frame the role of kinship networks and habitual interaction as the primary resources for

conflict prevention. These frameworks helped to position the data within a wider sociological discourse on peace as a socially constructed and continuously negotiated reality.

Given the sensitive nature of sectarian identities and intra-communal tensions, ethical considerations were paramount throughout the study. All participants were anonymized using pseudonyms, and any identifiable details were removed from the analysis. Informed consent was obtained for all formal interviews, and informal conversations were documented in anonymized field notes. This ensured that participants' privacy was protected while still allowing for the accurate representation of their perspectives.

While ethnographic methods could have offered rich cultural descriptions, grounded theory was chosen because of its emphasis on conceptual development. Unlike ethnography, which tends to stay within the specificity of a single cultural context, grounded theory facilitates abstraction toward broader sociological themes—making it more suitable for connecting Sunni–Shia coexistence in Bondowoso to wider theories of conflict transformation and peacebuilding (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021).

C. Results and Discussion

The *Sādah Bā 'Alawiyyah* in Bondowoso employs interconnected strategies to foster peaceful coexistence among Sunni and Shia communities. These strategies encompass the structure of the Arab community and Sunni-Shia relations, the peaceful coexistence between Sunni and Shia, and the dynamics of social stratification and political integration. Such initiatives demonstrate that sectarian harmony arises from social, cultural, and political practices rather than merely doctrinal tolerance. The discussion integrates Galtung's peace theory, Richmond's local peacebuilding, and Mac Ginty's concept of everyday peace to underscore their broader significance.

1. Results

a. *Arab community structure and sunni-shia relations*

The Arab village of Bondowoso primarily comprises two principal groups: the Sadah (Sayyid/ Habib) and the non-Sadah. These groups are

further subdivided geographically into Jema'ah Laok ("southern congregation") and Jema'ah Temur ("eastern congregation"). This social organization is depicted in Figure 1, illustrating the coexistence of *habaib* and non-Sayyid Arabs, as well as hybrid identities such as "Su-Si" (Sunni–Shia).
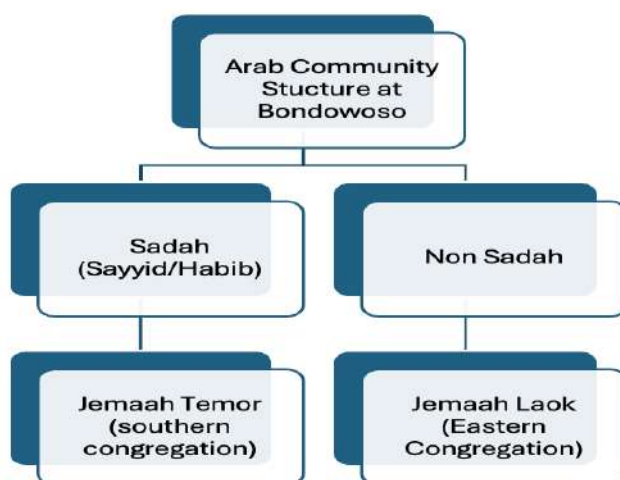
Figure 1. Arab community structure at Bondowoso
Source: Researcher's data processing

Based on this figure, it can be mapped that the Sadah or *Jema'ah Temur* is affiliated with the Al-Khairiyah Foundation, which oversees multiple madrasahs where Hadhrami Arabs, commonly known as Habib, serve as administrators. These institutions cater to both Sunni and Shia Hadhrami children, exemplifying the community's effort to balance tradition, education, and sectarian diversity (M. Hasan et al., 2023). In contrast, non-Sadah (*Jema'ah Laok)* comprises Arabs who are neither Sayyid nor Hadhrami and is frequently associated with Al-Irsyad, an organization founded by Sheikh Ahmad Sooerkati in 1915. This organization, consisting of non-Sayyid Arab descendants, emerged as a response to the dominance of Sayyid Arabs within the earlier Jami'atul Khair organization (Miftahuddin & Abdurahman, 2023; Noer, 1980; Nurhidayat, 2024).

As Habib Amjaf explains:

"There are two types of Arabs: there are Arabs who are descendants of the Prophet, who have accountable genealogy, and there are ordinary Arabs in general... here

(Bondowoso), habaib are all generally from that intersection to there, those are habaib, Arabs who are descendants of the Prophet. That's why here there's the term jamaah laok, which means Arabs but not sayyids. As for here, there's the Eastern community or Al-Khairiyah" (Interview with Amjaf, 2024).

