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Alternative Dispute Resolution of Lonto Lèok in Resolving Land Rights Disputes in Deno Village East Manggarai District

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Abstract: This paper discusses the existence of Lonto Lèok local wisdom as an alternative in resolving disputes over land rights status in Deno Village, South Lamba Leda District, East Manggarai Regency, East Nusa Tenggara. This research aims to identify the history of land disputes, as well as understand the application of Lonto Lèok in resolving conflicts. The method used is a case study with a qualitative approach, including in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation studies. The results showed that Lonto Lèok is still relevant in Manggarai society, functioning as a forum for deliberation to reach a binding agreement. This process not only strengthens social relations, but also creates a peaceful atmosphere in dispute resolution, prioritizing family values and unity. Therefore, the revitalization of Lonto Lèok is necessary to face modern challenges, ensuring that local wisdom values remain alive and functioning in the evolving social context.

Keyword: Alternative Dispute Resolution, Land Rights, Local Wisdom, Lonto Lèok.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country of diverse ethnicities and cultures, with many local traditions coloring each region. These local traditions are spread throughout the archipelago, becoming a source of extraordinary wealth for Indonesian civilization. Each local tradition has different characteristics. The variety of local traditions holds the values of Indonesian identity that can be learned in each culture. The values of each culture in the archipelago are local wisdoms that shape and guide individuals according to their respective cultures. Local culture has permeated people's lives in all aspects. It is undeniable that culture and humans are intertwined. This connection explains the long process of shaping each other and producing noble values in the life structure of a particular society.

Local wisdom refers to aspects that are the soul of community life, values that motivate, structure perspectives, create patterns of life, and give birth to traditions and customs that have

been passed down from generation to generation and are manifested in all interactions with others and the way they live every dimension of life. (Atu, L. F., Solosumantoro, H., & Langgor, M, 2023) Humans and culture are like two sides of a coin; inseparable and forming a unity. The perpetrators and supporters of culture are humans themselves who will be genetically passed down to the next generation. Cultural diversity is a source of wealth for the Indonesian nation. This diversity continues to support the unity and integrity of Indonesia, which is summarized in the national motto *Bhineka Tunggal Ika*: different but still one. (Balzano Japa, n.d.)

Fundamentally, the character of culture is a renewal process, where culture is passed down from one generation to the next. In addition, cultural character is binding for every individual in the community. As such, it maintains the continuity and prevents the loss of the culture. Despite its binding nature, it cannot be denied that every individual needs to fulfill the demands of the culture. If a person cannot fulfill or reject the norms that become values in the culture, then the result is to be alienated or expelled from the community that is bound to the culture. (Mahur & Bustan, 2019)

In geography, Manggarai refers to a region in the province of East Nusa Tenggara, located on the western side of Flores Island. Originally, the region was a single administrative unit. However, as the population grew and to improve efficiency in administrative services, the area was split into two different districts. In 2002, West Manggarai Regency was formed, followed by the division of East Manggarai in 2007. In the structure of its administrative system, Manggarai is currently divided into three regions, namely Manggarai, West Manggarai, and East Manggarai. Although separated into different administrative units, the term “Manggarai” is still used to describe the cultural unity that encompasses these three regions within one Manggarai cultural context. Historically, the people of Manggarai are known to come from a number of different races, cultures and backgrounds. Awareness of this historical diversity promotes the importance of an inclusive approach, which values diversity as an asset and presents a model or method to bring these various elements together. *Lonto Leok*, as a concept or space, emerges as a viable solution for combining ideas and establishing lines of communication, in order to address the differences that exist within Manggarai society. This concept creates the mediation needed to address differences and strengthen unity within this rich framework of diversity. (Rahmat & Simangunsong, 2021)

Lonto Leok culture as one of the local wisdoms in Indonesia grows and develops in the lives of the Manggarai people into a culture that expresses the meaning of unity. Indonesia as a diverse country needs to explore the local values that exist in each region. This emphasizes the need to strengthen the human nature that has been created by its culture (not that Indonesia is local, but to build Indonesia while still respecting local wisdom).

