



International Conference on Theology, Religion, Culture, and Humanities
Re Imagining Theology, Religion, Culture, And Humanities for Public Life
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Faculty of Theology, Universitas Sanata Dharma Yogyakarta

Pate Nalan: Mediatization of Social Cohesion Struktural Functionalism Perspective

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Abstract

This study sought to show that the pate nalan rite of the Lelenbala and Ipi Ebang Adonara communities in East Flores is a medium for establishing social cohesion in a multi-religious society. The social cohesion of a multi-religious society becomes the basis of national cohesion and contributes to the development of national civilization. This study used a qualitative method with the aim of exploring the knowledge, experience, opinions, and feelings of informants about the pate nalan rite as a medium for establishing social cohesion. Observation, interview and document study were chosen as data collection techniques. The data were collected from May 2020 to July 2022. Primary data were collected through structured interviews with cultural and community leaders in the two villages. This study found that the pate nalan rite became the glue for the social structure of society and a means to achieve individual and communal salvation. These two sides of salvation encourage people to unite and move together beyond religious

backgrounds. Pate nalan becomes a medium to nurture social cohesion among Catholic and Muslim communities in the villages of Lelenbala and Ipi Ebang. Social cohesion manifests itself in the form of mutual assistance and active involvement in organizing rites and has an impact on the daily social relations of people with different religious backgrounds. This study enriches sociological studies of religion with a focus on local culture as the basis for building social cohesion of the multi-religious Indonesian nation.

Keywords: *pate nalan rite, social cohesion, multi-religious*

Introduction

One of the efforts to actualize social cohesion among Indonesian multi-religious communities is to accommodate local traditions or culture (Anakotta et al., 2019; Nawir et al., 2020). Here, local culture can be seen as a community bulwark when dealing with an ideology of intolerance that has the potential to cause social conflict (Ahnaf et al., 2015; Panggabean et al., 2014). It can be said that local culture assumes a role as the basic capital of the unity and integrity of the Indonesian nation. In other words, local culture is a medium for actualizing cohesiveness of Indonesian society. This study focused on *pate nalan*, a rite practiced by the Catholic and Muslim communities in the villages of Lelenbala and Ipi Ebang as an adhesive for the social structure of the community and a mold for social cohesion.

Previous studies have shown that tradition or local culture is a medium that can build and strengthen social cohesion. This has been emphasized by Fuad (2016) that local culture such as feelings of brotherhood, togetherness, respect, appreciation when seeing others experiencing happiness are elements that form a culture of peace and put aside religious differences in the people of Balun Village. Meanwhile, according to Mila and Kolambani, the values of local culture of the Watu Asa community are a counter-narrative against the ideologies of intolerance (Mila & Kolambani, 2020). Specifically, Yusuf et al., (2021) emphasized that the *som* tradition of the Matbat Misool indigenous people of West Papua is a medium for maintaining harmony in the life of the Christian and Muslim communities. Likewise, Bandur & Sihombing (2022) showed that the *likang telu* culture of the Manggarai ethnic group in NTT is the basis for harmonious relations between the Catholic and Muslim communities of Manggarai. Maulana et al., (2021) discussed the participation of multireligious communities in the *sujud sumarah* ritual. On the other hand, Hia et al., (2021) considered that the *tolo-tolo* rite of the Nias ethnic in the village of Fadorosifulubania can create social harmony thanks to the value of mutual assistance

contained in it. Iswanto & Kawanggung (2021) demonstrated *moko* in Alor NTT as a symbol of social cohesion.

This study of *pate nalan* aimed to show specifically how social structures, community participation, rites of prayer and the objects or items presented in the *pate nalan* rite shape and maintain social cohesion between humans, the universe and the supreme being (God). In this context, this study sought to draw out the implications of the results of gluing the social structure of society and the formation of social cohesion for efforts to build social cohesion of the Indonesian nation. Therefore, the main focus of this study was how the process of organizing the *pate nalan* rite is and what its implications are for the formation of social cohesion of the Indonesian nation. This study was prepared with the argument that the *pate nalan* rite is a form of social cohesion in the local community and has an impact on the realization of the social cohesion of the Indonesian nation people.

