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The Many Cultural Aspects of East Nusa Tenggara

East Nusa Tenggara is a province that still uses its traditional way of living. There are few big islands and a lot of small islands in the province. The other names for this province which are “ Nusa Cendana”and “The Sandalwood Island”. This province has a variety of aspects of cultures which make it unique. The flora and fauna, the unique islands, the traditional living style and the ceremonies are four cultural aspects from East Nusa Tenggara.

“East Nusa Tenggara has a lot of different types of animals and marine life. There are wild horses, wild buffaloes, dugongs, wild dogs, wild pigs, deer, and corals, but the most famous animal is called the Komodo Dragons, which can grow up to 4 meters in length.” (Nakhla) The local people calls the komodo “ora”. The komodo live on an island between Sumba and Flores. The island is called Komodo Island, which has a very hot and dry climate, and therefore, it has a very limited water supply. Not only animals and marine lifes can be found in East Nusa Tenggara, but there are also a lot of flora. The flora that exist in the island are fan palms, mangrove trees, bamboos, kepuh and tamarind, and the plants are Kesambi, Bidara and Rattan.

East Nusa Tenggara has three main islands, namely Sumba, Timor, Flores. Flores is a volcanic island which has a mountain called Kelimutu, which used to be active. There is a lake on top of the mountain. The second island is called Sumba, which is famous for “its arts, handicrafts, textile, weaving and cultural assets” (Nusa Tenggara). The last big island is called Timor, which is the principal island because the capital city, Kupang, is located there. Kupang is the centre of the government and the economic activities, and it has a very special schedule that contains various events every year. Famous people come and sing to entertain the town, Kupang.

East Nusa Tenggara is a province that has many traditional cultures and ceremonies. For istance, the people in Flores still use the traditional ways of living. They are seperated into clans, elders and head chiefs who decide on land rights and funerals. The clan is called “ the Ngadanese”. “They live in villages and place food offerings on megalithic stones, and pray for their ancestors” ( Dr. Bli Sen Do ). They also practice traditional marriages and ceremonies. Ngadu, which is used for ceremonial offerings, is an umbrella-shaped thing that is attached to a roof. Bhaga, which is a small hut with a lot of carvings, is used by the female elder clan when they ask the ancestors protection for new born children.

East Nusa Tenggara has a unique way for funeral ceremonies. If someone dies in the village, a lot of people and clans from other villages will come to the funeral. They will attend the funeral and comfort the family who has lost one of their members. They will also give presents to the bereaved family or parents, and chop a cow or buffalo to have a feast together for dinner. Other than having dinner together, they will pray and talk with one another.

Four cultural aspects from East Nusa Tenggara would be the flora and fauna, the unique islands, the traditional way of living and the ceremonies. East Nusa Tenggara, a beautiful island in the East of Indonesia, is a unique province consisting of three big islands and hundreds of small islands that have special characteristics – flora and fauna, way of life, culture, ceremonies - and richness probably not found in other islands in the archipelago. These are the cultural aspects that show the richness of East Nusa Tenggara.

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