

# Ritual Marsuan-Suanan in Cultural Preservation and Tourism Development

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## ABSTRACT

This research is a study in the context of cultural preservation and tourism development in the Tipang area of Baktiraja District in Humbang Hasundutan. The existence of a unique tradition that is still maintained by the surrounding community can make this tradition experience commodification so that it is expected to have a selling value. The tradition in question is the Marsuan-suan tradition, where this tradition is a tradition in order to plant rice starting from Rapot Raja Bius Na Pitu, mangan indahan porngis, marsirippa or also called sihali aek and this research aims to find out how the form and stages of this tradition so that research is carried out with observation methods and interview methods with local traditional leaders.

**Keywords:** marsuan-suanan tradition, local wisdom, cultural preservation, tourism development

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Local wisdom is the value of local resources that can be utilized to improve the order of community life in a wise way. The term local wisdom consists of two words, namely wisdom meaning "wisdom" and local meaning "local". Thus, local wisdom can be understood as local ideas and practices that are wise, wise, good-valued, and valuable that are owned, respected, and implemented by members of the community (Sibarani 2012:114).

Local wisdom is learned from cultural traditions or oral traditions because local wisdom is a collection of oral traditions or budaya traditions that are traditionally passed down and utilized to improve the order of the community's life in a wise and prudent manner. It is very important to understand this local wisdom so that it can be extracted from the oral tradition as an ancient heritage and so that it can be utilized to improve social life in today's globalization.

Humbang Hasundutan is one of the regency in the Lake Toba region. Humbang Hasundutan is inhabited by the majority of the Toba Batak ethnic community who still follow the customs of the Batak community. In Humbang Hasundutan regency there is a village called Tipang Village which is located in Baktiraja sub-district. Tipang Village is a national tourism area that has a very diverse natural tourist attraction that offers a large selection of cultural attractions, both tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

One of the cultural heritages found in Tipang Village is the customs of Bius Raja Napitu who represents the Batak customary king who has influence and power in Tipang Village, as well as the Si Hali Aek community (irrigation workers) and the activator of the marsuan-suanan ritual. Tipang village is believed to be the clan of origin of ulsul 7 (seven) clans so called Bius Raja Napitu who is a descendant of the King of Sumba, who has two sons namely Toga Simamora as the first son of Toga

Sihombing and the second son of Toga Simamora. Toga Sihombing has four children, namely: Silaban, Hutasoit, Nababan, and Lumban Toruan. While Toga Simamora has three children namely Purba, Manalu and Debataraaja.

Marsuan-suanan (farming) is cultivating a piece of land for planting and working the land, until it produces a harvest. Marsuan-suanan is practiced on a large area of land in the vicinity of the villagers. Marsuan-suanan also means farming. In ancient times, humans were already marsuan-suanan by doing marhauma (farming) activities as one part of the first agricultural activities in history. The marsuan-suanan period was a time when humans began to fulfill their needs by utilizing the scrub forest to become fields.

This research will discuss the stages of implementation and the value of local wisdom contained in the marsuan-suanan ritual. In addition, the commodification that can be done from the marsuan-suanan ritual. As for this study, it uses the theory of local wisdom put forward by Sibarani, namely that local wisdom can be said to be the wisdom or native wisdom of a community that comes from the value of the buldaya tradition of the community to improve the order of their life. If local wisdom is focused on the value of culture, then local wisdom can be utilized to improve the order of the community's life in a wise way.

Sibarani (2014: 124), says that local wisdom or local genius is also culture identify "Cultural identity" or cultural personality that is able to cause the ethnic group to be able to absorb and process foreign culture in accordance with its own character and abilities. The types of local wisdom values according to Sibarani (2012: 135) are welfare, hard work, discipline, education, health, mutual cooperation, gender management, cultural preservation and creativity, environmental care, peace, politeness, honesty, social solidarity, harmony, conflict resolution, commitment, positive thinking, and gratitude.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

The basic method used in this research is descriptive qualitative method with field research techniques. Qualitative research is to find meaning and explore the value of the object of research (Sibarani, 2014: 279). According to Sibarani (2014: 25), qualitative methods try to explore, find, reveal, explain the "Meaning" (meaning) and "pattern" (pattern) of the object under study holistically. The descriptive qualitative method is used to describe the situation that will be observed in the field more specifically, transparently, and deeply.

