

Accommodative-Hybrid Religious Encounters and Interfaith Dialogue: A Study of Lamaholot Muslims and Catholics in East Flores

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Abstract

This paper focused its attention on three main problems. *First*, the changes occurred when ancestral religious rituals in Lamaholot collided with Islam and Catholicism. *Second*, the social cohesion capital possessed by the Lamaholot community in building inter-religious and interfaith dialogue in East Flores. *Third*, the challenges faced, and negotiations carried out in the interreligious and interfaith interaction and dialogue. This paper is constructed upon structural functionalism theory. Data was collected using observations, interviews, and documents. Data analysis method and technique used in this paper were interpretive qualitative. This paper identified two domains as entry points for developing interreligious and interfaith dialogue. *First*, the concepts of divinity in local Lamaholot rituals and in the world's religions (Islam and Catholicism) meet and strengthen each other and become the epistemological basis for dialogue. *Second*, Lamaholot rituals become a medium for transmitting the values of Lamaholot solidarity.

Penelitian ini memfokuskan perhatian pada tiga masalah utama yakni perubahan-perubahan yang terjadi ketika ritual agama leluhur di Lamaholot berjumpa dengan agama Islam dan Katolik, modal kohesi sosial yang dimiliki masyarakat Lamaholot dalam membangun dialog antaragama dan antariman di Flores Timur serta tantangan yang

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dihadapi dan negosiasi yang dilakukan dalam interaksi dan dialog antaraagama dan antariman tersebut. Kajian ini berlandaskan teori fungsionalisme struktural. Metode dan teknik pengumpulan data yakni observasi, wawancara, dan dokumen-dokumen. Metode dan teknik analisis data yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah kualitatif interpretatif. Penelitian ini menemukan dua ranah sebagai pintu masuk untuk pengembangan dialog antaragama dan antariman. Pertama, konsep-konsep ketuhanan dalam ritual lokal Lamaholot dan dalam agama dunia (Islam dan Katolik) berjumpa dan saling menguatkan dan menjadi basis epistemologi dalam rangka dialog. Kedua, ritus-ritus Lamaholot menjadi media untuk mentransmisikan nilai-nilai solidaritas kelimaholotan.

Keywords: Lamaholot; social cohesion; religious encounter; interfaith dialogue

Introduction

Lamaholot Islam and Lamaholot Catholicism are the results of their encounter with the Lamaholot culture in East Flores. In the process, the knowledge and value systems contained in the Lamaholot ancestral religion are strengthened by the sacred teachings offered by Islam and Catholicism. The strengthening underpins the cohesiveness of religious communities in East Flores.

Such encounters and praxis form two reproduction models, namely the reproduction of cultural identity (ancestral religion) in the world's religion space and the reproduction of world religious identity in the cultural identity space (Hefni, 2012, p. 63; Rubaidi, 2019, p. 21). These reproductions give birth to religious expression in two forms. On the one hand, the Lamaholot community has embraced one religion, Islam or Catholicism, faithfully believed and carried out the teachings of their religion, but on the other hand, loyalty to the world's religions does not eliminate loyalty to ancestral religious rites. These reproductions signify that within the different spaces, Muslims and Catholics live the knowledge system, value system and symbol system they created to demonstrate their search for the meaning of their lives. Their beliefs in the teachings of the world's religions are reinforced by ancestral religious values and contextualized in social encounters.

According to the researcher, knowledge, values and symbols are collective awareness of the Lamaholot community. Durkheim mentions that collective awareness as an individual's external force is a common social bond expressed through a culture's ideas, norms, values, beliefs and ideology (Durkheim, 2014, p. 36). Collective awareness can be viewed as the identity of the Lamaholot community of East Flores that propels them to stand in a single cultural collective corridor that does not discriminate against religious identity. Thus, it seems to them that cultural identity becomes the world's meta-religious identity.

