

THE TRACE OF ISLAMIC AND CATHOLIC ENCOUNTERS IN EAST FLORES AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

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Abstract

The idea that will be explored in this research is the historical traces of the encounter between Islam and Catholicism in the early days of East Flores and subsequent encounters that led to the revival of the spirit of tolerance in East Flores. The method was chosen for the literature study (library research), supported by reference sources such as documents, books, journals, magazines, and online media related to this research theme. This research found two models of encounters between Islam and Catholicism in East Flores: accommodative encounters (mutual acceptance and understanding) and clashing encounters in acts of violence against religious figures. These two models of encounter have negative and positive implications for the development of religious life in East Flores. One of the things that stands out is that accommodative encounters impact the livelihood of tolerance in East Flores based on culture. This study will add to the body of knowledge in the sociology and anthropology of religion.

Keywords: Islamic-Catholic Encounter, Lamaholot, Tolerance

1. INTRODUCTION

The encounter between religions, especially Islam and Catholicism, in the East Flores region of NTT in the past has had an impact on the dynamics of encounters among its adherents in the present. Islam and Catholicism in East Flores have historical traces of being accommodating (mutual acceptance and mutual respect); on the other hand, there have been real clashes in acts of violence against several religious figures. The traces of this meeting significantly influence the meeting between the two today. Several exciting things were found from contemporary encounters that can be seen as role models for encounters between religions, especially those related to the experience of tolerance between adherents of different religions (Sukmayadi et al., 2023; Atasoge & Sihombing 2022). Culture is one of the pillars that is the basis for strengthening relational encounters (Witro et al. 2022; Ola & Atasoge 2022). The followers of Islam and Catholicism in East Flores have a joint cultural base called the Lamaholot culture. On this cultural basis, tolerance is developed, mutual recognition of the existence of each party and mutual respect for existing differences (Ministry of Religion, 2019).

The discourse on East Flores and studies on cultural and religious realities in East Flores has been started by several researchers, including Penelope Graham, *Rhetorics of Consensus, Politics of Diversity: Church, State and Local Identity in Eastern Indonesia* (1994); Paul Arndt, *Native Religion in the Solor Islands* (2003); R. H. Barnes through a number of his works *Lamakera, Solor Ethnohistory of a Muslim Whaling Village of Eastern Indonesia* (1996),

Community Diversity and Unity in Witiham, Adonara (2004), New Village Temple in Witiham, Adonara, Indonesia (2011); Rofinus Nara Kean, et al, A Glance at Lamaholot Culture (2008); Karl Heinz Kohl, Raran Tonu Wujo: Core Aspects of a Local Culture of East Flores (2009); Paul Arndt, Philosophy and Activities of Human Life in the Solor Islands (Translation from Religion auf Ostflores).

Philipus Tule, Frederik Doeka, Ahmad Atang in his work "*Wacana Identitas Muslim Pribumi NTT*" or "NTT Indigenous Muslim Identity Discourse" (2015) discuss the Muslim community in NTT. This work looks at several important ideas. First, as devout native Muslims, the Muslim community upholds local culture as part of their identity. For example, the relationship between the world of ancestors and the natural world (the concept of cosmology) is one of the entry points in efforts to build a harmonious life between Muslims and other religious communities. Second, indigenous Muslims in NTT have the same genealogy as Christians in NTT. This rootedness in one genealogy makes them (Islamic-Catholics of NTT) associate agencies who both create or rely on the same cultural construct and 'serve' in their social life as part of that the same culture. In it, there is a complementary correlation between culture and religion. Third, humans in principle try to create, construct, create and then act out their identity and creatively try to challenge the boundaries of religion and culture that surround them, both what is called 'self' and 'identity' or ways of expressing oneself.

Yoseph Muda In his work "*Ata Lamaholot dalam Sorotan Budaya Dunia*" (2016), explained the virtues and life values of and about the local community of Lamaholot, East Flores. This presentation tells the story of Lamaholot's tridimensional human relations. These three relationships are between Lamaholot humans and God, fellow humansday lam creation. These three types of relationships are characteristic of the original Lamaholot people, which are still 'adhered' to this day and are even part of the life of the Lamaholot people of East Flores, even though from the perspective of faith there are certain parts which are seen as 'contradictory practices' with religious teachings and practices. Today, especially Catholicism and Islam. In short, even though they have embraced Catholicism and Islam, the Lamaholot people are still 'faithful' in carrying out their 'habits of life', which on the one hand can be seen as that these 'habits of life' constitute their 'original religion' and contain 'original religion'. Beliefs' and 'spirituality' of the Lamaholot people in building this tridimensional relationship. "Giving portions to ancestral spirits" with a special ritual could be one example.