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### A. STAGES OF MARSUAN-SUANAN RITUAL

The marsuan-suanan tradition is still carried out by the people of Tipang village, Baktiraja sub-district as one of the traditions of their ancestors. This tradition is a legacy of their ancestors that we can still see the process until now. The following are the stages carried out in the marsuan-suanan activity in Tipang Village:

#### 1. Meeting of Raja Bius na Pitu

In the marsuan-suan activities carried out by the surrounding community, it is usually preceded by a meeting of traditional elders called the Raja Bius Na Pitu meeting or also known as Rapot Tobuang. Where at this meeting or meeting the Bius Na Pitu Kings meet to discuss the rituals they need to do.

The seven Bius Kings will usually hold meetings according to the needs of the surrounding community. When they hold a meeting there is usually something that needs to be prepared or that needs to be resolved, for example an offense committed by a member of their community, or a problem such as prolonged absence of rain that needs to be resolved. In the past, usually if the rain did not come for a long time, they would hold meetings and rituals to summon rain so that the rain would definitely fall. And one of the reasons they hold meetings is also this marsuan-suan activity.



Picture 1. Raja Bius na Pitu Desa Tipang

## 2. Ritual Mangan Indahan Siporhis

In language it can be translated as: Mangallang means eating and indahan siporhis means healthy rice. Healthy rice is called tumba. This healthy rice is called turmeric rice and is cooked with a spice called sorbuk. This procession is carried out before Marsirimpa, and the Sihali aek tradition is carried out as an appreciation for the harvest blessings that have been given to the entire Tipang Village community.

The rules for the mangallang indahan siporhis ritual are:

1. Mangallang Indahan Siporhis is carried out by the sihali aek Toba and sihali aek Dolok groups at the same time. This means that at the same time there are 2 events being held simultaneously.
2. The host of the sihali aek Toba group must be of the same surname as sihali aek Dolok.
3. All expenses are borne by the turpuuk marga (host clan).
4. Raja Jolo turpuuk cl an must wear the attributes of peci, suit, sash, sarong.
5. Sanctions/fines will be given to those who do not attend the mangallang indahan siporhis ritual.
6. For anyone who does not attend the mangallang indahan siporhis ritual, a fine of 1 can of rice or the equivalent of 10 liters of rice will be imposed.



Picture 2. Ritual Mangan Indahan Siporhis

## 3. Marsirimpa/Sihali Aek

After the completion of the mangan indahan siporhis ritual, the water in the water rope in the rice fields will usually be stopped for 3 days so that it recedes a little and usually the community will plant rice on their respective fields in this condition, after which there will be marsirimpa / sihali aek activities by the Tipang village community together.

In the local wisdom of the Batak Toba people of Indonesia, there is the concept of "Marsirimpa", which is about the spirit of mutual cooperation and mutual assistance to help each other. The word "Marsirimpa" means "one" or "together". Sirimpa embraces the principles of cooperation, mutual support and innovation in agriculture, thus creating a rich and sustainable cultural foundation. Marsirimpa is not just for agriculture, but involves all aspects of daily life, including building houses, overcoming difficulties and holding events.

Mutual cooperation (marsirimpa) is work that is done together by involving several people to complete it, before mutual cooperation makes an agreement in advance about the time of the mutual cooperation, the provision of food on the work day, and where the mutual cooperation takes place first. The tradition of cleaning the water rope or sihali aek is a water management system used by the Tipang community. However, the uniqueness of the Sihale Aek tradition is that it is collaborative.

The Sihali Aek tradition is an annual tradition held every year in October. October is said to be the best time to welcome the rainy season and prepare crops for sowing. Paddy needs water when planting rice, therefore it is best to give water properly before planting.



Picture 3. Marsirimpa/Sihali Aek

#### 4. Mangamoti

The Mangamoti ritual is a tribute to the Almighty Creator by sharing food from the first harvest. The purpose of this traditional ceremony is to hope that the rice fields will grow fertile, that those who cut the rice in the fields will be healthy, that next year the rice will be abundant, and that pests and diseases will be avoided. Agriculture is a method of farming. It is a way of thanking God for the rice harvest each year.

This ritual is a form of collective prayer with the hope that next year's harvest will be abundant and protected from pests and diseases. In this tradition, women take half-ripe rice from the fields and make sinaok with old rice, men and their friends slaughter the animal and share it evenly to the entire community called Marbinda. This tradition is also carried out by the people of Tipang Village when the harvest season is approaching.

When the rice begins to turn yellow in Tipang village, the community has always carried out an activity called mangamoti. When the rice is not yet fully yellowed, they take some of the ripe rice seeds to be opened and mixed with the rice that will be cooked. There is no set amount of rice to be taken, but a little or a lot of new rice must be taken a few seeds to be cooked with rice from the previous harvest. This activity they call patujolo ni na niula or which can be interpreted as the beginning of what they plant.