Lonto Léok comes from two words, “*Lonto*” which means sitting position and “*Léok*” which refers to a circular arrangement. Thus, *Lonto Léok* can be understood as a gathering of people in a circle. In the context of Manggarai culture, *Lonto Léok* denotes a meeting attended by community members to resolve various problems. (Rahmat & Simangunsong, 2021) The basic spirit held by *Lonto Léok* can be illustrated through the phrase “*kope holes todo kongkol, nai ca anggit, tuka ca leleng, muku ca pu' u neka woleng curup, teu ca ambo neka woleng lako,*” (two sword blades standing side by side, one heart, one soul, like one banana tree that does not quarrel and like one clump of sugar cane that does not separate) which describes unity in the whole and a feeling of wholeness. The use of the word “*kope holes*” (double-edged sword) actually indicates the use of a device usually used in the context of battles in the past. The term refers to the social history of the Manggarai people, which originally consisted of various tribes that were often involved in armed conflicts with each other. (Sili et al., 2024)

Lonto Léok is one of the ways and customs of the Manggarai community in resolving cases, both individual and group, *Lonto Léok* is used as an alternative to resolving a dispute.

In one of the districts in East Manggarai, precisely in Deno Village, Lonto Léok still exists among the community, especially in the settlement of a case. One of the cases is a problem related to the “Status of Land Ownership Between Mr. Herman and Mr. Agus”. The origin of the land belongs to Mr. Dominikus (deceased), as the biological parent of Mr. Agus, which during his lifetime Mr. Dominikus sold part of his land to Mr. Augustine (deceased) as the biological parent of Mr. Herman. On September 12, 2006, there was a land dispute between Mr. Agustinus Adi and Mr. Herman Dirjon. This should not have happened but Mr. Adi said that the land belonging to Mr. Herman was his land. Furthermore, Mr. Herman did not accept what was said by Mr. Adi who said if the land belonging to Mr. Herman was his property, so that is what caused the dispute between the two parties.

After the village head and the customary leader examined the testimonies of both parties, the customary leader and the village head resolved the issue through the “LONTO LÉOK” family approach. Looking at the current situation in society, the spirit of collaboration, discussion to reach agreement, and acceptance of other people's points of view is diminishing. Individuals tend to seek and prioritize what provides benefits and satisfaction for themselves. In this context, the exemplary aspect becomes the main issue. These values have existed and developed in the Manggarai community for many years, and remain relevant despite the complexity of the current situation.

Therefore, Lonto Léok must be reactivated so that the values contained in it continue to function and develop in accordance with the social reality of Manggarai society now and in the future. In this way, Lonto Léok as a local policy emerges to revive the good values desired by everyone, especially for the Manggarai people. The implementation of Lonto Léok culture is indispensable for the Manggarai community, especially in facing various challenges in this era. (Galang Asmara & Yanis Maladi, n.d.).

METHOD

This type of research is a case study, in which the researcher will focus on one specific location, namely Deno Village. This research aims to analyze how the local wisdom of Lonto Léok is applied in resolving land disputes and how the community responds and interacts with the process. This research uses a qualitative approach method, which aims to understand and explore in-depth information about the existence of Lonto Léok local wisdom as an alternative in resolving disputes over land rights status in Deno Village, South Lamba Leda District, East Manggarai Regency. The qualitative approach was chosen because it can provide a more holistic and contextual understanding of the phenomenon under study, as well as allowing researchers to explore the views, experiences and perceptions of local communities related to this local wisdom.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

History of the Land Rights Dispute in Deno Village, South Lamba Leda Sub-District, East Manggarai District

Land for the Manggarai people is an inseparable part of their lives, because part of human survival depends on land. Benhard Limbong said that for the life of every human being, land has an important meaning, because human life is largely dependent on land. (Limbong B., 2012)

For the Manggarai people, land is an infinite gift given by the Creator that must be guarded by every human being, but as time goes by, no one can predict what the situation will actually be. In the 1970s, the Manggarai community, especially in Deno Village and its surroundings, experienced difficulties in obtaining food, so that with this situation and the different times that existed, it led to disputes over this land.

In the range of that year with this incident, Mr. Dominikus Darus (alm) who at that time had abundant land felt distressed when his land had no results, so he intended to sell his land to Mr. Augustine (alm) by barter. Barter at that time was still very strong and was still used by the local community. So that the barter activity took place. Mr. Dominikus gave his land to Mr. Augustine, so that Mr. Augustine gave some of his crops, be it rice, cloves and others, which were equivalent to the price of the land given by Mr. Dominikus Darus.

At that time, the community still did not understand and almost did not understand how the system of purchasing land using certificates, so they only used the intermediaries of existing traditional elders and the community who witnessed the barter. Unfortunately, with the development of the times, the community has begun to understand and know what to do when they want to buy land.