To achieve this goal, 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 and these relations are an absolute requirement for the survival and preservation of the organism (Barnard, 2004). 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 as being able to help the researchers to read and analyze the structure of the Lelenbala and Ipi Ebang indigenous peoples which have an organic character consisting of parts interconnected with each other based on collective awareness and their relationship with the Muslim and Catholics community who have genealogical kinship ties in the research area.

Research Method

A qualitative method was used to support the researchers' objective, which was to explore and analyze the knowledge, experience, opinions, and feelings of the informants on the *pate nalan* rite with a socio-anthropological approach (Ratna, 2010; McCutcheon, 2005). The research locations were Lelenbala and Ipi Ebang villages in East Adonara District, East Flores Regency. Observation, interview and document study were chosen as data collection techniques. The data were collected since May 2020 to July 2022. Primary

data were the result of structured interviews with 12 cultural figures as key informants and the community who are actively involved in the *pate nalan* rite (adults and youth). The interview focused on aspects of knowledge, experience, opinions, and feelings about the *pate nalan* rite. Secondary data were in the form of photographs related to the *pate nalan* rite and 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.

Once data was gathered through observation, interviews and documents, (Creswell, 2016) they were analysed using interpretive qualitative methods and techniques. Regarding the rituals, there were three things to be analyzed. First, exegetical interpretation, namely interpretation obtained from local resident informants about the rites that were carried out. Second, operation interpretation, namely interpretation obtained from actions conducted in the rituals. Third, positional interpretation, namely interpretation obtained from interpreting symbols in the rituals in relation to other symbols as a whole. Then, the data were classified, compared and interpreted. The analysis results were presented informally in a descriptive manner. Here, the results are presented in the form of narration.

Research Results and Discussion

A Brief Overview of the Pate Nalan Rite

The *pate nalan* rite is a ceremony to save a person, family (tribe) and villagers from disaster or calamity. The tribal council gathers the tribal chiefs for a discussion at the *uli beliwo* (traditional house) centered in the village of Lelenbala to determine the schedule for the implementation of the rite. There are five tribes in the rite, namely *nuda kenahin*, *baku lolaka rae pota*, *tutu koda marin kirin*, *belaba beahe* and *jaga no'a nete murate keleten* (R1, R2, Friday, May 15, 2020). The roles of the tribes are as follows: *Nuda kenahin* (*tuak mehine*) is in charge of pouring and distributing white palm wine; *Baku lolaka rae pota* is in charge of organizing and managing the kitchen and preparing all supplies (consumption) and mass mobilization; *Tutu koda marin kirin* is in charge of conveying all decisions and what will happen to the whole community; *Belaba beahe* is in charge of preparing the materials (wood) and the process of working on the traditional house; and *jaga no'a nete murate keleten*, the guardians of village boundaries. If someone deliberately violates the roles that have been set above (for example, a tribe that is not allowed to cut down are cutting down) then they will suffer difficulties, get sick, get hurt or even die.

After the rite schedule is agreed upon, each tribal chief submits the rite schedule to the members of their respective tribes. The most important message is the preparation

of materials that will be used in the rite. The materials that must be prepared include: *First*, cotton rolled in small sizes (*beraha*), prepared by each household. The number of cotton rolls is adjusted to the number of family members. One person gets one cotton roll. *Second*, a small, round container is woven from palm leaves resembling a small bottle. In the container rice or field rice is placed. The top is covered with cotton. *Beraha* wrapped in corn husks. All family members gather in their respective homes and pray together under the coordination of the head of the family (R3, R4, R5. Saturday, May 16, 2020). The contents of the prayer are as follows: “*Bapa rera wulan, Ema tana ekan/Lewotana nuba naran/Nalan nekin kame nolo nai wia kae/Tupa da’ gowa nalan/Nulu walen di mela hala/Koda kirin noo nalan nekin/Koon ata diken waha kae/Ti go lodo pate helo tuga lawa/Ka nire mete moe medhon pana/Kame mete mela lango gere/Ti kame moriten aip kame mela senaren.*” (R1. Friday, May 15, 2020). (Father, owner of heaven and earth, in social life, there are many mistakes and sins committed by indigenous peoples, both to fellow humans and to the natural environment, we have come to bring this offering as reparation for all the sins we have committed. Protect the village and all its citizens, keep all disasters away, so that all people live in peace, brotherhood to serve and build this village).

