

The Philosophy of Atadiken in the Lamaholot Tribe of East Nusa Tenggara: A Proposition for an Epistemological Foundation of Religious Moderation in Indonesia

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Received: 06-10-2024; Revised: 01-12-2024; Accepted: 20-12-2024

DOI: 10.31291/hn.v13i2.786

Abstract

This study aims to explore the Atadiken philosophy in the Lamaholot community, especially on their perspectives and practices on humanity. A qualitative research was conducted, employing field observations and structured interviews with 45 informants from three islands in East Flores Regency: East Flores mainland, Adonara, and Solor. Research participants include traditional leaders, religious figures, educators, and youth from the two main religions in East Flores. The study finds that the Lamaholot Atadiken philosophy can serve as an epistemological foundation to support and develop religious moderation in Indonesia. Atadiken's philosophy views humanity as kin, recognizing, valuing, respecting, and protecting individuals as dignified beings. This reinforces key terms in religious moderation, such as humanity, collective welfare, justice, tolerance, commitment to shared agreements, non-violence, and love for the nation and tradition. With its core emphasis on humanity, Atadiken's philosophy promotes religious moderation and social harmony, aligning with both local and global religious ideals.

Keywords: Lamaholot community, Atadiken philosophy, Religious Moderation, Harmony of Life

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi filosofi Atadiken dalam komunitas Lamaholot, khususnya perspektif dan praktik mereka tentang kemanusiaan. Penelitian kualitatif ini dilakukan dengan menggunakan observasi lapangan dan wawancara terstruktur dengan 45 informan dari tiga pulau di Kabupaten Flores Timur: daratan Flores Timur, Adonara, dan Solor. Peserta penelitian termasuk pemimpin tradisional, tokoh agama, pendidik, dan pemuda dari dua agama utama di Flores Timur. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa filosofi Atadiken Lamaholot dapat berfungsi sebagai dasar epistemologis untuk mendukung dan mengembangkan moderasi beragama di Indonesia. Filosofi Atadiken memandang kemanusiaan sebagai saudara, mengenali, menghargai, menghormati, dan melindungi individu sebagai makhluk yang bermartabat. Ini memperkuat istilah kunci dalam moderasi beragama, seperti kemanusiaan, kesejahteraan kolektif, keadilan, toleransi, komitmen terhadap kesepakatan bersama, non-kekerasan, dan cinta terhadap bangsa dan tradisi. Dengan penekanan utamanya pada kemanusiaan, filosofi Atadiken mempromosikan moderasi beragama dan harmoni sosial, sejalan dengan cita-cita agama lokal dan global.

Kata Kunci: *Filosofi Atadiken, Lamaholot, Moderasi Beragama, Harmoni Kehidupan*

Introduction

Culture, as a system of knowledge, meaning, and values (Geertz, 1992), plays a crucial role in building the nation's civilization. It marks Indonesian identity, strengthens national integrity, and embodies the spirit and inspiration for harmony in a multiethnic and multireligious nation (Maknun, 2022; Damana, 2023; Din et al., 2023; Himawan et al., 2023; Kibtiyah & Erna, 2023; Fuadi et al., 2023). Specifically, culture weaves social relations and unifies national harmony (Turmudi, 2021; Syukur, 2021; Mukhoyyaroh, 2019; Muslimah et al., 2022; Rohman, 2023; Sunarno et al., 2023).

In Indonesia, studies on culture as a foundation for national harmony include the Torch Parade tradition in Pangi Village (Muslimah et al., 2022), Kolarasa of the Konawe Selatan community (Awal et al., 2023), the Tudang Sipulang tradition of the Bugis and Makassar communities (Aswar et al., 2022), and the Mapalus tradition of the Minahasa people (Wagiu et al., 2023; Pelealu & Winoto, 2023).

Exploring the life philosophies embedded within local cultures and their interactions with religion is a pathway to grounding religious moderation. This philosophy includes fundamental ideas and principles such as tolerance, fraternity, and social harmony. Respect for cultural diversity and religious practices linked to local culture embodies communal philosophies. Examples include Halal Bi Halal, Grebek Syawal, Muludan, Sekaten, Tahlilan, Yasinan, Kupatan, the Waisak celebration at Borobudur, and the Nyepi celebration in Bali (Fuadi et al., 2023).

Studying the intersection of culture and religion within the framework of religious moderation contributes to social, cultural, and religious harmony in Indonesia. The convergence of moderation concepts with local and universal cultural values fosters mutual understanding. This alignment helps local communities grasp the ideals of religious moderation and collaborate on implementing its values and principles. For religious communities, this intersection serves as an epistemological basis for an inclusive approach to faith.

This study aims to explore and construct the culture of the Lamaholot ethnic group in East Flores, focusing on their

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philosophy of life within the framework of humanity. This philosophy is deeply ingrained in their mindset and daily practices, shaping human relationships. The core of this study is to systematize this philosophy into key terms of religious moderation, including justice, anti-violence, common good, respect for tradition, and patriotism, to strengthen Indonesia's ideals of religious moderation in East Flores.