The *Sādah Bā ʿAlawiyyah* community in Bondowoso comprises two primary religious groups: Sunni and Shia. The Shia adherents represent a smaller proportion of the population, accounting for approximately 30–40%. Habib Amjaf, a member of the Shia community, noted, *"We are fewer in number, but we coexist peacefully with our Sunni counterparts"* (Interview with Amjaf, 2024).

Shia followers are challenging to distinguish because they participate in Sunni religious practices while also engaging in Shia-specific rituals. This ambiguous identity complicates accurate population estimation, resulting in varying reports regarding the size of the Shia community (Amal, 2020).

The religious practices of the Sadah predominantly mirror those of the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), including *tahlilan* (recitations performed to seek blessings), *yasinan* (collective recitation of the Quranic chapter Yasin), and *dibaan* (literary readings of the Prophet Muhammad's biography) (Fealy, 2020; Sholihuddin, 2021; Taufiq et al., 2022). Theologically, the majority adhere to Imam Abu Hasan al-Asy'ari and Abu Mansur al-Maturidi, while their jurisprudence is aligned with the Shafi'i school. In terms of Sufism, the community follows the teachings of Imam Ghazali and Imam Junaid al-Baghdadi (Taufiq, 2022, 2023). Furthermore, some community members observe the Ja'fariyah school in specific fiqh matters. Habib Hasan stated, "Some follow Ja'fariyah in some fiqh matters"(H. Hasan, 2024).

Institutionally, *Sayyid Arabs* are supported by Al-Khairiyah and the Rabithah al-Alawiyah, whereas non-Sayyid Arabs (Al-Irsyad) lack genealogical institutions. As Habib Amjaf further emphasizes:

"Other terms are al-Khairiyah and al-Irsyad. So al-Khairiyah are Arabs who are habaib, while al-Irsyad are ordinary Arabs, not habaib. But over there (al-Irsyad), there's no special institution that can account for their genealogy, while we have an institution called rabitha al alawiyah" (Interview with Amjaf, 2024).

This differentiation is summarized in Table 1, which highlights contrasts in status, organization, practices, and social relations.

Table 1. Social Differentiation of the Bondowoso Arab Community

Category	Sadah	Non-Sadah
Status	Prophet's descendants	Ordinary Arabs
Local Term	*Jama'ah Temor*	*Jama'ah Laok*
Organization	Al-Khairiyah	Al-Irsyad
Genealogy Institution	*Rabithah al-Alawiyah*	*Masyayikh*
Religious Practices	*Tahlil, Maulid*, Pilgrimage, *Uwad*	Reject bid'ah
School of Thought	Sunni NU & Shiaa	Wahabi
Social Relations	Open	Tend to be exclusive

Source: Researcher's data processing

In addition to the differentiation between Sadah and non-Sadah. There is an interesting finding from Sadah, namely the Su-Shi (Sunni-Shia) hybrid. This hybrid category is visualized in Figure 2, which places "Su-Shi" as a flexible midpoint in the Sunni–Shia spectrum.

Figure 2. "Su-Shi" identity flexibility in sunni–shia spectrum
Source: Researcher's data processing

This figure illustrates the results of an interview with Habib Hasan, who describes it vividly:

> *"Those are people who are in between, not really Shia, not really Sunni, when they're with Shia they say they're Shia, when they're with Sunni people they say they're Sunni... they tend to still hesitate to truly enter Shia... later they take good Shia teachings, they take good Sunni teachings"* (Interview with Hasan, 2024).

The interview with Habib Hasan reveals a subgroup within Bondowoso's Arab community that is neither Sunni nor Shia. He describes them as "people who are in between", who adjust their religious identity depending on the social context—identifying as Shia among Shia groups and Sunni among

Sunni groups. Habib Hasan clarifies that this behavior is not opportunistic but rather a reflection of hesitation and a transitional identity, with these individuals synthesizing practices from both traditions. This adaptability enables them to navigate sectarian differences, resulting in a hybrid form of religiosity that reduces the distinctions between Sunni and Shia.

b. *Peaceful coexistence between sunni and shia sadah*

The Arab Sadah community in Bondowoso demonstrates significant interfaith harmony between Sunni and Shia Muslims, contrasting sharply with the sectarian tensions seen in other parts of Indonesia (Fakihudin, 2023; Suryadi & Puspita, 2023). This peaceful coexistence is supported by advanced social mechanisms that prioritize a common sense of identity over theological differences.

