

Theologizing “Teing Hang” Ceremony In The Culture of Manggarai, Indonesia

Gregorius Pasi

Sekolah Tinggi Filsafat Teologi Widya Sasana, Malang

Email: goris.smm@gmail.com

Abstract: The *teing hang* ceremony, which is practiced by the Manggarai people in East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia, celebrates local wisdom regarding the relationality of the Manggarai people with the Highest Being, with one’s fellow beings who are still living and with the relatives who have died. The methodology is what I call as “critical reading” of dialectical model, that has been proposed by Stefan Bevans and Daniel Pilario. By using the critical reading method of the *teing hang* ceremony data (collected through interviews and reviews of related studies), I found that the local wisdom of Manggarai can explain and illuminate the content of the Catholic faith with regard to the communion of saints in three ways. First, the communion of saints is a participation in God’s providence. Second, the communion of saints is a participation in the lives of one’s fellow beings. Third, the communion of saints is an intersubjectivity relationship between those who believe in Christ and are indwelt by His Spirit.

Keywords: *teing hang*, communion, relationship, intersubjectivity, participation

Abstrak: Upacara *teing hang*, yang dipraktikkan masyarakat Manggarai di Nusa Tenggara Timur, Indonesia, merayakan *local wisdom* mengenai relasionalitas orang Manggarai dengan Wujud Tertinggi, dengan sesama yang masih hidup dan dengan kaum keluarga yang sudah meninggal. Dengan menggunakan metode pembacaan kritis atas data upacara *teing hang* (yang dikumpulkan melalui pengamatan, wawancara dan tinjauan atas studi terkait), saya menemukan bahwa *local wisdom* yang disebutkan di atas dapat memperdalam, menjelaskan dan menerangi isi iman Katolik akan *persekutuan para kudus* dalam tiga hal berikut ini. *Pertama*, *persekutuan para kudus* merupakan suatu partisipasi dalam penyelenggaraan Tuhan. *Kedua*, *persekutuan para kudus* merupakan suatu partisipasi dalam hidup sesama. *Ketiga*, *persekutuan para kudus* merupakan suatu relasi intersubjektivitas antara mereka yang mengimani Kristus dan didiami Roh-Nya.

Kata Kunci: *teing hang*, persekutuan, relasi, intersubjektivitas, partisipasi

Introduction

The object of this contextual theology study is the *teing hang* ceremony practiced by the Manggarai people in East Nusa Tenggara. The *teing hang* ceremony is a phenomenon of the culture of the Manggarai people. In the ceremony, the Manggarai people ritually live their communion with others, both those who are still living and those who have died. In *rituals*, the mentality of a community is being revealed (Luzbetak, 1995, p. 268). This also applies to the *teing hang* ritual. Therefore, according to the law of *lex orandi, lex credendi*, in the *teing hang* ritual, the Manggarai people celebrate their belief in the Supreme Being, in life after death, in the relationship between the living and the dead, etc.

The mentality (belief) which is celebrated in the *teing hang* ceremony is the local wisdom of the Manggarai people. Local wisdom can refer to the values of togetherness, religious values, relationality with others, cultural concepts about the Creator, etc. (Riyanto, 2018, pp. 114-115). The *teing hang* ceremony declares the local wisdom of the Manggarai people regarding their cultural concept of the Supreme Being, of life after death, and of the relationship between the living and the dead. According

to Armada Riyanto (2020, p. 26), the exploration of local wisdom in Indonesian theologizing is urgent because God reveals himself there. Exploring local wisdom is like “drinking from one’s own wells”.

What Riyanto brings forward is in line with the concept of Asian contextual theology proposed by the FABC (*Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences*). According to the FABC, the cultural reality is one of the sources of Asian contextual theologizing (FABC-Office of Theological Concerns, 2000, pp 30-31). This is what gives a specific character to Asian theologizing activities (Wilfred, 2020, pp. 78-79). Asian contextual theology is a theology that takes Asian realities as *loci theologici* in correlation with the Bible and Tradition. Its basis is that God is present, active, and revealing himself there (FABC-Office of Theological Concerns, 2000, p 29). In that sense, the *teing hang* ceremony becomes a *locus theologicus* in Indonesian (Manggarai) contextual theologizing because God is present, active, and revealing himself there.

In this study, the *teing hang* ceremony is taken as a *locus theologicus* – in correlation with Bible and Tradition – to theologize about one of the main points of Christian faith, namely *the communion of saints*. Contextual theology, to be precise inculturation, is not only about expressing faith, but also about manifesting faith, and this means it involves the transformation of life. This transformation is not only about culture changed by Christian faith, but also about culture deepening, explaining, and illuminating the content of the Christian faith (Martasudjita, 2020, p. 178). I assume that the *teing hang* ceremony in Manggarai culture celebrates the belief of the Catholic faith in *the communion of saints*. So the *status quaestionis* of this study is as follows: How can the belief celebrated in the *teing hang* ritual deepen, explain, and illuminate the content of Catholic faith in *the communion of saints*?