The study also aims to draw implications for accommodating local culture in grounding the ideals of religious moderation in Indonesia. The main focus is to analyze the philosophical framework of the Lamaholot ethnic group within a three-dimensional relationship (God, humanity, and nature) and its implications for religious moderation in Indonesia, particularly in East Flores, NTT. Two main aspects will be highlighted: exploring the system of knowledge and meaning, and the value system regarding humanity within the Lamaholot ethnic group.

The results of this study will serve as a foundation for grounding the idea of religious moderation to foster harmonious coexistence. Although NTT and East Flores are regarded as having high tolerance based on the 2022 survey by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, researchers have observed subtle developments of intolerance in East Flores (Atasoge & Sihombing, 2022; Madjid, Pramuji, & Khairun, 2022; Sukmayadi, Sardin, & Utami, 2023; Sunarno et al., 2023).

Several facts in East Flores support this observation, including the ease with which disputes shift to religious matters, rejections of local customs as superstitious, resistance to newcomers on social

media, and opposition to constructing places of worship for minority religions (Wilson, 2008; Daven, 2019; Djainudin, 2022; Suryawati & Syaputri, 2022; Dahlan & Aslamiyah, 2022; Rohman, 2023).

The philosophy of humanity within the Lamaholot ethnic group is worth exploring as an epistemological basis for practice and identity strengthening. The researchers believe that the Lamaholot philosophy can inspire and motivate efforts to counter intolerance while grounding the idea of religious moderation to preserve social harmony within Indonesia. This research supports and enriches the culture and diversity as a foundation for the identity and integrity of the Indonesian nation, leveraging Indonesia's cultural plurality to strengthen national resilience and build social cohesion.

Literature Review

One of the elements of cultural diversity in Asia and Indonesia is *mentifact*, which encompasses the values, beliefs, thoughts, life philosophies, and worldviews that are lived and experienced by tribes, ethnic groups, or communities. These serve as a foundation for thinking, acting, and perceiving the surrounding reality (Nurjaman, Rusmana, and Witro 2021; Wong, Hussin, and Saat 2022). In the context of Asia, the philosophy of *sonta* among traditional communities living in the Nilgiri-Wynaad forests is one example. The community views itself as *sonta* (translated as “siblings living together”). Initially, this term was reserved for those who were blood relatives within the same tribe or group. However, its usage has expanded to include those who are not related by blood or group affiliation. Those who are not blood

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relatives are also referred to as *sonta*, meaning that they are considered part of the community. In this second context, *sonta* means “one of us” (Bird-David, 2014).

Mentifacts and philosophies similar to *sonta* can also be found in the Lamaholot ethnic community in East Flores, Nusa Tenggara Timur. However, the philosophy of the Lamaholot ethnic group has a life philosophy related to the three-dimensional relationships of life, namely the relationship with 'the sacred' (God, referred to as *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan*), humans, and the universe. *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan* is a symbol of God as great and transcendent (*Lera*: Sun, *Wulan*: Moon) while also being close and intimate (*Tana Ekan*: earth, land). The transcendent and great God is also the one, which close to humans. Besides being *Lera Wulan* (sun-moon) that is far in the sky, God is also *Tana Ekan* (earth-land), on which humans establish their existence. The socio-religious meaning that arises from this view is that God, who is worshiped and exalted as the Almighty (Almighty), is also the God who brings different kinds of believers closer together (Tule, 2003; Usfunan, 2021; Soge et al., 2023; Rudi & Hatmoko, 2022). This closeness becomes a pathway to create a balance in the relationships among believers and followers of different religions, leading to social harmony (Rahman et al., 2022).

This conception reinforces the teachings of religions that teach and encourage their followers to foster closeness with fellow adherents and diverse communities. The intimacy framed by three principles—trust, sympathetic awareness, and collective obligation—is a social capital for religions and their followers to create a cohesive society (Chidester et al., 2003; Atasoge et al., 2022; Safii et al., 2023; Saudah et al., 2023). In Durkheim's

concept, this is called social harmony, where every religion and culture is a part of its system of knowledge and values but has an inseparable relationship with each other (Durkheim, 1969; Durkheim, 2015). This relationship culminates in intentionality, which in the Lamaholot concept is called *melan senaren*, meaning the teaching of the common good (Bebe, 2018; Ola & Atasoge, 2022). This life view becomes the relational basis of the Lamaholot ethnic community in organizing their lives.