Stella Aleida Hutagalung in her research entitled "Muslim-Christian Relations in Kupang: Negotiating Space and Maintaining Peace" (2016) found that practical initiatives built by the Christian and Muslim communities in Kupang City, NTT were a way to build harmony. Community members are involved in various forms of cooperation in various events, especially on religious holidays. At the community level, everyday social relations are practiced through mutual visits and cooperation in daily activities, critical religious celebrations and participation in life cycle rituals.

In contrast to the research above, through this study, the idea that will be presented is the historical traces of the encounter between Islam and Catholicism in the early days in East Flores and subsequent encounters which led to the revival of the spirit of tolerance in East Flores.

Tolerance is an attitude of tolerance (respect, allowing, allowing) positions (opinions, views, beliefs, habits, behavior) that are different or contrary to one's views (Dictionary Team for the Center for Language Development and Development 1995). In other words, tolerance means behaving to yourself and not thinking about it to others.

The main problem raised in this study is the encounter between Islam and Catholicism in East Flores and its main implications for the current development of these two major religions in East Flores. The focus of attention is the impact of past encounters on mainstreaming attitudes and values of tolerance for religious life in East Flores and NTT in general, which, based on the results of the Research and Development survey of the Indonesian Ministry of Religion in 2021 has the highest level of religious harmony index in Indonesia.

2. METHODS

This research uses literature study (library research), which is supported by existing reference sources, such as documents, books, journals, magazines and online media related to the theme studied. Data and information were processed by researchers by sorting and examining the main ideas and classifying them into specific themes in accordance with the aim of this research, namely to describe the encounter between Islam and Catholicism in East Flores and draw implications for efforts to foster tolerance in East Flores.

3. DISCUSSION

a. The beginning of Islam and Catholicism

Barnes writes that when Portuguese missionaries arrived in Solor in 1559, they found that Muslim settlements and a mosque had also been established (Barnes, 1987). Adolf Heuken also noted that before João Soares, a merchant from Portugal, converted about two hundred people in Lewonama (Larantuka), several Muslim teachers from India and Bengal were already active among the inhabitants on the island of Solor (Heuken 2018). By referring to the information conveyed by Barnes and Heuken, it can be seen that Islam existed in the Solor Islands before missionaries arrived in Flores (which at that time was better known as Solor Island) with its Catholic mission.

In line with Barnes, Dahlan Paing Ebang, in his study of the historical narrative of the entry of Islam in East Flores, noted that the beginning of the entry of Islam in the Solor Islands (East Flores) can be referred to historical records about the entry of the Portuguese in Malacca in 1512. Paing writes that when the Portuguese arrived in Malacca there were already five Islamic kingdoms in the Solor Islands known as Solor Watan Lema, which in his estimation, had existed at the end of the XIV century, around 1475 (Ebang 1996).

According to Paing, Islam in the Solor Islands was spread by Muslim traders from Ternate, Maluku, who on their voyage stopped the coast on eastern Adonara Island, precisely in Lamahala Village. Ternate traders also visited the eastern part of Solor Island, namely in Lamakera and Lohayong Villages. Paing called this voyage the name of the first Islamic expedition in the Solor Islands. Historical traces that are seen as evidence of the early stopover

and spread of Islam in the Solor and Adonara Islands are the Qur'anul Karim written on buffalo skins which the Lamahala Wadan Tribe and the Lewuun Lamakera Solor Tribe still keep. Meanwhile, the second expedition took place in the XVI century by missionaries who studied with a scholar named Dato'ri Bandang and Khatib Sulaiman (Ebang 1996).

From Lamaholot's perspective, Ahmad Betan, Chairman of MUI East Flores believes that the beginning of Islam in East Flores was when ata kiwang (mountain people of East Flores) who came down from the mountain met Gujarati traders and listened to the claims of Gujarati traders and followed him. "When those from the mountain came down and met the Quran brought by Gujarati traders and followed it, Islam began to exist in East Flores." (Betan 2019).