In line with the *status quaestionis* above, the purpose of this study is to articulate the local wisdom contained in the *teing hang* ceremony in order to deepen, explain and illuminate the content of the Catholic faith in *the communion of saints*. In this way, the *teing hang* ceremony contributes to the Catholic Church's understanding of its faith in *the communion of saints*. This is the theoretical aim of this study. By taking seriously its context (the *teing hang* ceremony), this paper – to borrow the terminology of Raymundus Sudhiarsa (2020, p. 8) – takes part in contributing to the future of Christianity in Indonesia. In addition, this study is intended to be of help to the pastoral agents of the local Catholic Church (in Manggarai, Ruteng diocese) in adopting the right pastoral policy regarding the praxis of the *teing hang* ceremony which is celebrated by the Catholics in Manggarai.

Method

To answer the *status quaestionis* above, I use the method of critical reading of the data related to the *communio sanctorum* and the *teing hang* ceremony. Data of the *communio sanctorum* and *teing hang* ceremony were obtained from relevant literature. In addition, data of the *teing hang* ceremony were also collected by interviewing people involved in the ceremony, and experts. The data of the *teing hang* ceremony were in a critical way put in reciprocal dialogue with the data of the faith in the *communio sanctorum* in Bible and Tradition in order to draw from the *teing hang* ceremony the faith in the communion of the saints. By doing so, this study followed one of the models of contextual theology proposed by Stephen B. Bevans (2002, pp. 161-190), namely the synthesis model. This model is also called the “dialectical model”. The basic methodological position of this model is openness and dialogue (Bevans, 2002, p. 171). Meaning, this model realizes a creative and dynamic dialogue between faith and culture (Bevans, 2002, p. 164). Pursuing such a dialogical approach (Dialogue with Asian philosophies and religions) is a unique contribution of the Asian theology (Pilario, 2020, p. 35).

The results of this critical reading are synthesized in the following four points. *First*, an informative-descriptive presentation of the *teing hang* ceremony based on interviews and reading of related writings. This is the listening-to-context stage. *Second*, the presentation of the teachings of the Catholic faith regarding *the communion of saints*. This stage is the *auditus fidei*, which is listening to what the Scriptures, Traditions and Magisterium say. *Third*, the description of *the communion of saints* in the *teing hang* ritual. What was observed at this stage was the context, namely how faith in *the communion of saints* is celebrated in the *teing hang* ritual. *Fourth*, theologizing about *the communion of saints* departing from the context of the *teing hang* ritual. This is the *intellectus fidei*, which is deepening the understanding of faith in *the communion of saints* with a concept taken from a context, namely from the *teing hang* rite.

Results and Discussion

Description of the Teing Hang Ceremony in Manggarai Culture

The expression "*teing hang*" in Manggarai literally means giving (*teing*) food (*hang*). This expression refers to a traditional ceremony in Manggarai culture, which basically is giving food to the souls of deceased relatives (Minggu, 2019). This ceremony is related to an event or an occasion, experienced or going to be experienced by a village (*beo*), a tribe (*wa'u*), a family (*kilo*) or an individual. If the *teing hang* ceremony is held before a certain event, then the intention is to ask for the involvement of the dead so that the event can run smoothly and bring goodness. If the ceremony is held after a certain event, then the intention is to give thanks for the involvement of the dead and together with them to give thanks to the Supreme Being for His providence (Minggu, 2019).

Examples of *teing hang* ceremonies before an event with the intention of requesting something are *teing hang* before taking a certain education (*teing hang wuat wa'i sekolah*), *teing hang* before holding a wedding ceremony (*teing hang laki*), *teing hang* before entering a new house (*teing hang we'e mbaru weru*), etc. Examples of *teing hang* ceremonies after an event with the intention of thanksgiving and gratitude are *teing hang* after a child has completed a certain education (*teing hang cacaca selek sekolah*), *teing hang* after a wedding ceremony, *teing hang* after getting a job, *teing hang* after succeeding in some enterprise or activity, etc. There is also a *teing hang* ceremony which contains both the intention of requesting, as well as the intention of thanksgiving and gratitude, for example, *teing hang* in the context of closing and starting the year (Minggu, 2019).

The *teing hang* ceremony is usually held in the evening and takes place at the house of the family who is having the celebration. This means that the event urging the holding of this ceremony has occurred or will happen within the scope of this family or involves it or one of its members. If the event in question involves a village or a clan, the *teing hang* ceremony can be held in the traditional house (*mbaru gendang*), for example, *teing hang* at the harvest thanksgiving celebration (*pentu*), *teing hang* at the closing and opening of the year with the villagers (Minggu, 2019).

All those attending the *teing hang* ceremony have a relationship with the nuclear family of the host of the celebration. Attendees are classified based on their genealogical line of relationship with the host. They are named and position themselves according to the category of their relationship with him. The categories of relations in question are as follows: a) *ase kae* (the father's brothers and their families); b) *anak rona* (all belonging to the mother's family of origin); c) *anak wina* (the father's sisters and their families); d) *pa'ang olo, ngaung musu* (inhabitants of the village); e) *sando* (the performer of the *torok*

[traditional prayer]). This relationship is formed by blood ties or by living as neighbors in a village. Their presence is not only to support the intention of the *teing hang*, but also to show and strengthen their relationship with the host of the celebration (Sang, 2019).