The common good is also the ultimate ideal of religious moderation narrative in Indonesia. Religious moderation is understood as a perspective, attitude, and behaviour of individuals or communities that always take a middle position, always act fairly, and do not practice extremism in religion (Kementerian Agama, 2019; Aksa & Nurhayati, 2020; Ali & Purwandi, 2021; Rohmadi et al., 2022; Mujahid, 2023; Mutawali, 2023). Justice and balance are the basic principles of religious moderation, along with tolerance, egalitarianism, deliberation, integrity, and firmness (Rahman et al., 2022; Wisnarni, 2023). From this perspective, religious moderation is the key to creating an atmosphere of tolerance and harmony in coexisting among religious communities in Indonesia (Salim, 2022; Pasaribu et al., 2023; Sukrawati et al., 2023). With that, religious moderation is understood as an attitude and way of life that balances practicing one's own religious teachings while respecting the practice of other religions. This perspective is a middle ground that can prevent followers of religion from being extreme and fanatical (Kruja, 2021; Bowling, 2021; Hefni & Muna, 2022; Jati et al., 2022). Therefore, the main goal of mainstreaming religious moderation in Indonesia is to

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create religious harmony as a result of embodying a balanced way of practicing one's religion and respecting the religious practices of others with different beliefs (Suhendi & Rahman, 2022; Ismail et al., 2023; Maeja & Paska, 2023; Purba et al., 2023).

Religious moderation is also seen as a means to avoid attitudes of intolerance and radicalism in faith. This concept of moderation is perceived as a response to the emergence of violent actions committed in the name of religion by groups categorized as extreme, fundamentalist, terrorist, and liberal (Fuadi et al., 2023). In this context, religious moderation is regarded as a solution-oriented perspective against all forms of intolerance that threaten the peaceful coexistence of religious life.

Moderate religious attitudes are reflected in four main aspects. First, a commitment to nationalism that values diversity. Second, tolerance that appreciates differences in beliefs. Third, a rejection of all forms of violence in the name of religion. Fourth, the acceptance and accommodation of the rich cultures and traditions that live and develop within society. Thus, it can be said that, in essence, moderation encompasses teachings, principles, and values about how humans manifest their religious teachings, especially in establishing healthy and good relationships with others, whether of the same faith or different faiths (Rahman et al., 2022).

The intersection of culture and the Atadiken philosophy with the ideas and ideals of religious moderation directs local cultural developers and adherents of religion to display a sense of unity, solidarity, and harmony in diversity (Harahap et al., 2023). Therefore, in the context of religiosity and the willingness to

engage with local culture or to be accommodative towards local culture, adherents of religion and society can develop a permissive attitude towards inclusive and tolerant diversity, thus creating an atmosphere of peaceful, dynamic, and spirited religious life (Harahap et al., 2023).

Method

This study employed qualitative research methods to explore and analyze the knowledge, experiences, opinions, and feelings of informants regarding aspects of humanity in Lamaholot culture. Conducted from January to August 2024, the research adopted both anthropological and sociological perspectives. From an anthropological viewpoint, the study emphasized ethical perspectives, exploring the relevance, goals, and benefits of the research by observing and treating field data according to its existence, nature, and quality (Ratna, 2010). Sociologically, the focus was on the interaction between the worldview and lived practices of the Lamaholot people (Northcott, 2020), providing a comprehensive understanding of their social structure, interactions, and phenomena within humanitarian relations.

The study focused on the Lamaholot ethnic community in East Flores Regency, specifically in two villages on Adonara Island, two villages on Solor Island, and two villages on the East Flores mainland. Each district selected three villages/sub-districts based on the following criteria: a Catholic-majority village, a Muslim-majority village, and a village with a mix of Catholic, Muslim, and other religions.

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Data was collected through field observations and structured interviews with 45 informants, including cultural leaders, religious leaders, government officials, educators (both male and female), and youth (both male and female). Informants were selected using a probability sampling method for four reasons: their extensive knowledge of Lamaholot culture, gender representation, representation of both elder and younger figures as guardians and successors of tradition, and the opportunity for educators to disseminate research results. To enhance validity and reliability, triangulation techniques were employed (Bekhet & Zauszniewski, 2012).

Data analysis was conducted in three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and data verification, using descriptive and content analysis techniques. Data reduction involved organizing data systematically and thematically. Data presentation displayed research results through interview quotes. Data verification involved drawing conclusions based on data trends. Descriptive analysis provided the basis for contextual interpretation, while content analysis followed the outlined process (Sugiyono, 2016). These stages and techniques were used to draw conclusions.

Result and Discussion

Atadiken Lamaholot

The Lamaholot ethnic group of East Flores can be categorized into two groups. The first category is called *atadiken*, and the second category is *atadaten*. Literally, *atadiken* means a good person, while *atadaten* refers to a person with bad thoughts, actions, and intentions. When referring to the Lamaholot people, it means

atadiken. Therefore, indirectly, the term "Lamaholot people" implies *atadiken* (in full: *atadiken* Lamaholot). The term *atadiken* refers to every person who consistently builds good relationships with others. The characteristic marker of *atadiken* is prioritizing the attitude of treating others as brothers and sisters (I-1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 18). This characteristic can also be found in the philosophy of *sonta* among the traditional communities living in the Nilgiri-Wynaad forests. Indicators of this marker lie in harmonious relationships with others, openness towards others, respect for others, noble character, and upholding kinship and brotherhood (I-1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 30, 33, 34, 35). This can be seen in the following interview excerpts:

"A Lamaholot person who does not care is not a true Lamaholot person" (I-4).

"A Lamaholot human is atadiken who always prioritizes caring and loving others in communal life" (I-10).