Religious expressions embraced and carried out by Muslims and Catholics in Lamaholot contain two cultural aspects, i.e., cognitive and evaluative aspects (Brown et al., 2001, pp. 5–6; Geertz, 1992, pp. 7–8). Geertz divides culture into two important elements, i.e., culture as a knowledge and meaning system and culture as a value system. The first two elements are called cognitive aspects of culture while the other element is evaluative aspects of culture. The cognitive aspects (knowledge system and meaning system) are the representative construction of *model of*, from the 'existing' reality. While the evaluative aspect is the representative construction of *model for* achieving future reality. In other words, as a pattern of actions (*model of*), culture is what is done and what people can see every day as real, or in other sense, the form of action or reality that exists. As a *model for* actions, culture is viewed as a set of human knowledge that contains models that are selectively used to interpret, encourage and create actions, or in other words, as a guide for action or a reality that still has to be realized (Geertz, 1992, p. 9).

From a cognitive point of view, the expression contains a knowledge and meaning system and functions as a *model*, and from an evaluative point of view, it contains a value system and functions as a *model for*. Therefore, on the one hand, Lamaholot Islam and Catholicism contain cognitive aspects that represent the existence of ancestral and world religions. It can be understood that new religious expressions (Lamaholot Islam and Catholicism) are a new form adjusted according to the model

and substance of ancestral and world religions. Meanwhile, the evaluative aspects take the opposite role of representing a reality that must be formed or realized. Its form is still intangible but not impossible to actualize because there is a value system that directs, encourages and creates action.

According to Geertz, to account for how knowledge is translated into values or vice versa, values into knowledge, it takes what he calls a symbol system. For him, a discussion around symbols always relies on interpretation. Because of that, the symbol system allows for interpretation. If this concept is accepted then Geertz's construction of culture will have three elements, i.e., the cognitive aspect (knowledge system), evaluative system (value system) and symbol system. The three are united by the system of meaning, which Geertz calls the meeting point of knowledge and value made possible by symbols (Geertz, 1992, p. 10). According to Endraswara, the cognitive dimension (creative culture) is abstract in nature, consisting of human ideas, knowledge, outlook on life, insight and cosmos. The evaluative dimension pertains to values and cultural norms, regulating human behaviors and attitudes in culture. The symbolic dimension consists of human interaction with symbols used in culture (Endraswara, 2006, p. 5).

This study used the theory of structural functionalism as its framework. This theory views society as a biological organism consisting of organs that have dependent relationships between them; these relations are an absolute requirement for the survival and preservation of the organism (Barnard, 2004, p. 61). Therefore, structural functionalism presupposes that the system must be structured in order to ensure its survival and must also be able to harmonize with other systems. It must also have the support of other systems in order to run harmoniously. Therefore, the system must be able to accommodate the actors proportionally so that each actor has a position and role to run the system. Here, it must be able to generate adequate participation from the actors. Thus, it must also be able to control any potentially disrupting behavior caused by the actors and their members. The perspective of structural functionalism is deliberately chosen to help the researchers read and analyze the structure of the Lamaholot indigenous peoples. The peoples have an organic character consisting of parts

interconnected with each other. This society comprises the Muslim and Catholic community with genealogical kinship ties in the research area.

A qualitative method supported the researchers' objective to explore and analyze the informants' knowledge, experience, opinions, and feelings on the rites with a socio-anthropological approach (McCutcheon, 2005, p. 117; Ratna, 2010, pp. 368–389). The research locations were Adonara Island (Lelenbala, Ipi Ebang, Botung, Samsoge, Balaweling, Sandosi, Baobage, Pledo, Bukit Seburu) and Solor Island (Apelame and Kalike Aimatan). Observation, interview and document study were chosen as data collection techniques (Creswell, 2007). All data were collected from May 2019 to July 2021. Primary data were obtained from structured interviews with the cultural figures as key informants and from the community actively involved in the rites. The interviews focused on aspects of knowledge, experiences, opinions, and feelings about the rites. Secondary data were collected in the form of references related to the research theme.

All data collected were classified, compared and interpreted. The interpretation in question was describing everything behind the data that has been collected while still paying attention to the quality of its objectivity and linking it with relevant references.

