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LIKANG TELU: Cultural Basis for Muslim-Catholic Relations in Manggarai

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the power of culture as an effort to promote a harmonious, tolerant and peaceful life between Muslims and Catholics. Likang telu is a cultural concept of the people of West Flores which is the basis for Muslims and Catholics to live in harmony, tolerance and peace. This study was conducted in Manggarai, West Flores, East Nusa Tenggara Province. The work aims to explore four elements including, 1) the differences in Muslim-Catholic relations after and before the reform era; 2) the extent to which the likang telu concept affects Muslim-Catholic relations in Manggarai; 3) the reasons for the likang telu concept being ignored by the Manggarai people and 4) the implications of the fading likang telu concept in Muslim-Catholic relations in Manggarai. The suggests that before the reform era, the Muslim and Catholic communities could live side by side in harmony and peace, while after the reform, the situation changed and conflicts were inevitable. It is apparently due to fading local wisdom, namely the likang telu concept of the Manggarai people which has 3 pillars: ase-kae (brother and sister), hae beo (fellow residents), and anak wina-anak rona (husband-giver and wife-giver). The trigger factors are the emergence of religious organizations both in the Catholic Church and in Islam; preferences of people's knowledge sources that rely on the social media; and the unresolved trauma of the Muslim-Catholic relations in the past. The disregard for local wisdom has negative implications for Muslim-Catholic relations in Manggarai. This study recommends that all elements of the Manggarai community should revive and socialize likang telu as a local cultural treasure that had been proven in the past to be able to build a bridge of interfaith relations among different Manggarai communities.

Keywords: Likang Telu; Basis for Relations; Muslim-Catholic, Manggarai; Post-Reform

INTRODUCTION

The people of Manggarai used to live in harmony, peace and tolerance, but now it is no longer the case. This is based on the fact that conflicts and tensions occurred in the post-reform era in the Manggarai region, including the Reo case in 2014 and the Labuan Bajo case in 2018. These two cases are basically not purely religious issues, but the polarization of conflict and tension between the Catholics and Muslims. The Reo case coincided with the Eid al-Adha celebration (Floresa.co, 2014a, 2014b; Hardum, 2014). The Reo incident was caused by a “public nuisance”, as explained in Law No. 2/2002 concerning the Indonesian National Police, Article 15, namely the effects of consuming alcohol, while the Labuan Bajo case in 2018 occurred due to economic activities that did not take social conditions into account. A pork satay seller was regarded as having no tolerance for Muslim brothers who were entering the holy month of Ramadan (Kesbangpol Data, 2019). Both of these events could basically have been prevented, if certain individuals had not provoked the masses with religious issues. Attacks against each other actually occurred between Catholic and Muslim families despite the fact that these families are bound by marital relations, which are sealed in the *likang telu* concept. These cases show that the people of Manggarai have turned their back on the *likang telu* concept in the social relations system.

The literature on customs and culture in relation to religion has been extensively researched by previous scholars with their respective approaches and perspectives. Frans (Borgias, 2015, 2016), for example, mentions that the confluence of culture (Manggarai) and religion (Catholic Church) has given the Manggarai people a mutual transformative power, thus forming a hybrid identity. Religion and customs are two aspects that are inherent in the life of the Manggarai people. To quote Yosef K. Ratzinger (2004) as saying that faith itself is cultural, and faith itself exists as culture. In addition to being part of culture, religion is also a source of cultural inspiration (Ibrahim, 2015; Yazdani, 2020). These studies have placed religion and culture as two segments that are inseparable from the dynamics of life. It shows that the basic concepts of *adat* (customary law) and local culture remain a force for promoting a harmonious, peaceful and tolerant way of practicing religion (Lubis, 2017; Adison Adrian Sihombing, 2018).

Several scholars (Webb, 1990; Barnes, 2003; Tule, 2004; Gomang, 2006; Widyawati, 2018) found two basic strengths of harmony between Muslims and Catholics in Eastern Indonesia (East Nusa Tenggara), namely: attachment to culture and marital relations. The findings of these scholars generally integrate community practices and habits into the aspects of cooperation, solidarity,

the principle of equity and equality, hence the term *pela gandong* in Ambon, *katong basudara* in Kupang, *rambe* and *dodo* (cooperation, mutual assistance) in Manggarai. While the previous scholars emphasized more on traditional rites that always involve Muslim and Catholic families, this paper emphasizes local concepts of interaction models that actually cannot be decided by the new identity of a member of the community. Therefore, this study stresses on the significant role of local culture, which is commonly known as local wisdom, to regulate the ecosystem of relations between individuals and social groups. The concept of *likang telu* becomes urgent in the midst of the worsening Muslim-Catholic relations in Manggarai today. *Likang telu* is a network of social relations, which Ashutosh Varshney (2002) referred to a civic network, which can be used to strengthen inter-religious peace-building efforts in Manggarai.