"Humans are more important and deserve more respect than other objects or material things. They live in harmony with nature, have a close connection with their ancestors, perform sacred cultural rituals, and have beliefs in good and evil spirits" (I-14).

"In their daily life, an atadiken with such character truly adheres to and practices the customs and culture that have been passed down from their ancestors" (I-15).

"They are kaka no'on arin (brothers and sisters)" (I-18).

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On the other hand, *atadiken* Lamaholot is a group of individuals with a shared origin, descended from the same ancestors (I-8). In other words, they are a group of people originating from the same ancestors, organized into clans (I-10). They believe they are from one father and one mother, expressed with the phrase *ina tou amahan*. In other words, they are genealogically related, as seen in the meaning of the word "Lamaholot," which refers to plates linked to one another (I-30).

Lamaholot people live in an area that has a unified culture (I-1), manage customary land in each *lewo* (village), and still preserve the cultural traditions passed down by their ancestors until now (I-26). Informant 7 emphasized that they prioritize the culture of mutual cooperation (*gemohing*), which motivates them to selflessly help others as social beings (I-7). They highly value customs, rituals, or traditional ceremonies related to their entire existence, from conception to death (I-17, 35, 36). They are all bound to each other, fostering brotherhood, living side by side, loving one another, and this unity is made possible by a unified cultural and customary system (I-2, 36).

Atadiken Lamaholot shares a language called the Lamaholot language. This language is used in daily activities and traditional rituals, delivered in oral literature containing symbolic metaphors (I-6, 12, 20, 40, 41). *Atadiken* Lamaholot inhabit the same area, across three main regions (mainland East Flores, Adonara, Solor, Alor). They live on these four islands, united by Lamaholot culture and share a belief system called *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan* (I-22, 27, 31, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43). The Lamaholot people are part of a tribal or clan group with a cultural system that recognizes and

respects the Creator (*Lera Wulan*) and the Ancestors (*Tana Ekan*), and this reverence is reflected in all traditional rituals (I-5, 8). *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan* is regarded as the Supreme Being and the foundation of their lives (I-4, 11).

The description above demonstrates the philosophy of *atadiken* Lamaholot. The belief in the Supreme Being as the source of everything forms the epistemological basis for further understanding their human views. The Supreme Being, addressed as *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan*, is seen as a Father and Mother to all Lamaholot people. This belief has socio-religious consequences, as they view themselves as brothers and sisters obligated to love and care for one another. Such obligations can also be found in many other cultures (Asrawijaya, 2022; Watu, 2023). These obligations can also be found in religious teachings (Hardawiryana, 1993; Inayatillah et al., 2022; Rungkat, 2023; Fuadi et al., 2024).

This obligation gives rise to and strengthens the kinship system of the Lamaholot people. Essentially, kinship relationships are formed through marriage. For example, marriage between members of the main clans (*Koten, Kelen, Hurit, Maran*) or between members of the main clans and other migrant clans (I-1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11). Besides marriage, the kinship of *atadiken* is also established through the openness of *atadiken* in accepting migrant clans residing in their area. This openness also allows for intermarriage between native and migrant clans (I-2). Inter-clan relationships strengthen kinship ties (Wisnarni, 2023; Harahap et al., 2023).

Kinship system within Lamaholot is also strengthened by a cooperative work system called *gemohing*. *Gemohing* is a

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cooperative effort aimed at facilitating a work process. For instance, *gemohing* in cleaning fields, building houses, sewing nets, or assembling fishing boats (I-2, 3, 42) (Atasoge & Sihombing, 2022). Besides *gemohing*, the kinship of the Lamaholot community is also expressed in traditional communal gatherings. For instance, through the practice of *puput taan tou*, *kumpu-kaao*, or *nei uma lamak*, which involves collecting contributions in the form of animals, basic necessities, and money within the clan and delivering them to a family experiencing bereavement or celebrating a happy event like a wedding (I-2, 4).

Expressions such as *kumpu-kaao*, *nei uma lamak*, or *puput taan tou* imply that *atadiken* is obliged to bring contributions (money, food, drink) to other *atadiken* experiencing misfortune, grief, or weddings. These voluntary contributions take place within the village and even between villages. This practice is not only carried out by the native *atadiken* but also by migrants living in the area (I-4, 5, 6). The informants (I-7, 18, 20, 28) stated that the basis for this practice is the solidarity within *atadiken* (Cardinale et al., 2021; Rohmawati et al., 2021). Such solidarity can be considered a mechanical solidarity that grows within *atadiken* and merges into their kinship system. Ultimately, mechanical solidarity becomes a social capital that drives and unites all Lamaholot residents in brotherhood (Azizah et al., 2021).

The impact of this kinship system includes creating a familial spirituality reflected in social behaviors such as mutual respect, mutual support, and upholding tolerance (I-5, 8, 9, 18). For them, there is no divide between native and migrant clans (I-6, 10, 11, 14, 15). The main figure considered the driver of familial spirituality

between *atadiken* and their clans is the clan head. Each clan is led by a clan head. The ultimate role of the clan head is to maintain social ties among them for the continuity of cohesive life within the clan and *lewo* or village (I-17, 26, 27).