The ceremony continues with a procession from each house to the traditional tribal house. After all members of the tribes are complete, the procession then continues to *Uli Beliwu* which is used as the big house, everyone’s house. In *Uli Beliwu*, the tribal council receives all deliveries from the five tribes. The contents of the delivery are *beraha* (small cotton) which is stored in woven palm leaves. The little cotton roll is a symbol of everyone's faults. The plaits are received by the tribal council, collected and hung on a bamboo bearing the symbol of an archer called *eken matan pito*. Before *eken matan pito*, Lodovikus Kopong, the *belen lewo* (customary leader of the five tribes), offered the following prayer:

“*Bapa rera wulan...ema tana ekan/Lewotana suku ekan,nuba nara-koke bale/Ribu ratu pi lewo noro gole/Tana noro bue/Ra tupa da gowa nalan hala helo naen/Ratupa nalan gowa mehin, ra geto wote/Hala, helo naene geto wote/Temaka temon hala helo temaka temon/Ra ope aka, tipu daya ata dike wahan kae/Nalan nekin wahan kae ni/Go lodo pate helo/Tuga lawa kae ni/Ti pana ake mai tuen/Gawe ake mai balik/Nalan pulo mai gogana,te kowa saranotan/Nekin lema mai bake baeko, teparak laga doni/Ti nu’un lai sina haka, na dahan asa/Nalan pulo, neku lewo tana goenek ni/Eli take rapem take/Ti mayan lau jawa dai gete gete/Nekin lema, naku tana goenek/Elin take rapen kurang/Ribu ratu pulo kae lema kae/Ata nuda kenahin lewo tana naen/Nalan pulo,odoro lau nai doan/Nekin lema gesero rae mai lela/Ribu ratu ra ola lali duli raro puhuka/Paraka ti ola ehin sama aya,raam gute gelekat lewo tana/Ratu lema rai here teti raaro kekoka/Woyata here wain sama rain/Raan gewan rian wetan/Bapa rera wulan ema tana ekan/Susa pulo naro nai doan/Paya lema naro nai lela.*” (Father, ruler of heaven and earth...the ancestors of Lewotana, all the people who inhabit this village, in social life, the residents of this village

often commit acts that deviate from customary rules, both towards fellow humans and the natural environment where we stand, all the wrong sins that we have committed, whether intentionally or unintentionally, have caused trouble for fellow humans and harmed the natural environment. All these wrongs and sins, we return them through this offering and ask the Father, ruler of the heavens and the universe, to forgive all our mistakes and sins. Protect our hometown and all its inhabitants from all calamities). (R1. Friday, May, 15 2020).

After the prayers are sung, the tribal council and tribal chiefs move the *beraha* into the traditional house and keep it until four o'clock in the morning. At four o'clock in the morning, a number of people who are specifically appointed deliver the goods (*beraha* in woven palm) and release them into the sea. On the way back to the village, the deliverymen of the goods are required not to turn their heads. The people do not immediately enter the village. They are required to wait at the outskirts of the village. Before they are allowed to enter, the tribal council performs "*pahaa niha-gate karan*", namely "fencing the village" (R3, R4, R5. Saturday, 16 May 2020). The goal is to protect the village so that sins and mistakes that have been thrown into the sea do not return to the village (R7, R8. Thursday, September, 10 2020).

Before sunrise, all the tribesmen gather again for a *hebo baha* (cooling bath). The ingredients prepared are young coconut and dried coconut. Dried coconut is grated and mixed with young coconut water and cold water taken directly from the source. The waters are mixed with five kinds of herbs/plants, namely *baki*, *lite*, *lette*, *kemalaren* and *klehine*. These concoctions and herbs serve as coolants. These potion mixtures must be taken by all members of the tribes. Each of them doused his body with the potion mixtures. This action signifies that all wrongs and sins have been cleansed. The next day continues with the *Toben Lewo* rite, which is a rite of summoning the spirit of *lewotana* (the spirit of the ancestors of the village guards) to protect the community and the village.