The whole *teing hang* ceremony is opened by a representative of the nuclear family who is holding the celebration and then it is guided by the *torok* performer (reciting the traditional prayer). Not everyone can be a *torok* performer. He not only knows well the essence of the *teing hang* ceremony but is also able to convey the intentions of this *torok* in the right figurative language which is pleasing to the dead. He must be familiar with the world of the dead, have a sensitivity to their presence and role in the life of humans, and be able to summarize the content of the hearts of all who are present and convey it to the dead.

Here follows the structure of the *teing hang* ceremony based on the interviews with Agustinus Sang (2019), Lukas Gunggas (2019) and Yos Minggu (2019). First, the introduction and the *kepok kapu* (welcoming the attendees). A person representing the nuclear family conveys the intention of the *teing hang* ceremony which is going to be held. After that, he welcomes all attendees with *tuak* (palm wine) and mentions all of them (no one should be overlooked) by the aforementioned category of their relationship with the host of the celebration, in the following order: *ase kae*; *anak wina*; *anak rona* and *pa'ang olo - ngaung musi*. Representatives from each category deliver their responses as well as a form of their participation in the event (usually in the form of money). After that, the family representative asks and invites the *Torok* performer to lead the *teing hang* ceremony.

Second, the invitation to and welcoming of the dead. After declaring his willingness, the *Torok* performer invites the dead, aimed by the host of the celebration to be present and to take place in the ceremony. They are invited to hear the intentions of the ceremony and to take part in the festive meal together. He offers to them *cepa ceki* (a package of betel leaves, lime stone powder, and areca nut) and *tuak* (palm wine). Both of these offerings are an initial and polite form of invitation as well as of appreciation (greeting) in welcoming the presence of the dead. In Manggarai culture, *cepa* is the first thing presented when welcoming guests.

Third, traditional prayer. *Torok* performers invite the attendees to pray in a customary manner. In the prayer he chants, he collects the prayers of all those in attendance. Holding a cock and lifting its head, the *torok* performer offers the prayer. After each stanza of the *torok*, the *torok* performer plucks feathers from the cock. The content of the prayer is adjusted to the intention or theme of the *teing hang* and represents the prayers of all attendees according to the kinship categories mentioned above. All participants listen to the prayer offered by the *torok* performer. The prayer ends with a request that the dead may give instructions – through the intestines and liver of the cock - whether the *teing hang* ceremony is pleasing to them or not.

Fourth, the reading of the cock's intestines and liver (*toto urat*). The intestines and liver of the sacrificed cock are shown to the *torok* performer. The *torok* performer interprets the veins near the intestines and liver of the cock. If the ceremony is pleasing to the dead, the veins of the intestines and liver of the cock will appear straight and flawless. If, on the contrary, it is not pleasing to them, the veins of the intestines and liver of the cock will not be straight.

Fifth, serving food to the dead (*helang*). The cock's liver is roasted, sliced, mixed with rice (a little), and served to the spirits. It is assumed that some of the dead aimed by the host of the celebration might not be present at that time. For them, a separate meal is provided. Meals for the dead are usually placed at the main pillar of the house (*siri bongkok*) or at a place that has been prepared.

Sixth, eating together (*hang cama*). All in attendance eat together. It must be ensured that everyone in attendance joins the meal. If someone would be absent at the time of the meal, he must be called and waited for. At that time, the attendees will converse with each other more freely. Closeness, brotherhood, and communion colors the ritual of eating together.

Communion of Saints According to the Catholic Faith

The Church's profession of belief in *the community of saints* or the *communio sanctorum* is found in the *Apostles Creed*: "I believe in the communion of saints." There, the profession of this belief is placed after the profession of belief in *the holy Catholic Church*. It is a proper place because, in a certain sense, belief in the *communio sanctorum* is an extension of the profession of belief in the holy Catholic Church. The church is nothing but the gathering of all the saints. Therefore, the Catechism of the Catholic Church (1993, no. 946) says that the *communio sanctorum* is the Church. When it first appeared in the creed (IVth century), the *communio sanctorum* was identified with the Church. Thus, the *communio sanctorum* is one of the names of the Church (Journet, 2004, p. 203).

The term *the communion of saints* has two meanings. *First*, communion in holy things, *sancta*. *Second*, communion among holy persons, *sancti* (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1993, no. 948). Martasudjita (2013, pp. 245-246) argues that the word *sanctorum* has more to do with the word *sancta* (holy things, events, gifts) than with the word *sancti* (holy persons). In tradition, *sancta* refers to the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. The *communio sanctorum*, therefore, in the first place concerns the people celebrating the Eucharist. In the Eucharist, God gives holy things to the Church so that the Church becomes a brotherhood and a community. The essence of the *communio sanctorum*, according to Martasudjita (2013, p. 246), is eucharistic, a communion built on the basis of the Eucharistic celebration. Now, the word *sancta* (communion in holy things), apart from concerning communion of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1993, no. 950), also concerns communion in the faith (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1993, no. 949), of charisms (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1993, no. 951), and in charity (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1993, no. 953).