The rituals studied were communal rituals performed by Islamic and Catholic community collectively in the same time and space involving the entire village or village community. The rituals were *Pate Nalan*, *Toben Lewo*, *Lewak Tapo*, *Soga Madak*, *Nedhan*, *Belu Breken* and *Wuunlolon*. The rites is similar to the *saparan* rite in Sleker hamlet (Kopeng Village, Semarang Regency), the *wahyu kliku* rite in Kendal hamlet (Karangananyar), the ritual of warding off misfortunes (disaster) for the Betung Village community (Pangkalan Kuras Sub-district, Pelalawan Regency, Riau Province) and Tolotang (Perrinyameng, Amparita, Sidenreng Rappang) (Nasruddin, 2019). These rites are carried out to ward off calamities or disasters or disease outbreaks (*pagebluk*) for the sake of individual and communal safety (Ahsana AS, 2019, pp. 21–57; Hasbullah et al., 2017).

No studies specifically and intensely link the Lamaholot culture and social cohesion, especially among Muslim and Catholic communities in East Flores. This study aimed to reveal a discussion space on the meeting between the ancestral religion of Lamaholot and the world's religions (Islam and Catholicism) in East Flores, East Nusa Tenggara, and draw relevance to the effort to create social cohesion of religious communities. Therefore, from the researcher's perspective, several new things distinguish their studies from this study. Among others, the Lamaholot rituals are a means or vessel for the preservation, development, transmission, and reproduction of knowledge systems and value systems within and for the Lamaholot community (East Flores Catholic and Islamic communities). Because of the knowledge and values, the Lamaholot community present themselves as a moral community (a community who live with relationships: God, Humans and Universe). Ultimately, the rituals give principles for the moral community while simultaneously stimulating commitment to them. The creation of a cohesive community is part of the principles and commitment.

There are three principal problems which are the focus of this study. *First*, to what extent have the ancestral religious rituals in Lamaholot changed after their encounter with Islam and Catholicism? *Second*, what kind of social cohesion does the Lamaholot community have in building interreligious dialogue in East Flores? *Third*, what are the challenges faced and what kind of negotiations are carried out in the interaction and dialogue between ancestral religions and Islam and Catholicism?

Based on such rationale, this study carries a mission to trace and reconstruct Lamaholot's knowledge system, value system and symbol system in the narratives of the ancestral religion (and culture) of Lamaholot and the narratives of Islam and Catholicism which can be an entry point for building dialogue in order to create social cohesion of East Flores, East Nusa Tenggara community in particular and Indonesia in general.

The Lamaholot's Ritual and Relational Harmonization

In the Lamaholot's communal rituals we can find the underlying structure of belief system of the Lamaholot ancestors that can be

illustrated as follows. The Lamaholot community lives and thrives in relational bond, namely relationships with the 'holy', ancestors, the universe and humans (tribes and *lewo*). Any life event in the form of catastrophes or disasters that befall a person for which reasons cannot be explained is seen as the result of individual and communal actions that disrupt the relationship.

Awareness (individual and communal) of such events leads to ritual praxis of restoring the relational bond. Tridimensional relationships are established through rituals. The goal that is sought after and strived for in the tridimensional relationships is the salvation (relational harmonization) of both individuals or tribes and *lewo*. Also, it is through these rituals individual and communal morality is formed (*atadiken*-good humans and *atadeten*-bad humans). Therefore, it can be said that the rituals become a moral authority that presents a normative order that strengthens the social network of tribes and *lewo* of Lamaholot.

Ritual praxis of Lamaholot contains two expression models: belief expression and tribal/*lewo* bond expression. The two expressions articulate socio-religious functions of the Lamaholot rituals. On the one hand, the rituals express the belief system of the Lamaholot community. On the other hand, the rituals also convey the social system of the Lamaholot community. According to the researcher, the second function is predominant among the Lamaholot community. As in the first note above, the belief function is still a subject of debate because it evolves from time to time. However, what can be said regarding its social function is that it is the content of the social function that makes the rituals not lost until now, even though its bearers have affiliated themselves with the world's religions (Islam and Catholicism).

This study has mapped the functionality into two ideas as proposed by Geertz, namely *model of* and *model for* interfaith and interreligious dialogue as well as social cohesion of the community (Geertz, 1992, pp. 9–10). The soundest idea the researcher found is that the Lamaholot rituals have stimulated, produced, and transmitted the socio-religious

value systems of its society. It is also what makes people not debate why the people still faithfully perform the rituals of their ancestral heritage of Lamaholot even though they have embraced Islam and Catholicism. The belief (faith) system that lives in the Lamaholot rituals exists at the level of the world of ideas that can change and develop. Meanwhile, the social function of the rituals will stay and even thrive as a social reality of the performing community and as learning media for other communities.