Pate Nalan and Social Cohesion

The tribes and *lewo* (villages) of Lelenbala and Ipi Ebang which consist of Lamaholot Muslims and Lamaholot Christians have an organic character. Each tribe has its own role and function. The tribes are headed by a tribal chief and the tribal chiefs are led by a chief called *belen lewo* or village head (both from among Muslims and Catholics based on lineage). If communal rites are performed, the tribal and *lewo* structures play a role in constructing the communal rites. The tribal and *lewo* structures are built on genealogical kinship ties. Such kinship does not reveal absolute segregation between Muslims and Lamaholot Catholics. The bond is so tight and becomes an instrument that

strengthens its organic unity as a unitary human community (*ummah*) and in turn also strengthens the cohesive character at the tribal, *lewo level* and extends between *lewo*.

The indigenous peoples of Lelenbala and Ipi Ebang believe that disasters, calamities, and death are unavoidable in their lives. For these two communities, every natural phenomenon has a cause. When a phenomenon occurred, the tribal council together with the tribal chiefs begin to have a discussion and find out what caused the incident to occur. It is believed that all disasters or calamities occur because of behavior or speech that violates customary provisions or laws, especially violations related to the natural environment. The elementary idea is disaster, calamity, or death is caused by errors that have been made by the person that the disaster, calamity, or death befalls. The error has not been publicly acknowledged and therefore the person is still in a situation of unsafety. Therefore, the culprit must be saved and in order to obtain salvation, guilt must be paid or atoned for (*R1. R2. Friday, May, 15 2020*).

As a community that has a strict social structure (family, tribe, *lewo* or village) and has a communal character, the people of Lelenbala and Ipi Ebang believe that the sins or mistakes of one person become a common sin or mistake. Therefore, the community under the leadership of *kabelen lewo* (elders) and five tribal chiefs must take action to save someone who has made a mistake. Communal rescue actions in one community or indigenous peoples are known as the *pate nalan* rite (a rite for repentance) (*R1. Friday, May, 15 2020*).

In a broader context, the *pate nalan* rite leads to the creation of a cohesive relationship with *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan* (God), the universe and humans (Kean, 2008; Bebe, 2018; Arndt, 2003). This relationship contains the perspective and structure of thinking of the Lelenbala and Ipi Ebang people about physical (nature and human) and metaphysical (God and ancestors) realities and their ideals of social cohesion (Bui, 2010). The idealism of social cohesion is evidenced by the ritual procedures, the stakeholders involved, the objects presented in the rite, and community participation.

The Lelenbala and Ipi Ebang community calls the power that created the universe by the name of *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan*. The concept of *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan* is anthropomorphic. *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan* is seen as a 'father and mother' whose role is to create and care for human life. 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 also believed to be the creator of the universe and everything in it for humans to achieve welfare and prosperity.

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 all the intentions offered in the rituals. Through *bau lolon*, *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan* is presented along with the spirits of ancestors. *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan* not only becomes the 'ultimate form' of all the intentions offered but also asserts the legality of the rituals. God and the ancestors are given a special place in the rituals and offering for them is prioritized.

Here there seems to be an effort to interpret the core of *Lera Wulan* as 'Father and Mother' to give blessings to the rituals and grant the ritual's intentions with sacred interventions for disasters or calamities that befall the community, individually or communally. He who is great is expected to be the main character in removing human sins in the *pate nalan* ritual. 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*.

Lelenbala and Ipi Ebang's God is a familiar God. This concept is the further consequence of the first concept. He who is great and resides in the seventh heaven (*teti kowa lolon*) is also He who is close with humans. 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.

Emile Durkheim, one of the supporters of the theory of structural functionalism, views that the most important and prominent thing in every society is the role of social actors in a small-scale society that has been integrated in an integrated manner. Durkheim put his faith in the idea that it is harmony that defines the existence and state of society. Durkheim comes from his study of social phenomena related to the role and function of each member of society in forming and producing what is called social harmony.