Table 2. Religious pluralism mechanisms in the Bondowoso Arab community

Aspect	Practice/ Mechanism	Interview Evidence	Outcome
Theological Accommodation	Emphasis on shared fundamental beliefs	Habib Amjaf: "Fundamentally, there are no differences, Shia also recognize the same prophet as Sunni... the Quran is the same, God is the same, the prophet is also the same".	Theological differences minimized
Shared Religious Practices	Joint participation in *tahlil, maulid, and Ashura*	Habib Hasan: "Religious study sessions, telling the story of the martyrdom of Sayyidina Hussein until [people] cry and shout".	Cross-sectarian religious unity
Interfaith Marriage	Sunni-Shia intermarriage accepted	Habib Al Muhdar: "Even husband and wife sometimes differ, so their prayers are also different".	Kinship networks transcend sectarian boundaries
Conflict Resolution	Traditional mediation by a habaib	Habib Al Muhdar: "It's resolved here without needing courts, finished in one or two days".	Disputes resolved internally without escalation

Aspect	Practice/ Mechanism	Interview Evidence	Outcome
Social Status Protection	Elevated community position	Habib Al Muhdar: "Their social status, so they are not so influenced by such things".	Insulation from external sectarian pressures

Source: Researcher's data processing

This table demonstrates that the Arab community in Bondowoso possesses various social and religious mechanisms that facilitate harmonious coexistence between Sunni and Shia. These mechanisms are manifested through the emphasis on shared core beliefs, collaborative participation in religious rituals, and acceptance of inter-sectarian marriages, which are regarded as integral to everyday life.

In theological discourse, community leaders emphasize that the distinctions between Sunnis and Shias are not inherent. Habib Amjaf noted that both factions acknowledge the same God, Prophet, and Qur'an. Habib Amjaf stated:

> *"In my view, fundamentally, there are no differences. Shia also recognize the same prophet as Sunni, but there are propagandas claiming Shia's prophet is Ali. As for differences, it's not just among Shia, even among Sunni, there are differences… the differences are only in subsidiary matters, the Qur'an is the same, God is the same, the Prophet is also the same"* (Interview with Amjaf, 2024).

This mutual understanding underpins efforts to diminish differences. Additionally, intergroup cohesion is strengthened through common religious practices, as Habib Hasan articulated that both communities engage emotionally in religious gatherings and the observance of Ashura (H. Hasan, 2024).

An important aspect of integration, as demonstrated in Table 2, pertains to the acceptance of interfaith marriages between Sunni and Shia members (Fakihudin, 2023; Suryadi & Puspita, 2023). Habib Al Muhdar illustrated that within a single household, a husband and wife may perform prayers in different ways without causing any problems. Conflict resolution is also carried out internally through the mediation of a habaib. According to Habib Al Muhdar, disputes are usually settled within one or two days without involving the court (Al-Muhdar, 2024).

The elevated social standing of Arab Sadah functions as a safeguard against external pressures. Habib Al-Muhdar clarified that their societal position acts as a protective factor against external sectarian influences (Al-Muhdar, 2024). Consequently, the five principal mechanisms—comprising shared theology, collective practices, intermarriages, conflict resolution strategies, and social protection—serve to maintain community harmony and prevent conflicts.

c. *Social stratification and political integration dynamics*

The third strategic approach concentrates on socio-political moderation as a means of reducing sectarian discord (Rasyid et al., 2022; Yaqin, 2021). While political differences undoubtedly exist—the Sunni members tend to support Prabowo, and the Shia members normally favor Jokowi—the Sadah consistently emphasize that such differences are intrinsic to a democratic system and should not undermine unity (Wain, 2018). As Habib Hasan observed:

> *"Different political preferences are normal, but they must not divide the ummah"* (Interview with Hasan, 2024).

This perspective reflects the community's broader effort to normalize diversity within the political sphere and to ensure that pluralism does not result in fragmentation. The commitment to moderation also extends to resisting transnational ideologies such as the Khilafah movement. Community leaders emphasize that Pancasila provides the definitive foundation of Indonesian national identity (Faruq, 2021; Harisudin, 2019; Taufiq, 2022). As Habib Amjaf firmly articulated:

> *"The Khilafah does not align with Indonesia; Pancasila is definitive"* (Interview with Amjaf, 2024).