This research explores and analyzes how the concept of *likang telu* of the Manggarai people can be the basis for discourse and action towards living in harmony and peace. On the one hand, *likang telu* is seen as a reflection of the management of social relations in a plural society; but on the other, the possibility of it being 'eroded' by advances in science and information technology as well as contemporary religious reflection in each religion. As a concept and philosophy of social relations, *likang telu* can be a reference, but in the course of time, this is increasingly being ignored. In fact, the existence of Catholics in Manggarai is also related to marriage between a Muslim woman who converted to Catholicism and a young man that was later recorded as the first Catholics in Manggarai. the tense Muslim-Catholic relations in the post-reform era in Manggarai illustrates that the *Likang telu* 'ecosystem' is increasingly ignored. In line with that, there are four main questions that need to be answered in this research, namely first, what are the differences between Muslim-Catholic relations before and after the reform in Manggarai? Second, to what extent did the *likang telu* concept affect Muslim-Catholic relations in Manggarai before the reform? Third, why has the concept of *likang telu* been ignored by society in the post-reform era? Fourth, what are the implications of the fading *likang telu* concept in the life of the Muslim-Catholic communities in Manggarai after the reform?

As a tentative answer, it can be argued that the fading *likang telu* concept in Muslim-Catholic relations is due to the contestation and mediatization of religion in the post-reform era. The post-reform era in Indonesia is referred to as the period of revival of religions (Ikhwan, 2018; Suhadi, 2018). The revival of religions has led to its own clashes, both internally and with other dimensions of social life. The contestation in the sphere of religion includes

not only the contestation of discourse but also the contestation of religious actions. Furthermore, excessive and unbalanced mediatization of religion allows conflicts of interest, especially when religion begins to lose its prophetic aspect. Religion that has lost its prophetic spirit is shown in the following two facts, first, religion is misused by certain parties to deprive society of awareness so that it closes itself to social facts of the present; second, religion is often perceived as a perfect doctrine (D'Costa, 2010; Marshall, 2014; Qorib, 2019). In both cases, the socio-cultural order of the community, customary authority no longer serve as the main reference. In the Manggarai community, the concept of *likang telu* is increasingly drifting away or abandoned.

MUSLIMS AND CATHOLICS IN MANGGARAI

Between the followers of two major world religions, the Muslims were presumably the first group to inhabit Manggarai. They set foot in the Manggarai region in 1626, after two (2) Minangkabau ulemas, Dato ri Tiro and Dato ri Bandang, Islamized Makassar, Lombok, and Sumbawa (Aizid, 2016; H Chambert-Loir & Salahuddin, 1999; Henri Chambert-Loir, 1985; Noorduynd, 1987; Toda, 1999). Meanwhile, the Catholics began to establish a community here since the baptism of the first Catholic in Reo in 1912 (Borgias, 2015; Chen & Suwendi, 2012; KR Secretariat, 1985; Widyawati, 2018). The coastal areas are generally inhabited by Muslims, while the Catholics generally live in interior areas, although a small number of Muslims also live in remote areas and blend with local traditions (Ibrahim, 2015; Steenbrink, 2013). Similarly, some Catholics also live in the coastal area. The character of the Muslim and Catholic communities in the coastal and interior areas is also different. The informants reported, "Interior Muslims are more likely to encounter Catholic dynamics" (I2.Na/5/11/2019; I4.Re/15/10/2019; I8.Lb/28/9/2019), while coastal Catholics encounter more Islamic dynamics" (I1.Na/5/11/2019; I3.Re/15/10/2019; I6.LB/28/9/2019; I7.LB/28/9/2019). In daily interactions, coastal communities are referred to as *ata wa wae* (coastal people), who are identified as Muslims, while interior communities are referred to as *ata eta golo* (mountain people), who are identified as Catholics.

The interactions between Muslims and Catholics both in the coastal areas and in the interior areas allow for assimilation, acculturation and accommodation. The first Muslim-Catholic union in Manggarai occurred upon a marriage between a Muslim woman, Sitti Aminah, and a young man from the Andara family in Jengkalang Reo. Sitti Aminah (Agnes Mina, baptismal name) and her husband along with three others were later baptized into the Catholic faith. Their names were recorded as the first Catholics in Manggarai. The

marriage formed family ties between the Muslim and Catholic communities in Reo (North Manggarai). For the first time, the Muslim family was referred to as the *anak rona* (wife-giver) in the Manggarai cultural narrative, while Catholic family referred to as *anak wina* (husband-giver's family). In the course of time, the growth of Muslims and Catholics continued to increase. Based on 2020 data, the majority of the Menggarai population were Catholics (88.3%), followed by Muslims (11%), Christians (0.62%), and Hindus (0.07%) (Manggarai, 2020; West Manggarai, 2020 ; East Manggarai, 2020). Why is the growth rate of the number of Muslims and Catholics so far apart even though the former came far earlier than latter? Based on several scholars' research, it was partly because of the political and economic power of the Dutch East Indies which favored the growth of Catholics (Steenbrink, 2013; Webb, 2013). , 1990), and the preferences of the Manggarai people on culture (Hefner, 1993; Widyawati, 2018).