According to Durkheim, society is a unit in which there are parts that are differentiated from one another but depend on one another. The parts of the system also have their respective functions. These different functions do not make the system chaotic but make it balance. The parts are interdependent and functional in character. Therefore, if any part does not work it will disrupt the balance of the system. Durkheim saw that the concept of totemism and the accompanying rituals in the Arunta community in Australia are a way or means to create balance in society (Durkheim, 1995). In other words, the ritual of totemism is the architect of the social cohesion of the Arunta community. The holistic nature of society is related to the functions of its elements, especially norms, customs, traditions and institutions that are held and exist in society. According to Durkheim, the ideas, values, norms, beliefs and ideologies of a culture are real expressions of the collective consciousness or social bonds of a society. It is this collective consciousness outside of an individual that controls human desires and self-interests.

According to the researchers, the *pate nalan* rite is built on the basis of collective consciousness as well as the social bond of the community that practices it. In it can be found ideas, values, norms, beliefs and philosophy of life of the Lamaholot community. When collective consciousness reaches its maximum point and completely envelops all people's consciousness in a community, born what Durkheim calls organic solidarity. Organic solidarity is a type of solidarity that gives rise to the division of labor that comes from the cooperation of individuals in a system. This system views society and each individual as an organ of society. Organic solidarity demands the interaction of each part for the sake of totality (Durkheim, 1995).

The praxis of the *pate nalan* rite is the result of the accumulation of the role of each individual in their respective tribes. Each individual interacts in the tribe and *lewo* for the sake of the totality of the rite in the lowest level, namely family and tribe and then continues to the last level, namely *lewo*. The interaction of individuals within the tribe and *lewo* confirms the consistency of the ritual and also confirms the interaction of individuals and the Muslim-Catholic ummah community. The ritual practice of *pate nalan* bridges the social cohesion of religious communities. As revealed in interviews with informants. The following is shown an excerpt from the interview:

"We who come from a Catholic village go hand in hand with our brothers and sisters from the Muslim village to carry out the pate nalan rite." (R9. Thursday, September, 10 2020).

"This rite unites all that is different. The root of unity is the heart." (R10, R11. Friday, September, 11 2020).

"Pupu onet (to unite the hearts) is the main prerequisite for the success of the ritual process. Unity of heart transcends religious differences. Even though it is a prerequisite, the effect is real. Without pupu onet, it is believed that the ritual has no impact. In the implementation of the ritual, there is a sense of traditional unity as one family. Tradition makes all as one family." (R7. Thursday, September, 10 2020).

"On that occasion spontaneously, all those involved felt like brothers and sisters between tribes, between villages. Under these circumstances, no one sees themselves as Muslim or Catholic but as Lamaholot people who come from ina tou, ama ehan (one mother and same father)." (R12. Saturday, September, 12 2020).

The unity of the people of Lelenbala and Ipi Ebang in the *pate nalan* rite was established on the basis of faith. The faith is not only in the 'holy' (highest being) and ancestors vertically but also horizontally among fellow human beings. *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan* is the 'holy one' and the ancestors are believed to be the source of salvation. From it flows the expected salvation for the tribes and *lewo* (village). Kabelen Lewo is a figure who is believed to be the intermediary and guarantor of the safety relationship between the tribes or *lewo* with the 'holy one' and ancestors. Every member of the tribes and *lewo*

attends and follows each series of rites with a belief that the tribe and *lewo* united in the rite are a community that affirms the common needs of personal, tribal and *lewo* safety. According to the researchers, this communal faith is a social capital that strengthens the social relations of the community and this relationship in turn becomes an indicator of social cohesion among the community. The tribal bond of the tribes in Lelenbala and Ipi Ebang led by tribal chiefs and *kebelen lewo* strengthen the level of faith and social capital as described in structural functionalism. In *pate nalan*, faith and social capital underlie community participation. Not participating in the rite might bring a misfortune to a person (disaster, calamity) and does not bring salvation (Atasoge & Sihombing, 2022).

This study shows that *pate nalan* has existential power as the weaver of social cohesion of Lamaholot society as proposed by Durkheim. This link is also implied in objects and everything related to the rite such as *uli beliwo-korke* (traditional houses), *rihe hikum lima wana* (prayer corner to communicate with the highest being), *eken matan pito* (place of offerings), and *belegan* (white cotton).