The *Communio sanctorum* also concerns the saints. Meant by *the saints* are all those who belong to Christ and are indwelt by His Spirit. By accepting God's self-presentation in Jesus Christ, they are sanctified. Thus, they are not only being united with God but also united with one another. They are found in three different Church statuses. *First*, the faithful who are still pilgrims on the earth. *Second*, the faithful who have died and are being purified. *Third*, the faithful who are already in eternal glory in Heaven and contemplate God's face exactly as it is. Although scattered in three different statuses, they are all united in forming one Church and cleave together in Christ. They all offer the same worship to God (*Lumen Gentium*, 1964, no. 49).

The faithful form only one body. Christ is the Head of this body. Therefore, "if one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together" (1 Cor 12:26). In that communion, there is dependence on one another. Each member depends on all and all depend on each member (Groenen, 1988, p. 143). The riches of Christ as Head are distributed to all members. Likewise, the possessions of each member are shared with other members (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1993, no. 947). Therefore, "they had everything in common" (Acts 4:32).

All who believe in Christ are united in the same love towards God and their neighbor. This love does not end in death. Because of that, those who have died continue to love their brothers and sisters who are still on pilgrimage on this earth. Moreover, because they are more closely united with Christ,

their love for their brothers and sisters on earth resembles that of Christ Himself. In various ways, they help their brothers and sisters on their journey of life in this world. They play an intermediary role to their neighbor before God (*Lumen Gentium*, 1964, no. 49).

The pilgrim Church prays for those who have died and are still being purified, so that they may be freed from the stain of sin (cf. 2 Macc 12:46). For them, the Church offers sacrifices for the forgiveness of sins. This happens especially in the Eucharist. The Church honors those who are already in heavenly glory and asks for their prayers. The saints in Heaven are a model for the faithful in matters of holiness. They are also a reason for the Church to give thanks to God (*Lumen Gentium*, 1964, no. 50). The most sublime manifestation of the communion of the Pilgrim Church and the heavenly Church occurs in the Liturgy, especially the Eucharist, when the Pilgrim Church, gathered together with the heavenly Church, praises and glorifies God (*Lumen Gentium*, 1964, no. 50).

Elements of the Communion of Saints in the *Teing Hang* Ceremony

The *teing hang* ceremony is based on the belief that those who have died do not vanish, but pass on to a world (*pa'ang be le*) which is totally different from the human world (Borgias M., 2019). According to the Manggarai people, in the event of death, a person passes from the visible world to another world. This transition and separation are confirmed through the *kelas* ceremony (the culmination of the farewell ceremonies for a deceased person). Even though they exist in a completely different world, the family union that was built up while they were still living in this world is not broken. The love that characterized this union in the past did not stop with death. This belief is the same as in the *communio sanctorum*. In the *teing hang* ceremony, the Manggarai people live, celebrate and sense this union.

In the *teing hang* ceremony, the Manggarai people celebrate their union with their fellow beings, both the living and the dead. Union characterizes the entire ceremony. Attendance, participation in the *torok* (traditional prayer), and eating together are manifestations of this union. In the *teing hang* ceremony, the Manggarai people not only express their union with fellow humans and with the dead but also with the Supreme Being who is believed to be involved in human life. Ignoring Him and not opening oneself up to His involvement can have fatal consequences (Mukese, 2012, p. 119). Therefore, the Manggarai people open themselves up to His providence, especially when facing special and important events in life. The *teing hang* ceremony is carried out in the context of asking and giving thanks for His providence.

In relating to this Supreme Being, the dead are being involved. The basis for this involvement is their involvement in this world in the past. The attitude of heart which characterized their involvement during their worldly existence has not changed. The attitudes of the heart are love, attention, care, brotherhood, union, kinship, etc. With such an attitude of heart, the dead play a role in the realization of daily human life. In the *teing hang* ceremony, the Manggarai people not only express their gratitude for the participation of the dead in their lives but invite the dead to give thanks together to the Supreme Being. The eucharistic dimension (thanksgiving) of the *communio sanctorum* is visible here.

In the *teing hang* ceremony, Manggarai people not only ask for the presence and involvement of the dead in human life, but also ask for their prayers. The Manggarai people respect the dead as intermediaries (*letang temba*) between humans and the Supreme Being (Mukese, 2012, p. 119). The *teing hang* ceremony is an intercessory prayer, namely asking the dead to pray for them. This is revealed, for example, in the following *torok* sentence: "*Tegi dami, mai ga ite agu senggen ceki ase kae dite, lonto cama agu ami ngaji cama laing kamping Mori*" (Translation: We ask you, come all of you [the dead] to

sit with us and pray with us to God) (Sang, 2019). When facing certain events in life, the Manggarai people open themselves up to the interference of the Supreme Being. Efforts to open themselves up are manifested, among others, in the *teing hang* ceremony. In this ceremony, they ask the dead to convey their supplications to the Supreme Being. The intermediary role of the saints in the *communio sanctorum* can be seen here.