In the pre-independence period, relations between Muslims and Catholics in Manggarai were filled with competition and ambitions for political and economic domination. However, after independence, especially during the Old Order and New Order, Muslims and Catholics could live in harmony, tolerance, and peace. Two basic forces that contributed harmony, tolerance, and peace between Muslims and Catholics in Eastern Indonesia, including in Manggarai in the pre-reform era as reported by previous researchers (Barnes, 2003; Gomang, 2006; Tule, 2004) are the factors of kinship and attachment on culture. Thus, in the pre-reform era there was a shift, i.e. from the state of political and economic competition in the pre-independence period to harmonious and peaceful relations. The pattern of relations between Muslims and Catholics before independence was marked by super-odination (domination)–subordination, among others, first, the domination of the Makasar (Goa-Tallo) kingdom in the sixteenth century in politics, economy and religion in Manggarai; second, the dominance of the Bima kingdom in politics, trade and religion in the period after the Makassar Kingdom placed power under the Dutch Company (1667) since the sixteenth century through the early twentieth century; and third, the dominance of Dutch political, economic and religious power since 1908 in Manggarai (Steenbrink, 2013; Toda, 1999). In the pattern of superodination-subordination relations, the Manggarai community is classified as a subordinate group, because they do not have adequate political and economic power.

The dynamics of Muslims and Catholics changed during the independence period in Manggarai, not only because of the decentralized political system of power, but also the active cultural segment and kinship between Muslims and

Catholics. In fact, several studies have stated that Muslim-Christian relations in other parts of Indonesia during the New Order era were marked by conflicts and tensions due to several factors, including the construction of the media on the discourse of Christianization and Islamization (Muttaqin, 2004), the presence of religious groups with exclusive and inclusive perspectives (Husein, 2005) and feelings of threat (Mujiburrahman, 2006). In contrast, conflict and tension between Muslims and Catholics in Manggarai during the Old Order and New Order almost never happened. Cultural activities involving the two groups were largely responsible for their friendly and fun encounters. During the New Order, cultural activities were seen as opportunities for Muslim and Catholic family reunions.

Furthermore, the similar demographics of Muslim and Catholic coastal communities also show a more dynamic religious character. The three regions selected as research sites in this study as the focus of research (Nangalili, Reo and Labuan Bajo) reflect not only harmony but also potential conflict and tension. The data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2020 show the following figures: in Labuan Bajo, Muslims: 49.6% and Catholics 47.4%; in Nangalili, Muslims: 78.2% and Catholics 21.7%; in Reo, Muslims: 32.2% and Catholics 66.3% (Manggarai, 2020; West Manggarai, 2020). These religious demographics in the post-reform era, if not properly managed, will potentially trigger tension and conflict. The Reo incident in 2014 was an event that threatened the narrative of peace between Muslims and Catholics in Manggarai. The conflict between Muslims and Catholics in Reo was between families, namely Muslims as *anak rona* (wife-giver) and Catholics as *anak wina* (husband-giver). For some reason, religious emotion was far stronger than kinship. This phenomenon was not found in the pre-reform era. Likewise, the Labuan Bajo case in 2018 is an illustration of the fading cultural ecosystem regarding social interactions between Muslims and Catholics in Manggarai. The concept of *likang telu* in local Manggarai culture has increasingly lost its significance with respect to Muslim and Catholic social interactions. Thus, the relations between Muslims and Catholics in Manggarai from the pre-independence to post-reform period have been unpredictable depending on the issues of religious dynamics in each period.

THE CONCEPT OF *LIKANG TELU* IN THE MANGGARAI COMMUNITY

Likang telu is a concept of social interaction in the Manggarai people's culture. *Likang telu* comes from the Manggarai language; *likang* means stone stove, *telu* means three (Lon, 2018; I1.Na/5/11/2019; I3.Re/15/10/2019). "The term

likang telu for us Manggarai people is very important, because it not only refers to the activity of cooking rice and vegetables in the kitchen, but also a symbol of relations between people, including inter-religious relations,” said an informant (I1.Na/5/11/2019).). In general, *likang telu* means a three-stone stove, which implies that there are three stones arranged as a stove used cooking. In the social relations structure of the Manggarai people, the *likang telu* consists of *ase kae* (brother and sister), *hae wa’u* (clan), and *hae beo* (fellow residents). The *likang telu*, with regard to social relations of the Manggarai people, includes kinship relations: *ase-kae* (brothers), *hae beo* (fellow residents) and *anak wina-anak rona* (husband-giver and wife-giver) (I1.Na/5/11/2019 ; I4.Re/16/10/2019; I5.Re/17/10/2019; I6.Lb/28/9/2019; I8.Lb/28/9/2019). *Likang telu* became the precursor of discussion about multiculturalism in the Manggarai society. In other words, the concept of *likang telu* is the basic idea to promote a multicultural mentality in the Manggarai community. The *likang telu* concept inspires open-minded thinking. The dynamics of the global community regarding equality and interconnectedness in the era of digital technology can find its basis in local concepts such as *likang telu*. Success and luck for the Manggarai people occur because of the continuity of the concept of *likang telu* in each individual struggle, namely the good relations with *ase-kae*, *haebeo* and *anak rona - anak wina*. The three pillars of *likang telu* can be explained as follows.