Meanwhile, missions in Flores, in particular, and Nusa Tenggara in general, are handled by the leader of the Goa mission in India, namely the Diocese of Goa India. When the Diocese of Goa was upgraded to an Archdiocese in 1558, two new dioceses were established: the Diocese of Cochin on the west coast of India, south of Goa, and the Diocese of Malacca on the Malacca Peninsula. Mgr. Jorge da Santa Luzia, OP was appointed Bishop of Malacca (1558-1579). To carry out mission work in the east, several orders and societies settled in Malacca: the Dominican Order in 1554, the Franciscan Order in 1577, the Society of Jesus in 1581 and the Order of Saint Augustine in 1591 (Jebarus 2017).

Lame Uran records that after traveling as far as the Solor Islands, traders and missionaries informed mission leaders in Goa and Portugal of the presence of Catholicism in the region. Fr. Antonio da Taveira, OP who participated in the trip, told Mgr. Jorge da Santa Luzia, OP, sent missionaries to serve the people in the Solor Islands (Uran 1986).

When he arrived in Malacca towards the end of 1561, Mgr. Jorge da Santa Luzia, OP sent three missionaries: Fr. Antonio da Cruz, Fr. Simao das Chagas, and Br. Francisco Alexio to the Solor Islands. These three missionaries built a residence in Lohayong, Solor Island. Lame Uran records that in Lohayong there were already Catholics consisting of Portuguese traders and locals. Since the arrival of the three missionaries, the Catholic mission in the Solor Islands officially began (Ettel 1957). Other sources mention that the local population of about two hundred people who had known Catholicism earlier converted to Catholicism after being influenced by a Portuguese trader João Soares (Heuken 2018). A few years later (after 1561), a Muslim fleet from Java attacked Lohayong in Solor. Everyone sought refuge into the fortress. Lohayong was able to escape thanks to the help of Portuguese ships coming from the direction of Larantuka on the return voyage from Maluku. Local leaders were baptized in the aftermath of this event (Uran 1986; Heuken 2018).

From several sources recorded by Jebarus it can be seen that around 1600, the population in some areas adhered to Catholicism (Heuken 2018; Uran 1986): Solor (Lohayong, Lamakera, Karawatun, Lewolein, Pamakayo; Adonara (Lamahala, Karmaing, Lewoko, Lewoingo, and Wure; Flores (Tropobelle, Lewonama, Lebao, Gege, Larantuka, Waibalun, and Mulawato (Bama); Lomblen (Lewoleba, Lewotolok). However, the fall of Lohayong as the center of Catholicism at that time was then followed by the conquest of other villages under the influence of the VOC, which made the residents of several villages convert to Islam.

Even though Lohayong had fallen into the hands of the VOC, the Dutch did not settle there, like the Portuguese before them. There was an attempt by the Dutch to instill Calvinist Christianity, but this attempt failed because the Catholic faith of the local population was still maintained under the leadership of Dominican missionaries and local community leaders (Ettel 1957).

b. Islam and Catholicism in the early days of the meeting

Barnes wrote that when Portuguese missionaries arrived in the Solor Islands, they built residences next to the Muslims. However, over time the Portuguese presence became a threat to the Solor Muslim community. Solor Muslims collaborated with Islamic kingdoms in Maluku and Sulawesi when dealing with the Portuguese. Next, they were invited by the Dutch to form an alliance to expel the Portuguese. When war broke out between the Dutch and the Portuguese, the Solor Muslims under the leadership of the Party allied with the Dutch and the Portuguese were defeated. From Solor, the Portuguese turned to Larantuka. However, in the end, the local population of Solor rose up against the Dutch. According to Barnes, instead of protecting the local population, the Dutch actually became enemies of the local population. Barnes noted that in terms of social relations, Portuguese traders were said to be more assimilated and familiar with the local situation and could mingle with the local community. The Dutch, on the other hand, had difficulty getting along with local people (Barnes 1987).

In those centuries Solor has been a stopover place for European, Arab and Chinese traders. Its strategic position as a safe bay area makes traders choose it as a place to stop for shelter. While trading and sheltering, the Portuguese also built residences and spread Catholicism. Meanwhile, Solor's local leaders from the Muslim community established relations with Muslim kingdoms in Eastern Indonesia such as Ternate, Buton, Makasar and received assistance from these kingdoms in the form of materials and especially war fleets to face the enemies. Solor itself is under the territory of the Ternate kingdom.