The Theology of the Communion of Saints departing from the Context of the *Teing Hang* Ceremony

What has been presented above is a source for theologizing about the *communio of saints* departing from the context of the *teing hang* ceremony. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the content of the Catholic faith in *the communion of saints* can be found in the *teing hang* ceremony. The *teing hang* ceremony celebrates the content of the Catholic faith that the living not only are in communion with each other, but also in communion with those who have died. In addition, the dead aimed at in the *teing hang* ceremony are part of *the communion of saints* (cf. Jebadu, 2009, p. 234). This communion is not isolated from its relation to the Supreme Being. Moreover, the Supreme Being is the basis and goal of the existence of this communion.

The following is an attempt to theologize departing from the context of the *teing hang* ceremony. The *teing hang* ceremony originates from the world view of the Manggarai people about reality, about life in this world, about life after death, about the Supreme Being, etc. This world view is not only expressed in the *teing hang* ceremony but also in various other cultural forms, namely in ideas, physical objects and behavior. This world view must be articulated in order to explore, explain and illuminate the Catholic faith in *the communion of saints*. To explore the world view which is ritualized in the *teing hang* ceremony, some forms of Manggarai culture, such as: the shape of houses, village arrangement, land distribution, etc. will be observed.

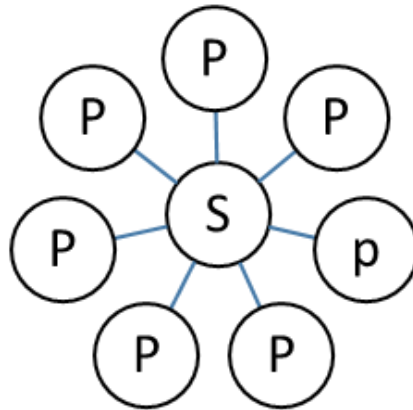
The Communion of Saints: A Participation in God's Providence

This first part is an attempt to explain the first aspect of *the communion of saints*, namely *the communion in holy things (sancta)* from the perspective of the *teing hang* ceremony. In the *teing hang* ceremony, the Manggarai people ritually manifest the union they live in everyday life, both with their fellow human beings who are still living and with the people who have died. As an agrarian society with communal characteristics, the Manggarai people always live in togetherness (Mukese, 2012, pp. 120-121). This togetherness is manifested, for example, in the family (*kilo*), the clan (*wa'u*), the village (*beo*), gardens of the people (*Lingko*), etc. Such togetherness becomes a communion because each individual or component that makes it up is connected to the same "central point". This can be observed in the arrangement of houses, villages and gardens of the original Manggarai people which are circular in shape (*mbuling / mongko / jolor*) around a common center.

In each traditional Manggarai house there are several *kilos* (family rooms). Each male member of the clan (*wa'u*) and his family occupy one family room (*kilo*). Each *kilo* (family room) in the house makes part of (is connected to) a center, namely the *siri bongkok* (the main pillar of the house). The same applies to the houses in a village as well as to the cultivated lands of each family (*moso*) in a communal garden complex (*Lingko*). Each house is connected to the same central point, namely the *compang* (altar) and each *moso* is connected to the same central point called *lodok*. This being connected with the same central point turns togetherness in a house, village and communal agricultural land

(*lingko*) into a communion. The participation of each *kilo*, house and *moso* to a common center can be visualized as follows:

Picture 1. Scheme of traditional house in Manggarai



Explanation:

S: Central point (*siri bongkok, compang, lodok*);

P: Participants (*kilo, house, moso*)

From the graphic above, it is apparent that this communion primarily is being shaped through the relationship of each participant with the common central point. Through that central point, all participants are interconnected to one another. According to Ino Sutam (2012, p.167), this "central point" is a symbol of the omnipotence of the Supreme Being (*Mori Kraéng*) over the universe. The omnipotence of the Supreme Being is experienced in what He provides in the life of humans. He creates and sustains the existence of all things, including humans. The names given to Him illustrate this (Lanur, 2012, p. 102). It is He who created man and all things (*Jari agu Dédek*). Everything belongs to Him (*Mori (n) agu Ngaran*). He is also the one who sustains the existence of humans and all other creatures (*Ame Rinding Mane, Ine Rinding Wie*). He rules over the universe and controls the circulation of time and seasons (*Parn Awo, Kolepn Sale; Ulun Le, Wain Lau; Tanan Wa, Awangn Eta*) (Mukese, 2012, pp. 34-35). Any togetherness formed by the Manggarai people, in the family, village, garden, etc. is a form of participation of each participant in what the Supreme Being provides in the life of humans.

As explained above, the *teing hang* ceremony is carried out in the context of asking and giving thanks for what the Supreme Being provides in the life of humans. Therefore, togetherness in the *teing hang* ceremony is a communion of people who put their trust in the providence of the Supreme Being. Participants in the *teing hang* ceremony are not only people who are still living in this world, but also people who have died and are in the other world over there (*pa'ang be le*). That other world is also sustained by the providence of the Supreme Being. According to Ino Sutam (2012, pp. 166-167), in the world view of the Manggarai people, there are three world circles. *First*, the circle of the visible world (*tana lesu*) which encompasses everyday life or the world of the living (*kuni agu kalo*), of animals and plants (*saung de haju, ngongo de golo, kaka de tana*) and of humans. *Second*, the circle of the world of the dead. *Third*, the circle of the world of the Supreme Being (*Mori Kra'eng*). This last circle encompasses the other two circles. Both the world of humans and the world of the dead are connected and sustained by the Supreme Being. In that sense, a communion exists between the circles of these two worlds.