First, the *ase-kae* pillar. *Ase-kae* denotatively means one’s consanguine and uterine brothers and sisters. In the social interaction system of the Manggarai people, *ase-kae* connotes all social groups in one territorial area, so they are called *ase-kae ca beo* (of the same village), *ase kae remong* (brothers and sisters because they have met somewhere), *ase-kae ca nuk* (family because of a shared dream, hobby, and interest), *ase-kae labar* (family because of playmates). Every individual who has formed a group or association in any ethnicity and religion is called *ase kae agama*, *ase kae suku*, *ase kae diskusi* (discussion partner), *ase kae arisan* (women’s social gathering partners), etc. (I2.Na/6/11/ 2019; I3.Re/15/10/2019; I1.Na/5/11/2019). In the diaspora Manggarai community, their bond with those at home is still called *ase kae Manggarai*. Therefore, the Manggarai people in Yogyakarta, for example, are called *ase kae Manggarai Yogyakarta* regardless of their religion and ethnicity. The second pillar of the *likang telu* is *hae beo*, or *hae golo*. The term *hae beo/golo* refers to each individual who comes from the same area (hometown). They are connected and bound by territory (*ca beo* or *ca golo*, the same village of origin). *Hae beo* is seen as the second element in the success of an individual. Success for the Manggarai people is strengthened by the support and cooperation of fellow villagers. To every child of the Manggarai diaspora, the parents usually remind

them of this message, *neka hemong lonto torok cama golo, lonto leok cama beo* [Never forget the solidarity and good relations with fellow villagers].

The third pillar, called *anak wina-anak rona* which denotatively refers to a form of a relationship bound by marriage. A family who gives a wife in marriage is called *anak rona* no matter the religion, on the other hand, a family who gives a husband in marriage is called *anak wina*. In the social relations of the Manggarai people, social ties due to the relationship between *anak wina* and *anak rona* is undeniable. The term also connotes everyone who has not been known at all. Each stranger is referred to as *anak wina* or *anak rona* (I1.Na/5/11/2019; I4.Re/16/10/2019; I7.Lb/28/9/2019); in the sense that each guest can establish a good relationship with the host. It is natural that new encounters with guests can be continued into family relations due to marriage or simply due to economic interests and the like. A person of Bima ethnic group, for example, can be called *anak rona* because their daughter is married to a member of the Manggarai family. At the same time, a Manggarai man's family is called *anak wina*, and vice versa. Generally, a woman follows her husband's religion. As a result, the relations between Muslim and Catholic families is bound as an *anak wina-anak rona* relations. In the traditional Manggarai structure, *anak rona* (wife-giver's family) has a higher position because from their daughter, her husband's family can get children.

Therefore, the concept of *likang telu* is the precursor of the discussion about the spirit of living the *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* [Unity in Diversity]. The concept of *likang telu* opposes the tendency of homogeneity and promotes diversity in the Manggarai community. Everyone is regarded as *ase kae* and all people who are not yet known are as *anak wina-anak rona*. In the concept of *likang telu*, there is no term for "the others" (*toe ata bana*), but all are called *ata dite*, *ata dite taung* ("our" people). Each individual and all groups can be inter-related. Therefore, the following expression is often used to resolve tensions and conflicts, "*bom cei ise, cei ite*" (they are not 'them' and we are not 'us'). This expression implies a rejection of words and actions that discriminate against individuals based on certain interests. Therefore, *likang telu* is a representation of the multicultural character of the Manggarai people. Lawrence Blum (2001) state that the character of a multicultural society embodies three (3) positive traits, namely first, every individual is free to express cultural identity in the midst of plurality; second, every individual has a desire to learn other people's culture, and third, every individual feels happy with cultural differences. The character of a multicultural society as proposed by Blum colors the dynamics of the life of the Manggarai people.

The Manggarai community consists of Manggarai, Bugis, Bajo, Minangkabau,

Mentawai, Sasak and Sumba people and several other Flores ethnic groups such as Ngada, Nagekeo, Ende, Sikka and Lamaholot (Heerkens, 1930; Orinbao, 1969). Three dominant language groups are found in coastal communities, namely, 1) Bima, Manggarai and Bugis languages in Labuan Bajo, West Manggarai; 2) Bima, Manggarai and Bugis languages in Reo and Pota; 3) Manggarai, Ende and Bima languages in Nangalili. The communities in the three locales form a trilingual communication. Three language families in one residential area are used by the three community groups, therefore, the Bima people in Reo can use the Manggarai language in communicating with the Manggarai people, and vice versa. The willingness of each individual to use three languages in daily conversations is an expression of individual pride as *ase-kae*, *hae beo* and *anak wina-anak rona*. Therefore, as Varshney (2002) emphasizes the need for activating civic networks which he refers to as day-to-day interaction and associational interaction to minimize inter-religious conflict (in India), then Muslims and Catholics in Manggarai can revive *likang telu* to prevent and resolve problems between social groups, especially in this case between Muslims and Catholics.