Uli beliwo (*korke* or traditional house) became a big house (main house) and a common house for the Lamaholot community. *Pate nalan* is held in a traditional house. The traditional house is also a meeting place for solving traditional and social problems. If there are disputes, quarrels, fights, even killings between families and tribes, *kabelen lewo* (tribal institution) summons the disputing parties and settles them in a big house (*lango belen*) both belonging to the tribe and belonging to the *lewo* (village). *Lango belen* became a symbol of the unity of the tribes in *lewo*. The yard in front of the traditional house is called *namang*. It is in this courtyard that *ribu ratu* (people) gather when the rite is performed.

Eken matan pito (seven-eyed bamboo pole) becomes a place and a connecting sign between humans and the Supreme Being or connects the earth ('social') and that above the sky ('holy one'). In addition, seven-eyed bamboo poles are believed to be steps (*keda'a rera wulan nae*) that function as a means of ascending and descending the Supreme Being ('holy one') and ancestral spirits to give blessings to humans. On this pole offerings are usually hung down such as *tuak*, *mimen korok* (animal jaws), hearts, and livers of sacrificial animals filled in *ketupat*. All of the offerings are for *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan* ('holy one') and ancestral spirits. These offerings are a part or right of *Lera Wulan Tanah Ekan* and the ancestral spirits to be tasted first before humans taste the food and drink available in this rite.

Rihe hikum lima wana is one of the places or corners in a traditional house. At this place, someone communicates with the ancestors and *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan*. *Rihe hikum lima wana* is a symbol of personal encounter with the 'holy one' and their ancestors. The encounter is an intentional encounter through which a person conveys to the 'holy' and their ancestors about the relational issues that put him and his family or tribe in a

situation of danger or unsafety. In the presence of the 'holy one' and ancestors who are believed to be present in *rihe hikum lima wana*, the person asks for instructions to solve the problem. In general, the activity of meeting and communicating with the 'holy one' and ancestors is carried out by the *ata mua* (tribal priests).

Rihe hikum lima wana and *eken matan pito* suggest that between the 'holy' and 'social' there is a distance that allows them to be separated in space and time. However, *rihe hikum lima wana* and *eken matan pito* connect the abyss and make the unity and integration between the 'holy' and 'social' possible. Unity and integration both produce blessings. With this concept, it can be seen how society builds a mutualistic relationship with the 'holy'.

Belegan (or *lelu bur'an*) are lumps of white cotton which are formed by the *ata mua* (tribal priest) into small lumps according to ritual requirements. In the *pate nalan* rite, *belegan* symbolizes the disclosure and cleansing of sins. White cotton is also a symbol of purity as a result of the cleansing. It is also presented as a symbol of sincerity in carrying out the rite.

Pate nalan is carried out on the basic belief that a disaster or calamity occurs because of a violation that breaks the metaphysical relationship with God (*Lera Wulan Tana Ekan*) and the physical relationship between humans (family, tribe, *lewo*). *Pate nalan* is a means to improve these relations. The estuary of the intention is relational harmonization which is believed to bring salvation.

Through the *pate nalan* rite, people believe that the intervention of the 'holy' and the ancestors brought them salvation. Salvation in their concept is salvation with present and future dimensions. The present dimension means that an individual, tribe, and village who have committed a sin are freed from the wrongdoings that have made them disturbed and separated from their bond with the 'holy', ancestors, humans and the universe. Meanwhile, the future dimension means that through the *pate nalan* rite, the family or descendants of the perpetrator will also find salvation in the future. In essence, the rite repair tridimensional relationships that were broken due to wrongdoings made by a person or group of people. With and through the rite, cohesiveness and harmony with *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan* as the 'holy one', ancestors, humans and the universe are remanifested and reaffirmed.