Departing from the world view which is ritualized in the *teing hang* ceremony, we can develop a theology of *the communion of saints*. The essence of *the communion of saints* is participating in the same matter, namely in God's providence in human life. The summit of God's providence is God's work of salvation in Jesus Christ. Accordingly, the summit of human participation in God's providence is participation in God's work of salvation in Jesus Christ. In that sense, *the communion of saints* is the communion of people who are saved in Jesus Christ, whether they have arrived in Heaven, or are still in purgatory or on pilgrimage here on earth. The communion of saints is a fellowship in God's saving providence in Jesus Christ. Paul describes God's saving providence as follows: "When the time had fully come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying: "Abba! Father!" So through God, you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son then an heir" (Gal 4: 4-7).

The summit of God's saving providence in and through Jesus is the mystery of Christ's Passover: the passion, death, and resurrection of Christ. In the Eucharist, the mystery of Christ's Easter is actualized (Martasudjita, 2003, p. 293). There, Christ gives Himself to men under the form of bread and wine. By receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, humans are being united with God and neighbor (Martasudjita, 2003, p. 298). Thus, participation in God's providence in the Eucharist makes humans united with God and their neighbor. Paul put it this way: "The cup of blessing, which we bless, is it not a participation ^(^q) or *communion*) in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation ^(^q) or *communion*) in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Cor 10: 16-17).

The Communion of Saints: A Participation in the Life of one's Fellow Human Beings

This second part is an attempt to explain the second aspect of *the communion of saints*, namely the communion of holy persons (*sancti*) from the perspective of the *teing hang* ceremony. In the *teing hang* ceremony, the Manggarai people ritually manifest one of the dimensions of Manggarai communal life, namely taking part in the lives of one's fellow human beings. According to John Dami Mukese (2012, pp. 121-122), the communal life of the Manggarai people has the pattern of an organism. Communal life or a communion has the pattern of an organism if the persons who make up the communion are interconnected to one another and therefore what happens to one member affects the whole communion. The progress that occurs in one member becomes the joint progress of the members who make up the communion. On the other hand, a setback that befalls one of the members becomes a setback together with the members of the communion.

In Manggarai culture, the organism pattern of a communion can be found in the shape of traditional agricultural land (*lingko*) which is centered on one central point (*lodok*), just as the cone-shaped roof frame of the traditional house (*mbaru gendang*). The *lingko* is distributed among each *kilo* (family). For this reason, each head of the family puts his finger (*moso*) at the *lodok* (the central point of the *lingko*). According to the number of participating *mosos*, lines are drawn from the *lodok* to the outer boundary of the *lingko* (Lanur, 2012, pp. 113-114). The lines marking the division of the land shape a cobweb-like formation. This can be seen in the following picture:

Picture 2 *Lingko Lodok* field



Source: <https://tuanviolet.wordpress.com/2012/01/13/sawah-laba-laba-lingko-lodok-di-manggarai-flores/>

Each *kilo* (family) participating in the distribution receives a *moso* (a plot of land to work on). Each participating *kilo* (family) is aware that what happens to their *moso* can affect the entire *lingko*. For example, negligence in maintaining security at the outer edge of their *moso* can disrupt the security of the entire *lingko*. The responsibility for their *moso* has significance for the entire *lingko* (Mukese, 2012, p. 123). In this context, the *lingko* not only symbolizes the complexity of inter-human relationships, but also the participation of everyone in forming a communion. A communion is formed because each person takes part in a reality of togetherness, and this reality of togetherness which encompasses everyone makes it into a unity.

This concept of a *lingko* can be found in the communion which is celebrated in the *teing hang* ceremony. The communion in the *teing hang* ceremony is a living *cobweb*. This reality is reflected not only in the manner of sitting of the attendees in a circular arrangement but also in the presence itself. Every individual who comes, including the souls of the dead, has a relationship with the *kilo* (family) that holds the *teing hang* ceremony. Attendees are greeted in the category of their relationship with the host of the celebration, as mentioned above. The communion is incomplete if one of the categories is absent. The presence of their relatives, the inhabitants of their village, and the souls of the dead is a sign that they are taking part in the communion that has been built between them and the host of the celebration. Each of the attendees is aware that his or her participation is significant for the communion that is being celebrated in this ceremony. They have the awareness that their absence would diminish the completeness of the communion.

Because of being part of the same communion, what has happened or will happen to the host of celebration (as a member of this communion), concerns all of them. They also take part in the intention of the *teing hang* ceremony, whether it is supplication or thanksgiving. They also take part in the event which is the background for the *teing hang* ceremony. They really take part in the traditional prayers delivered by *torok* performer. They also take part in the meal together.

