

## Article

# Christian and Indigenous: Multiple “Religions” in Contemporary Toraja Funerals

Anna M. Maćkowiak

College of Religious Studies, Mahidol University, Nakhon Pathom 73170, Thailand; anna.mac@mahidol.ac.th

**Abstract:** The theoretical framework of “religion” is problematic, especially in studying non-Western realities. In the field, I often encountered its Indonesian and Toraja most common equivalents—*agama* and *aluk*. There were also categories assigned to the realm of “culture” rather than “religion”. Toraja funeral ceremonies, which originated from the indigenous religion and became predominantly Christianized, are defined in religious and/or cultural categories. How do these related categories manifest in the utterances of the ritual actors of Toraja funerals? This article is based primarily on interviews; it refers to statements from 34 purposively chosen research participants. The attitudes towards the Toraja funeral tradition vary based on religious affiliation. The lines between different perspectives and categorization characteristics of Christianities and the minority indigenous religion are blurred but distinguishable.

**Keywords:** indigeneity; religion; culture; ritual; Toraja; Christianization

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. A Brief Introduction to Religions in Toraja and This Article

The two regencies of the Sa’dan Toraja highlands in Sulawesi—Tana Toraja and North Toraja or Toraja Utara (Figure 1)—are inhabited by around half a million people (BPS-Statistics of Tana Toraja Regency 2024; BPS-Statistics of Toraja Utara Regency 2024). However, the larger Toraja world goes far beyond this figure as explained by de Jong 2013, pp. 67–113). The highlanders have been migrating extensively, and the migrant population might have exceeded the Sa’dan one (de Jong 2013, pp. 80–81). Despite its relatively small size, Toraja is one of the most studied and promoted regions in Indonesia. It has received extensive attention from anthropologists (Adams 2006, 2020; Bigalke 2005; Budi-man 2013; Donzelli 2020; de Jong 2013; Nooy-Palm 1979, 1986; Sandarupa 2015; Segara 2023; Tsintjilonis 2000; Waterson 2009), journalists, and travelers. Torajas are famous for their death culture and ceremonies.

Toraja funerals perpetuate the indigenous religious heritage. Nevertheless, the size of the indigenous religious community is significantly smaller than the Christian one and even the Muslim population. Today’s Sa’dan Toraja is predominantly Protestant (74.1%) and Catholic (17.04%), while Muslims (8.06%) make up the largest religious minority (data from 2023: BPS-Statistics of Tana Toraja Regency 2024, p. 147; BPS-Statistics of Toraja Utara Regency 2024, p. 133). The previous sentence characterizes the religious landscape of the region in the theoretical framework of an official world “religion” or *agama*. Meanwhile, Toraja funeral ceremonies or *Rambu Solo’* are defined in world and indigenous “religious” and “cultural” categories. I analyzed how these related categories manifest in the utterances of research participants, primarily religious and traditional leaders and funeral organizers—children of deceased people. The attitudes towards this tradition vary based on religious affiliation.



**Citation:** Maćkowiak, Anna M. 2024. Christian and Indigenous: Multiple “Religions” in Contemporary Toraja Funerals. *Religions* 15: 1112. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15091112>

Academic Editor: Martin Hoondert

Received: 15 July 2024

Revised: 16 August 2024

Accepted: 11 September 2024

Published: 14 September 2024



**Copyright:** © 2024 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).



**Figure 1.** Indonesian regencies (*kabupaten*) with Tana Toraja and North Toraja regencies of the South Sulawesi province. Created with mapchart.net.

A traditional Toraja funeral is a multireligious affair. Michaela Budiman in her book titled *Contemporary Funeral Rituals of Sa'dan Toraja: From Aluk Todolo to New Religions* (Budiman 2013) examines how Catholics, Pentecostals, and Muslims negotiate their Toraja and world religious identities within funeral ceremonies. I hold her study in high esteem for its unique value and the detailed descriptions of three *Rambu Solo'*: a Catholic, a Pentecostal, and a Muslim ritual. However, some of my interview partners presented positions that could not be explained based on Budiman's work. I elaborate on the diversity of Toraja Christians and the Torajas who remain followers of the indigenous religion. Additionally, I have learned from the actors of funeral rituals that are not only of different denominations but also internally multireligious.

Recently, two articles dealing with issues closely related to my research were published in the Indonesian language (Alam 2023; Pora et al. 2023). Syamsul Alam portrays the "culture of *Rambu Solo'* ceremonies" as the perfect example of harmonious coexistence between different religions. According to him, understanding this example "can help identify factors promoting interreligious harmony and the way conflicts can be minimized or resolved in a peaceful matter"<sup>1</sup> (Alam 2023, p. 4). It seems that his article presents the bright side of religious pluralism in Toraja based on general statements and stereotypes while failing to inform us where these generalizations come from because the description of methods and materials is very vague. A similar rhetoric of cultural (but not religious) ceremonies bringing Torajas (of different religions) together and developing values of brotherhood, mutual respect, help, and cooperation was employed by a group of three scholars (Pora et al. 2023). Although all three authors represent institutions that deal with religions (Tana Toraja office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the State Islamic Institute of Palopo) and their informants were mostly religious figures, they treat the Toraja rituals as the expression of purely cultural "local knowledge" (*kearifan lokal*). Such an approach is not reflected in reality and also can lead to discrimination of indigenous religious heritage by treating it as superstition or touristic folklore. Therefore, framing *Rambu Solo'* in "religious" and/or "cultural" categories is not purely linguistic.

This article deconstructs the complex "religious" and "cultural" framing of the Toraja ancestral heritage along the line of religious affiliations. I discuss different perspectives of Christianities and juxtapose them with the minority indigenous religion viewpoint that became associated with Hinduism. In the results section, I briefly refer to the implication of the Christianization on indigenous Toraja funeral heritage; then, I describe the Catholic perspective on *Rambu Solo'* which, according to my informants, was influential for the dominant Protestant organization in the Sa'dan highlands, the Toraja Church or *Gereja Toraja* (GT). After studying *Gereja Toraja* representatives, I elaborate on the minority Christian denominations that have been hardly researched. The following section focuses on the shrinking indigenous religion (*Aluk Todolo* or *Alukta*). After reaching an understanding of

the religious diversity of Toraja funerals, I move to their leading ritual actors, with special attention given to the cultural and religious category of *gora-gora tongkon*. I interviewed two representatives of this hybrid class of funeral officials during two multireligious funeral ceremonies. These two ceremonies were crucial for my research, and I return to them in the Discussion section. Another important topic recurring throughout this article is the 2017 Constitutional Court decision that recognized the right of Indonesian indigenous religions' followers to list their "beliefs" (*kepercayaan*) on identity cards.

### 1.2. Defining "Religion" and Its Equivalents in Toraja

Since the mid-1990s, the category of "religion" has been subjected to multiple critiques aimed at showing its profoundly problematic character (Asad 1993; McCutcheon 1997, 2018; Masuzawa 2005; Fitzgerald 2000, 2007). One of the founding fathers of the critical study of religions, Timothy Fitzgerald, suggested that we should abandon the useless ideological construct of "religion" (Fitzgerald 2000, pp. 62, 106, 123; 2007, pp. 7, 99). In my opinion, Fitzgerald's arguments overlap significantly with Jochem van den Boogert's (2015) statement that the "Javanese religion" does not exist out there on the Indonesian island of Java. "Javanese religion" or "Javanese *agama*" meaning "Javanese Islam" is a constraining misrepresentation of reality constructed by Westerners, primarily the Dutch colonizers, influenced by Christian theology (Boogert 2015, pp. 140–44, 181–84).

The most commonly used Indonesian and Malay (as well as Javanese and Balinese) equivalent of "religion", the Sanskrit loanword *agama*, combines "in Sanskrit guise of a Christian view of what counts as a world religion with an Islamic understanding of what defines a proper religion: divine revelation recorded by a prophet in a holy book, a system of law for the community of believers, congregational worship, and a belief in the One and Only God" (Picard 2011b, p. 3). This concise and useful description is a part of Michel Picard's (2011b) elaboration of the journey *agama* made from India to Indonesia and in Indonesian politics. Indonesia, neither an Islamic nor secular state, was founded on the "five principles" of *Pancasila* national ideology (Picard 2011b, pp. 11–14; Seo 2012). According to its first principle and the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, "the State shall be based upon the belief in the One and Only God"<sup>2</sup> (art. 29, sec. 1). At the same time, the Constitution guarantees freedom of religion or belief (art. 28E sec. 2; art. 28I, sec. 1; art. 29 sec. 2).

What constitutes a "proper" *agama*? In line with its narrow definition proposed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs in 1952, *agama* is a world monotheistic religion that acknowledges a prophet and a holy scripture (Hefner 2018, p. 216; Maarif 2017, p. 25; Ramstedt 2004a, p. 9). There are six official state-recognized religions in Indonesia, namely: Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. The world religion of Hinduism conceptualized as monotheistic (Ramstedt 2004a) was embraced by the Balinese elites to prove that their ritual practices are the expressions of an *agama* equal to Islam and Christianity (Picard 2011a). After securing the position of Balinese Hinduism, the umbrella of Hinduism spread to other Indonesian islands. Some minority local religionists, including the Toraja leader of *Aluk Todolo*, were reluctant to convert to Christianity or Islam and chose to adopt Hinduism so that their indigenous traditions were counted as "proper" religions (Aragon 2021, pp. 146–47; Ramstedt 2004a).