The kinship system of *atadiken*, driven by the spirituality of familial bonds under the leadership of tribal chiefs, culminates in the strengthening of social ties, which are essential elements in building a cohesive community. Essentially, *atadiken* individuals are those who always live in togetherness. There is a belief that Atadiken cannot live alone; they need others as well as nature, animals, and plants (I-14). The philosophy of *kaka-arin* (siblings) serves as a fundamental principle that colours their way of life (I-19, 37, 38). This philosophical basis for human relations is also evident in several terms that have emerged from intermarriage, including “*opu pai*” or “*tuan dadi*” (mother’s brother), and “*wae tia*” (wife of mother’s brother) (I-20, 30, 34). These expressions reflect a dimension of respect towards women and the extended families of married women (Bebe, 2018; Reynaldo et al., 2023; Barclay & Laskar, 2023; Khader, 2023).

From the information provided by the informants, it appears that the kinship system of the *atadiken* Lamaholot is divided into five types: kinship based on blood relations, kinship through marriage, kinship based on goodwill (due to *atadiken*’s involvement in communal events), kinship based on agreements or recognition between different tribes, and kinship based on neighbouring tribes or *lewo* (villages). The researcher views the depiction of *atadiken* and their kinship system as a social capital that can serve as an

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entry point for efforts to ground the principles of religious moderation (Erman, 2022; Muttaqin, 2023; Rohman, 2023).

Three Relationship of *Atadiken* Lamaholot

The *Atadiken* Lamaholot philosophy encompasses three key relationships: between *atadiken* and God, between humans, and between humans and nature (Juhani et al., 2023). The continuous relationship with Lera Wulan Tana Ekan, rooted in awe of His immense power and intimacy with His creations, guides the Lamaholot community in forming bonds with each other and the natural world. As creations of Lera Wulan Tana Ekan, *atadiken* have a socio-religious duty to respect and love their fellow *atadiken* and the environment (I-6, 13). Consequently, they view each other as siblings (*tite kakang aring*), always seeking refuge in God, the creator (*Lera Wulan*), and continually praying to their ancestors (*Tana Ekan*) (I-7, 10).

The universe is perceived as a creation of *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan*. From nature, *atadiken* obtain their basic needs, including food and water (I-25). More specifically, informant 29 sees that *atadiken* and nature form a unified entity inhabiting the earth. They are interconnected and inseparable. The *atadiken* fully believe in the supreme power of *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan*, whose power resides in *lewo* (village) and the land in Lamaholot (I-29). In this position, informants 44 and 45 particularly emphasize that *atadiken* serves as a connecting link (I-44, 45) between *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan* and the universe (Sene, 2020; Usfunan, 2021; Soge et al., 2023).

Atadiken regards other humans as siblings, even if they are not blood-related. The local expression that captures this view is

kakang-aring, kakang dike aring sare (siblings in advantages and disadvantages) (I-3, 9, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 38, 42, 43, 44). Those positioned as parents are viewed as ‘father and mother’ to all (I-10, 11, 12). Such a relationship is inseparable. They describe it with the expression *tale lola'a bote papa'a*, meaning every human originates from one umbilical cord (I-26). This perspective gives rise to a relational principle that other *atadiken* must be respected, valued, and assisted in times of hardship. All *atadiken*, whether within the native community or from outside tribes, should still be appreciated as integral parts of Lamaholot society (Kean, 2008; Bebe, 2018). Special respect is given to women as ‘*ina*’ (mother) (I-1). The *gading* (ivory) as bride offering symbolizes the appreciation of women's dignity (Turner, 1977; Manuk & Bato, 2023).

The Lamaholot community perceives others as parts of themselves, even if they are not family members (I-3, 4). Informants 4 and 8 state that this relationship has become an integral part of every *atadiken*'s life. They express it as *toit wekin melan hena kae*, meaning that good relationships have existed since the time of their ancestors and have been passed down through generations. Here are excerpts from interviews with the informants:

“As a Lamaholot person, I view others as part of myself. Therefore, they deserve to be respected, honored, and assisted, even if they are not blood relatives” (I-4).

“We Lamaholot people always prioritize a heartfelt willingness to help whenever our fellow community members face natural disasters” (I-5).

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“We Lamaholot people view one another as kakang aring (siblings), just like kebote tou (one womb) (I-6).

“They view each other as kaka aring (siblings) as if they were biological siblings, and should be treated as complete human beings without barriers or distinctions (I-8).

According to the participants, the presence of others is a symbol of the presence of ancestors and the creator. This belief motivates *atadiken* to value and honor fellow humans within the social order (I-6). One *atadiken* and another must not harm each other, as they share the same dignity and worth, being brought into existence by the Supreme Being as sacred individuals (I-7, 19, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20). This symbolism has further implications, as others are viewed as a unity that gives and receives from one another or as individuals deserving of attention in the spirit of care and service (*gelekat*) without regard for social status differences (Tabuni, 2023; Putra, 2023).