When there was a conflict with the Portuguese, the villagers of Lohayong and Lamakera in Solor, Lamahala, and Karmaing in Adonara converted to Islam (Heuken 2018; Uran 1986). In 1581 two Dominican missionaries became victims. P. Antonio Pestana was killed by a group of Muslim pirates from Java and P. Simao das Montanhas died while leading the Lamahala people against the invasion of Muslims from Terong. He was killed with multiple spear stab wounds (Uran 1986; Heuken 2018). For killing the priest from Lewonama P. Francisco Calassa while visiting the village of Tropobelle, Captain Antonio Viegas and a squad of soldiers from Lohayong invaded the village of Tropobelle, killing its inhabitants and burning the village (Heuken 2018).

In 1618, Father Mulawato P. Agostinho da Magdalene was murdered by the inhabitants of Lamakera (Ettel 1957). On January 20, 1621 Fr. Joao Bautista da Fortolezza and Fr. Simao da Madre Deos were persecuted and killed by Lamakera, in the presence of Dutch officers, Thomas Dayman and Joao de Ornay, who then respectfully buried the bodies of the two missionaries. Both officers later converted to Catholicism (Heuken 2018).

On May 16, 1621 the Dutch fleet and the Muslims attacked Larantuka and managed to go ashore and capture Larantuka. However, this attack was repelled by the Larantuka people under the leadership of P. Luis de Andrada and Captain Francisco Fernandez (Uran 1986). On January 14 1641 the VOC captured Malacca. Many Catholics in Malacca, including the Portuguese, moved east, for example to Makassar, Larantuka, Konga, and Wureh (Steenbrink 2006). The king of Bulukumba, a subordinate of the Sultan of Makassar, exploited Malacca's fall. A fleet of 150 boats with a crew of more than 6,000 attacked Larantuka on January 20, 1641. Under the leadership of the Vicar Bishop, Fr. Antonio de Sao Jacinto and Captain Francisco Fernandez, the Portuguese and Catholics in Larantuka successfully defended themselves and repelled the invading forces. After this event, Fr. Antonio de Sao Jacinto left for Timor with two priests and 70 soldiers to assist Queen Ména (Timor), and then went on a mission in Timor based in Lifao (Oekusi). After Malacca fell, missionary "shipments" for Solor began to decline.

The Portuguese community in Solor only sometimes lived quietly because it had to face Islamic communities from the area around Solor and Java as well as the Dutch trade union, VOC (Verenigde Oost-indische Compagnie). On January 17 1613 a VOC fleet under the leadership of Apolonius Scotte, assisted by the Butones, arrived in Solor while the Portuguese fleet was in Timor to buy sandalwood. Scotte's threat followed by cannon fire led more than 1,000 fort dwellers escorted by only 30 soldiers to surrender on April 20 1613, two days before the Portuguese fleet arrived from Timor. Fort Lohayong was controlled by the VOC and given a new name, Fort Henricus. The Portuguese and six Dominican missionaries were allowed to Malacca. Several mestizo residents and P. Agostinho da Magdalena were allowed to cross to Larantuka (Abdurachman 2008). Agostinho and the mestizos built defenses at Larantuka. In later developments, Larantuka took over the role of a trade center and mission center. The Catholic population in Larantuka consists of natives, Portuguese and mestizos. They are led by a priest assisted by a captain for defense affairs (Heuken 2018); (Heinen 1876). In Lohayong Solor, there is a Portuguese and Dutch heritage fort. Today, there are Muslim and Catholic communities in this region. The Dutch footprint in terms of religion is not visible because the Netherlands' focus is on trade rather than on religious interests.

From this painting it can be seen that initially the encounter between the Muslim community and the Catholic community in the Solor Islands in the 15th-16th century was an encounter that did not cause any problems. This is evident in the process of socio-social assimilation of Portuguese traders within the local Muslim community of Solor. Compared with Dutch traders, the relationship between Portuguese traders and the local population seemed more harmonious. However, the process of assimilation which had an impact on the harmonization of social relations did not guarantee the settlement of the Portuguese Catholic community among the local Muslim community. The Dutch Christian community, which was said to have difficulty getting along with the local community, actually became an ally for the local Muslim community to expel the Portuguese Catholic community.

