

# The Role of Mapalus Local Wisdom in Building the Tolerant Attitudes of the Tomohon City Community

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# The Role of *Mapalus* Local Wisdom in Building the Tolerant Attitudes of the Tomohon City Community

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**Abstract**— The main problem in this study is related to the number of intolerance cases that lately occur in Indonesia. This study aims to describe the role of *Mapalus* local wisdom in building the tolerant attitude of the people of Tomohon, North Sulawesi. This study used a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and documentation studies. Analysis of the data used in this study was Grounded Theory (Strauss & Corbin) analysis, i.e., Open Coding, Axial Coding, and Selective Coding. The results of the study found that the local wisdom of *Mapalus* contained noble values that had been well preserved and made the people of Tomohon and North Sulawesi, in general, live in an atmosphere of tolerance. This study recommends further research in the form of developing tolerance education models in the city of Tomohon and North Sulawesi Province in general.

**Keywords**— Local wisdom, *Mapalus*, Tolerance, Community

## I. INTRODUCTION

Pluralism is the basic essence of the Indonesian people. In *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* which is the motto of the Indonesian people contained a profound meaning of Unity in Diversity. *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* is a vivid proof of the diversity and clearly illustrates the diversity of the Indonesian nation in all aspects. The diversity of the Indonesian people is visible in many cultures that exist in Indonesia. Social and cultural diversity is manifested in the number of cultures and religions, for example, Javanese, Sundanese, Batak culture and others. In terms of religion, there are Protestant Christians, Islam, Catholics, Buddhists, Hindus, and Confucians. These six religions are officially recognized by the Indonesian government [1]. One of the fascinating features of Indonesian society is the plurality of cultures and religions [2]. The French historian Denys Lombard once referred to Java as "Le Carrefour Javanais" or "Javanese Exhibition," where various cultures meet in a geographical cross [3]. With the motto of Unity in Diversity, Indonesia should become a united country amid diversity. The nature of the Indonesian people is a nation that has different customs and cultures [4]. The occurrence of many intolerance cases in Indonesia today cause deep concern for the existence of this nation. Setara Institute recorded

violations or violence on freedom of religion and belief in Indonesia in 2018 is highly increased compared to last year. Setara Institute noted that up to June 2018 there were 109 intolerance cases in freedom of religion and belief [5].

The lack of tolerance towards religious and cultural diversity is currently the main factor causing conflict in Indonesia. Tolerance is essentially a form of action and attitude, in which there is a spirit of mutual respect for differences in ethnicity, religion, tribe, attitudes, opinions, and actions of others who are considered different [6].

The people of North Sulawesi, especially the people of Tomohon, live in harmony because of the strength of the local socio-cultural values (local wisdom) as a unifier. The dominant socio-cultural values in the city of Tomohon are *Si Tou Timou Tumou Tou*, *Mapalus* and *Torang Samua Basudara*. The *Si Tou Timou Tumou Tou* and *Mapalus* culture is the most prominent Minahasa culture and animates the life of the people of North Sulawesi in general and the people of Tomohon City in particular. The *Si Tou Timou Tumou Tou* essentially implies that in life, humans must be able to humanize (revive) others, which is the philosophy of Sam Ratulangi. This philosophical thought inspired the lives of the Minahasa people and even the entire community of North Sulawesi to live in harmony to humanize others and not become enemies for others (*homo homini lupus*). Meanwhile, *Mapalus* is a Minahasa tribal tradition, especially in the context of work where any work or activity is carried out in mutual cooperation or togetherness (for example, to work in farming).

In the modern *Mapalus* concept, its application can be observed in religious activities; where Christians celebrate Christmas or Passover, the young Muslim guard the church. Likewise, when Muslims celebrate the Eid Mubarak, then Christian youths and other Christian organizations guard around the mosque.

In fact, in North Sulawesi, there is one institution that has a role to maintain interfaith harmony, which is BKSAUA (Interfaith Cooperation Agency). These two cultures in their development were combined to become the motto of the

people of North Sulawesi, *Torang Samua Basudara* (we are all family). This motto clearly illustrates how the people of North Sulawesi live in harmony and full of brotherhood.