In the Manggarai social interaction structure regarding Muslim and Catholic relations, the Muslim community are seen as *anak rona* / wife-giver, so they deserve to be treated with respect as how *anak rona* should be treated by *anak wina* in the Manggarai people's tradition. Therefore, regardless of their relations based on *ase kae* (brothers and sisters) or *hae beo* (fellow villagers), every Muslim and Catholic in Manggarai must interpret themselves as parties who are bound by the relationship between *anak wina* and *anak rona*. Social disharmony often occurs because they ignore these three elements of relations, namely *ase-kae*, *hae beo*, and *anak rona-anak wina*. In the concept of *likang telu*, conflicts and tensions occur because one group religious followers no longer regard the followers of other religions as *ase-kae*, *hae beo*, and *anak rona-anak wina*. The concept of *likang telu* in the social interaction of the Manggarai community can be described as follows:



- A = normal lines of interaction between individuals/social groups, leading to social harmony.
- B = the broken line of social interaction between the three elements of society, which is vulnerable to conflict and tension

FADING LIKANG TELU CONCEPT IN MANGGARAI COMMUNITY

From the interview data, it was found that there are three factors that trigger the disregard for *likang telu* concept, namely the presence of religious organizations both in the Catholic Church and in the Manggarai Muslim community in the post-reform era. Second, social media; and third, the unresolved trauma of past Muslim-Catholic relations. First, the concept of *likang telu* in the Manggarai community is increasingly marginalized by the religious dynamics initiated by religious organizations. The informants reported, “there are approximately four religious organizations that present themselves differently from the others, namely PDK (charismatic prayer fellowship) and KTM (Community of the Holy Trinity in the Catholic Church, while in the Muslim community there is Khilafatul Muslimin (KM). and the Jamaah Tabligh (JT).” (I1.Na/5/11/2019; I3.Re/15/10/2019; I4.Re/16/10/2019; I5.Re/17/10/2019; I6 .Lb/27/9/2019; I7.Lb/28/9/2019; I8.Lb/28/9/2019) The informants also reported that the religious propagation models of new religious organizations in Manggarai “tend to ignore, and even consider custom as *shirk* [polytheistic practice] and infidelity” (I2.Na/5/11/2019; I3.Re/15/10/2019; I7.Lb/28/9/2019; I5.Re/17/10/2019; I6 .Lb/27/9/2019; I8.Lb/28/9/2019) “The groups forbid their children and their families to participate in traditional activities in the village, because for them these activities are acts of infidels,” said an informant. (I1.Na/5/11/2019).

Among the many religious organizations in Manggarai, there are four religious organizations each of which has a different character, namely Khilafatul Muslimin (KM) and Jamaah Tabligh (JT) in Islam; and the Charismatic Prayer Fellowship (PDK) and the Holy Trinity Community (KTM) within the Catholic Church. The PDK is one of the oldest organizations in the Catholic Church. It was originally a student movement on campus, initiated by students (assisted by several Catholic lecturers) at Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, United States in February 1967 (Ramadhani, 2008; Ranaghan, 1969). This Organization entered Indonesia in 1976, but was not immediately approved by the Indonesian Bishops' Council (MAWI, now known as KWI, the Indonesian Bishops' Conference). PDK was officially accepted in Indonesia in 1983

through KWI and was established as a legitimate spiritual organization within the Catholic Church (Ramadhani, 2008; Adison Adrianus Sihombing, 2019). One of the spiritual organizations that is the “biological child” of the PDK in Indonesia is KTM. KTM was initiated by Pastor Yohanes Indrakusuma, O.Carm, who later founded a new order called Ordo Putri Karmel [the Order of the Princess Carmel] (P.Karm) and the Congregation of Carmelitae Sancti Eliae (CSE) in 1986, and was inaugurated in 2002 (P.Karm) and in 2012 (CSE).

The KTM organization was introduced to the public in 1987 in Ngadireso, Malang, East Java, Indonesia. The KTM organization is an organization of a spiritual nature (St. Paskalis Church, 2021; Putri Karmel, 2021). KTM entered the territory of the Diocese of Ruteng in 1992 along with the entry of the Princess Carmel sisters, but was only widely introduced to Manggarai Catholics in the 2000s. KTM was born under the Carmelite spirituality, therefore, KTM's spirituality is that of the Princess Carmel sisters and the CSE priests. In other words, the forerunners and at the same time the movers of the KTM organization were the Sisters of Princess Carmel and the priests of CSE. As a form of embrace on the spiritual life, KTM members rely on the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit in their works of life. Therefore, the KTM style of spiritual reform is contemplative but charismatic at the same time. Today, the international KTM communities can be found in Malaysia, Vietnam and the United States (Sugiyanto, 2020).

The characteristics of religious movements of PDK and KTM show a new way of worship and emphasize the reform of spiritual dynamics among Catholics. In carrying out spiritual reform activities, PDK and KTM tend to ignore matters related to customs and culture. Consequently, they often clash with the Manggarai people's way of life, which is inseparable from tradition and culture. PDK and KTM bring new interpretations in accordance with the basic spirituality of their lives, namely the reform of life in a spiritual way. The Holy Spirit is the guide for the lives of its members and no longer in traditional rites. From the aspect of spirituality, the way of life of PDK and KTM is in line with the basic values of the Holy Bible, but their exclusive interpretations have caused clashes in their own internal circles. The members of PDK and KTM refer to themselves as groups that carry out religious principles based on the Holy Bible. Several informants reported that the presence of PDK and KTM in the Catholic Church has caused socio-religious unrest. “They tend to use different interpretations of biblical texts from those used by priests, for example the interpretation of victims. They only believe in the Bible, and are ‘allergic’ to the customs of our ancestors”, said one informant (I6. LB/27/9/2019). Another informant said, “their way of praying is not in line

with the way the Catholic Church usually does” (I7.LB/27/9/2019). The PDK and KTM movements that place too much emphasis on the spiritual aspect and ignore the role of culture have made their members exclusive, and does not fit with the *likang telu* concept in the narrative of social relations among the Manggarai people.