Such perspectives demonstrate how the Arab–Hadhrami community navigates its religious heritage while actively anchoring itself within Indonesia's pluralistic political framework (Bujra, 1967; Taufiq et al., 2024). Significantly, this stance is also upheld by the younger Sadah, who internalizes these moderate values. Habib Yahya elucidated, "*Young people today understand not*

to adhere to radicalism. We are Arabs, but we reside in Indonesia, and Pancasila is our foundational principle" (Interview with Yahya, 2024).

In this manner, socio-political moderation operates not only as a safeguard against sectarian or political polarization but also as a mechanism for reinforcing inclusive nationalism within the community.

Table 3. Social stratification and political integration dynamics

Domain	Traditional Structure	Modern Adaptation	Interview Evidence	Integration Outcome
Religious Authority	Genealogical legitimacy through Rabithah al-Alawiyah	Institutional validation system	Habib Amjaf: "The institution that manages and protects the genealogy of the Prophet".	Traditional authority complements modern institutions
Political Participation	Community-based decision making	Democratic electoral participation	Habib Al Muhdar: "Sunni usually [support] Prabowo. While Shia supposedly [supports] Jokowi".	Diverse political preferences without social tension
National Ideology	Islamic identity and Arab heritage	Indonesian nationalism support	Habib Amjaf: "Pancasila ideology is very good. It's sufficient and needs to be maintained".	Successful dual identity integration
Conflict Resolution	Traditional habaib mediation	Internal dispute settlement	Habib Al Muhdar: "It's resolved here without needing courts, finished in one or two days".	An alternative justice system functioning alongside state courts
Identity Flexibility	Fixed sectarian categories	Adaptive "Su-Shi" identity	Habib Hasan: "When with Shia people they act Shia, when with Sunni people they act Sunni".	Pragmatic identity navigation preserving social harmony
Social Boundaries	Sadah vs. non-Sadah distinction	Maintained genealogical hierarchy	Habib Hasan: "Genuine Shia people will never	Traditional distinctions persist within

Domain	Traditional Structure	Modern Adaptation	Interview Evidence	Integration Outcome
			mention Sayyidina Abu Bakar... they won't use Bukhari-Muslim hadiths".	the modern citizenship framework

Source: Researcher's data processing

The table illustrates the interaction between this form of moderation and traditional social hierarchies rooted in genealogical assertions, demonstrating their adaptation to contemporary contexts of citizenship, political participation, and democratic principles (Taufiq et al., 2024). The genealogical system, institutionalized through Rabithah al-Alawiyah, establishes stratified forms of authority that influence marriage, leadership, and communal respect (Alatas, 2021; Azra, 2021). However, rather than opposing democratic principles, this framework complements them by integrating traditional legitimacy within Indonesia's institutional structure. As Habib Amjaf explained:

> *"That is the institution that manages and protects the genealogy of the Prophet"* (Interview with Amjaf, 2024).

The persistence of such authority exemplifies how concepts of Islamic nobility are transformed into modern social frameworks that coexist with, and even reinforce, democratic citizenship.

At the political level, community members participate freely in elections, demonstrating a variety of political preferences without provoking significant social tension (Brehony, 2017). Habib Al-Muhdar characterizes this relaxed attitude as follows:

> *"Sunni usually support what? Prabowo. While Shia supposedly support Jokowi… Do political differences cause tension? Oh no, it's relaxed here"* (Al-Muhdar, 2024).

This diversity is further supported by the strong endorsement of the Indonesian national ideology, as Habib Amjaf noted that the Pancasila ideology is exemplary. It is comprehensive and requires preservation (Amjaf, 2024).

Finally, Table 3 illustrates the community's inventive responses to sectarian diversity utilizing flexible identity categories. The emergence of the "Su-Shi" (Sunni–Shia) identity assists individuals in navigating theological complexities practically by adapting their practices according to the context (Hilmy, 2015; Rokhmad, 2019). Habib Hasan explained that this group consisted of people who were in-between, not fully Shia nor fully Sunni; when they were with Shia they tended to act like Shia, and when they were with Sunni they tended to act like Sunni (H. Hasan, 2024).

When addressing sensitive theological matters—such as the Shia perspective on early caliphs or the sources of hadith—the community employed discretion, mutual respect, and accommodation to manage potential tensions (Amal, 2020). Habib Hasan further clarified that genuine Shia adherents in their daily lives would never mention Sayyidina Abu Bakar, even when practicing *taqiyah*. He observed that they refrain from citing Bukhari-Muslim hadiths because, in their view, hadiths transmitted by traitors and liars are unacceptable (H. Hasan, 2024). Despite these differences, community cohesion persists through shared practices and acknowledgment of a common sense of belonging.