The Lamaholot expressions that specifically articulate these humanitarian relations are depicted in excerpts I-1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 11. First, *tite kakan no'o aring*, which means I, you, and they are one and siblings. Second, *mo gong lola, go kahang lola; mo menu lola, go menu lola; mo tah'n molo, go tah'n pure*, meaning that for an *atadiken*, everything, whether joy or sorrow, is faced and felt together. Third, *toi wekit rerong wahang kae* means mutual concern or care among all people. Fourth, *majang wekit tite kakang aring*, meaning to greet or speak politely to one another. Fifth, *tite hena*, meaning we are one and cannot be separated.

Sixth, *rete ume lamak*, which is an invitation to bring items such as rice, essential goods, or animals to help fellow family or community members who are holding a specific event. These items are collectively gathered and sent together to the home of the family being assisted. Seventh, *pai tite hama-hama taan tou*. This expression is often spoken during community social activities and rituals. Its meaning is to encourage *atadiken* to unite and carry out collective activities. Eighth, *tite tobo tutu hama-hama*, meaning sitting together to resolve problems. Ninth, *ema' makat tana nawa, bapa' ewa kajo de'i*, which means the noble values of life inherited from ancestors should be preserved and practiced by all members of the tribe across generations. Tenth, *netek lau wana ga, ihik pia roke dekit*. This phrase illustrates that unity, tolerance, and mutual cooperation shown by ancestors in their time serve as a foundational guide for present-day *atadiken*.

Eleventh, *hunge ba'at tonga blola*. This expression implies mutual respect, emphasizing that no actions should demean any *atadiken*. Twelfth, *pohe pore, tali tulun*. This phrase encourages *atadiken* to live by helping and giving to those in need without demanding returns or rewards. Thirteenth, *lage ae niku lau kola, peten pali hukut bauk*. This phrase invites *atadiken* to thoughtfully consider what they will say, which is essential to avoid linguistic errors that could offend others' thoughts and feelings. Fourteenth, *kelepa one who, kerage puke wutu*. This phrase sends a message to *atadiken* to be Lamaholot individuals with pure hearts and thoughts.

These expressions convey the meaning that brotherhood holds a primary position in relational bonds within the life of *atadiken*. If brotherhood becomes a central value in communal life, it will

encourage each individual to engage in tangible actions of care and assistance for those suffering (Arifin, 2020; Fransiskus, 2021; Susanta & Upa, 2021; Rahman & Junanah, 2023).

Despite having numerous positive characteristics as described, it cannot be denied that there is a perception that *atadiken* possess a hard and emotional character in several contexts (I-1, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 31, 32, 35, 36, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44). These contexts include instances where individuals act harshly towards others, discrimination and disrespect towards women, and a lack of appreciation for the traditional systems upheld (I-2, 5). Such attitudes are also related to the enforcement of truth, discipline, and regulations (I-3, 7). *“We are firm when it comes to speaking the truth. We are firm if behaviours are showing a lack of respect towards mothers or ‘Ina’. We are firm if the traditions and religions we adhere to are disrespected or ridiculed. We are firm if oppression occurs among one another”* (I-6). This hard character is fundamentally displayed when *atadiken* advocate for the life values they believe in as truths about humanity, contributing to the construction of a civilization of love and brotherhood (Benediktus XVI, 2009; Adon & Budi, 2021; Poli & Wijanarko, 2023).

Several informants acknowledge that this tough character is shaped by geographical factors and is legitimized through the application of customary values that are deeply rooted in tradition (I-4, 8, 11, 12, 15, 19, 30, 34, 35, 39, 40). The Lamaholot region is dominated by heat, rocky terrain, and dry land. They must contend with such a harsh environment to develop agricultural fields.

The historical context of the Lamaholot community also contributes to the formation of this character. In the past, when seeking to dominate a territory (*lamalewo*: village), ancestors would do so through warfare (inter-village conflicts). This warrior spirit has left a lasting mark, ingrained in the identity of the current generation (I-13). The blood of their ancestors' struggles to defend their ancestral land continues to flow in every Lamaholot child, serving as a strength in protecting their customary territories and ancestral heritage from third parties seeking to seize the land belonging to the Lamaholot tribe and its people (I-26).

Behind the strong ties among the Lamaholot community and between the *atadiken*, it is undeniable that conflicts often arise in their communal life. When disputes or conflicts occur, they have a resolution system to navigate such situations. In the event of a disagreement or dispute, the head of the tribe, along with elder members of the *lewo* (the respected elders) and customary authorities, along with village governance, will schedule a time to meet and communicate to resolve the matter according to customary practices (I-1, 4). The customary authority plays a mediating role in facilitating the peace process between both parties within the realm of tradition (I-2, 8). The village government consistently collaborates with customary institutions both in the identification of issues and in the resolution process, emphasizing the importance of peace between the parties involved (I-3). This customary approach to conflict resolution is not aimed at judging the conflicting parties but rather at restoring relationships or reconciling both sides while seeking the intervention of the Supreme Being and ancestors for guidance in

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resolving the issue (I-4, 5, 6). Reconciliation occurs when both parties are open and honest about the issues at hand. Openness and honesty are prerequisites for restoring human relationships among the *atadiken* (Ngarbingan et al., 2021; Septoyadi et al., 2021; Utari & Rosiana, 2022).