In contrast to *agama*, the Ministry presented *aliran kepercayaan* (lit. "a stream of beliefs") as the traditions of backward indigenous groups that do not have a "proper" religion yet (Aragon 2021, p. 141; Maarif 2017, p. 25; Ramstedt 2004a, p. 9). This 1952 attempt to define *agama* ("religions") and (*aliran*) *kepercayaan* ("beliefs") in dichotomous terms was influential but not legally binding (see Maarif 2017, pp. 25–26). Thanks to its impact, *kepercayaan* were relegated to the realm of "culture", perceived as distinct from "religion".

This conceptual dichotomy has been fading away recently. Indonesian scholars of religions, Samsul Maarif (2017, 2019) and Zainal Abidin Bagir (2018, 2020), have promoted a broad understanding of *agama* that encompasses *kepercayaan* and can contribute to fighting its discrimination. The term *kepercayaan* became the equivalent of an "indigenous religion",

not only in academic but also in legal discourse. In 2017, *kepercayaan* followers reached a milestone in their continuing journey towards legal equality. The Constitutional Court ruled in favor of the applicants, the followers of *kepercayaan*, who called for the recognition of their religion-related rights and the inclusion of their affiliations in identity documents (Constitutional Court Judgement 97/PUU-XIV/2016; see [Aragon 2021](#), pp. 137–40; [Bagir 2020](#), pp. 48–52; [Butt 2020](#), pp. 9–21; [Maarif 2019](#), pp. 103–4, 108).

It is clear that the realm of “religion” is deeply entangled with the sphere of “culture”. Indonesians express the latter using the categories of *adat* and *budaya*. An Arabic loanword, *adat*, is usually translated into English as “custom”, “customary law”, “tradition”, or “local”. The Dutch colonizers used *adat* for maintaining and strengthening social divisions. They created *adat* as a codified written law, distinct from Islamic religious regulations, and contributed to its disconnection from *agama* ([Lindsey and Butt 2018](#), pp. 127–42). Moreover, *adat* expresses “local” or “indigenous” in contrast to “national”, and in this meaning it serves to characterize Indonesians as members of *adat*-based communities ([Hauser-Schäublin 2013](#); [Klenke 2013](#), pp. 151–52). *Budaya* (and *kebudayaan*) has its roots in Sanskrit and is commonly translated as “culture”. [Picard \(1997, p. 197\)](#) argued that, during the New Order regime of President Suharto (1966–1998), Indonesian cultures were often reduced to their decorative aspects and relegated to regional or provincial cultures.

At this point, let me turn to the Toraja–Sa’dan. This language, like other indigenous languages of the archipelago (e.g., [Picard 2011a](#), p. 486), has adopted the term *agama* as well as the term *adat*. Moreover, Toraja–Sa’dan has the word *aluk* (“precept”, “ritual”, “religion”; see [Tammu and van der Veen 2016](#), p. 11). *Aluk* primarily denotes the “rules” or “commandments” that were brought from heaven to earth ([Budiman 2013](#), pp. 46–47; [Nooy-Palm 1979](#), p. 138). The term has been used to describe a particular ritual system, for example, *Aluk Rambu Solo’*—“Smoke [of animal sacrifices] Descending Rituals”. *Aluk Rambu Solo’* rituals are sometimes also referred to as *Aluk Rampe Matampu’*—“Rites of the West or of the Smoke of Setting Sun” (see [Nooy-Palm 1986](#), pp. 169–311; [Waterson 2009](#), pp. 301–2). *Aluk Rambu Solo’* offerings should be made after noon and west from an ancestral house. “The most important category among the west-oriented rituals is the *aluk to mate*, rituals for the dead” ([Nooy-Palm 1979](#), p. 112); therefore, *Rambu Solo’* has become synonymous with a funeral in Toraja.

*Aluk* has gradually become close to “religion”. “The first Toraja who were baptized by the Dutch missionaries were stigmatized for following *Aluk Belanda* (Dutch ritual)” ([Bisgalke 2005](#), p. 110). *Aluk* pertains primarily, but not only, to the “indigenous religion”, which is referred to as *Aluk Todolo* (“the way/ritual/religion of the ancestors”) and *Alukta* (“our way/ritual/religion”) or Hindu *Alukta*.

## 2. Materials and Methods

This article results from my reflections that came after completing my doctoral project and preparing my dissertation on social actors of two Indonesian religious rituals ([Maćkowiak 2020](#)). Here, I am referring only to some materials from and about Toraja. During the fieldwork trips to the Sa’dan highlands (August–September 2017 and July–September 2018), I attended and studied 10 funerals in various locations within the Tana Toraja and North Toraja regencies. I collected ethnographic data using participant observation, casual conversations, and, most importantly, in-depth interviews. My research was also based on content analysis. I examined cultural texts that presented and developed the image of Torajas and their funerals.

In the field, conversations with the research participants were divided into casual ones and proper semi-structured in-depth interviews. A total of 57 individuals took part in the research on Toraja funerals as participants; and here, I refer to the statements of 22 experts and 12 anonymous interview partners relevant to the topic of this article. Private individuals are mentioned in the text by codenames that include information on their gender and age; for example, F58 is a female who was 58 years old at the time of the interview. Initially, I did not plan to de-identify expert interviewees because it is not a common practice



among the researchers of Toraja, and I wanted to stay credible. Upon further reflection, I decided to pseudonymize expert interviewees because not all of them are public figures to the same degree, and I wanted to protect their privacy. They still represent their offices, positions, and organizations specified by the epithets, which are accompanied by the code-names; for example, EGT2 is the second (2) expert (E) representing the *Gereja Toraja* (GT) I interviewed. EGT2 is the pastor of the central Toraja Church and a scholar.

I conducted interviews mostly in Indonesian<sup>3</sup>. Although my knowledge of Indonesian was sufficient in most cases, there were some exceptions. During my talks with three Toraja elderly ritual specialists, two *tominaa* priests and a former *tominaa*, interpreters were indispensable. The interviews were recorded and transcribed, I was also keeping notes. I analyzed the transcriptions and notes following some guidelines from Kathy Charmaz's *Constructing Grounded Theory* (Charmaz 2006). I employed the strategy of line-by-line coding (Charmaz 2006, pp. 50–53) to stay focused on the utterances of research participants while thinking analytically.

### 3. Indigenous and Christian

#### 3.1. Christianization and the Separation of Adat and Aluk

The Dutch missionaries spread the world religion of Christianity in Toraja and artificially divided indigenous religious practice into the following:

- Belonging to *aluk*, in their perception religious—“pagan”, hence prohibited;
- Classified as *adat*, treated by the Dutch as merely cultural and non-religious, hence permitted (Bigalke 2005, pp. 126–28).

This attempt to split *aluk* and *adat* harmed the *Aluk Todolo* system of the rituals of the east and the west (Waterson 2009, p. 310). There have been two complementing classes of indigenous rites, the already mentioned *Aluk Rambu Solo'*, which is associated with the west and the ancestors, and *Aluk Rambu Tuka'* (“Smoke Ascending Rituals”), associated with the east and the deities (see Nooy-Palm 1986; Waterson 2009, pp. 297–315). The introduction of colonial power and Christianity to Toraja was more harmful to the east-oriented than the west-oriented rituals. The pastor of the central Toraja Church and a scholar explained that “the entire *Rambu Tuka'* showing the traces of *aluk*, the traces of [the old] *agama*, it was dismissed. [...] *Rambu Solo'* was not prohibited, because they [the missionaries] figured out that it is very important to the Toraja people. So, they kept saying ‘okay, continue *Rambu Solo'*, but little by little the Protestant attitude must replace the meaning of the [past] religion”<sup>4</sup> (EGT2, interview). The missionaries and later the representatives of the Toraja Church never dared to prohibit the traditional funerals; they were Christianized instead.

The interpretations of traditional funerals changed significantly in the new Christian context. The converts were, for example, told not to believe anymore that spirits of animals accompany a human soul on the way to the afterworld (Bigalke 2005, p. 128). However, livestock continued to be exchanged and slaughtered, and the ritual meat division carried on, for social reasons, to host the family and the guests (EGT5; EP1; EP2, M27 2018; M37; M38, interviews; see also Budiman 2013, p. 99). The practice of animal sacrifices and its interpretations have been the key contentious issue disputed by followers of *Aluk Todolo* and members of different new religions; therefore, this issue will be recurring later in this paper.

For some Torajas, the arrival of Christianity resulted in introducing a new category to *Rambu Solo'*—*agama*, understood as a state-recognized world religion (EGT3; ET5; M26c; M38, interviews). By that logic, after Christianity (and Islam) settled in the highlands, *Rambu Solo'* became a matter related not only to *aluk* and *adat* but also to *agama*.

Four of my local Protestant and Catholic interview partners perceived the domains of *aluk*, *adat*, and *agama* as deeply entangled and inseparable within a funeral celebration (EC1; EC2 EGT2; M46, interviews). Six of them (EG1; ET2; F58; M47; M51a; M51c, interviews), as well as a Muslim *ustad* (EI1, interview), described *Rambu Solo'* as cultural but not religious. When I observed my interviewees, even those verbally denying the *Rambu Solo'* religious character, as participants or organizers of traditional funeral ceremonies, the

division between “cultural” and “religion” was not rigid. Their ceremonies included Christian prayers led by religious officials, which according to my interview partners did not make the *Rambu Solo'* religious. For example, a member of the Protestant Toraja Church who organized a *Rambu Solo'* or, as he calls it, a “funeral party” (*pesta acara pemakaman*) (M47, interview) invited a Toraja Church priest to the funeral ground to lead a prayer. The prayer did not disturb the cultural rather than religious character of this “funeral party” of his mother because, as he explained, “it was only for consolation, to console family, [...] to reduce sorrow”<sup>5</sup> (M47, interview). This statement was in line with the Protestant teaching of his denomination, which in contrast to the Catholic Church recognizes that the purpose of the mourning service is to comfort the family left behind, not to pray for the soul of the deceased (EC3, interview). Let me move on to the dominant Protestant and Catholic attitudes towards the Toraja funeral heritage.