Accommodative-Hybrid Religious Encounters And Interfaith Dialogue

The researcher argues that local culture and religious rituals have universal values that can be used as entry points for developing interfaith and interreligious dialogue models. Specifically, the entry points for such development are found in two domains. *First*, the theological domain. Here, the concepts of divinity in local Lamaholot rituals and in the world's religions (Islam and Catholicism) meet and reinforce each other. The researcher views it as an epistemological basis in the context of dialogue. *Second*, the practical domain. By starting with the theological domain, dialogue in the practical domain is presented in the form of communal rituals. However, the process can happen the other way around, by departing from dialogue in the practical domain as a dialogue on the plains of life toward dialogue in the theological domain (Banawiratma et al., 2010, pp. 5–6; Connolly, 2002, p. 267; Wijayatsih et al., 2010, pp. 412–414).

Starting from this idea, the researcher reconstructed these encounters as a model of and a model for as an effort to create social cohesion among religious believers in Lamaholot, East Flores as well as to answer the accompanying challenges.

First, knowledge and meaning of manifestation about God. Since their existence, humans have recognized and believed the presence of a power that creates and controls the universe (Komaruddin & Gaus AF, 1998, p. 80). The Lamaholot community calls the power that created the universe by *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan*. The Lamaholot community believes that *Lera*

Wulan Tana Ekan is parents that become the source of human life by creating, raising and ensuring human survival.

Lera Wulan Tana Ekan is a symbolic term and greeting about divinity. The word *Lera* means 'sun'. *Wulan* means 'moon' and *Tana Ekan* means 'earth' (soil). The three elements of the universe are used to interpret God as a great power. In the symbolism there are two concepts about divinity. *First*, Lamaholotian God is a great God. He who is great is asked to intervene in the rituals' intentions. He who is great is expected to come down to earth and become the main actor of *soga madak*, namely lifting the souls of the dead into *lango belen*, the name of heaven by the Lamaholot community. He who is great is expected to be the main character in removing human sins in the *pate nalan* and *nedhan* rituals. He who is great is asked to present the truth in the rituals of *lewak tapo* and *belu breken*. He who is great is asked for his presence to elevate human dignity through the *wuunlolon* rite. He who was great is given His place in *uli beliwo* or *korke* and becomes the main character in solving all the *lewo* (village) problems that were discussed and resolved in the *korke*.

Second, Lamaholotian God is a familiar God. The greeting *Tana Ekan* (earth-soil) indicates the very concept. In addition to *Lera Wulan* (sun-moon) far away in the sky, God is also *Tana Ekan* (earth-soil) to which humans lay their existence.

All adherents of major religions believe in Allah who is worshiped and glorified as the greatest (*akbar*), but also very close (familiar). The great Allah is also familiar with all the people who believe in Him and simultaneously brings all the diverse believers closer (Tule, 2003, p. 9). The concept in Durkheim's ideation is called social harmony where every religion and culture is parts which has a knowledge system and a value system, but also has inseparable relationship with one another culture (Durkheim, 1995). This relation boils down to the aspect of intentionality in the Lamaholot concept called *melan senaren*, namely the teachings about the goodness of living together.

Therefore, it is evident that the Lamaholot conception of the great God and the familiar God does not contradict the teachings of Islam and Catholicism. The symbolic image of the divinity of the Lamaholot ancestral religion is explained by the theological description of the divinity of the world's religions. According to the researcher, there are symptoms of reaffirmation of the conception of divinity. Lamaholot's concept of *Lera Wulan-Tana Ekan* is confirmed by the Islamic concept of a Most Merciful God and the Catholic concept of a Loving Godhead (Ilyas, 2018, pp. 80–84; Magnis-Suseno, 2017, p. 129; Susanto, 2009, pp. 32–33; Vanhoozer et al., 2008, p. 225).

