

Introducing Tana Toraja: Icon of Religious Moderation on the World Stage Through Cultural Customs

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe and implement the religious harmony that originates from the customs of Tana Toraja, South Sulawesi. The research focuses on the diverse religious and cultural practices in Tana Toraja, particularly in the Lembang Pakala area, RT. Tarangga. The findings highlight the community's longstanding embrace of religious and cultural diversity, exemplified by customs such as Rambu Solo, a funeral ceremony, and practices promoting religious tolerance, like providing food to Christian children in schools and avoiding pork offerings to Muslims. The study suggests that these customs not only foster religious harmony locally but also serve as a model for other regions in Indonesia. The cultural practices of Tana Toraja demonstrate how to build a sense of togetherness and harmony among diverse religious communities, extending beyond just Muslims and Christians. This research underscores the potential for these customs to contribute to broader efforts in promoting religious moderation and unity on a global scale.



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1. Introduction

When we hear the words religious moderation, our minds immediately raise the name of Tana Toraja, a place where religious tolerance is very closely intertwined and deserves to be made an icon of religious moderation in Indonesia. Tana Toraja is of course very well known in both national and international circles (Halid et al., 2022). When they hear the name Tana Toraja, everyone thinks of the lack of Islamic religion in that place, but this is different for people who have set foot in this peaceful

and serene Tana Toraja, then they will say that Tana Toraja is what makes Indonesia shine on the world stage with its various religions, cultures and customs which are very worthy of being protected and preserved together (Upa & Mbato, 2020). Of course, in Tana Toraja Regency there is a sense of togetherness and harmony in social life. Starting from young children to parents, they really hold harmony in various aspects, both in everyday life and in social life.

So, what is the state of religious harmony and customs in Tana Toraja? To be precise, Lembang Pakala, Tana Toraja Regency, South Sulawesi is used as a place of service for Indonesian KKN students who teach directly how the attitude of tolerance between religions is adhered to by the community itself which of course is combined with various customs. In this article the author will discuss how diversity religion and customs in Tana Toraja. Includes the Rambu Solo ceremony and various other forms of harmony between religions.

2. Method

This service uses the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) method. Where researchers photographed several natural resources, local potential and human resources in Tana Toraja. The aim of this service is to provide an overview of the religious culture and customs that are still maintained in Tana Toraja. The Asset Based Community Development (ABCDD) method carried out by researchers goes through the stages of community service. First, researchers identify local and cultural potential in the community, both in the form of facilities, infrastructure, community activities and a number of habits or customs that exist in the area. Second, researchers took a direct approach and collaborated with local residents to participate in Rambu Solo culture and religious harmony activities in Lembang Pakala, RT Tarangga. Third, researchers examined carrying out community service in the form of helping with ongoing processions, carrying out documentation, and being involved in forms of customs that took place during KKN in Tana Toraja, especially the Lembang Pakala area.

3. Results and Discussion.

The various religions and customs that exist in Tana Toraja Regency, South Sulawesi are certainly very interesting to discuss in more depth because of the diversity that exists and has long been adhered to by the community itself, especially in Lembang Pakala, RT. Tarangga is where the author researches and serves, including:

1. Solo signs

The Rambu Solo Ceremony is a ceremony carried out by the Tana Toraja people as a form of final respect for people who have died. Literally, Rambu Solo means light that is directed downwards. Thus, Rambu Solo is interpreted as a ceremony carried out at sunset. Another term for Rambu Solo is Auk Rampe Matampu. The Rambu Solo ceremony is considered to be quite expensive, therefore this ceremony is carried out several months or even several years after someone dies (Hasbi et al., 2019). The reason for the high cost of the Rambu Solo ceremony is

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because this ceremony requires the slaughter of a buffalo or pig for the family left behind as a form of family ties and to the local community. The provision of buffalo or pigs to families and communities has two purposes, including; As a form of condolence (Pa'uaimata) and return of gifts made by the family of Rambu Solo implementers in the past, as a form of respect for people who have died. The Rambu Solo ceremony is held based on the status of the person who has died as follows; Dasili' Ceremony (death of a child without teeth), Di Pasangbongi Ceremony (death of a commoner), Dibatang Ceremony (middle nobility), Spoils Ceremony (high nobility) (Lusi & Yuwanto, 2020).

2. Religious Harmony

Experiencing a harmonious and peaceful life is the desire of every human being, being in Tana Toraja which is very well known as an area of moderation and tolerance for various things is something that is very proud, unlike what is in our minds and imagination of the extreme religion in Tana Toraja, setting foot in Tana Toraja and seeing firsthand the variety of religious tolerance that exists in Tana Toraja, opened up knowledge and knowledge and opened the heart and mind to instill a sense of gratitude for the beauty of religion with various ways of worship but still with the same goal, namely to worship God Almighty. Tana Toraja is very suitable to be used as a place to gain direct knowledge about religious tolerance, tolerance in the sense of not joining together but respecting each person's beliefs in their own way of worship.

Like Muslims and Christians who respect each other despite the many differences, such as in terms of food where Christians who are used to eating pork are different from Muslims who forbid consumption of this meat (Mustamin et al., 2023). Therefore, they continue to respect each other's differences, so if there is an event for Christians, they separate the meat that will be given to Muslims and vice versa. Not only that, but consuming liquor also (tuak) is something that has become a habit of the people in Tana Toraja, because in the cold nature they drink palm wine to warm their bodies from the cold weather in Tana Toraja. Apart from that, the people of Tana Toraja also don't look at religion when getting married. If they love each other, they will still marry even though they are of different religions. Therefore, it is not surprising to say that Tana Toraja is a society that is very tolerant in religion, even in one house they can live with different religions between husband and wife, which of course they separate the refrigerator, and which other cooking utensils should be used to cook meat pork and other Muslim foods.

Apart from that, young children, children of State Elementary School (SDN) 16 Mengkendek in particular, as the author researched, have also been instilled in them by their respective parents with an attitude of tolerance between each other's religions, as is the case with , when bringing food to school if Christian children bring rice and side dishes in the form of pork then they will not offer it to those who are Muslim, in fact they eat away from their Muslim friends. This is an attitude that of course we must respect and maintain an attitude of religious tolerance between each other.

4. Conclusion

The hope is that this can also be enforced not only in Tana Toraja, but also in various regions in Indonesia by implementing the procedures and implementation that have been exemplified in Tana Toraja. Apart from that, the customs in Tana Toraja also deserve to be used as an example in building a sense of togetherness between religious communities, which of course is not limited to just Muslims or Christians but, builds harmony and togetherness among the various kinds of diversity that exist.

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