### 3.2. Catholicism and the Toraja (Protestant) Church

The first Christian clergymen who visited the Sa'dan highlands in 1910 were from the Catholic Church (Schie 2000, pp. 20–21). However, the Catholic mission was initially blocked by the Dutch effort to defend their monopoly (Steenbrink 2007, pp. 277–82). Antonie Aris van de Loosdrecht from the Dutch Calvinist organization *Gereformeerde Zendingsbond* (GZB) was sent to the highlands in 1913 to establish the mission that provided a foundation for the largest religious denomination in the region, the Toraja Church—*Gereja Toraja* (GT).

Catholics in Toraja are perceived as much more tolerant towards local traditions than Protestants. Michaela Budiman describes thoroughly the *Rambu Solo'* organized by one of her informants—a Catholic priest and an expert in theology. It was a celebration of Toraja identity that featured, among other things, buffalo fights, indigenous music and dances, and the effigy of a deceased (Budiman 2013, pp. 91–99). Traditional customs of *Alukta* origin were highly valued and interpreted in line with the new creed, with some exceptions: “The Catholic Church disapproves of this custom as it reflects social inequality; however, they [the Catholic officials] are aware that it is unrealistic to try to ban it” (Budiman 2013, p. 88).

I saw the care about the ancestral heritage and its preservation among my expert Catholic interview partners (EC1; EC2; EC3, interviews). The most frequently recurring theme among the three officials was inculturation, understood as the integration of Catholicism and the indigenous cultural heritage. Inculturation is, after all, a concept promoted by the post-Vatican II Roman Catholic Church (Doyle 2012). They were all also concerned about the extensive funeral spending, the competition for prestige, and the threat of wastefulness within *Rambu Solo'*.

A leader in educating Catholic clergymen in Toraja and an academic theologian (EC3) officiated a mass during the most extravagant funeral I attended. It was organized by a predominately migrant and Catholic family for their deceased Catholic mother. The religious official classified it as the highest order of ceremony in the region where it took place, or *sarrin bone-bone* (EC3, interview). That ritual included all breeds of buffaloes available in the market (over 24 of them), together with other animals: hundreds of pigs, a goat, a deer, a cow, a horse, a junglefowl, and a monkey<sup>6</sup>. At that funeral, I came across the most expensive buffalo offering of this research project; the animal was bought for IDR 650 million<sup>7</sup>. My Catholic informant (EC3) officiated a requiem mass there, and during the interview he criticized the wastefulness of ceremonies and the competition for prestige that occurs, especially during the extravagant funerals of high order. In conversation with me, he explained the choice of the highest order rite by the fact that “consciously or unconsciously they [children of the deceased] proclaim themselves as the new rich people, people who are able to carry out such a large ceremony”<sup>8</sup> (EC3, interview). The affluent migrant daughter of the deceased would not agree with this statement. According to her justification, it was about paying respect to exalted parents: “Because our Toraja people’s philosophy is that our parents are the representatives of God. After God, there are parents.

They gave us life. [...] So, whatever we give to our parents, it won't make us poor. [...] We don't fear financial loss because we have the blessing of our parents"<sup>9</sup> (F43, interview).

In a general conversation, this academic theologian portrayed Catholic missionaries as eager to study Toraja ancestral traditions of *Rambu Solo'* and *Rambu Tuka'*, while "the GZB unwittingly threw the soul from *adat*; the soul of Toraja peoples' *adat* is *aluk*"<sup>10</sup> (EC3, interview). He expressed great respect for indigenous ritual practices while promoting their Catholic interpretations. During ceremonies, he often explains that the souls of buffaloes and pigs most definitely do not accompany the deceased; they are offered to maintain and strengthen family ties (EC3, interview).

Another Catholic informant (EC1), a priest running a local parish, compared sacrificed animals with prayers. In the broad Christian context, he explained that prayers for the dead help them on their way to heaven, just like animal spirits serve as vehicles for a soul on its journey to the afterworld, *puya*. There is no need to pay money for prayers. They, unlike buffaloes, are available to everyone, the rich and the poor (EC1, interview).

A priest from the oldest Catholic parish in Toraja and an author of books on Toraja culture explained that "the Catholic Church throughout the world seeks unity with tradition"<sup>11</sup> (EC2, interview). Joining these two spheres is inevitable because "humankind must use symbols to be able to have a relation with the Divine"<sup>12</sup> (EC2, interview). And, therefore, Toraja symbols and language had to be incorporated by the clergy. According to the Catholic expert, *Rambu Solo'* became corrupted and wasteful owing to prestige competition, modernization, and urbanization, but local wisdom remains pure (EC2, interview). Recently, the category of "local wisdom" (*kearifan lokal*) has been employed by Indonesian researchers of Toraja indigenous rituals, primarily funerals, to frame them as cultural and transcending religious identities to create tolerance, harmony, and sustainability (e.g., Alam 2023; Baan et al. 2022; Lumbaa et al. 2023; Pora et al. 2023; Sandarupa 2015).

Two of my expert interview partners representing the Toraja Church acknowledged that the Catholic way of handling the *agama-adat* relation inspired their religious organization: a *Gereja Toraja* priest who studies *Rambu Solo'* as a pastoral issue in the area known for being difficult to reach and strongly tied to the indigenous religion (EGT1) and the scholar affiliated with the GT headquarters (EGT2). The autocritical words of the latter: "The Catholics purified *aluk*, while Protestants killed it, that's the difference. So, when [the Protestants] killed *aluk*, carrying out *adat* was continued, but *Alukta* that long served as its true basis was discarded"<sup>13</sup> (EGT2, interview) reminded me of the Catholic expert who stated that the predecessors of the Toraja Church, the Dutch GZB missionaries, "threw the soul from *adat*; the soul of Toraja peoples' *adat* is *aluk*" (EC3, interview). According to the autocritical *Gereja Toraja* representative (EGT2), this attitude continued within his church until recently. The new approach towards ancestral heritage was propagated during the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of Christianity in Toraja commemorating the initiation of Van de Loosdrecht's mission (1913); it is commonly referred to as four "Re": re-actualization, re-vitalization, re-interpretation, and re-education (EC3, interview).

The renewed encouraging position towards integrating traditional funeral practices and Toraja Church liturgy was not the only thing the two informants from this organization had in common. They also defined *Rambu Solo'* in the same manner—as the initiation to the afterlife (EGT1; EGT2, interviews). The other two ministers of *Gereja Toraja*, who spoke with me, expressed a different understanding of the meaning of the indigenous funeral customs (EGT4; EGT5, interviews).

A pastoreess running a *Gereja Toraja* parish on the outskirts of a regency capital presented *Aluk Todolo* traditions as something belonging to the past but lasting and difficult to discard (EGT5, interview). It should be, in her view, subjected to Christianization. The Christianization of Toraja is a long process that has already reached an advanced stage. The pastoreess was critical towards social stratification and the lack of equality that is intertwined with the indigenous tradition of *Rambu Solo'*, and she suggested that Christianization could be the remedy (EGT5, interview).

A GT pastor of a parish located by a traditional village in North Toraja (EGT4) pointed out the same problematic issues as the pastoreess (EGT5). In the first sentence of the interview, he referred to *Aluk Todolo* as a “primitive” religion. He portrayed it as a way of thinking that is long gone. *Aluk Todolo* is gone, but *Rambu Solo’* rituals survive, and they are no longer the expression of a “primitive” religion (EGT4, interview), like the Christianized funeral ceremony in his traditional village, during which we met. According to the minister, contemporary *Rambu Solo’* does not aim at bringing a soul to the afterworld, and it does not require animals’ blood. The children are not hoping that their parents become exalted ancestors; instead, “nowadays, a funeral is carried out to express respect and affection of family left alive [...] towards the dead”<sup>14</sup> (EGT4, interview).

The network of *Gereja Toraja* goes far beyond the Sa’dan highland, and numerous churches outside the region serve the large Toraja migrant population and safeguard Toraja identity. I interviewed a pastor from the Toraja Church in Yogyakarta (EGT3). He perceives Protestantism in Toraja as historically and consistently moderate towards *Rambu Solo’* indigenous heritage: “In fact, Aris van de Loosdrecht did not prohibit *Rambu Solo’* ceremonies [...]. What has been prohibited in this matter were the beliefs (*kepercayaan*) about *Rambu Solo’* held by animists, that slaughtered buffaloes and that slaughtered animals serve as vehicles for the deceased. [...]. And truly, *Rambu Solo’* performed within the faith in Jesus Christ needs to be done, so performing it was actually not forbidden, only later subjected to contextualization”<sup>15</sup> (EGT3, interview).

Contextualization or contextual theology is closely related to inculturation (Banawiratma and Müller 1995, pp. 38–40; Bevans 1985). In Toraja, the former is often associated with the Toraja Church and the latter with Catholicism: “Who else shall carry out Toraja culture if not the Toraja people? [...] Clearly, today *Gereja Toraja* members with its concept of contextual theology, Catholics with inculturation”<sup>16</sup> (EGT1, interview). The GT priest who studied *Rambu Solo’* as a pastoral issue in the area known for its strong ties to the indigenous religion treated Toraja Protestants and Catholics as heirs of the ancestral funeral tradition. He noticed the need to prepare different liturgies that can accompany traditional rites; during his fieldwork, he “counted 30 rites within one ritual cycle of one class. It really means that Toraja Church must prepare 30 different types of liturgies”<sup>17</sup> (EGT1, interview).