In the worldview of the *atadiken*, conflicts among *atadiken* and between communities can provoke the anger of *Lera Wulan Tana Ekan*, the Supreme Being, which can bring disaster upon the *atadiken* and the entire village community. The customary authorities are present to mediate between the parties and conduct rituals to avert more significant consequences. This process is generally known by the expression '*hamo laeng lango uli*,' which refers to a customary ceremony aimed at rejecting harsh and hurtful words that may have been exchanged between the conflicting parties (I-1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7). In cases of more extensive conflicts, such as those between tribes and villages, the resolution process involves a broader range of participants, including religious leaders, community leaders, educators, village government elements, family members, and the parties involved in the dispute (I-7).

If the kinship relations among the *atadiken*, resulting from prolonged and unresolved conflicts, are not addressed, it can lead to negative consequences for both parties and the entire village community. Such consequences may include illness, death, crop failures, and failures in children's education, among others (I-9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20). The involvement of customary authorities and other parties in resolving issues; affirmed through customary rituals for reconciliation, becomes an

essential requirement for restoring harmonious relationships among the *atadiken* and freeing them from the wrath of the Supreme Being (Suwartiningsih & Purnomo, 2020; Muslimah et al., 2022; Himawan et al., 2023; Azka et al., 2024).

The Lamaholot community recognizes several reconciliation rituals (I-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17), including *tuno lera wulan*. Through this ritual, individuals who have made mistakes or are involved in conflict atone for their actions by providing food offerings to the Supreme Being and ancestors. Those involved include the parties in conflict, their family members, and the customary authorities who lead the ceremony.

Second, *hodik dawa*. This ritual is performed to seek forgiveness and ask for assistance from the Creator and ancestors to reconcile families or individuals experiencing conflicts. It aims to prevent actions that could bring harm to families, tribes, and villages. Additionally, it serves as a means of healing for those suffering from illnesses. A similar ritual is called *hodik padak-dame*, which is conducted to restore relationships between the parties involved in disputes. The conflicting individuals are gathered in one place by the customary authority or tribal head to reconcile.

Third, *lebek kलोbo*. This ritual is carried out in cases of land disputes, theft, adultery, and other issues. After investigating the matter, if the parties involved maintain their positions, the customary authority will conduct this ritual primarily to ascertain the truth of the issue at hand.

Fourth, *belo baja*. This is a customary peace ceremony performed due to disputes or arguments between village residents. These conflicts often last a considerable time, leading the customary authorities from both conflicting villages to meet and deliberate, ultimately deciding to conduct a customary oath. This oath does not restrict the interactions and relations between the residents of the two villages but aims to prevent similar disputes from arising again. If conflicts arise once more, the parties are reminded of the oath: “*Tite pi baja kae, eka ta’a ulang muri*” (we have bound ourselves together by oath, so let us make peace and not quarrel again).

Fifth, *glete gluo*. This ritual is performed when a dispute results in severe consequences, such as permanent disability or death. Typically, a customary ceremony will be held, involving the sacrifice of an animal and the pouring of coconut water on the parties involved or on objects used in the conflict as symbols of peace and reconciliation (to remove anger and vengeance).

Sixth, *hode limaka*. This ritual is conducted by two individuals who have unresolved conflicts from the past that negatively impact their lives or their descendants in the present, often manifesting as prolonged illnesses despite medical treatment. The conflicting families are gathered, and a person referred to as *ata molan* (customary healer) is invited to mediate the reconciliation. A similar ritual called *tewu mei* addresses unresolved issues of past murders by ancestors that have resulted in disharmony among the families of the perpetrators.

These rituals aim to mend the bonds of brotherhood and kinship that have been severed due to disputes, conflicts, and actions that have resulted in loss of life. Such outcomes affect social relations and the safety of individuals and community members (Rahman et al., 2022; Suhendi & Rahman, 2022; Wainarisi et al., 2023). Mending the ties between the parties involved is a pathway to ensuring the safety of individuals and the community, both now and in the future (Susanta & Upa, 2021; Aini et al., 2022).