In the Manggarai Muslim community, in addition to typical Indonesian religious organizations such as NU and Muhammadiyah (Shariasih, 2018) there are also several religious organizations with different characteristics, namely Khilafatul Muslimin (KM) which tends to be political and Jamaah Tabligh (JT) which tends to be spiritual and cultural. Syaifi Mufid, (2011) argues that Muslims had a fairly high development of socio-religious organizations in Indonesia during the reform era. Besides national Islamic religious organizations, they also joined global Islamic organizations, where their movements and organizational scope are not limited by certain territorial boundaries. KM established a mainland Flores branch office in Marombok Labuan Bajo, West Manggarai, in 2018. The KM organization has in fact been established since the time of Caliph Abu Bakar Ash-Shiddiq, but has not developed. Since 1926 (in Cairo) the discourse on the importance of the caliphate (the supreme leader of the Muslims) has been continuously reformed, among others, through congresses, which are called the congress of the Islamic caliphate. The KM group is seen as one of the organizations that carries the political Islam movement (khilafatul muslim.net, 2019). Thus, KM is a religious movement that is political in nature. The West Manggarai government under the coordination of the National Unity and Politics Agency and a Muslim leader from Labuan Bajo acknowledged that KM in the early days of its presence in the Labuan Bajo area did not carry out activities that disturbed the public after being warned about the history and orientation of the KM organization towards politics. A study conducted the Research and Development Agency of the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs is used as one of the state guidelines for supervising KM in Manggarai. It is stated that the KM organization was supported by the Al-Qaeda terrorist network and even became an accomplice to ISIS (*Islamic State of Iraq and Syria*) (Bakri, 2019; FaktaNews, 2018).

In addition to the KM organization, there is the Jamaah Tabligh. In short, JT is a religious movement that was originally founded and developed in India but later spread to reach several Muslim countries in the world. The movement was founded in 1926 in Mewat, India, by Sheikh Maulana Muhammad Ilyas Kandalawy (1885-1944). This movement has been growing rapidly not only in India and Bangladesh but also in other parts of the world, including

Indonesia. JT began to take root in Indonesia since 1952 (in Medan) and 1955 (in Jakarta) (Noor, 2010, 2012). The number of JT members that continues to increase throughout the Indonesian Archipelago shows how JT has a place and positive response from all Muslims in this country. JT actually entered the Manggarai area in 2004, but the congregation did not stay in Manggarai. In 2012 the membership of the JT organization almost spread throughout the Flores area, despite the fact that the central MUI [Indonesian Ulemas Council] only gave an official permit in 2015. In 2018, JT constructed a mosque in Siru, Lembor District, West Manggarai as a center for its members' da'wah activities. An informant reported, "At a certain time, JT Siru invited preachers from Malaysia" (I2.Na/5/11/2019).

The unique trait of the JT group is that although they do not have an office like KM, its members can preach from mosque to mosque. Farish A. Noor (2012) referred to JT members as "Muslim missionaries". JT is not interested in political movements, because it does not jeopardize unity wherever they preach. JT's da'wah is seen as an asset for the propagation of Islamic da'wah in the world, however, Junaedi argued that JT's principles need to be criticized, among others, the JT's interpretation model of a number of verses of the Qur'an which tends to emphasize literal-textual aspects rather than substantive-contextual meanings, inclines towards subjectivity rather than objectivity (Junaedi, 2013). In addition, Muslim intellectual, Ibnu Burdah in his critical note said that "JT is less productive for efforts to strengthen nationalism in Indonesia" (Burdah, 2018). Their physical appearance (dressed in white and turban) and their courage to travel on foot along the trans-Flores road, from the eastern end of Manggarai to Labuan Bajo (west end) in the year 2000 captured the attention of many Catholics. They are no different from the Catholic missionaries of the past, therefore they are more accurately called "Muslim missionaries" as Noor (2012) said. JT's physical appearance is viewed as a new scene after the events of September 11, 2001 in the United States. They could be misunderstood by local community groups, in the same way that the Manggarai people in the past being reactive and even refusing the arrival of Catholic missionaries because they were considered as disturbing the local (traditional) religious order.

Therefore, the presence of KM and JT is seen by certain people as a group that threatens harmony between Muslims and Catholics, even though KM and JT --up to the time this research was conducted-- had never been proven to cause any conflict in Reo (2014) and in Labuan Bajo (2018) despite their tendency to exclusivism in religious practices. Exclusivity of religious manifestation everywhere raises suspicion, misunderstanding between Muslims and

Catholics. This research concludes that the new face of religion promoted by religious organizations does not necessarily help religious propagation both internally and externally. Religious organizations, either political or non-political, still generate internal and external resistance. In other words, the presence of religious organizations tends to distance themselves from the concept of *likang telu* in Manggarai culture.