He (EGT1) and another *Gereja Toraja* representative (EGT3)—two out of five GT pastors I interviewed—mentioned the concept of contextualization. Apart from them, an expert in Toraja culture and an *adat* activist (ET6, interview) paid attention to contextualization and its relation to inculturation. A *Gereja Toraja* minister candidate with an anthropological background despite his religious affiliation preferred the term “inculturation” over “contextualization”; according to him, inculturation implies that traditional funerals are continued within the religious spirit of Christianity: “Religious meaning has changed, but *aluk* is still there”<sup>18</sup> (EGT6, interview).

### 3.3. Minority Protestant Denominations

Despite the dominance of *Gereja Toraja*, Toraja Protestants are internally divided. We know very little about the minority Christian denominations in the highlands and their attitudes towards the indigenous funeral tradition. For example, there is hardly any information on the KIBAIID Church (*Gereja Kerapatan Injili Bangsa Indonesia*<sup>19</sup>), despite its relatively long history and substantial number of followers. The KIBAIT, back then with ‘T’ standing for “Toraja”, was a theological association formed in 1936 by Toraja emigrants affiliated with a Biblical school in Makassar. It later became an independent Church and changed its name to a national one, where “ID” stands for “Indonesian”. According to their calculations, KIBAIID membership reached 35,800 people associated with 275 churches (Sinode KIBAIID 2024). During the literature review, I found just these two excerpts on the KIBAIID’s relation with the indigenous heritage:



1. “KIBAIID and the Pentecostals require their members to avoid all objects and ceremonies even remotely related to the ancestral religion” (van den End et al. 2008, p. 474);
2. “According to the two American evangelist missionaries in Tana Toraja, their church, Gereja Kibaid, is much more ‘strict’ in its stance on funeral rituals: members are not permitted to slaughter water buffalo at funerals” (Adams 2006, pp. 60–61).

The chairperson of the KIBAIID Church (EP2) would not share the opinions quoted above. During our talk at the church headquarters in Makassar, he stated that the position of his organization towards traditional ceremonies had evolved and become more lax, still, the Bible is an unconditional authority. The KIBAIID pastor is favorable of church members celebrating *Rambu Solo’* rituals as long as they do not turn into a “party” (*pesta*)—they are modest, do not result in wastefulness, and are free from idolatrous elements (EP2, interview). According to him, slaughtering animals, including buffaloes, serves merely to repast the guests. A funeral should be carried out no later than three days after death, but exceptions are allowed when family members live outside Toraja and need time to organize their trips (EP2, interview).

Pentecostalism alongside the KIBAIID Church is presented as the enemy of Toraja indigenous religious heritage. Michaela Budiman delivered a novelty case study of a funeral rite performed by Toraja Pentecostals. The rite was deprived of traditional elements because “the Pentecostals regard the Bible as an absolute authority [...]. This literal reading lies at the root of their total disapproval of incorporating many features originating from the *Aluk Todolo* into present-day Toraja Christian funeral rites. Other Torajas are often derisive about devotees of the Pentecostal movement, demurring that they sing too often, clapping their hands as they do, and noting they have a ban on eating blood and slaughtering buffaloes and pigs at funerals” (Budiman 2013, p. 101).

Even though Budiman noticed that there were 13 denominations of Pentecostalism in Toraja (Budiman 2013, p. 101 in a footnote) and observed how attitudes towards participating in the custom of meat sharing within *Rambu Solo’* celebrations differ among individuals (Budiman 2013, pp. 103–104), I had the impression that the Pentecostal movement is treated as a homogenous entity. There is, for example, no information on specific affiliations of her Pentecostal interlocutors.

The Toraja Pentecostals whom I met identified rather as members of particular churches than adherents of Pentecostalism in general. They stressed the heterogeneity of the movement and the variety of divergent positions towards ancestral traditions. A pastor from *Gereja Pantekosta di Indonesia* (Pentecostal Church in Indonesia) in Rantepao, who I chatted with after the service, was critical of those Christians who mix two separate, in his opinion, domains: Christianity and *adat*. Meanwhile, the members of *Gereja Bethel Indonesia* (GBI) are more favorable towards cultural and religious blending within *Rambu Solo’*.

During one of the funeral ceremonies that I observed, to the visible surprise of many participants, a Pentecostal service was officiated by a GBI minister (EP1). Traditionally, children are responsible for organizing a funeral for their parents. The deceased and her three (out of six) children were affiliated with the *Gereja Toraja*, and during the ceremony there was also time and space reserved for the GT worship. Two of their siblings emigrated and became members of *Gereja Bethel Indonesia*; but their religious belongingness was not an obstacle to arranging an extravagant *Rambu Solo’*, which involved sacrificing 43 buffaloes and lasted for two weeks. One sister married a Bugis man and converted to Islam, thus Bugis traditional performing arts were incorporated in the *Rambu Solo’*, and a cow was slaughtered according to the rules of Islamic law.

During that multireligious ceremony, I met my interview partner representing the *Gereja Bethel Indonesia* (EP1). This pastor of Toraja descent was running a congregation in Papua, which shows that *Gereja Toraja* is not the only church sheltering the activities of migrant Christian Torajas. He described the domain of “world religion” and the domain of “culture” as different yet united in our common humanity: “[...] In practice, *adat* and *budaya*

along with *agama*, they are a kind of unity that cannot be separated from humanity”<sup>20</sup> (EP1, interview). He employed the term *agama* solely with regard to “world religions”, especially Christianity; meanwhile, he associated the Toraja funeral heritage with the terms *adat* and *budaya*, which he used interchangeably (EP1, interview). Placing an equal sign between *adat* and *budaya* as well as between *agama* and “world religion” was common among my interlocutors.

According to the GBI pastor, the *Aluk Todolo* heritage lives on in contemporary Toraja Christians: “*Aluk Todolo* is the belief of the Toraja people of the past, the Toraja people were hierarchically arranging *adat* ceremonies. It was our ancestors who were classifying those events, the order was passed on, and it is in use until today”<sup>21</sup> (EP1, interview). He categorized the indigenous religion as *kepercayaan* and associated this local “belief” solely with the domain of “culture” (*adat* and *budaya*). In addition to the declared acceptance of the *Alukta* “cultural” heritage, the GBI pastor took part in the ritual exchange; he made a generous gift of a buffalo to the family of a deceased person.

### 3.4. Toraja Indigenous Religion

There is no consensus regarding the name of the Toraja indigenous religion. And the need to name it is relatively new; Bigalke (2005, p. 110) suggested that it might have emerged in the late 1950s as the result of the competition from other religions. *Aluk Todolo* (written also separately—*Aluk To Dolo*; meaning “the way/ritual/religion of the ancestors”) is the most common term used in anthropological literature; it also dominated media and tourism discourses. *Aluk Todolo* appeared in at least two titles quoted so far (Budiman 2013; Sandarupa 2015). Some authors use it interchangeably with the less popular *Alukta* (“our way/ritual/religion”); for example, Roxana Waterson in her monograph (2009), employed each with almost equal frequency. In 1969, the Toraja indigenous religion found shelter against the threat of discrimination, prosecution, and extermination—due to its association with communism hence atheism—under the umbrella of Hinduism (Ramstedt 2004b, pp. 195–96; Segara et al. 2019, p. 73; Segara 2023, p. 243). *Aluk Todolo* does not “show any significant traces of early Indic influence like the Javanese and Balinese culture definitely have” (Ramstedt 2004b, p. 191), so indigenous leaders requested to be recognized as a local variant of Hinduism, urged by political reasons. Today, after the 2017 Constitutional Court ruling, these political reasons are not so urgent, but the alliance of *Aluk Todolo* and Indonesian Hinduism has over half a century of history.

As a local Hindu sect, the indigenous religion of Torajas is referred to as Hindu *Alukta* by the Balinese-dominated Hindu unit of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Balinese scholars studying Toraja (Segara et al. 2019; Segara 2023). I Nyoman Yoga Segara et al. (2019, p. 73) believe that *Aluk Todolo* was the Toraja religion of the past, and in 1969 it was transformed into Hindu *Alukta*. According to Segara’s (2023, p. 20) logic, numerous *Aluk Todolo* people became Protestant, Catholic, Muslim, or Hindu (*Alukta*), so *Aluk Todolo* is no longer the indigenous religion of Torajas. Nevertheless, some people identify with this name and use it interchangeably with *Alukta* or simply *Aluk*. This small group has been gradually shrinking (see Segara 2023, pp. 232–34) throughout the decades of successful Christianization and, to a lesser extent, Islamization. We cannot precisely estimate the number of *Alukta* followers due to their peripheral distribution, but, according to the data from the governmental statistical offices, in 2023 there were 4049 Hindus<sup>22</sup> in the Tana Toraja (BPS-Statistics of Tana Toraja Regency 2024, p. 147) and none in the North Toraja Regency (BPS-Statistics of Toraja Utara Regency 2024, p. 133), which makes them less than 1% of the Sa’dan population.