As a proof of the tolerance attitude in the diversity of the people of the city of Tomohon, in 2017, Tomohon city received the Harmony Award from the Ministry of Religion as a city that has a high level of tolerance. The award was handed over directly by Minister of Religion, Lukman Hakim Saifuddin to Mayor of Tomohon, Jimmy Eman SE Ak. in the 2017 national working meeting at the Mercure Convention Center Jakarta, on Sunday (02/26/2017).

Initial observations show that the tolerant attitude in the North Sulawesi community and specifically the city of Tomohon can be observed concretely in daily life. In the city of Tomohon, there are 3 large mosques, located in Kinilow, in Matani and the Javanese Village of Tomohon. There was no issue when the construction or renovation and rehabilitation of the mosques because of the City Government and the Ministry of Religion and the community's support. Muslim participation in Tomohon city can be observed when there are Christian religious events, for example at Christmas, Muslims join in guarding the Church and maintaining a friendship. There are also concrete examples, when there was a Christmas performance in 2012 held by the Tomohon City Government, Muslims participated in presenting songs and rhythms of Qasidah. Muslim leaders and figures are always invited to the activities of the Tomohon City Government and Ministry of Religion, and even every Christian religious event.

In common life, for example in the grieving event, people will flock to help the mourning families cleaning the funeral home and make a tent that will be used in the funeral regardless of the religion and ethnicity of the grieving family. In an atmosphere of joy (such as weddings) and grief, especially when there is a meal together, then food will be served separately for Christians and Muslims. In social life, especially in prominent religious events, all religious groups will be involved. For example, when Muslims are fasting, then there is a joint iftar event with elements of government and Muslim religious communities. In Christian church activities, when there are sports and art activities, representatives from each religion will be invited to participate.

Some of the above matters prove a mutual understanding between citizens from different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds. There has never been any intolerance incident thus far that caused conflicts between residents triggered by background differences. Regarding any punishments for people who do not show an attitude of tolerance or intolerance, so far there has been no punishment except for moral sanction, for example, isolation from the community.

The situation of tolerance between locals and transmigrants in the city of Tomohon needs to be maintained

and developed. The existence of national issues, such as the emergence of radical ideologies that want to divide Indonesian citizens and people through their intolerant actions towards followers of other religions certainly becomes a challenge for the sustainability of tolerance in the city of Tomohon. In this case, efforts and intense involvement from all parties, both the government and the people of Tomohon are needed as the effort to maintain the existence of an atmosphere of tolerance which has currently been well maintained.

## II. RESEARCH METHODS

In this study, researchers used a qualitative approach. The source of this study was the people Tomohon city, with trans-migrants, people of different ages, ethnic, and the local government as the key informants. Data collection techniques used were observation, Interview, Documentation, and literature studies. In testing the validity of the data, the researcher used internal validity (credibility) in the aspect of truth-value, in its application was external validity (transferability), and reliability (dependability) in the aspect of consistency, and objectivity (confirmability) in the naturalist aspect. Analysis of the data used was Grounded Theory (Strauss & Corbin) analysis, i.e. Open Coding, Axial Coding, and Selective Coding [7].

## III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

*Mapalus* literally means community self-help or collaboration. Its application in the life of the community includes almost all works, both in grieving events (misfortune, joyful activities (marriage, baptism, birthdays, housewarming, et cetera.), home construction, and agricultural production activities [8].

*Mapalus* is the dominant culture of the people of North Sulawesi. *Mapalus* simply means a form of collaboration or mutual cooperation in working to accomplish something. The term *Mapalus* itself is a combination of the words *ma* (mutual) and *palus* (pour, spill). Thus etymologically *Mapalus* means spilling or pouring one another. The concept of "Si Tou Timou Tumou Tou" in the life of Minahasa / North Sulawesi people, from the beginning, has grown and developed in the form of *Mapalus* or Maendo (Tountemboan) work ethic. *Mapalus* is a traditional culture in the Minahasa area, a culture of mutual assistance or help that develops in the Minahasa. *Mapalus* is a working model with several families, groups and working groups of villages in Tomohon City [9]. In this context, *Mapalus* can be seen as a concrete form of actualization which contains the deepest meaning of "Si Tou Timou Tumou Tou." *Mapalus* cultural values in practice can be viewed from the four principles of actualization, i.e. deliberation and consensus, family, religion and cooperation), as well as five aspects in the organization of *Mapalus* i.e. openness, help, togetherness, group discipline, and the usability result. For the Minahasa community, the activity of helping each other