***Atadiken* Philosophy and Religious Moderation**

Terms such as justice, brotherhood, solidarity, empathy, mutual respect, appreciation, and assistance that can be inferred from the philosophy of *atadiken* humanity are key points that strengthen the idea of religious moderation and support the primary indicators of religious moderation in Indonesia, namely tolerance, anti-violence, national commitment, and accommodation of local cultures (Amri et al., 2020; Cinnirella & Streb, 2021; Pajarianto et al., 2022; Manahung et al., 2022; Warsono et al., 2023). Findings can be seen in the table below:

<i>Atadiken</i>	Key Ideas of Religious Moderation	Indicators of Religious Moderation
<i>Lera Wulan Tana Ekan</i>	God is the Greatest; God is Intimate; The obligation to build a bond of brotherhood with everyone, regardless of their religious and cultural backgrounds; Mutual respect for one another	Tolerance

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<i>Atadiken; kakang-aring, kakang dike aring sare</i>	Presenting oneself as a good individual in faith and religion, based on the principle that all people of faith are siblings in humanity.	Anti-violence
<i>Tite pi baja kae, eka ta'a ulang muri</i>	Building harmony in life within religious diversity.	Anti-violence and tolerance
<i>Lage ae niku lau kola, peten pali hukut bauk</i>	In togetherness with others who are different, good words should be spoken without belittling, mocking, or discrediting others, as seen in hate speech and hate spin, which must be avoided; living with tolerance, acknowledging differences within diversity.	Tolerance and anti-violence.
<i>Kelepa one woho, kerage puke wutu.</i>	Every person of faith must have a clear heart and mind in building interfaith and interbelief dialogue.	Tolerance and anti-violence
<i>Rete ume lamak</i>	Every person of faith has an obligation to help one another.	Tolerance and anti-violence
<i>Pai tite hama-hama taan tou</i>	Every person of faith is called to build cooperation to create the common good and to commit to living as one united nation.	National commitment
<i>Tite tobo tutu hama-hama</i>	Building interfaith cooperation to collectively	National commitment

		address humanitarian issues.	
<i>Ema' tana bapa' ewa kajode'i</i>	<i>makat nawa,</i>	Every person of faith needs to uphold the values of tradition and cultural customs that are the heritage of our ancestors, enriching the nation's civilization.	Accommodation to local culture
<i>Tite kakan aring'</i>	<i>no'o</i>	All people of faith are united in the bond of humanitarian brotherhood.	Tolerance and anti-violence
<i>Mo gong lola, go kahang lola; mo menu lola, go menu lola; mo tah'n molo, go tah'n pure</i>		Every person of faith is called to feel a shared destiny and burden as one family (joyful together, sorrowful together).	Tolerance and anti-violence
<i>Toi wekit rerong wahang kae</i>		Every person of faith is expected to pay attention to and care for one another.	Tolerance and anti-violence
<i>Majang tite aring</i>	<i>wekit kakang</i>	Every person of faith lives in relational bonds that are peaceful and free from violence.	Tolerance and anti-violence
<i>Tite hena</i>		All people of faith are equal and dignified as brothers and sisters to one another.	Tolerance, anti-violence, national commitment

This finding indicates that the Atadiken philosophy of the Lamaholot implicitly embodies indicators of religious moderation (Rohmadi et al., 2022; Kementerian Agama, 2019; Wainarisi et al., 2023; Turambetov, 2021). Long before the mainstreaming of

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religious moderation in Indonesia, the Lamaholot community had already embraced these ideals. The core principle is that beyond the love of humanitarian brotherhood, every person of faith is called to engage in dialogue and cooperation (Harahap et al., 2023).

Dialogue and cooperation are driven by sociological, theological, and philosophical demands (Banawiratma & Bagir, 2020; Inayatillah et al., 2022; Levinovitz, 2016). Sociologically, no religious group can solve communal life problems alone; ideal solutions require broad participation (Epafras, 2017; Atasoge et al., 2022; Fuadi et al., 2023). Theologically, religion, as an institutionalization of faith, is a limited social reality, while the essence of God transcends human institutions. Thus, true faithfulness to God necessitates openness to diverse experiences and interpretations of the divine (Arijal, 2015; Armstrong, 2001). Philosophically, human knowledge is inherently limited, making it unreasonable to claim absolute truths. Knowledge advances through openness to different viewpoints (Wisnarni, 2023; Fuadi et al., 2023). Without an open and critical attitude, human knowledge becomes rigid and disconnected from the realities of life.

Conclusion

The philosophy of humanity of the Lamaholot people from East Flores exemplifies one of the key pillars supporting harmonious coexistence in diversity, which is the ultimate goal of promoting religious moderation. This philosophy is in line with the nation's effort to ground and strengthen the ideals of religious moderation.

This endeavor bridges contexts by engaging with the diverse cultures and local wisdom that flourish across the archipelago.

The findings of this study reveal that the values, principles, and ideals of religious moderation in Indonesia are inherently embraced by local communities. The intersection of religious moderation with local wisdom, as reflected in the worldview and daily practices of these communities, represents a hybrid-accommodative encounter. This mutually reinforcing relationship supports the grounding of religious moderation ideals, fostering a harmonious and cohesive Indonesian nation.

Exploring and constructing the philosophical foundations of humanity from the sociological-anthropological perspective of the Lamaholot people is expected to contribute significantly to strengthening religious moderation. This outcome is not merely an accommodation to local wisdom or culture, which is one of the indicators of religious moderation. More importantly, these exploratory and constructive findings are anticipated to serve as an epistemological basis at the local level, aiding in the understanding, translation, and embodiment of the ideals of religious moderation in Indonesia.

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