But how do the officials of this small community refer to their religion? By officials, I mean the knowledgeable supreme male priests of the indigenous religion—*tominaa*. *Tominaa* priests address the deities in ornate language, officiate rituals, and recite hymns and litanies from memory (see Budiman 2013, pp. 36–37; Nooy-Palm 1979, p. 275). Three Indonesian scholars (Baan et al. 2022), who relegated Toraja funeral heritage to the realm of culture and implied its non-religious character, similarly treated *tominaa* as “hymn speak-

ers” and “culturalists”. There are very few *tominaa* priests left (Budiman 2013, p. 47). Tato’ Dena’ (Ne’ Sando)—the most photographed *tominaa* (Hoppenbrouwers et al. 2017; Liku-Ada’ 2014; Waterson 2008) and the most esteemed informant in Toraja (e.g., Budiman 2013; Ramstedt 2004b; Segara et al. 2019; Segara 2023; Waterson 2009)—is convinced that he is one of the last of his kind. I just chatted with him, and I interviewed two less famous *tominaa* priests: one from the district of North Sangalla (EA1) and another from the Masanda district (EA4). The priesthood is inherited and neither of them has passed it down. Furthermore, I spoke with a former *tominaa* (EA2) who converted and became a member of *Gereja Toraja* in 2013, for the hundredth anniversary of Christianity in Toraja. Before the conversion, he had felt lonely with his religious affiliation and had been concerned about his funeral because of the lack of an indigenous religious official in his neighborhood (EA2, interview).

So, how do they refer to the indigenous religion? They all used the term *Aluk Todolo*, often just shortened it to *Aluk*, and rarely employed *Alukta* (EA1; EA2; EA4, interviews). When I directly asked about the most suitable term to refer to their religion, the *tominaa* from North Sangalla (EA1) and the former *tominaa* (EA2) pointed to the name *Parandangan*; “According to them [outsiders], there are no followers of *Parandangan* [anymore], nowadays it is said that *Aluk Todolo* is the religion of the people of the past, not of the present-day”<sup>23</sup> (EA2, interview). This was a new term for me, so I returned to the literature review.

*Parandangan* refers to the scarcely used term *Parandangan Ada’*. *Parandangan Ada’* is an association of Toraja’s indigenous religious leaders that is hardly documented in the literature (Koubi 1982; Rahman 1995, p. 37; Segara et al. 2019, pp. 72–73; Waterson 2009, pp. 267, 358). The only satisfying explanation of this name comes from Roxana Waterson’s book *Paths and Rivers*: “With the granting of official status to *Alukta* in 1969, a further bureaucratic requirement was the setting up of a council of representatives from each district. This council is called the *Parandangan Ada’*. Pak Kila’ served for a number of years as secretary, and later, head, of this organization. He explained that the Toraja word *parandangan* means the foundation-stone on which each of the pillars of a house or rice barn are set. The council’s purpose is therefore to uphold the *ada’* or Toraja custom. [...] A continuing problem for the organization is its shortage of funds and the difficulties of communication. The members live very far apart in different districts; most do not have telephones [...]. So even to arrange a meeting is very difficult. Unfortunately, there seems to be little consensus or sense of direction within the group of members, so that its influence is very limited and it is powerless to halt *Alukta*’s continuing decline” (Waterson 2009, p. 358).

The scarcity of governmental funding and its related public religious education pose a challenge for the declining *Alukta* community (EA3, interview; Ramstedt 2004b, p. 188; Segara 2023, pp. 234, 247–48). Children in Indonesia should receive compulsory religious education according to the religion listed in their documents, which for Toraja pupils affiliated with the indigenous religion means education in Hinduism. There are too few schoolteachers of Hinduism in Toraja, as reported by Segara (2023, pp. 234, 248) and Ramstedt (2004b, p. 188). I interviewed a Toraja primary schoolteacher of Hinduism (EA3) who portrayed Hindu *Alukta* as a world religion that shares the same eternal goal with Balinese Hinduism but has a different way of reaching this goal. According to him, Hindu *Alukta* and *Parandangan* are the same thing: “*Parandangan* is in the Toraja, the language of this region, whereas Hindu *Alukta* is known nationally. *Alukta* and *Parandangan* are the same, it is the same”<sup>24</sup> (EA3, interview). My interview partner was educated in Bali because there is no Hindu school, college, or university in Toraja. Textbooks and study programs for Hinduism are prepared within the Balinese-dominated Hindu Directorate of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The Hindu teacher I interviewed explained that, to some extent, they take into consideration the intra-religious diversity of Indonesian Hinduism that is exemplified in the ritual sphere (EA3, interview). Upon a literature review of the textbooks, I was surprised by how tiny this extent is.<sup>25</sup>

As far as the ritual sphere is concerned, all four of my interview partners affiliated with the indigenous religion agreed that *Aluk Todolo* funerals are more complex and longer

than other funerals associated with the new *agama* (EA1; EA2; EA3; EA4, interviews). Within *Alukta*, the process does not simply end with the entombment; it is followed by offerings and purification rites that enable family members to return to their everyday lives (EA1; EA2, interviews). The *tominaa* priests and the former *tominaa* believe that *Rambu Solo'* ceremonies officiated within the indigenous religion have been immune to changes, while new belief systems have brought certain alterations (EA1; EA2; EA4, interviews). The alterations are not limited to shortening and simplification; my *tominaa* informant from Masanda blamed Christianity for reinforcing the pressure to slaughter extensively and spend large amounts of money for extravagant rituals (EA4, interview).

Conversely, the *Alukta* schoolteacher recognized ritual changes within the indigenous religious ceremonies; funerals carried out within *Aluk Todolo* have been eroded due to unhealthy competition for prestige (EA3, interview). *Aluk Rambu Solo'* ("Smoke Descending Rituals"), also known as *Aluk Rampe Matampu'* ("Rites of the West or of the Smoke of Setting Sun"), should, as he explained, by definition, take place in the afternoon, but that is not a rule anymore. Some families begin offerings in the morning because of their extensive numbers. "Even though many Hindu *Alukta* people believe that one of the requirements is to slaughter a buffalo, it is not like that. It is not like that. It is according to [financial] capacity"<sup>26</sup> (EA3, interview). The schoolteacher as well as the *tominaa* from Masanda defied the need for extravagance; animal sacrifices should be made in line with one's financial abilities and a buffalo is not essential because a pig or a chicken is enough to bring a deceased person to the afterworld, *puya* (EA3; EA4, interviews).

According to the *tominaa* from Masanda (EA4), the souls of sacrificial animals carry a human soul to the afterlife; they serve as vehicles. Meanwhile, the *tominaa* from North Sangalla (EA1), as well as the *Alukta* teacher (EA3), treated animals rather as provisions required for the journey and its destination, and for the future existence that is influenced by the earthly status and wealth: "If we wish to go to Jakarta, to Makassar, we bring provisions. So, on arrival, we brought a lot of supplies"<sup>27</sup> (EA1, interview). The former *tominaa* (EA2) presented a different point of view. When asked about the aim of extensive funeral spending, he mentioned neither the need for vehicles nor supplies. The former *tominaa* explained that parents according to *Aluk Todolo* beliefs were the first deities of Torajas, their first subject of prayers, and hence they receive costly animals during their ceremonies (EA2, interview).

### 3.5. "Religious" and "Cultural" Ritual Leaders?

Who officiates *Rambu Solo'*? I received various answers to this question, and here I am focusing solely on the affiliation of those officials. Historically, *to mebalun*, the priest contaminated with the impurity of death takes care of a corpse "[...] until attention turns to the gods, whereupon he cedes precedence to the *to mina*" (Nooy-Palm 1979, p. 280). But "nowadays there are no [*to mebalun*] anymore"<sup>28</sup> (EA2, interview). Four of my interlocutors suggested that *tominaa* is the principal ritual actor of *Rambu Solo'* (EA1; F24; M26c; M51c, interviews). However, among them, the actual *tominaa* (EA1) limited the leading role of the indigenous priest to a small religious community of *Alukta* followers. Another four research participants pointed to a Christian minister as a ritual leader (EP2; ET1; ET6; M26c, interviews). Moreover, there are also *adat* authorities, primarily a noble local leader—*to parengnge'*, who oversee the meat division, and therefore, could be treated as those in charge of a Toraja funeral (EA3; ET5; M41b, interviews).

During my observations of Toraja funerals, I overheard the conversations of numerous knowledgeable and less knowledgeable tour guides. I often witnessed guides pointing at men in traditional clothes with microphones and calling them *tominaa*. Upon chatting with those pointed at, they turned out to identify as mere emcees or *gora-gora tongkon*. I will come back to *gora-gora tongkon* officials after looking at the misconception that a *tominaa* leads contemporary Christianized *Rambu Solo'*. The travel and tourism industry perpetuates this misconception to present Toraja within a timeless authenticity bubble (Author). UNESCO, the influential source of the Toraja image, does not mention the presence of



world religions in the region and portrays *Aluk Todolo* as “the Toraja belief system which governs the life of the society” (UNESCO 2009).

*Gora-gora tongkon* is a hybrid category of ritual leaders that I encountered during the fieldwork. We can find very little general information about them in the literature, and there are no references to the funeral context (Nooy-Palm 1979, p. 52; Tsintjilonis 2000). I met two *gora-gora tongkon* (ET3; ET5) who were officiating two lavish funerals: of a Catholic deceased person and a Protestant one. Clothed in distinguished ritual vestments, they acted as traditional leaders of funeral litany recitations and rite experts. They were more than emcees or simple ceremonial speakers during *Rambu Solo'*.