On the other hand, it seems that the belief in the world's religions' teachings is reinforced by ancestral religious values and contextualized in social encounters. Or, the fundamental belief in the ancestral religion becomes the vessel of the seeding and growth of knowledge and values taught by the world's religions. Here, the Lamaholot conception and the religions' teachings affirm each other even though both are present in the same space at different times. According to the researcher, the statement of 'affirming each other' requires a footnote. *First*, mutual affirmation does not necessarily mean that the world's religions and the ancestral religion of Lamaholot are each liberated from mutual acceptance. Meaning, encounters between the two are not without problems. On the one hand, there seems to be perceptual clashes causing disproportionate views of one another. The Lamaholot ancestral religion is seen as obsolete, a past that must be left behind. In fact, the religion is considered wrong and blasphemous. On the other hand, the world's religions claim that the truth belongs only to them and with this claim, the proselytization movement occurs. In Lamaholot, East Flores, the movement is not visible to the naked eye, but the results are noticeable. The existence of the Lamaholot ancestral religion cannot be doubted. It persists even though its recognition has been constantly eroded. On the other hand, there is also an element of accommodation and hybridity between the two. Their perceptions and teachings about divinity and the tri-relational values and

norms they offerf make the two meet accommodatively and hybridly. However, the researcher believes that the ‘superior position’ of the world’s religions is obvious. This superiority is also obvious in the essence of the ancestral religion rituals (Lamaholot culture) that undergo changes when entering the same space as Islam and Catholicism.

Second, knowledge and interpretation of manifestation of the “social”. Several Lamaholot communal rituals such as *Pate nalan*, *toben lewo*, *soga madak*, *lewak tapo*, *belu breken*, *nedhan* and *wuunlolon* carry a social harmony intention. *Pate nalan* and *nedhan* erase social sins and personal sins of indigenous communities. *Toben lewo* protects the village from disasters. *Soga madak* brings safety. *Lewak tapo* and *belu breken* reveal the truth of the cause of a disaster. Meanwhile, *wuunlolon* intends to maintain the balance of the social dignity of women and men. These rituals are performed upon the fundamental belief that disasters or calamities occur because of human behavior or speech that violates customary laws or regulations, especially violations related to the natural environment and the destruction of social relations between humans. Violations sever the metaphysical relation with God (*Lera Wulan Tana Ekan*) as the universe's creator and physical relationship between humans (family, tribe, *lewo*). The rituals become a means to improve these relationships. The end intention is relational harmonization. However, in their belief, the Lamaholot community sees that the sins or mistakes of one person become a common sin or mistake. Its communal character expresses this belief. This is the principal emphasis that will be discussed in this section.

First, *rituals of all*. On the designated day, all residents of *lewo* (village) are also presented in the rite. *Lewo* people's participation is not only measured by their presence during the ritual. Participation is also expressed through offerings in the *tulung tamba* or *talin* action. *Tulung tamba* or *talin* actions are based on the realization that ‘your ritual is our ritual’. The idea of ‘rituals of all’ carries a message that through the Lamaholot rituals, solidarity actions such as those initiated by Durkheim

are produced culture (Durkheim, 2014, pp. 120, 242). The solidarity of the *lewo* residents of Lamaholot is the underlying spirit for the idea of ‘rituals of all’.

The solidarity of *lewo* community of Lamaholot is a solidarity which melts the differences between the ‘Islamic me’ and the ‘Catholic me’. The ‘Islamic me’ and ‘Catholic me’ see *nedhan*, *belu breken* and *lewak tapo* as the rituals in which the ‘Islamic me’ and ‘Catholic me’ should participate. In it all see themselves as *sonta* like the views of traditional people living in the Nilgiri-Wynaad forest of South India where people see that other people are part of themselves (Bird-David, 2014, pp. 140–141).

Second, *rituals for all*. The rituals encourage all *lewo* residents to be in a synod (Greek: walk together) to achieve common salvation as happened in the rituals of *pate nalan* and *toben lewo* (Ujan, 2012, pp. 134–146). Salvation here leans more toward salvation in the world which the researcher classified as the establishment of a cohesive relationship between one human being with another human being, humans with the universe and humans with the ‘holy’ and the ancestors. A cohesive relationship keeps the *lewo* people from disasters or calamities such as unnatural deaths. *Lewo* people who experience salvation are transformed into *atadiken-atadiken* (good humans) as opposed to *atadaten-atadaten* (bad humans). Ultimately, ‘rituals for all’ naturally produce the social moral of Lamaholot. The social moral of Lamaholot is manifested in the Lamaholot human relation models including the obligation to be part of the whole and the obligation to be *atadiken* for the sake of common safety (Graham, 1994, p. 122; Makin, 2016, pp. 6–11).