The pattern of the communion as an organism that forms the background of and which is expressed in the *teing hang* ceremony can explain, illuminate, and deepen the Catholic belief in *the communion of saints*. *The communion of saints* has the pattern of an organism. Each member is not only interconnected

to each other but also takes part in the joys and sorrows of each fellow member. The progress of one member contributes to the whole communion and vice versa. *The communion of saints* is an expression of the total number that makes up that communion.

The biblical foundation for the organism pattern of *the communion of saints* can be found at 1 Cor 12: 12-31. Everyone who partakes in *the communion of saints* is like a member of one body. So, “if one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together” (1 Cor 12: 26). Every member of *the communion of saints* has a place and a role to play in supporting the entire communion. Each member plays a different role but it is for the sake of the continuation of the communion. Every member needs all the other members because each member is a constitutive element of the body of the communion.

The Communion of Saints: A Relationship of Intersubjectivity

This third part is an effort to explore the intersubjectivity relationship in *the teing hang* ceremony with the purpose of enriching the practice of belief in *the communion of saints*. In the *teing hang* ceremony, the Manggarai people ritually manifest the intersubjectivity relationship among one another and with the dead. They live this intersubjectivity relationship in their daily life. According to Fransiskus Borgias M. (2012, p. 134), there are five keywords in the intersubjectivity relationship of the Manggarai people. These five keywords are terminology of the Manggarai language and all begin with the letter "R" and can therefore be called the 5R words. These are the five words that are meant: *reis*, *ruis*, *raes*, *raos* and *rao*. *First*, *reis*, which means greeting others in a friendly and polite manner. *Reis* opens the intersubjectivity relationship in the life of the Manggarai people. *Second*, *ruis* which means close, familiar. *Reis* triggers dialogue and in dialogue, people grow closer to one another. *Third*, *raes* which means accompanying, going together with somebody. This accompanying arises from closeness (*ruis*). *Fourth*, *raos* which means a bustling atmosphere. *Raos* is a living atmosphere created by *reis*, *ruis* and *raes*. *Fifth*, *rao*, which means hugging tightly. *Rao* is an expression of love and becoming one body (Borgias M., 2012, pp. 134-139).

The five aspects of the intersubjectivity relationship described above are lived out in the *teing hang* ceremony. *First*, *reis*. The first action in the *teing hang* ceremony is greeting people, both the attendees who are still living and those who have died. That is what is expressed by the *kepok kapu* (welcoming), by serving *cepa* (lime, betel leaves, and areca nut), *tuak* (palm wine), etc. (Gunggas, 2019). This *reis* breaks the silence, sparks communication. In *reis*, people acknowledge the existence of others as individuals with whom one can converse (Borgias M., 2019). *Second*, *ruis*. Communication has made those who were distant grow closer. Communication enables people to cross over and stand beside others. Closeness occurs after people have greeted each other in the *teing hang* ceremony. *Third*, *raes*. Once close to each other, people then accompany one other: the attendees accompany the host of the celebration in inviting the dead and asking for their prayers; the dead accompany them in supplicating and giving thanks to the Supreme Being. This accompaniment occurs intensely when the *torok* (traditional prayer) is chanted, when eating together, when sharing stories, etc. (Borgias M., 2019; Gunggas, 2019). *Fourth*, *raos*. Thanks to the three R's above, the lives of the participants in the *teing hang* ceremony become colorful, dynamic, not dull, and not lonely. *Fifth*, *rao*. At its closure, the *teing hang* ceremony makes people finally embrace each other and feel in communion with each other. This communion extends to everyday life.

In *the communion of saints*, an intersubjectivity relationship exists between the living among each other and between the living and the dead (both those who are already in Heaven, and those who are still in purgatory). *The communion of saints* is, in a sense, an intersubjective relationship between those who believe in Christ and are indwelt by His Spirit. The intersubjectivity relationship occurs when people become aware of each other's presence and open themselves up to one another. This awareness and openness trigger *reis* (communication). *Reis* is not only done towards living people, but also towards people who have died. Communication with the saints in Heaven takes place in prayer. Through this communication, the saints are not figures of the past, but actual figures who can be contacted and asked for their involvement, figures who are close to actual human life (*ruis*). In *the communion of saints*, participants are close not only to their fellow humans who are living but also to those who have passed away. This closeness makes people care for each other, accompany each other, take part in the ups and downs of each other's life (*raes*). In the fellowship of the saints, *raes* takes place not only between the living but also between the living and the dead. The saints in Heaven accompany those who are still living with their various ways of mediation. They are involved in the Liturgy of the Church, especially in the Eucharist. Because of this *raes*, the communion of saints becomes a vibrant and dynamic communion (*raos*). Through all of this, the communion of saints becomes a body with various members (Rom. 12: 2-8).

Conclusion and Pastoral Recommendation

Several aspects of the beliefs celebrated in the *teing hang* ceremony can deepen, explain and illuminate the Catholic faith in the *communio sanctorum*. Three of them are: *first*, communion as a participation in God's providence in human life; *second*, communion as participation in the lives of others; *third*, communion as an intersubjectivity relation. However, this does not mean that all aspects of the *teing hang* ceremony are in accordance with the teachings of faith in *the communion of saints*. These inconsistencies are not the focus of this paper. Exactly this is where the limitations of this study are found and therefore it must be complemented by other studies, especially how the Christian message transforms the *teing hang* ceremony in Manggarai culture.