The two *gora-gora tongkon* defined their function as similar to *tominaa*, owing to their fluency in the ornate language and their traditional tasks (ET3; ET5, interviews). Contrary to *tominaa*, both of them were members of the Toraja Church; they identified along to *parengnge'* as *adat* or cultural functionaries rather than religious. And therefore, religious conversions of *gora-gora tongkon* and to *parengnge'* are broadly acceptable. Furthermore, *tominaa* priests do not receive a formal education, and their knowledge is passed down from generation to generation, whereas both *gora-gora tongkon* officials studied indigenous philology at the Hasanuddin University in Makassar, the capital city of the South Sulawesi province.

#### 4. Discussion

*Gora-gora tongkon* is the class of ritual experts who have emerged as a new category of funeral officials. The statements delivered by the two funeral leaders who identify as *gora-gora tongkon* (ET3; ET5, interviews) suggest that their function is to bridge the heritage of *Alukta* and the dominant new religions of contemporary Toraja. Researchers might examine the development and prevalence of this category in the future. So far, I have met two Christian families that recognized the need to have someone more than an emcee and the need for hiring a *gora-gora tongkon* for funerals they organized.

Those two families held elaborate funeral ceremonies that were crucial for my research and recurred throughout this article. The two ceremonies reflected the internal religious diversity of Toraja.

One family was predominantly Catholic. The funeral ground they prepared hosted, among other things, recitations delivered by *gora-gora tongkon* and a Catholic requiem mass. A Catholic priest was accompanied by a pastoreess from the *Gereja Toraja*, but she did not officiate a ritual with him because Protestant and Catholic *Rambu Solo'* services have different aims and statuses. Catholics hold a requiem and pray for the deceased, while Protestant ministers just comfort families (EC2; EC3, interviews). It was a Christianized *Rambu Solo'*, and new theological interpretations were mixed with the indigenous religious heritage. When justifying the extensive spending on sacrificial animals—the crucial issue in debates on *Rambu Solo'*—the Catholic daughter of a deceased person described her parents as “the representatives of God”, capable of influencing her life on Earth, and that is why giving them offerings could not make her and her family poor (F43, interview, see pp. 5–6). Her account resembled the explanation I received from the *Alukta* expert and former *tominaa* that parents receive costly animal offerings during their funerals because they are the first deities of Torajas and exalted ancestors (EA2, interview, see p. 12). This example shows that the key line dividing Christian and indigenous *Rambu Solo'* is blurred, and theological interpretations do not always follow religious affiliation.

Another family was celebrating the deceased, who was, like her three children, a member of the Toraja Church, and during the ceremony there was time and space reserved for the *Gereja Toraja* worship. This worship was not intended for the other three children. The eldest daughter migrated and converted to Islam to marry a Muslim man. Two of the children were affiliated with Pentecostal *Gereja Bethel Indonesia*, and the GBI minister also held a service. The unexpectedly favorable attitude of the GBI towards indigenous ritual heritage made me interested in minority Protestant denominations in Toraja.

Pentecostals' views vary from denomination to denomination and from individual to individual. We cannot treat Pentecostalism in Toraja as a monolith. The same could be stated about Toraja Christianity in general, as well as Toraja Islam. Studies of the diversity of Christianity and Islam in the Sa'dan highlands are needed. Minority denominations, even those of substantial size and influence like the KIBAIID Church, receive very little scholarly attention. I have not elaborated on Muslim attitudes towards the indigenous Toraja funeral heritage here because it is a separate topic. It came up in my research, but I did not collect enough data to discuss it thoroughly. I chose to focus on the indigenous religion and juxtapose it with the largest and most influential religion of the region, Christianity, in its diverse variants.

The presence of *gora-gora tongkon* hybrid—neither religious nor secular, neither ancient nor modern—funeral officials is a piece of vital evidence for the deeply entangled relations between religious and cultural spheres. “Religion” is usually referred to as *agama* in Indonesian and *aluk* in the Toraja language, while the realm of “culture” is commonly expressed through the categories of *adat* and *budaya*. The two *gora-gora tongkon* I interviewed are experts in the texts and language of the Toraja indigenous religion. However, neither of them affiliates with this religion—they are Christians. They describe themselves as disciples and heirs of indigenous *Aluk Todolo* priests, and at the same time they recognize their function as cultural rather than religious (ET3; ET5, interviews).

Some of my interview partners stressed the inseparability of the “religious” and “cultural” domains; they often used the words *agama*, *aluk*, *adat*, and *budaya* interchangeably. Others sought a boundary between the two but never postulated their complete separation.

The differentiation between religious and non-religious in Toraja funerals overlaps the one between “party” or “festivity” (*pesta*) and “ceremony” (*upacara*). My interview partners employed those categories interchangeably. Some did it unconsciously. Two of my interlocutors expressed their criticism towards the allegedly degrading term *pesta Rambu Solo'* or “funeral party”; however, in the course of our talk, all three casually used the word *pesta* in reference to traditional Toraja funerals (EC2; EGT3; ET6, interviews). The indigenous *Alukta* priest did not recognize the category *pesta Rambu Solo'* as problematic (EA1; EA4, interviews). Only one person went beyond the *pesta*–*upacara* division, the expert and activist in Toraja *adat* (ET6). He explained that *Rambu Solo'* cannot be categorized by foreign names—it is neither *pesta* nor *upacara* but *aluk*, *Aluk Rambu Solo'* (ET6, interview).

Referring to Toraja funerals as “feasts” or “parties” (*pesta*), with the subsequent emphasis on their “cultural” rather than “religious character”, is the legacy of colonization, Christianization, and the New Order. The New Order state (1966–1998) aimed at creating and asserting Indonesian culture through domesticated ethnic diversity. It promoted Toraja and other local cultures by reducing them to their showcase, decorative versions that overlook the contentious aspects, primarily religion. The Indonesian state still intensively promotes cultural tourism in Toraja and focuses on the showcase aspects of indigeneity.

Politics and power relations participate in the conceptualization of “religions” in Indonesia. I mentioned earlier the 2017 Constitutional Court decision that marked a milestone in the journey of Indonesian indigenous religions (*aliran kepercayaan*) towards equality. The indigenous religion of Torajas has not been classified as *kepercayaan* for over half a century. Since 1969, it has been officially recognized as a branch of Hinduism and its followers are registered as Hindus. Back then, the protection of the Hindu umbrella was truly needed; today, the situation is different.

In the aftermath of the Constitutional Court judgement, *Alukta* followers could argue for the recognition of their independent indigenous religion. But I think, on a substantial scale, they would not do it anytime soon. First, the *kepercayaan* followers still cannot enjoy the same treatment and freedom from discrimination as the *agama* adherents. Second, despite the tourist image of the indigenous religion of Torajas as a vital power governing social life in the highlands, its community is weak and shrinking. And third, the decades of alliance with Hinduism have influenced the shrinking *Alukta* community. Even though, its Hinduization has not yet been fully accomplished (Ramstedt 2004b). In regard to Hin-

duization, I tend to believe Martin Ramstedt (2004b) more than Segara (2023); the Balinese scholar affiliated with a Hindu University in Bali eagerly portrayed *Alukta* as fully integrated with Hinduism. However, Segara's portrayal of the Hinduized Toraja indigenous religion might suggest that he is worried about *Alukta* followers leaving the umbrella of Hinduism in future. The relation between the state-led Hinduization and the Toraja indigenous religion is a critical and understudied topic that requires further research.

Two other descriptions of Toraja indigenous religious heritage, which I mentioned in the introduction, deny its religious status. They frame the Toraja rituals as solely cultural; these cultural ceremonies bring Torajas adhering to exclusive world religions together and safeguard tolerance (Alam 2023; Pora et al. 2023). But pluralism is not about mere tolerance, it requires "conditions or settings in which diversity is accorded legitimacy" (Peletz 2009, p. 2). I argue that Toraja funeral ceremonies often provide such conditions, even though their descriptions do not. Syamsul Alam (2023), as well as Sudarmin Tandi Pora et al. (2023), perpetuate the Western-centric understanding of the "proper" religion brought to the archipelago by the colonizers and developed during the New Order. The 2017 Constitutional Court judgement brings hope for decolonization. It is a step for indigenous religions (*kepercayaan*) formerly seen as superstitious, backward, and opposite to "proper" *agama* in the direction of their official recognition and equal rights. Local minority religions, even those aligned with Hinduism like *Aluk Todolo*, do not enjoy full equality with majoritarian religions. However, within some Toraja multireligious funeral rituals, pluriversal (FitzGerald 2021; Mignolo 2020) dialogue is constructed.

## 5. Conclusions

In the last paragraph, let me return to the word usage related to "religion" and "culture". The multiplicity of categories, their different origins and histories of formations, the problem of translations and appropriation, the state politics, and the variety of religious identities of Torajas result in framing their ritual heritage as "religious" or/and "cultural". Terms describing Toraja "spiritual" life: "religion", *agama*, *kepercayaan*, *aluk*, and *adat* are problematic, and are understood differently by individuals. I observed some conceptual similarities among people who shared religious affiliations; the lines between religious groups were usually distinguishable but blurred. Similarly, the divisions between *agama*, *kepercayaan*, *aluk*, and *adat* were blurred but distinguishable. Despite the fuzziness, these terms are analytically useful. These classifications matter. *Aluk Todolo* elites successfully sought recognition of their indigenous religion as a variant of Hinduism to avoid discrimination, prosecution, and extermination over half a century ago. Today, treating their ritual heritage as cultural but not religious or merely folkloristic still threatens their religious rights.

**Funding:** The article refers to the data gathered within the project funded by the National Science Centre, Poland, grant number 2016/21/N/HS3/00869. However, I wrote this article based on further reflections on the fieldwork data after the project was over and without additional external funding.