Third, Lamaholot rituals as an idealism of harmony and mutual solidarity. The rituals and symbols in Lamaholot are closely related to the view of divinity and sociability of their bearing community (Duncan, 1968, pp. 4, 44; Ilyas, 2018, pp. 108–109; Wright, 2004, p. 135). The ancestral religion of Lamaholot embraced by the East Flores Muslims and Catholics also carries the idealism of harmony and mutual solidarity. The idealism is manifested the ritual praxis. The researcher sees the knowledge

and value systems contained in the symbol system as the locus and focus of the cultivation of teachings and values of Catholicism and Islam in Lamaholot, East Flores. Lamaholot's knowledge and value system become a common property that unites the Lamaholot Muslim and Catholic communities. The systems become a shared intuition enriched with various religious practices through their rituals. The systems, shared intuition, and religious experience give birth to the common good laws that lead the Lamaholot *atadiken* to salvation, individually and communally.

The ancestral religious rites of Lamaholot teach and invite the faithful to be 'familiar' with fellow adherents of other religions, 'familiar' with the surrounding environment, and 'familiar' with cultural values and its diverse society. At this point, the ancestral religion of Lamaholot is presented as a 'common religious locus' for the Muslim and Catholic Lamaholot communities.

The ethnic community of Lamaholot is integrated in tribes. These tribes are headed a tribal chief. Each tribe has a tribal traditional house. The tribes form a *lewo* (village) and is led by a *kabelen lewo* (*mehen lewo*). A *lewo* has a traditional house (*lango belen*), as a large house belonging to the village and at the same time belonging to the tribes. The study has stressed that the Lamaholot communal rituals are one of the means that enables the integration. From the procedures, means and forms of community involvement or participation, the researcher sees that the Lamaholot rituals are a vehicle for reproduction, transmission, development, and continuity of knowledge systems, meaning systems, and value systems in social fabrics. The systems become an unwritten guide behind the social morals of the Lamaholot community in establishing their social interaction. Kimball Young and Mack W. Raymond said that no cohabitation would exist without social interaction (Young & Mack, 1959, p. 137). Social interaction is the basis of the social process, namely the interplay between one individual and another or one group with another, not only physically but in various aspects of life. Or, as emphasized by John Lewis Gillin and John Philip Gillin (1954, p. 489),

social interactions are social relations that are dynamic between individuals, between groups of people, and between individuals and groups of people. In a simpler context, the relationship manifests in forms such as greeting, shaking hands, talking-dialogue-communication. The researcher classified such social interaction perspective as small devices that create social harmony as idealized by Durkheim for a structured and integrated society in the tribes (*lewo*) of Lamaholot.

Lamaholot's Rituals: Reproduce, Develop and Transmit Socio-religious Values

On a micro-scale, Lamaholot's rituals, both incidental rituals such as *soga madak*, *lewak tapo*, *belu breken* and *nedhan*, or periodical ones such as *pate nalan*, *toben lewo* and *wuunlolon* have and will always reproduce, develop and transmit socio-religious values. This study found three principal value reproductions as follows:

First, rituals and cohesiveness. Lamaholot's communal rituals become a vessel that enables continuity and cohesive stability in communities with different world religion backgrounds. Through them, they encounter 'the holy'. When together facing the 'holy one', they want to emphasize that they have one need in common, namely personal, tribal and *lewo* safety. In fact, they are also meeting the same character, namely the 'holy one' (*Lera Wulan Tana Ekan*), whom they believe to be the source of salvation with their ancestors. According to the researcher, belief in 'the holy one' and the common salvation from the same 'holy one' become the socio-religious strength of this community group.

On the other hand, Lamaholot's community meets each other through the rituals. It forms a common identity as children of the same mother and father, which allows them to unite the commitment to live together even though they come from different communities (Islamic and Catholic communities). They are united in the same Lamaholot community. In a Lamaholot community, they build a *lewo* consisting of tribes. The existential commitment moves them to *pupu taan tou gahan taan ehan* (embrace everyone, build unity and foster togetherness).