The Dutch alliance and the local Muslim community supported by the Islamic kingdoms in Maluku and Sulawesi succeeded in expelling the Portuguese from the land of Solor (Aritonang and Steenbrink 2008). From this point it can be said that the social encounter between the

Catholic community and the Muslim community in East Flores becomes disharmonious when the encounter is dominated and based on religious labeling and the interests of the propagators of the religion. In the case of Solor, such an encounter gave rise to conflict at that time and such conflict gave birth to a number of settlements in East Flores with quite strict segregation: which areas were Muslim and which areas were Catholic. If these historical traces can also be said to be a historical burden in East Flores, if they are not reconstructed without paying attention to the context, they will have the potential to create and foster potential conflict between the Muslim community and the Catholic community in East Flores.

c. A portrait of the present meeting

The history of East Flores' travels records that this district at the eastern tip of Flores Island is not free from violent conflict between villages and between individuals. The motive for the conflict stems from fighting over land boundaries, riots and fights during football matches between young people who happen to have different religions, so it can be read as an inter-religious conflict. Even though it does not extend to high levels of escalation, conflict disrupts societal harmony (Petrus and Murin 2010). It can be said that even though it is considered a region that has fairly good tolerance, areas in East Flores are quite vulnerable to acts of violence with various motives involving individuals and communities with different religious backgrounds.

In general, violent contact occurred between Catholic youths who controlled most of Larantuka City (the center of East Flores district) and Muslim youths. Apart from that, in this small town there have also been a number of mass riots with various motives involving religious people from two different communities, namely Catholicism and Islam. In 1993, a Muslim who managed to 'enter' the Larantuka Cathedral Church during a Sunday Eucharist celebration and was suspected of defiling one of the symbols of Catholicism, was detained and then at the pressure of the crowd he was surrounded and beaten until he lost his life. The pollution incident triggered greater action in the afternoon and evening. A number of kiosks and shops belonging to Muslim immigrants (Padang-Makassar) were burned by the mob. Two years after that incident (1995), another mass rampage broke out, triggered by the death of a Catholic father as a result of being beaten by a number of Muslims in Larantuka City. The murder was suspected to have been misdirected, but the result was that the Muslim settlement in the city center, namely Kampung Baru, where the attackers came from, was 'attacked' by Catholic groups in the city center. Even though there were no fatalities, dozens of houses were victims. Meanwhile, one of the things to always be wary of is fighting between villages. The duel that attracted national attention was the Waibao duel in East Adonara which involved the three villages of Tobi-Lewokeda-Lewokeleng. The dueling war started with a land dispute between the three.

d. Building tolerance in East Flores

Behind the sad stories told in the previous section, there are also a number of life praxis of East Flores residents which can be seen as small ways to realize the idealism of tolerance and harmony in religious life. Media, Antara News, January 9, 2012 reported that hundreds of East

Flores residents, especially those who are members of "Solor Watan Lema", Tuesday (01/03/2012), crowded the Kupang Flobamora Sports Center to attend the Christmas celebration together. The residents of Solor Watan Lema, who are descendants of Sina-Java-Malacca, come from mainland East Flores, Adonara Island, Lembata, Solor and Alor with different religious backgrounds, namely Catholicism, Protestant Christianity and Islam. They came together in that Christmas event together. Three community leaders, namely Father Kanis Pen from the Catholic element, Rev. E. Yahya R. Luakusa from the Protestant Christian element and KH Saleh People from the Islamic element were asked to provide Christmas reflections and tolerance of religious and interreligious life in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT).

In the East Flores environment, during Christmas or Easter celebrations, Muslims always act as a joint Christmas committee. They prepared everything for their Christian brothers after church. When Eid al-Fitr arrives, it is Christians who act as a halal bihalal committee to greet each other and benefit each other. They sat together, drank together, ate together and then left together.

Likewise during friendships Eid Al-Fitr. Media online Aug. Pena. East Flores, tells the story of the Eid al-Fitr celebration in a village called Namatukan-Witihama-Adonara in East Flores. Namatukan that day witnessed the gathering of thousands of people (Muslims and Catholics) throughout the Witihama sub-district to celebrate a togetherness event to strengthen ties of friendship. Approximately two thousand people (Muslims and Catholics) are involved in this family event.

The manifestation of inter-religious tolerance in East Flores, and several other places in East Nusa Tenggara, is also visible in the construction or rehabilitation activities of places of worship. If there is construction of a mosque, for example, people of other religions will definitely be involved in it. Vice versa.

The story about it comes from Horinara Village. Roaring roars arose at the top of the Cuban Mosque. The queue of bouncy tools on the wall of Hoga Hill. Hordes of rhythmic voices of cheer and joy chanted on the rooftops and courtyards of the mosque. Material falling from the roof of the mosque and crushing each other further adds to the atmosphere of togetherness of Catholics and Muslims who are working together to repair the roof of the Nurul IKhsan Horinara Mosque, Horinara Village, Kelubagolit District, Adonara Island, East Flores Regency (Flotim), Saturday (07/15/2017).