**Institutional Review Board Statement:** The study was conducted in accordance with the guidelines for good practice established by the American Anthropological Association and the European Commission (DG Research and Innovation). The study did not require the Institutional Review Board Statement because the research ethics were evaluated positively by the Polish National Science Centre in the process of reviewing grant number 2016/21/N/HS3/00869. Additionally, the data were subjected to pseudonymization.

**Informed Consent Statement:** Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

**Data Availability Statement:** The recordings and transcriptions of the interviews are not publicly available due to the privacy assurance that I made to the research participants.

**Acknowledgments:** I cannot thank my interview partners enough. My work would have not been possible without them. In Toraja, I received help from many individuals; special thanks to Henri Parimba, Fyant Layuk, Frans Pangrante, Ryan Gerentino Rantelili, and Alex Tangkeallo. I want to

express my gratitude to Caeza Dinar Maharani for her help with transcriptions. My appreciation also goes to the anonymous reviewers of this article for their valuable feedback.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The author declares no conflicts of interest.

## Notes

- 1 [...] Dapat membantu mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor yang mempromosikan kerukunan antar agama serta bagaimana konflik dapat diminimalisir atau diselesaikan dengan cara yang damai. Translation by the author.
- 2 Negara berdasar atas Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa.
- 3 Some interviews for my doctoral project were in English. But they were primarily with travelers, and they were not relevant for this article.
- 4 Rambu Tuka' ini kan semua berbau aluk, berbau agama, itu semua dihentikan. [...] Rambu Solo' itu tetapi tidak dilarang, karena mereka berpikir ini sangat penting bagi orang Toraja. Jadi mereka tetap katakan "oke, dilanjutkan ini Rambu Solo'", tetapi perlahan-lahan, harus di, kalau di sikap Protestan diganti makna agamanya. All the translations of research participants' statements were carried out by me. I intended to adequately reflect the spoken language of my interlocutors. Therefore, the transcriptions and translations might contain some grammar errors natural for the spoken language.
- 5 Itu untuk penghiburan saja, untuk menghibur keluarga [...] mengurangi rasa sedih.
- 6 The monkey was not sacrificed after all, which would have been bizarre. Experts in the Toraja tradition who attended the ritual were not sure why the monkey was there in the first place.
- 7 It was a saleko buffalo with white and black skin, which is considered the most unique and valuable one. I have heard about more expensive animals of this breed but never saw one during a ceremony.
- 8 Mereka sadar atau tidak sadar mereka memproklamasikan diri sebagai orang kaya baru, orang yang mampu menyelenggarakan upacara-upacara besar seperti itu.
- 9 Karena filosofi kita orang Toraja, kita punya orang tua itu adalah wakil daripada Tuhan. Setelah Tuhan, orang tua. Orang tua itu yang melahirkan kita. [...]. Jadi apa pun yang kita kasih pada orang tua, ya itu tidak akan membuat kita miskin. [...] Tidak takut rugi, karena kamu punya blessing itu dari orang tua.
- 10 Tanpa disadari Zending membuang jiwa dari adat, jiwa dari adat orang Toraja itu adalah aluk.
- 11 Gereja Katolik di seluruh dunia kan mencoba bersatu degan tradisi.
- 12 Manusia harus menggunakan simbol untuk bisa berelasi dengan yang ilahi.
- 13 Kalau saya dapat simpulkan Katolik itu memurnikan, memurnikan aluk, Protestan itu membunuh aluk, itu perbedaannya. Jadi kalau membunuh aluk, adat tetap melaksanakan, tapi betul-betul yang Alukta itu aluk yang lama yang mendasari itu, dibuang.
- 14 Sekarang maka pemakaman itu dilakukan dalam arti penghormatan, kasih sayang dari keluarga yang ditinggalkan [...] bagi yang meninggal.
- 15 Sebenarnya Aris van de Loosdrecht dia tidak melarang itu, upacara Rambu Solo' [...]. Yang dilarang di situ adalah kepercayaan Rambu Solo' dilakukan oleh orang-orang animisme, bahwa kerbau yang dipotong itu, hewan yang dipotong itu, ada kendaraan bagi si mati. [...]. Dan betul-betul, Rambu Solo' yang dilakukan itu di dalam iman percaya kepada Yesus Kristus, itu yang harus dilakukan, jadi tidak melarang sebenarnya yang dilakukan itu, cuma kemudian ada kontekstualisasi.
- 16 Siapa lagi yang mau melaksanakan budaya Toraja kalau bukan orang Toraja? [...] Jelas hari ini Gereja Toraja dengan konsep teologi kontekstualnya, Katolik dengan inkulturasi.
- 17 Saya hitung-hitung itu ritus satu kali jalan untuk satu tingkat di ritual itu sampai 30. Arti sebenarnya, Gereja Toraja itu harus menyiapkan 30 bentuk jenis liturgi yang berbeda.
- 18 Artinya agama sudah berubah, tetap masih ada aluk.
- 19 As far as I know, KIBAID does not have an official English name. Gereja Kerapatan Injili Bangsa Indonesia can be translated as "Evangelical Union Church of Indonesian People".
- 20 [...] dalam pelaksanaan, adat dan budaya serta agama itu, itu semacam kesatuan yang tidak bisa terlepas dari umat manusia.
- 21 Aluk Todolo itu adalah satu kepercayaan orang Toraja dulu. Nah dan orang Toraja dululah yang mengemas tingkatan-tingkatan upacara adat. Itu nenek moyang kami dulu mengemas acara itu sampai itu digunakan sampai itu turun-temurun sampai sekarang ini.
- 22 There was no Balinese migration to Toraja, so we can assume that nearly all the 4049 Hindus follow the Toraja indigenous religion.
- 23 Menurut mereka, tidak ada yang menganut Parandangan, sekarang dikatakan lah Aluk Todolo atau agama yang dipercaya oleh orang-orang yang dulu, bukan sekarang.
- 24 Parandangan itu kan bahasa Torajanya, bahasa daerah di sini, kalau Hindu Alukta kan dikenal secara nasional. Sama Alukta dengan Parandangan, itu sama.
- 25 After reviewing a dozen textbooks, I found only one reference to the Toraja variant of Hinduism in the publication aimed at the fourth class of a primary school (Putra 2021, pp. 121–22).
- 26 Tetapi banyak orang yang menganggap bahwa dalam Hindu Alukta itu salah satu persyaratannya itu adalah memotong kerbau, tidak seperti itu. Tidak seperti itu. Itu sesuai dengan kemampuan.



- 27 Kalau mau ke Jakarta, ke Makassar, kita bawa bekal. Itu sampai banyak-banyak bekal kita bawa.
- 28 Tapi sekarang tidak ada lagi.