In 2006, precisely in September, the land that had been exchanged by the two parties, namely Mr. Domi and Mr. Agus, was again raised by the son of Mr. Domi, the problem occurred because Mr. Domi's son, Agustinus Adi, or Mr. Adi, questioned the existing land, because the land that had been exchanged by his father did not have an official certificate given to Mr. Agus, so Adi claimed the land belonged to him. However, Herman Dirjon, the son of the late Mr. Agus, did not accept what Adi said, because at that time their parents had bartered (exchanging goods or services without using a means of payment, namely money) which had been exchanged for rice, cloves and supplies that could produce food or money at that time. Adi said that Herman's family had not fully repaid the barter because there was no written note or official certificate for the barter, but Herman's family also remained firm in their stance that the land had been repaid when his father was still alive. This dispute occurred because of a lack of understanding and mutual acceptance between the two parties regarding the land.

In order to avoid prolonged problems, both parties chose to use alternatives in resolving the dispute over the status of land rights with Lonto Léok, so that the problem could be resolved peacefully and without having to go to court, this is how they resolved the dispute.

The existence of Lonto Léok local wisdom as an alternative in resolving disputes over land rights status in Deno Village, East Manggarai Regency

The existence of local wisdom as an alternative in resolving disputes over the status of land rights in Deno Village is still inherent in community life. Local wisdom is one of the alternatives in solving problems in Manggarai society, because Manggarai people still hold tightly to existing customs and traditions. In the socio-cultural life of the Manggarai community, Lonto Léok is a process of deliberation. Lonto Léok culture has long existed and has become a tradition, even becoming the main spirit in building relationships and communication in social life. Lonto Léok is also considered as an effort to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and family values that have existed in the ancestors of the Manggarai people for a long time.(Gaut et al., 2021)

At first, Lonto Léok culture was used to discuss family problems or interests in woenelu (kinship) relationships, namely the anak wina family (male family) or the anak rona family (female family). (Hadi, S. (2017)) The traditional house (Mbaru Gendang) raises the issue to ask for opinions, advice or suggestions from other families on how to solve the problem. In the case of resolving this land rights status dispute, Lonto Léok itself has a high position in determining the final decision. The accepted decision is an accepted action in the settlement of this dispute, and is considered an absolute final decision in which both parties to the dispute must accept the decision, as well as in the settlement of the dispute over the status of land rights between Adi and Herman where the final decision of the implementation of Lonto Léok is a binding and inviolable decision of both parties to the dispute.(Don Rade et al., n.d.)

In this land dispute, Lonto Léok is used as an alternative dispute resolution that has a function or role in the form of communication between the disputing parties, which results in

a feedback between the two conflicting parties. Kasim, (F. M., & Nurdin, A., 2015). Each conflicting party tells the whole problem from the beginning to the peak of the existing problem while the elders and other families listen to the delivery by the conflicting party, this is the initial event of Lonto Lèok which is commonly called caca. Etymologically, caca means to dismantle or release. Caca in Lonto Lèok is interpreted as a way of reducing problems and not giving new problems, with the presence of Tu'a Golo (customary head / traditional elders) as a village leader has the obligation to reduce problems or explain or explain related issues faced by the parties to the conflict, in addition to Tu'a Golo, there are Tu'a Panga and Tu'a Teno who attend and assist in resolving this dispute, hence this is the purpose of Lonto Lèok. In this dispute, the customary elders present were Gaspar Ndaten (Tu'a Golo), Ignasius Sion (as Tu'a Teno), and Hilarius Sali as Tu'a Panga as well as the head of Deno village at that time, Mr. Fransiskus Dan as a neutral party. (Wicaksono & Yurista, 2018) If connected with alternative dispute resolution, they are referred to as mediators, who have a position in the middle without taking sides with any party. Lonto Lèok if interpreted is a mediation that is resolving a dispute by involving a third party as an intermediary between the conflict in a peaceful way, in alternative dispute resolution when a problem occurs, both problems between individuals and between groups using Lonto Lèok as an alternative dispute resolution outside the court channels so as to produce a win-win solution (no one wins or loses). Soeroso, (F. L., 2008).