The sweat that covered his body in broad daylight seemed to be ignored. A cheerful aura appeared on the faces of children, young people and old people. The materials from the demolished roof of the mosque were carried together while joking around in the style of village people. Materials that initially looked messy can be arranged well and quickly thanks to the alert spirit of mutual cooperation that knows no space or time. Homeless women are not left behind in their enthusiasm. With full faces, they served drinks and food.

Tolerance means an attitude of tolerating (respecting, allowing, allowing) positions (opinions, views, beliefs, habits, behavior) that are different or contrary to someone's views (Dictionary Team for the Center for Language Development and Development 1995). In other words,

tolerance means behave to yourself and not think about it to others. This idea refers to the term tolerance which is taken from the Latin word to tolerate which means to bear. In its original use, tolerance meant an attitude towards oneself or the ability to bear a heavy burden. In subsequent developments, the term tolerance was defined as an expression of the kindness of a person or certain institution that is willing to act outside of its agreements, provisions or rules for the good of others. The term tolerance is also used in the sense of "accepting and allowing something to exist, as long as certain people or institutions do not have the power to eliminate or change it" (Madung 2017; Panda 2013).

A tolerant person is a person who has his own views and attitudes. However, the person does not impose his opinion and does not resolve differences of opinion with others through violence or through punitive measures that destroy someone. On the contrary, by accepting the person, and trying to find possibilities to help overcome views whose values are incorrect or contrary to the basic commitments of religiosity. Therefore, being tolerant is allowing or allowing other people to be themselves, respecting other people, by respecting their origins and background. Tolerance invites dialogue to communicate mutual recognition (Panda 2013).

Forst discusses four different conceptions of tolerance (Forst 2013). First referred to as permission conception. Tolerance is the relationship between an authority or majority and a different minority (or various minorities). Authority grants freedom to minorities to live according to their beliefs on the condition that the minority accepts the dominant position of authority or majority. Second conception, the coexistence conception, namely tolerance as the best way to end or avoid conflict and to pursue certain goals. In contrast to the two conceptions above, the third conception is respect conception, namely the concept of tolerance born from the desire of different groups to recognize each other as equal citizens because they have the same legal and political status. Although differing in their ethical beliefs about goodness and ways of life and practice, they maintain mutual respect for each other. Equal in the sense that the general framework of their social life must be guided by laws and norms accepted by all parties. Rainer Forst calls the fourth concept of tolerance esteem conception (self-concept). For him, the concept of tolerance demands mutual recognition between citizens, because according to this conception, a tolerant person not only respects other cultures, forms of life and religions as a form of moral and political equality, but also he can enjoy some (partial) ethical stances on forms of life as valuable social choice (Forst 2013).

The fourth concept, namely esteem conception, contains higher ethical demands than just respecting each other as citizens of a community who are politically and legally equal, but ethically recognizing each other (mutual recognition) their beliefs, ethical views, life practices. This conception can be said to try to go beyond the three previous conceptions because it is not enough to just emphasize respect (respect), but also acknowledgment (recognition) and positive acceptance of identities, moral beliefs, religions and cultures that are fundamentally different from one's own. Tolerance means mutual respect and recognition. This deeper ethical appreciation is also demonstrated by positive acceptance of other views, even if those views contain flaws and weaknesses. Tolerance hereby accommodates value pluralism, or the recognition that there is a fundamental plurality of values in society, and is willing to respect

these differences. In a communal perspective too, there is recognition of the diversity of communal values and a willingness to share perspectives and find common ground between communal values and tolerate some variations in them.

In the Indonesian context, the concept of tolerance referred to is the concept of tolerance as esteem conception. This is in accordance with the intentions of tolerance and religious freedom contained in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution and various regulations and laws that apply in the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia. Tolerance within the framework of religious and cultural pluralism is an attitude of appreciating and respecting religious and cultural plurality as well as recognizing it and being willing to work together for the common good. This tolerance brings the Indonesian nation to religious harmony as mandated in the Joint Regulation of the Minister of Religion and the Minister of Home Affairs Number 9 of 2006 No. 8. Religious harmony is a state of relations between religious communities that is based on tolerance, mutual understanding, mutual respect, respect for equality in the practice of religious teachings and cooperation in social, national and state life within the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia based on Pancasila and the State Constitution. Republic of 1945.