The second factor, the trigger for the increasingly fading *likang telu* concept is the public's preference for social media. Several informants acknowledged that they skipped the cultural events in the Manggarai community due to the "social media" preference factor (I2.Na/5/11/2019; I3.Re/15/10/2019; I7.Lb/28/9/2019; I6.Lb/27/9/2019; I8.Lb/28/9/2019). People in the post-reform era in Manggarai have been using social media a lot. Information technology such as the internet entered the Manggarai area for the first time in 2003 with the Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) technology. Since then, the first cellular telephone network, namely Telkom Seluler (Telkomsel), has been established in the Manggarai area. As of 2019, the Telkom network towers amounted to 73 units including Telkomsel, IM3, XL Axiata, Indosat, etc. (Kominfo Manggarai Office, 2019).

A decade after the reform, the growth of telecommunications in the NTT [East Nusa Tenggara] region increased tremendously. Telkomsel internet users in NTT throughout 2012 saw a twofold increase compared to 2011. The increase in Telkomsel internet users reached 72% of the total population of NTT. Telecommunications infrastructure in part has also encouraged public interest in using telecommunications media such as computers, cellphones (Hp) and becoming members of certain social media such as FB (facebook), WA (whatsapps), Line, Instagram and Twitter. The events of Reo and Labuan Bajo occurred after the information technology revolution reached remote areas of Manggarai. Therefore, the "allegation" that social media has an impact on the dynamics of the development of religions, including Muslim-Catholic relations in Manggarai, as stated by the informants, is realistic and makes sense. People prefer to use social media as a source of religious knowledge rather than religious preachers. They also prefer to use today's social media information rather than cultural narratives that are considered outdated. In fact, should people have embraced the concept of *likang telu*, conflicts and violence between religious communities could have been prevented.

The third trigger factor is the unresolved trauma of past Muslim-Catholic relations. An informant reported, "New organizations make other religious groups afraid and suspicious of various things, please understand, because of the story of the unpleasant past relations between Muslims and Christians"

(I8.Lb/27/9/2019). Several informants acknowledged that religious activities that promote a new way of religious practice in each religion are seen as “signs of the revival of the ambition of domination by certain religious groups over the others” (I2.Na/5/11/2019; I3.Re/15 /10/2019; I7.Lb/28/9/2019; I6.Lb/27/9/2019). Muslims and Catholics in Manggarai in the pre-independence era were involved in a bloody rivalry. On the one hand, between traditional religions and Muslims from the kingdoms of Makassar and Bima; on the other, between Catholic missionaries and traditional religions and Islam. Catholic missionaries won the competition and conflict due to several factors, including 1) the political power of the Dutch East Indies which sided with the Catholic missionaries to spread Catholicism rather than Islam in Manggarai, 2) the Dutch political strategies which appointed the first king of Manggarai from among the Catholics (Alexander Baruk) and ignored the request of the sultan of Bima to appoint Nasoeruddin, a son of the king of Bima (Steenbrink, 2013; Syafii, 2020).

The trauma is basically a derivative impact of social media. The media that presents global religious events also worsen tensions in inter-religious relations everywhere, including in Manggarai. For example, according to Ahmed and Mathes, western media occupies an important position in the climate of Muslim and non-Muslim relations between the West and Muslims in the world. Oftentimes, the western media describes Islam as a negative, violent religion, synonymous with radicalism, extremism and terrorism (Ahlin, 2011; Ahmed, 2017; Zein, 2012). In contrast, according to Karim and Eid, Judaism and Christianity are described as the “main enemies” of Islam (Karim, 2014; Lynch, 2011; Morgan, 2011; Saeed, 2011). Media images of religion and religiosity (particularly regarding Muslim-Christian relations) have somehow provoked latent conflicts between Muslim and Christian communities wherever they are; at the same time forgetting the chain of other aspects of the life of the Manggarai people such as the concept of *likang telu*.

These three factors (religious organization, social media preferences and past trauma) have eventually distanced the Manggarai community from the *likang telu* concept. *Likang telu* as a culture is identified with a certain religion, namely traditional religion. Therefore, reviving *likang telu* is considered contrary to the religious concept of religious followers who prefer the implementation of religious teachings in a pure and consistent manner. Bringing the concept of *likang telu* to life for certain people is considered to be degrading and even damaging to religious faith. Meanwhile, today’s customary institutions are no longer the decision-making authority. The two major religious communities (Islam and Catholicism) view traditional religious practices as a threat to

the advancement of religious principles. The fear of being controlled by a particular religious community is so strong among religious communities. Among Muslims and Catholics, it is the ideology of fear and worry” (Hefner, 2019; Muttaqin, 2004) that is still haunting their respective religious dynamics rather than cultural concepts, such as *likang telu*. At first glance, communities can coexist but in reality it is very unlikely. Kahane (1973) referred to such society as “assimilating but not united”. Manggarai Muslims and Catholics can live side by side but do not get along with each other because the principles of *likang telu* in their relations is no longer respected, which is also the case with the reform movement in religions through religious organizations, social media and unresolved past trauma.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR MUSLIMS AND CATHOLICS