## References

- Adams, Kathleen M. 2006. *Art as Politics: Re-Crafting Identities, Tourism, and Power in Tana Toraja, Indonesia*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Adams, Kathleen M. 2020. What Western Tourism Concepts Obscure: Intersections of Migration and Tourism in Indonesia. *Tourism Geographies* 23: 678–703. [CrossRef]
- Alam, Syamsul. 2023. Kerukunan dalam Beragam: Koeksistensi Antar Agama dalam Upacara Rambu Solo Tana Toraja. *Socioreligious: Jurnal Ilmiah Sosiologi Agama* 8: 1–13.
- Aragon, Lorraine V. 2021. Regulating Religion and Recognizing ‘Animist Beliefs’ in Indonesian Law and Life. In *Religious Pluralism in Indonesia*. Edited by Chiara Formichi. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, pp. 135–62.
- Asad, Talal. 1993. *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Baan, Anastasia, Markus Deli Girik Allo, and Andi Anto Patak. 2022. The Cultural Attitudes of a Funeral Ritual Discourse in the Indigenous Torajan, Indonesia. *Heliyon* 8. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
- Bagir, Zainal Abidin. 2018. The Politics and Law of Religious Governance. In *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Indonesia*. Edited by Robert W. Hefner. Abingdon and New York: Routledge, pp. 284–95.
- Bagir, Zainal Abidin. 2020. ‘Kepercayaan’ dan ‘Agama’ dalam Negara Pasca-Reformasi. *Prisma* 39: 41–52.
- Banawiratma, Johannes Baptista, and Johannes Müller. 1995. *Kontextuelle Sozialtheologie: Ein Indonesisches Modell*. Freiburg, Basel and Wien: Herder.
- Bevans, Stephen. 1985. Models of Contextual Theology. *Missiology: An International Review* 13: 185–202. [CrossRef]
- Bigalke, Terance W. 2005. *Tana Toraja: A Social History of an Indonesian People*. Singapore: Singapore University Press.
- Boogert, Jochem van den. 2015. Rethinking Javanese Islam: Towards New Descriptions of Javanese Traditions. Ph.D. thesis, Leiden University, Leiden, The Netherlands. Available online: <https://scholarlypublications.universiteitleiden.nl/handle/1887/36400> (accessed on 15 July 2024).
- BPS-Statistics of Tana Toraja Regency. 2024. *Kabupaten Tana Toraja dalam Angka 2024: Tana Toraja Regency in Figures 2024*. Makale: Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Tana Toraja.
- BPS-Statistics of Toraja Utara Regency. 2024. *Kabupaten Toraja Utara dalam Angka 2024: Toraja Utara in Figures 2024*. Rantepao: Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Toraja Utara.
- Budiman, Michaela. 2013. *Contemporary Funeral Rituals of Sa’dan Toraja: From Aluk Todolo to New Religions*. Translated by Barbora Štefanová, and Keith Jones. Prague: Karolinum Press.
- Butt, Simon. 2020. Constitutional Recognition of ‘Beliefs’ in Indonesia. *Journal of Law and Religion* 35: 450–73. [CrossRef]
- Charmaz, Kathy. 2006. *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*. London: SAGE Publications.
- de Jong, Edwin. 2013. *Making a Living between Crises and Ceremonies in Tana Toraja: The Practice of Everyday Life of a South Sulawesi Highland Community in Indonesia*. Edited by Rosemarijn Hoeffte and Henk Schulte. Leiden: Brill.
- Donzelli, Aurora. 2020. *Language and Politics in the Toraja Highlands of Indonesia*. Singapore: NUS Press. [CrossRef]
- Doyle, Dennis M. 2012. The Concept of Inculturation in Roman Catholicism: A Theological Consideration. *U.S. Catholic Historian* 30: 1–13. [CrossRef]
- FitzGerald, Garrett. 2021. Pluriversal Peacebuilding: Peace Beyond Epistemic and Ontological Violence. *E-International Relations*. Available online: <https://www.e-ir.info/2021/11/27/pluriversal-peacebuilding-peace-beyond-epistemic-and-ontological-violence/> (accessed on 15 July 2024).
- Fitzgerald, Timothy. 2000. *The Ideology of Religious Studies*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Fitzgerald, Timothy. 2007. *Discourse on Civility and Barbarity*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hauser-Schäublin, Brigitta. 2013. The Power of Indigeneity: Reparation, Readjustments and Repositioning. In *Adat and Indigeneity in Indonesia: Culture and Entitlements between Heteronomy and Self-Ascription*. Edited by Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin. Göttingen: Universitätsverlag Göttingen, pp. 5–15.
- Hefner, Robert W. 2018. The Religious Field: Plural Legacies and Contemporary Contestations. In *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Indonesia*. Edited by Robert W. Hefner. Abingdon and New York: Routledge, pp. 211–25.
- Hoppenbrouwers, Toke, Stanislaus Sandarupa, and Aurora Donzelli. 2017. From the Womb to the Tree: Child Rearing Practices and Beliefs among the Toraja of Sulawesi. *Wacana* 18: 658–91. [CrossRef]
- Klenke, Karin. 2013. Whose Adat Is It? Adat, Indigeneity and Social Stratification in Toraja. In *Adat and Indigeneity in Indonesia: Culture and Entitlements between Heteronomy and Self-Ascription*. Edited by Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin. Göttingen: Universitätsverlag Göttingen, pp. 149–65.
- Koubi, Jeannine. 1982. *Rambu Solo’, “La Fumée Descend”: Le culte des morts chez les Toradja du Sud*. Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique.
- Liku-Ada’, John. 2014. *Aluk To Dolo Menantikan Kristus: Ia Datang agar Manusia Mempunyai Hidup dalam Segala Kelimpahan*. Toraja: Batu Silambi’ Publishing.
- Lindsey, Tim, and Simon Butt. 2018. *Indonesian Law*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Lumbaa, Yulfa, Sam'un Mukramin, Novia Damayanti, and Martinihani. 2023. Kearifan Budaya Lokal dalam Ritual Rambu Solo' di Toraja. *INNOVATIVE: Journal of Social Science Research* 3: 4849–63.
- Maarif, Samsul. 2017. *Pasang Surut Rekognisi Agama Leluhur dalam Politik Agama di Indonesia*. Yogyakarta: CRCS UGM.
- Maarif, Samsul. 2019. "Indigenous Religion Paradigm: Re-Interpreting Religious Practices of Indigenous People". *哲学·思想論集 (Studies in Philosophy)* 44: 103–21. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Maćkowiak, Anna M. 2020. Between Local Communities and Foreign Visitors: Social Actors of Two Indonesian Rituals (Rambu Solo' and Pujawali–Perang Topat). Ph.D. thesis, Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Kraków, Poland.
- Masuzawa, Tomoko. 2005. *The Invention of World Religions: Or, How European Universalism Was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- McCutcheon, Russell T. 1997. *Manufacturing Religion: The Discourse on Sui Generis Religion and the Politics of Nostalgia*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McCutcheon, Russell T. 2018. *Fabricating Religion: Fanfare for the Common e.g.* Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter.
- Mignolo, Walter D. 2020. Foreword. On Pluriversality and Multipolarity. In *Constructing the Pluriverse*. Edited by Bernd Reiter. New York: Duke University Press, pp. IX–XVI.
- Nooy-Palm, Hetty. 1979. *The Sa'dan-Toraja: A Study of Their Social Life and Religion. I Organization, Symbol and Beliefs*. Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff.
- Nooy-Palm, Hetty. 1986. *The Sa'dan-Toraja: A Study of Their Social Life and Religion. II Rituals of the East and West*. Dordrecht: Foris Publications.
- Peletz, Michael G. 2009. *Gender Pluralism: Southeast Asia since Early Modern Times*. New York: Routledge.
- Picard, Michel. 1997. Cultural Tourism, Nation-Building, and Regional Culture: The Making of a Balinese Identity. In *Tourism, Ethnicity, and the State in Asian and Pacific Societies*. Edited by Michel Picard and Robert E. Wood. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, pp. 181–214.
- Picard, Michel. 2011a. Balinese Religion in Search of Recognition: From Agama Hindu Bali to Agama Hindu (1945–1965). *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde* 167: 482–510. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Picard, Michel. 2011b. Introduction: 'Agama', 'Adat', and Pancasila. In *The Politics of Religion in Indonesia: Syncretism, Orthodoxy, and Religious Contention in Java and Bali*, edited by Michel Picard and Remy Madinier. Abingdon and New York: Routledge, pp. 1–20.
- Pora, Sudarmin Tandil, Aisya Alkestri Malleana, and Nurhasanah. 2023. Menguak Kearifan Lokal Masyarakat Toraja dalam Menjaga Toleransi (Uncovering the Local Wisdom of the Toraja People in Maintaining Tolerance). *Pusaka Jurnal Khazanah Keagamaan* 11: 299–312.
- Putra, Komang Edi. 2021. *Pendidikan Agama Hindu Dan Budi Pekerti Untuk SD Kelas IV*. Jakarta: Pusat Kurikulum dan Perbukuan. Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi.
- Rahman, Ahmad. 1995. Kehidupan Beragama Masyarakat Tator (Studi Kasus di Kelurahan Tikala Kec. Rantepao Kab. Tana Toraja). *Al-Qualam* 7: 31–39. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Ramstedt, Martin. 2004a. Introduction: Negotiating Identities—Indonesian 'Hindus' between Local, National, and Global Interests. In *Hinduism in Modern Indonesia: A Minority Religion between Local, National, and Global Interests*. Edited by Martin Ramstedt. London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, pp. 1–34.
- Ramstedt, Martin. 2004b. The Hinduization of Local Traditions in South Sulawesi. In *Hinduism in Modern Indonesia: A Minority Religion between Local, National, and Global Interests*. Edited by Martin Ramstedt. London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, pp. 184–225.
- Sandarupa, Stanislaus. 2015. Glokalisasi Spasio-Temporal dalam Agama Aluk To Dolo oleh Agama Kristen di Toraja. *Sosiohumaniora* 17: 86–93. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Schie, G. van 2000. *Gereja Katolik di Tana Toraja dan Luwu: Sejarah tentang Awal Perkembangannya*. Jakarta: OBOR.
- Segara, I Nyoman Yoga. 2023. The Future of Hindu Alukta in Tana Toraja Post-Integration with the Hindu Religion. *Heritage of Nusantara: International Journal of Religious Literature and Heritage* 12: 217–59. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Segara, I Nyoman Yoga, I Ketut Gunarta, I Nyoman Alit Putrawan, and I Made Adi Brahman. 2019. *Hindu Alukta: Sejarah, Keberadaan, Aktivitas, Dan Dinamiknya Di Tana Toraja, Sulawesi Selatan*. Denpasar: Institut Hindu Dharma Negeri.
- Seo, Myeongkyo. 2012. Defining 'religious' in Indonesia: Toward Neither an Islamic nor a Secular State. *Citizenship Studies* 16: 1045–58. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Sinode KIBAIID. 2024. Gereja Kami. Available online: <http://sinodekibaid.org/> (accessed on 15 July 2024).
- Steenbrink, Karel. 2007. *Catholics in Indonesia, 1808–1942: A Documented History*. Leiden: KITLV Press, vol. 2. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Tammu, J., and Hendrik van der Veen. 2016. *Kamus Toraja Indonesia*, Revised ed. Rantepao: P.T. Sulo.
- Tsintjilonis, Dimitri. 2000. A Head for the Dead: Sacred Violence in Tana Toraja. *Archipel* 59: 27–50. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- UNESCO. 2009. Tana Toraja Traditional Settlement. Available online: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5462/> (accessed on 15 July 2024).
- van den End, Thomas, Chris G. F. de Jong, and Kees de Jong. 2008. Christianity in Central and Southern Sulawesi. In *A History of Christianity in Indonesia*. Edited by Jan Sihar Aritonang and Karel Steenbrink. Leiden: Brill, pp. 455–91.

---

Waterson, Roxana. 2008. *When the Sun Rises: A Toraja Priest of the Ancestral Way*. Singapore: Roxana Waterson.

Waterson, Roxana. 2009. *Paths and Rivers: Sa'dan Toraja Society in Transformation*. Leiden: KITLV Press.

**Disclaimer/Publisher's Note:** The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.