In the discourse about tolerance, there are three important aspects, namely personal (individual), social and political aspects (Madung 2017). Personal tolerance means that a democratic citizen respects fellow human beings for adhering to religion, conventions or political beliefs and other life ideals. Meanwhile, social tolerance is expressed in a society that allows anyone to believe in something or not believe in anything and develop themselves in any ideology or view of life. Meanwhile, political tolerance is also called tolerance as a legal and state principle. Liberal democratic countries, for example, place tolerance in the constitution as a guarantee of religious freedom in the sense of human rights.

The experience of meeting the Islamic and Catholic communities in East Flores and the co-existential reality described above illustrate two levels of quality of tolerance known as the qualifications of passive tolerance and active or authentic tolerance (Madung 2017). Passive tolerance is real in the attitude of being forced to let others live because of plural social reality. Passive tolerance (also called forced permission tolerance) refers more to an attitude of allowing minority communities to live in accordance with their beliefs that are contrary to the beliefs of the majority as long as they do not question the authority of the authorities or anyone who permits or gives permission to them. This tolerance is more vertical (the authorities or a handful of people and the general public). Meanwhile, active or authentic tolerance means affirming the right to life or existence, freedom and the will of others as others to develop. Active tolerance is also called respectful tolerance or in Forst's thinking it can be classified into the concept of tolerance esteem conception which is characterized by an attitude of respect, recognition and acceptance towards those who are different. This tolerance is horizontal because it relates to a person's attitude towards others in social relations. This principle of tolerance is seen as appropriate to the conditions of contemporary democratic and plural societies which are characterized by differences that have the potential to give rise to conflict.

The tolerance and spirit of diversity harmony believed by the people of East Flores was born from the womb of culture. This is the legacy of their ancestors. Therefore, according to the people of East Flores, culture and tolerance are two interrelated things. Disharmony in cultural practices gives rise to intolerant behavior in society. An intolerant attitude will hamper the space for movement and expression of culture itself. In fact, tolerance is a natural human trait. Tolerance is an important part of people's lives. It is rooted in people's daily lives. Being the values that govern ethics and social principles.

The togetherness shown by Christians (Catholics) in Witiama District, East Flores Regency during the Christmas holiday and Muslims during the Halal Bihalal Eid al-Fitr holiday is a legacy from their ancestors. The local community (Adonara) does not need formal rules that regulate the limits of tolerance. The values of togetherness are only taught from generation to generation. There is no written law that regulates it.

The spirit of unity in diversity is very strongly visible in the daily lives of the people of East Flores, NTT. The value of *lemaholotan* that underlies this spirit is *pupu taan tou gahan taan ehan* atau *puin taan uin ehan gahan taan kahan olon* atau *puin taan uin tou gahan taan kahan ehan* (association). Value Lateness this local wisdom is the glue of brotherhood and kinship which is highly respected and is an essential part of community life.

The local wisdom that was born from the Lamaholot culture and which is shared by the entire NTT region is solidarity. Solidarity in this context is related to the attitude of mutual assistance and mutual cooperation (Penelope 1994). When Muslims build mosques, people from other religions such as Catholics and Protestants help. Likewise, when Catholics or Protestants build churches, Muslims help. One interesting thing is that at the inauguration of a church or mosque, all people, including Catholics, Protestants, Muslims and others, come to bring their share, which is usually in the form of consumer goods such as rice, coffee, sugar and animals as an expression that the mosque or church is a shared property. Must be guarded.

The symbolic language of the expression that churches and mosques belong together is interpreted concretely in real actions, namely maintaining family ties with each other regardless of religion. The strength of tolerance in the NTT region cannot be separated from the wise languages of our ancestors which have been passed down from generation to generation in NTT, which is the breath of solidarity and tolerance in NTT. One expression that becomes a bonding force for togetherness and kinship which is then manifested in acts of solidarity is: "Your happiness is our happiness, your sadness is our sadness".

For the people of East Flores, NTT, local wisdom that has been lived and implemented for generations has become a school for maintaining and maintaining tolerance, solidarity and mutual cooperation in living together. For them, tolerance is an action, not a word, tolerance cannot be contested because it has become a legacy from their ancestors that must be preserved.