Collectively, these dynamics demonstrate the Arab–Hadhrami community's effective preservation of its traditional structures while integrating into Indonesia's democratic and pluralistic system. Through genealogical legitimacy, socio-political moderation, and adaptable identity negotiation, the community sustains its cultural distinctiveness without disengaging from the wider Indonesian national context.

2. Discussion

The *Sādah Bā 'Alawiyyah* community in Bondowoso maintains peaceful Sunni-Shia coexistence through mechanisms like genealogical legitimacy, ritual flexibility, hybrid identity, and socio-political moderation. Peace here isn't just the absence of violence but the normalization of diversity, aligning with Galtung's idea of positive peace as a proactive state maintained through social and cultural frameworks (Galtung, 2018; Elfia etal., 2024).

The grounded theory approach was crucial for identifying mechanisms, especially the core category of "normalization of sectarian

difference through genealogical continuity and everyday interaction." This insight would have been hard to get through hypothesis-driven methods. The coding showed how genealogical pride, ritual integration, and hybrid identity build a resilient, adaptable system of coexistence(Abdul Latiff, 2014). Sadah's genealogical legitimacy—via Rabithah al-Alawiyah—acts as local ownership of peacebuilding, rooted in cultural traditions rather than externally imposed authority, as Richmond explains (Richmond, 2010, 2013). Unlike in Sampang, Madura, where a lack of cultural capital led to violence (Hilmy, 2015; Siddiq et al., 2023), Sadah's authority in Bondowoso offers a protective framework for sectarian harmony.

One of the most notable findings is the emergence of "Su–Shi" hybrid identities, where individuals navigate between Sunni and Shia practices without strict allegiance. This development challenges traditional ideas of religious identity as being exclusive and unchangeable. It supports Richmond's concept of post-liberal peace and broadens Mac Ginty's idea of everyday peace by showing how flexible identities can serve as tools for peace (Mac Ginty, 2014). Similar to Hefner's observation of Indonesian Islam's pragmatic pluralism, the Bondowoso case shows that hybridity and ambiguity can act as resources for fostering harmony. Instead of weakening religious commitments, hybridity offers social flexibility that helps prevent polarization.

The community also highlights theological commonalities—such as shared belief in God, the Prophet, and the Qur'an—while viewing sectarian differences as less important. Leaders like Habib Amjaf, who has extensive knowledge of various schools, including Ja'fari jurisprudence, actively portray differences as minor and focus on unity. This approach reflects Indonesia's longstanding tradition of theological tolerance (Fitriani, 2023). Shared rituals like *tahlil, maulid, and Ashura* foster a sense of community across sectarian divisions, and intermarriage between Sunni and Shia Sadah families helps promote integration into kinship networks, ensuring diversity becomes part of everyday life (Naim, 2019). These practices exemplify Mac Ginty's concept of everyday peace indicators, where simple routines like rituals and family ties support broader social harmony.

Socio-political moderation further strengthens coexistence. Despite differences in political preferences—Sunni members tending to support Prabowo, Shia members leaning toward Jokowi—the community views political pluralism as natural within a democracy. This reflects what could be called vernacular democracy, where democratic participation is balanced with local cultural authority. The Sadah's rejection of transnational Islamist ideologies like the Khilafah movement, along with their strong support for Pancasila, demonstrates a dual commitment: preserving Arab-Islamic heritage while integrating into Indonesian national identity. As the "Indonesianization of Islam" is not assimilation but a blend of tradition and modernity (Nakamura, 2023). The passing down of moderate values through generations, such as Habib Yahya's statement that *"Pancasila is our foundational principle,"* shows how peace practices are adopted by youth, ensuring continuity across generations.

These findings contribute to broader theoretical discussions on peacebuilding. Firstly, they refine Galtung's concept of positive peace by demonstrating that structural harmony can be rooted in cultural legitimacy and genealogical authority, rather than solely in institutional arrangements (Galtung, 2018). Secondly, they expand Richmond's framework of local peacebuilding by illustrating how traditional authority can serve to complement democratic citizenship rather than undermine it (Richmond, 2013). Thirdly, they enhance Mac Ginty's notion of everyday peace by emphasizing hybridity and adaptive identity as emerging forms of peace practice (Mac Ginty, 2014). Consequently, the Bondowoso case presents a conceptual framework wherein genealogy, everyday actions, and identity flexibility collaboratively support sectarian coexistence.