Under the guidance of *pupu taan tou gahan taan ehan*, Lamaholot's community brings their self into the social space, namely tribe and *lewo*. The social space accommodates and bridges religious differences. In this social space, the *pupu taan tou gahan taan ehan* principal melts differences and cements cohesiveness when dealing with a social structure which is starting to show its multicultural-multi-religious face. In East Flores, the Lamaholot ethnicity is not the only ethnicity. There are also Sumatra, Java, Sulawesi, Timor ethnicities who live mingle with the Lamaholot ethnicity. However, until now there is no precise data about how many of them. In general, they make a living as traders who already have a permanent residence in East Flores.

Second, rituals and subsidiarity. Lamaholot's rituals mobilize their residents to participate and participate not only with their presence but also by giving subsidies through *gemohing-talin*. *Gemohing* and *talin* actions express this subsidiarity idealism which is working together while gathering what can be gathered from personal belongings for common welfare.

The adhering community is moved to give what can be given to the ritual host. Lamaholot rituals is ultimately a celebration of subsidiarity, namely a spontaneous concern that allows them to be involved in the pursuit of individual and communal salvation and the social growth of tribes and *lewo(s)*. Subsidiarity enables tribe and *lewo* members as individuals or communities to establish collaboration with others and contribute to the religious, cultural, and social life of tribe and *lewo* members in which an individual and community are members (Florisan, 2009, pp. 125–127; 131–135).

Third, rituals and solidarity. Solidarity has two complementary aspects: social principle and moral virtue. Through the communal rituals, the Lamaholot community upholds the solidarity principle. Solidarity is seen as a social moral virtue and not merely as feelings of pity or sadness due to bad luck to humans. On the contrary, the solidarity that prevails here is a firm determination to dedicate oneself to the common good. The basic principle is that each individual is responsible for everyone. In this sense,

solidarity is an act that transcends the self by imposing distinctive religious dimensions such as generosity, forgiveness and peace. Therefore, it can be said that when it already binds its individual self to the social space, what happens there is that every individual Lamaholot experiences ‘you become another me’, ‘my joy is your joy’, ‘your anxiety is my anxiety’, ‘your disaster is my disaster’ and ‘my salvation is your salvation’ (Hardawiryana, 1993, GS Art. 1).

Conclusion

The depiction of Lamaholot in this study is a description and reconstruction of how to be in an individual and social Lamaholot *atadiken* (human) manner that has been integrated in the new identity namely Lamaholot Islam and Lamaholot Catholicism. Through the rituals, the Islamic-Catholic Lamaholot community desires to be with the ‘holy one’ (*Lera Wulan Tana Ekan*-Allah-God), in the social institutions (family, tribe, *lewo*) and be together with the whole universe. It is social capital to be together in social relations and encounters.

In this study, the researcher obtains the three most prominent ideas. *First*, the Lamaholot rituals, which are part of the Lamaholotian symbol system is a means or vessel of preservation, development, transmission, reproduction of the knowledge system and value system within and for the Lamaholot community (Islamic and Catholic community, East Flores).

Second, because of the knowledge and value, such Lamaholot community (ritual-bearing community) presents itself as a moral community (a community that lives with relationships: God, Humans and the Universe). The Lamaholot rituals in which a knowledge and value system of the Lamaholot ancestors are found are intertwined, and the one presupposes the other. The symbolic relation present in it is closely related to their experiences of suffering and social safety. The knowledge and value systems form the Lamaholot community as a moral community.

Third, the moral community in Lamaholot, East Flores is a cohesion-supporting community. The Lamaholot community is characterized by its

communality. The ethnic unit (*marga*) is very dominant without neglecting the position and role of the individual in it. The communal nuance was born from their view of the tridimensional relational fabric. *Atadiken* (humans) of Lamaholot are believed to be individuals coming from a father and a mother who are one and the same (*ina tou, ama ehan*), grouped into tribes and *lewo* (village). Tribes and *lewo* inhabiting the same universe serve the one and the same God, namely *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan*. At the same time, it is the socio-religious principle for the moral community and stimulates community commitment to these principles.[w]

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