Several daily activities that can become an oasis and university of tolerance from the people of NTT for all Indonesian people to revive the values of local wisdom in each region as a breath of tolerance for the Indonesian nation, is a concrete translation of the expression "Your happiness is our happiness, your sadness is our sadness".

For example, in East Flores Regency. On the centenary of Tua Ma in Larantuka on October 5, 2005. Although the rite is Catholic, it is still the pride and property of all religious people. Muslims from Kampung Baru (Larantuka) perform "talin," where they come with rice, coffee, and sugar and donate about five cows to the Larantuka Diocese as organizers of the centenary celebration of Tua Ma to be consumed together. Likewise, as happened in the Parish of Mother of Eternal Helpers- Witihamas-Adonara Timur-Flores Timur-NTT. Muslims hold "talin" by bringing necessities, including animals, for joint consumption at the Thanksgiving celebration of the blessing of Witihamas Parish Church.

Likewise, when there is an ordination of a priest until the pick-up and holding of the first Mass, or the blessing of the church, all the people in the local village take a moment to "take a break" from their work to celebrate the thanksgiving event in joy and joy. Catholics and Muslims melted into dancing and singing. This illustrates very clearly that the event is a common property and a Catholic priest is a common property.

Likewise, when there are brothers and sisters who carry out the Hajj or Hajj pilgrimage in the holy land of Mecca, when they return they are picked up and paraded by the whole community as an expression of gratitude and pride that a Hajj has been born from that community. This further emphasizes that a Hajj or Haja does not only belong to Muslims but also to society.

The presence of all people at Christmas or Eid al-Fitr, where before the Christmas Celebration Mass ended, all Muslims were lined up in front of the church doors to give Christmas greetings and likewise queued Catholics, Protestants and others in front of the mosque to give congratulations on Eid al-Fitr after prayer increasingly emphasizing that the celebration being celebrated is a celebration shared by all citizens without ever debating religious issues.

Tolerance in East Flores is tolerance rooted in local wisdom that is inherited and preserved for the peace of Indonesia. The people of East Flores do not discriminate between tribes and religions because they adhere to the principle of *ina tou ama ehan*. This principle mandates that every citizen view each other as brothers who come from the same father and mother (*ina tou ama ehan*). In this view, unity and unity become aspects that are highly highlighted. The brotherhood that binds the relationship between Lamaholot people feels very strong. This can be seen in the expression: *eket nope tapo tonu-welak nope jin java, puin taan uin ehan-gehan taan kahan olon, puna dike nopa tupat-liput sare mopo rorit* (Or: *tite ata kakan arin tale kebote, edo dike reuk sare*). Unity as brothers is more felt when the Lamaholot people are in overseas places far from their hometowns. This unity is seen in the words: *tite ata koli lolon hena* (We come from the same source). This sense of unity is manifested in the act of helping each other, especially when helping people in need. The advice that is always conveyed is *ola ehin kae peten no peni umenen, here wain kae menu hukut noon laba lamaken or ola ehin here wain pao gotak kriden kenukan, press taan gike ukun tenu taan lobon (luan)* (Kean 2008; (Atasoge, Husein, and Masruri 2022)). The point is that all the fruits of human labour should be reserved for the benefit of the family and *lewotana* and should never be lavish in overseas lands. In everyday life, mutual help is also manifested in the completion of work if there is a task or work that cannot be completed by one person alone. Activities that are always carried out in mutual cooperation are called *gemohing, julun or kampo tangan*.

The people of East Flores, NTT have the principle that whoever you are, whatever your religion or ethnicity, they are one mother, one father; brother and sister; brothers and sisters. This is the principle and breathe of unity that citizens live by. However, this principle must be maintained and cared for because it is very sensitive when it comes into contact with disturbances with racial nuances such as what happened in the Ambon and Poso riots or the phenomenon of Christianization and heretical sects in Aceh (Al-Makin 2016).

4. CONCLUSION

The encounter between Catholicism and Islam in East Flores took place dynamically. The dynamics of encounters occasionally give birth to a hermeneutics of memories that can be used as a lesson in efforts to harmonize life in diversity. The Lamaholot cultural construction became the existential basis of the Catholic and Islamic communities in their encounters. It significantly contributed to cultivating attitudes and values of tolerance in East Flores. This study has opened a space for discourse regarding the aspects and meaning of the encounter between the two major religions that lived and developed in East Flores in historical trajectories. However, the researcher realizes that the historical space of this encounter still needs to be further elaborated through further research to enrich this study within the scientific framework of religious sociology-anthropology.

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