appears in the implementation of *Mapalus* culture and becomes a guideline for the community, it is based on the notion that the Minahasa community has a mutual need for each other. The *Mapalus* culture of the Minahasa people is rooted in agrarian culture in the villages, therefore, it can be distinguished from cooperation even though mutual cooperation is an essential part of *Mapalus* Siwu (2000) in [10]. These forms of harmony are themselves concrete forms of implementation of the principle of *mapalus* / mutual cooperation so that the migrant community also adapts and practices it. Therefore, there is a sense of shame if it is not actively involved and there is a kind of social sanctions such as feeling isolated. This also shows that in the context of interaction between local communities and migrants there has been an identification process. Identification itself according to Soekanto is tendencies or desires in a person to be the same as other parties [11].

As a foundation of the life of a community environment, *Mapalus* is seen as treasure or social capital that has a role as shaping the character of society to have a high social spirit. The close cooperation shown through *Mapalus* contains immense community energy so that its existence still stands in the community. The problem is how the *Mapalus* culture will continue to be implemented even can build a social life in the community especially to build the character of the young generation to be a better person. This study attempted to examine and find out about *Mapalus* culture in the Minahasa community and its benefits for the character building of the young generation [8].

*Mapalus* is very influential in the way of the people of Tomohon city to think and behave even rooted and ingrained, which is manifested in social activities such as village harmony, family harmony, and others. This *Mapalus* cultural value in Minahasa has been maintained until now. The value of *Mapalus* is so familiar in daily life, i.e. the spirit of helping each other, gathering together in the harmony of clans and other social harmonies. In the Minahasa community, especially in the Tomohon community, family values are a way of life that is constantly maintained and maintained. In the concrete life of the Tomohon community, the value of kinship is evident in the family pillars, the original regional pillars (Rukun Kawanua), the village pillars, and others. These types of harmony are still a social capital that is continuously maintained and preserved by the Tomohon community and the Minahasa community in general.

*Mapalus* is a system of community life values that is actualized in various aspects of human life as an actuality of human nature as a working human being. It is *Mapalus* value that makes the Minahasa people and the Tomohon people especially are tolerant of transmigrants. It is as argued by Edward B. Tylor (1871), quoted by referebce [12] that culture or civilization is a complex totality of beliefs, arts, knowledge,

customs, laws, and habits and other skills that human acquire in their essence as part of society. Broadly speaking according to Kluckhohn culture includes: (a). The total way of human life, (b). Social inheritance from individuals obtained from the group, (c). A way of thinking, feeling, and trusting, (d). An abstraction from behavior, (e). A theory in the science of anthropology about how a group of people in a group behaves in a combination of what is learned, (f). All basic guidelines for solving problems, (g). Behavior studied, (h). A standard regulatory mechanism for behavior, (i). All techniques to adapt to the outside environment and to others, (j). An application of history and turning around, perhaps in despair, as a figure of speech, like a map, like a filter, and like an arrangement of numbers.

*Mapalus* is also a form of local wisdom of the people of North Sulawesi, especially Minahasa and Tomohon. It has long existed as a guideline for people to think, act and behave amid diversity in society. As a result of the tolerant attitude of people of Tomohon city on diversity, the Tomohon city was endowed with the Harmony Award by the Ministry of Religion as a city that has a high level of tolerance in the 2017 national work meeting. Furthermore, in 2018, the city of Tomohon was named by the Setara Institute for Democracy and Peace, as one of the ten cities with the highest tolerance scores [4].

The results of this study also showed that in the life of Tomohon city community, especially in the context of different people's lives, the atmosphere of tolerance is always maintained. According to [13], tolerance actually develops within a framework of diversity, primarily the diversity of religions and cultures including the customs, traditions or customs that accompany it. Therefore the greater the diversity of a nation or a society, the greater the demands for the development of tolerance values in the lives of people and individuals, so that harmony and harmony in life can be realized, away from conflicts and social tensions Moreover, the contradictions and animosity between each other in society.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

*Mapalus* is a form of local wisdom of the people of North Sulawesi, especially in Minahasa and Tomohon. *Mapalus* has long existed as a guideline for people to think, act, and behave in community diversity. *Mapalus* is a significant factor in building the tolerance of the people of Tomohon city, North Sulawesi.

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