For Manggarai Catholics, the *teing hang* ceremony can become a form of veneration of the saints. This ceremony can help the faithful in experiencing communion with one another, communion with people who have died (including the saints), and especially communion with God Himself. However, the *teing hang* ceremony itself cannot be compared with the summit of realization of the communion of saints, namely the Eucharist. The *teing hang* ceremony cannot replace the Eucharist but becomes a preparation for the Eucharist. Therefore, the *teing hang* ceremony for a certain saint can be held before the commemoration or the feast of the saint concerned.

References

- Bevans, Stephen B. (2002). *Model-model Teologi Kontekstual*. Translated by Yosef Maria Florisan. Maumere: Ledalero.
- Borgias M., Fransiskus. (2012). "Filsafat Sosial dan Filsafat Pendidikan Manggarai Belajar dari 'Sokrates' Golo Momol, P. Florianus Laot OFM." In Martin Chen and Charles Suwendi (eds.). *Iman, Budaya & Pergumulan Sosial*. Jakarta: Obor.
- (November 28, 2019). Interview with respondent.

- Catechism of the Catholic Church*. (1993). <https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/INDEX.HTM>. Accessed on March 12, 2021.
- FABC-Office of Theological Concern. (2000). *Methodology: Asian Christian Theology. Doing Theology in Asia Today*. Hongkong: Office of the Secretary-General. http://www.fabc.org/fabc%20papers/fabc_paper_96.pdf. Accessed on February 22, 2021.
- Groenen, C. (1988). *Mariologi, Teologi & Devosi*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
- Gunggas, Lukas. (November 28, 2019). Interview with the respondent.
- Jebadu, Alex. (2009). *Bukan Berhala! Penghormatan kepada Para Leluhur*. Maumere: Ledalero.
- Journet, Charles Cardinal. (2004). *Theology of the Church*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press.
- Lanur, Aleks. (2012). "Pandangan Hidup Orang Manggarai." In Martin Chen and Charles Suwendi (eds.). *Iman, Budaya & Pergumulan Sosial*. Jakarta: Obor.
- Lumen Gentium, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*. (1964). http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html. Accessed on March 12, 2021.
- Luzbetak, L.J. (1995). *The Church and Cultures. New Perspectives in Missiological Anthropology*. Maryknoll-NY: Orbis Books.
- Martasudjita, Emanuel. (2003). *Sakramen-sakramen Gereja. Tinjauan Teologis, Liturgis, dan Pastoral*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
- (2005). *Ekaristi. Tinjauan Teologis, Liturgis, dan Pastoral*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
- (2013). *Pokok-pokok Iman Gereja. Pendalaman Teologis Syahadat*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
- (2020). "Berteologi Inkulturatif." In Robertus Pius Manik, Gregorius Pasi, Yustinus (eds.). *Berteologi Baru untuk Indonesia*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
- Minggu, Yos. (November 24, 2019). Interview with respondent.
- Mukese, John Dami. (2012). "Makna Hidup Orang Manggarai Dimensi Religius, Sosial, dan Ekologis." In Martin Chen and Charles Suwendi (eds.). *Iman, Budaya & Pergumulan Sosial*. Jakarta: Obor.
- Pilario, Daniel Franklin E. (2020). "Interdisciplinary Perspectives and Approaches in Theologizing in Asia." *International Journal of Indonesian Philosophy & Theology*, 1(1): 27-40. <https://doi.org/10.47043/ijipth.v1i1.4>.
- Riyanto, Armada. (2018). "Mendesain Riset Filosofis-Fenomenologis dalam Rangka Mengembangkan 'Berfilsafat Indonesia.'" In A. Tjatur Raharso, Yustinus (eds.). *Metodologi Riset Studi Filsafat Teologi*. Malang: Dioma.
- (2020). "Sketsa Model-model Pertautan Filsafat dan Teologi." In Robertus Pius Manik, Gregorius Pasi, Yustinus (eds.). *Berteologi Baru untuk Indonesia*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
- Sang, Agustinus. (December 17, 2019). Interview with respondent.
- Sudhiarsa, Raymundus. (2020). "Doing Theology and Our Theological Education: An Indonesian Perspective." *International Journal of Indonesian Philosophy & Theology*, 1(2): 105-115. <https://doi.org/10.47043/ijipth.v1i2.10>.
- Sutam, Ino. (2012). "Menjadi Gereja Katolik Yang Berakar dalam Kebudayaan Manggarai." In Martin Chen and Charles Suwendi (eds.). *Iman, Budaya & Pergumulan Sosial*. Jakarta: Obor.
- The New Covenant Commonly Called the New Testament of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ* (Revised Standard Version) (1971). Toronto New York Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson & Sons. In *Eight Translation New Testament* (1977). Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.

Wilfred, Felix. (2020). "Asian Theological Ferment (For Doing Theology in Contemporary Indonesia: Interdisciplinary Perspectives)." *International Journal of Indonesian Philosophy & Theology*, 1(2): 73-90. <https://doi.org/10.47043/ijipth.v1i2.11>.