Key informants acknowledged that there are two visible implications of the absence of the *likang telu* concept in the interaction pattern of the Manggarai people, namely, first, “disruption of the social interaction process” (I2.Na/5/11/2019; I5.Re/17/10/2019). ; I7.Lb/28/9/2019); and second, “Muslim and Catholic relations which tend to be tense” (I1.Na/5/11/2019; I4.Re/16/10/2019; I7.Lb/28/9/2019). First, regarding the disruption of the social interaction ecosystem between individuals and between social groups, the *likang telu* concept is a sketch of the Manggarai people’s social interaction patterns. Harmony, tolerance and peace can be achieved when individuals and social group pays attention to the three pillars of social interaction between *ase-kae* (brothers and sisters), *hae beo* (fellow residents) and *anak wina-anak rona* (husband-giver and wife-giver). It is important to observe the three pillars of social interaction in the *likang telu* concept. Denying one of them will lead to an unbalanced relations, like removing a stone from the three-stone stove of the *likang telu* structure. It would be unfortunate for an individual to fail in their interaction due to disharmony with *ase-kae* (*toe raes le ase kae*), disharmony with clan members (*toe kapu le hae wa’u*), disharmony with fellow villagers (*toe sompo le hae golo*), and disharmony with a brother’s or sister’s family (*toe tiba le anak wina, agu toe momang le anak rona*). This individual would likely be isolated. Ignoring the concept of *likang telu* is the same as denying himself as *ens individuum* and *publicum*, *homo duplex*, that is, a person who is both individual and social. Being disconnected with one of the elements of the *likang telu* concept can be caused by either latent or overt conflict.

The second implication if the *likang telu* concept continues to be ignored by the community is vulnerability to conflict and tension. The facts of conflict as

shown by Simmel have three main assumptions, which are interrelated with each other, namely first, humans have a number of basic interests and they always seek to make it happen. Second, power that is distributed unequally is a source of conflict. Conflict theory assumes that if the weaker segments (subordinate segments) are aware of their collective interests, it is more likely that such society will question the legitimacy of the unequal distribution of resources (Simmel, 1896, 1904; Varshney, 2002). The smaller the ability of the dominant group to regulate socialization processes and communication networks, the greater the ideological unification among groups that “feel subordinated”. Third, ideology and values are used as ‘weapons’ by different groups to achieve their own goals and interests. The elements required to reduce conflict can be in the form of institutions or social structures or in the form of actions or habits (Sutaryo, 1992; Varshney, 2002). Therefore, the conflict between Reo and Labuan Bajo in the post-reform era is seen as the impact of the increasing disregard for *likang telu* concept which has long been used as the principal ethics of social interaction among the Manggarai people. Conflicts between the Muslims and Catholics such as those that occurred in Reo in 2014 and in Labuan Bajo in 2018 seemed to signal that the relations between Muslims and Catholics as *anak wina* and *anak rona* were over.

The post-reform era is basically an era of identity contestation. In fact, contestation always involves fierce competition. This article shows that there is a contestation of cultural and religious identity, even religion versus culture *vis-a-vis*. In other words, the post-reform identity contestation in Manggarai is a contestation between religious conduct and cultural behavior. Some people view religion as a way of life, while others see culture as a guide of life. In addition, there are religious groups that are puritanical and liberal. The puritans want a pure manifestation of religious texts, while the liberals want reinterpretation of religious texts to be in harmony with social context. The clash between the syncretic ideology which emphasizes the importance of symbiotic relationship of mutualism between religion and culture and the puritanical-fundamentalist ideology which emphasizes the choice of religion alone is inevitable. However, for a *bonum publicum* (common good), multicultural concepts are needed, in which particulars are combined with universals. Even today, society tends to strengthen a particular identity, which is called *glocalization* (Belamghari, 2020), to be matched with the trend of globalization.

CONCLUSION

This research on *likang telu*, the local wisdom of the Manggarai people’s

culture, proves that a cultural approach is important and should not be ignored to create unity in society. The Manggarai people's *likang telu* of is one of the cultural concepts that can be used to bridge the gaps in conflicts and tensions. In the *likang telu* interaction model, Catholics and Muslims are brothers, namely *ase-kae*, *hae beo*, and *anak wina-anak rona*. Thus, the concept of *likang telu* has become a portrait of social interaction, unbroken by differences in religion and belief, race or class in the Manggarai community. If the *likang telu* concept ecosystem is understood, lived and managed properly, then conflicts and tensions can be prevented. However, this study also has limitations. First, to explain the Muslim-Catholic interaction using the analogy of the three-stone stove (*likang telu*) still seems ambiguous and even confusing. It has yet to clearly show the position of *ase-kae*, *hae beo* and *anak rona-anak wina* in *likang telu*, because such a disposition may affect the ethics and manners of social relations. This could be explored by future researchers using ethnographic approach. Second, this research used the interview method, of which the informants' subjectivity was inevitable. Therefore, the use of the mix-method by future researchers might provide a better insight into the *likang telu* concept.

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