After the caca process, the other disputing parties responded to what the initial conflict party conveyed which in Lonto Lèok is called cica, where each party present in Lonto Lèok is given the same opportunity to respond to the conflict at hand by paying attention to the direction of Tu'a Golo as the leader of the deliberation. In giving responses even until a solution is given related to this boundary conflict, it takes a very diverse time, depending on the size of the dispute. Likewise, in the settlement of disputes in Deno Village, Tu'a Golo, Tu'a Panga and Tu'a Teno have an important role in the implementation of deliberations to resolve land rights disputes, namely with Lonto Lèok, each party to the dispute has the same opportunity to provide explanations and responses. Adi's party has the opportunity to caca and Herman's party also has the opportunity to cica. In giving this cica with the mediators and several communities who attended and witnessed this dispute were able to find the right decision in resolving this land dispute. The conclusion given by Tu'a Golo as a final and absolute decision that must be accepted by both parties is called congko, literally congko means collecting, cleaning, and lifting. Where Tu'a Golo is seen as his ability to embrace both parties who have conflicts or problems. So that in this dispute the results obtained include:

1. Both parties are related by blood because they are still in the same family (one grandmother) so the customary elders said to pay attention to and maintain the blood relationship between the disputing parties.
2. Mr. Herman must increase the price of the land by Rp.1.000.000
3. Mr. Adi and his family should accept the additional money
4. The results of both parties in front of the village head, customary leaders and several communities who participated in this case where, the parties did not dispute the land in the future and were written in the minutes of the agreement in writing so as not to become a dispute again.

It should be noted that in Lonto Lèok it is divided into several parts including: (Balzano Japa, n.d.)

- a. Nempung/keboro which is a term used by the Manggarai community in planning a wedding either traditionally or officially in their respective churches/places of worship, culminating in the tudak event, namely tudak mbe and tudak ela depending on the families between the two. The essence of the tudak event is the union between the bride and groom with the female family handing over the bride to the male family and the bride has legally become the family of the groom.

- b.Kumpul kope in Lonto Lèok is one form of event in preparation for collecting funds for proposing. Usually this is done by the male family in preparation for proposing to the girl, which is based on kinship, unity and kinship as a responsibility and moral value of the existence of a family chain relationship so that it is not interrupted.
- c.Caca masalah (problem solving). The manggarai community itself has a habit of visiting a high sense of kinship, kinship to unity that will not be separated from a problem and problem, which in general in solving this problem is used in a traditional way, namely by building communication along with dialogue marked by the existence of Lonto Lèok in solving a problem by finding solutions to existing problems which usually the process of running Lonto Lèok is carried out at the Mbaru Gendang of the village concerned.

In the conflict resolution of land rights disputes in Deno Village, East Manggarai Regency, the resolution mechanism is not much different from the one described above, where in the process of resolving them it first starts with a caca by Adi's party which is then responded to by Herman's party with a cica. This cica can be given to anyone present in the conflict resolution process, but it needs to be reminded that the problem discussed does not go beyond the initial problem so that it can produce a solution agreed upon by the parties peacefully without any conflict.(Adon, 2021).

CONCLUSION

Local wisdom as an alternative solution in dispute resolution through non-litigation channels, where Lonto Lèok has proven to be effective as a dispute resolution method, prioritizes deliberation to reach an agreement between the disputing parties. This culture reflects the values of unity and kinship of the Manggarai people. The local wisdom of Lonto Lèok in Deno Village, South Lamba Leda Sub-district, is a traditional way used by the community to resolve problems, especially land rights disputes. In this process, the people involved in the dispute gather and sit together in a circle. Settlement in this way creates a more intimate and open atmosphere, where everyone can speak and express their opinions without feeling pressured. In this way, all parties have an equal opportunity to be heard and understood, so as to find a fair solution together.

The importance of the Lonto Lèok Tradition not only functions as a dispute resolution tool, but also as a means to strengthen social relations between community members. This shows that local wisdom is still relevant and plays an important role in everyday life. The existence of local wisdom as an alternative in resolving disputes over the status of land rights in Deno Village is still inherent in community life. Local wisdom is one of the alternatives in solving problems in Manggarai society, because Manggarai people still hold tightly to existing customs and traditions. In the socio-cultural life of the Manggarai community, Lonto Léok is a process of deliberation.

Through Lonto Lèok, family values and mutual cooperation are emphasized. People believe that by discussing directly, they can find a better solution than using formal legal means, which are often complicated and time-consuming. This process not only helps resolve conflicts, but also strengthens relationships between villagers. Thus, Lonto Lèok has become an effective and harmonious alternative in resolving land disputes in Deno Village, as well as maintaining peace and unity within the community.

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