One of the elements that support social cohesion found in this study is the communal belief of the people of Lelenbala and Ipi Ebang which is expressed in togetherness. The rite is carried out in the customary or tribal community together under the leadership of *kabelen lewo* (tribal council), tribes and *lewo* (village). Through the rite, a cohesive relationship is established between the performers of the rite (humans who are still alive), the souls of those who have passed, the ancestors, and *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan*. The cohesiveness between them gives birth to religious values for society. The

community also believes that ancestors and the 'holy' (*Lera Wulan Tana Ekan*) play an important role in creating and confirming peace, harmony and safety in the midst of their lives both now and in the future. Through words (*koda*), objects presented and symbolic actions or movements in the ritual, the search for the path to salvation and the idealism of cohesive life is reconstructed (Atasoge et al., 2022).

The *pate nalan* rite is similar to the *saparan* rite in Sleker Hamlet, Kopeng Village, Semarang Regency and the *wahyu kliku* rite in Kendal hamlet, Karanganyar and the ritual of warding off misfortunes (disaster) for the Betung Village community, Pangkalan Kuras Sub-district, Pelalawan Regency, Riau Province. These rites are carried out to ward off calamities or disasters or disease outbreaks (*pagebluk*) (Wahab, 2012; Kristanto, 2021) for the sake of individual and communal safety (Hasbullah et al., 2017; Chairunnisa, 2019).

Implications for Socio-Religious Life in Indonesia

The cohesiveness of the tribes and *lewo* (villages) of Lelenbala and Ipi Ebang is one of the foundations and pillars of Indonesian nationality. According to the researchers, *pate nalan* expresses the social moral of its adherents. It contains the idealism of togetherness in different communities with the intention of mutual trust, accommodation and embracing without conflict. The researchers view this as a dream for the future of Indonesia's multi-religious cohesiveness (Mirahmadi, 2014).

The researchers draw three main implications in order to create and develop social cohesion in the future.

First, individuals and religious communities must trust each other in building their lives. This choice of attitude becomes capital for them in placing mutual trust in other communities outside their community. Interfaith and interreligious dialogue at the theological and practical levels is based on this epistemology (Ola & Atasoge, 2022).

Second, religious communities serve a common vision of divinity and humanity. Therefore, the commitment and desire or capacity to live together cohesively must be intertwined in a joint engagement. Joint involvement or more precisely the involvement of shared commitments, desires and capacities is the basis for cohesive building among religious adherents and religious communities.

Third, the orientation of religious communities is to realize collective and individual safety. Therefore, they should be freed from inter-religious violent conflicts because of their social moral ownership and social capital that has been framed by this orientation. The framing of this orientation becomes a guide for the common struggle to overcome inter-religious violent conflicts.

Religions teach about mutual love between different communities without strict segregation related to religious and cultural backgrounds (Fachrudin & Pary, 2017). According to the researchers, the basis for accepting that difference is the honor and dignity of human beings. Any human being with all the backgrounds he was born with is noble in the eyes of God, at the same time in the eyes of humans.

In fact, acts of violence are not a life choice for religious people who believe in God Almighty (with all its appearances) to show the authenticity of their existence. This needs to be emphasized because all religions teach the ways of goodness (safety, truth, peace, harmony of life) (Satha-Anand, 2015). Therefore, acts of violence and conflict are actually the toughest test for religions. It is also a stumbling block for the civilization of the Indonesian nationality which is built on the foundation of local cultures that love and are closely attached to the paths of goodness.

Conclusions

This study has shown that the *pate nalan* rite can be a medium for forming social cohesion among Catholic and Muslim communities in the villages of Lelenbala and Ipi Ebang. This social cohesion is apparent in the form of mutual assistance and active involvement in holding the rite and affects daily social relations of people with different religious backgrounds. Thus, the *pate nalan* rite becomes a medium for strengthening the unity and the existence of the community. This study enriches sociological studies of religion with a focus on local culture as the basis for building social cohesion of the Indonesian nation with a multi-religious character.

East Flores is known as the region of a thousand rituals. This study has not touched on other rites that are preserved and practiced by the people of East Flores. These rites contain implicit values for the sustainability of the social cohesion of the community and contribute to the development of the nation. Therefore, further studies on these other rites are needed to complement this study.

The researchers would like to extend our appreciation to the parties who have contributed to our study, including the informants who have provided time and conveyed their ideas regarding the object of this study. The results of this study are free from conflicts of interest of the parties who may claim the results of this study.

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