The study also aligns with and builds upon findings from international scholarly research on religious pluralism. Comparative analyses in Lebanon and Iraq have shown how sectarian identity often leads to fragmentation when there are no shared cultural infrastructures (Al-Haddad, 2024; Takdir et al., 2023). On the other hand, the Bondowoso case demonstrates that when genealogy and daily practices are institutionalized, sectarian diversity can be normalized without relying on state coercion. In

this way, the study challenges common assumptions in the global literature that sectarian coexistence requires formal power-sharing arrangements, showing instead that locally rooted practices can be just as effective in maintaining peace (Galtung, 2018).

Practically, these findings suggest that peacebuilding initiatives within heterogeneous societies should prioritize local cultural institutions, including kinship networks, rituals, and genealogical legitimacy (Suaedy et al., 2023). The Sadah's proficiency in dispute resolution, their acceptance of intermarriage, and their commitment to national unity provide instructive insights for policy formulation and implementation (Wainscott, 2018; Bello, 2024). Peace strategies ought to extend beyond external frameworks and equally promote the reinforcement of culturally legitimate systems that communities presently depend on to navigate diversity.

The *Sādah Bā 'Alawiyyah* community of Bondowoso offers an empirically based model of sectarian coexistence that enhances both theoretical knowledge and practical application. It refines and expands existing peacebuilding frameworks by highlighting genealogy and hybridity as underused resources for maintaining harmony (Darwis, 2013). Additionally, it provides context-specific strategies to guide peacebuilding efforts in other pluralistic societies (Halili, 2019; Maarif et al., 2010). By connecting daily practices to broader theoretical debates, this study shows how lived experiences and local authority can promote sustainable peace amid deep religious diversity.

Despite its theoretical and empirical contributions, this study is not without limitations. The research was confined to a single community of the Sādah Bā 'Alawiyyah in Bondowoso, which, while providing a rich and in-depth case, limits the generalizability of the findings to other Hadhrami or non-Hadhrami contexts. The study's reliance on grounded theory and qualitative interviews, though effective for exploring lived experiences, also means that the results are interpretative and context-dependent, shaped by the specific social and cultural environment of Bondowoso. Moreover, the research does not include comparative data from other regions such as

Madura, Jakarta, or Palembang—where different configurations of Hadhrami identity and sectarian dynamics may exist. Another limitation lies in the absence of a gender-based analysis, as most key informants were male religious leaders or community elders, leaving women's perspectives underrepresented. These constraints suggest that future studies should employ comparative and intersectional approaches—incorporating multiple communities, genders, and generations—to test the broader applicability of the "family-based everyday peace" framework identified in this research.

D. Conclusion

This study has explored the mechanisms of peacebuilding within the Hadhrami Sadah diaspora community in Bondowoso and found that peace is maintained through a distinctive model rooted in kinship and everyday practices—what the study terms as *family-based everyday peace*. Through grounded fieldwork and analysis, the findings reveal that informal, intergenerational, and relational strategies—rather than formal institutional mechanisms—are central to sustaining long-term peace in this context. This synthesis offers a clear answer to the research question: how localized familial values and embedded cultural traditions function as a buffer against latent sectarian conflict.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the expanding discourse on *everyday peace* and *local peacebuilding* by offering an original conceptual lens—*family-based everyday peace*—which emphasizes the role of kinship, ritual, and trust within diasporic communities. This model extends the framework proposed by Mac Ginty and Richmond by integrating the specific role of family lineage (nasab) as a foundational element in conflict avoidance. Practically, this study offers a culturally contextualized approach for policymakers and peace practitioners engaging with conflict-prone communities, especially those shaped by diasporic and religious genealogies.

Building on the limitations discussed in the analysis—such as the ethnographic scope limited to a single community and the absence of a broader comparative framework—future research should consider cross-cultural and

cross-national comparisons. For example, applying this model to other diasporic Muslim communities in Southeast Asia, the Middle East, or Western Europe could offer deeper insights into the universality or uniqueness of family-based peace strategies. Additionally, incorporating gender dynamics or intergenerational shifts within these kinship structures may uncover new variables influencing peace sustainability.

Ultimately, this study highlights the power of localized, culturally embedded, and family-driven mechanisms in sustaining peace in ways that often go unnoticed by formal frameworks. It argues that to understand peace, one must go beyond policy and look closely at the everyday practices that quietly but powerfully shape harmonious coexistence. This insight not only enriches academic discourse but also offers grounded, community-based strategies for real-world peacebuilding in plural societies.

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