#### 5. Marbinda

The marbinda tradition is considered as an effort to ease the burden when approaching Christmas or there are several major activities to be carried out. During marbinda, the community will gather and help each other to buy, slaughter, and distribute animal meat for consumption during Christmas and New Year. The type and size of the animal to be "dibinda" will usually depend on the amount of funds collected. Then the results of this slaughter will be distributed evenly to every citizen who participates.

In accordance with the customs of the Batak toba community when there is a big event or a big holiday, the people in Tipang village also carry out the marbinda tradition. When the harvest arrived, people used to cut livestock to be used as their food as a sign of celebrating their harvest. The slaughtered livestock is usually known as marbinda. The whole community must eat their fill at that time. This is a form of celebration where everyone must eat very full. So there used to be a term mangane sampe pir siubeon i, which means eating until the stomach feels hard when pressed because of its fullness.

### **B. THE VALUE OF LOCAL WISDOM OF THE MARSUAN-SUANAN TRADITION**

Sibarani (2012:112) states that local wisdom is the wisdom or original knowledge of a community that comes from ancestral values of cultural traditions to regulate the order of community life.

The value of local wisdom is also contained in the marsuan-suanan tradition in Tipang Village. Some of the local wisdom values possessed by this tradition are as follows:

#### 1. Local Wisdom of the Napitu Rapot Bius Tradition

The local wisdom of the rapot bius napitu tradition that we can still see is harmony and conflict resolution, from here we can see in the form of a way for the community to find solutions in choosing rice seeds that are suitable for planting that year by opening the siungkap-uangkapon stone even though it is considered mystical but this activity can prevent crop failure for the surrounding community. Rapot bius napitu is also one of the community's efforts in solving customary problems by deliberation as a form of inter-communal harmony and determining sanctions on violators that can have a deterrent effect so that it does not happen again.

#### 2. Local Wisdom of the Mangan Indahan Siporhis Tradition

The local wisdom of mangan indahan siporngis that we can see is kinship, mutual

cooperation and social solidarity. This can be seen from their kinship in the form of eating together and the fact that none of the members are allowed to be absent as a form of solidarity. This tradition is one of the ways for people in Tipang village to build kinship so that it is easier for them to cooperate, let alone work together. local wisdom like this is one of the platforms that strengthen kinship for local residents.

This food is one of the local wisdoms for Tipang villagers. The way of making and the ingredients used are also very traditional and characterize this dish. This food shows the identity of the marsuan-suanan tradition in Tipang village because this dish can only be found during the marsuan-suanan ritual. Each regional specialty food can also show the identity of the region, and some also characterize a tradition or a traditional ceremony.

Efforts are needed to preserve regional specialties so that they remain local wisdom. One way is to develop a tourism business certification agency that can monitor the production and sale of local products. The agency can issue certificates to bakeries that adhere to local knowledge practices, such as using natural ingredients and traditional cooking techniques.

### 3. Local Wisdom of Marsirimpa/ Sihali Aek Tradition

Local wisdom is a way of thinking that resides in one's heart from knowledge of living conditions, lifestyle, traditions, and others. It is the product of centuries, illuminating the depths of the human soul and the breadth of relationships, honoring the masters of right thinking in the world. Regional wisdom is hidden in everyday customs, myths, beautiful writings, various honors and traditions, symbolic values in the form of buildings (dwellings), language and cultural arts, and other beautiful life-giving systems.

Gotong-royong is a basic characteristic of the Indonesian nation. People have long realized that as social beings, they need to involve others in meeting their needs. On the other hand, participation in handling

other people's problems is also necessary. They cannot do everything by themselves or alone. The culture of gotong royong is truly alive and a cornerstone of social life.

One of the local wisdoms in the form of mutual cooperation and environmental care can be seen in the marsirimpa activity in Tipang Village. This local wisdom has become one of the traditions that have existed since long ago and has always been carried out by the surrounding community. In addition to maintaining environmental cleanliness in the waterway area, this local wisdom in the form of mutual cooperation can also facilitate the work to be done by the local community in the village.

### 4. Local Wisdom of Mangamoti Tradition

The local wisdom contained in this mangamoti tradition is gratitude, where we can see that this mangamoti itself is a form of thanksgiving for the coming harvest season. The surrounding community will usually take part of their harvest and hold a prayer ceremony together. Apart from being an expression of gratitude, this ritual can also provide family values to each community in Tipang village by eating together in their respective families.

### 5. Local Wisdom of Marbinda Tradition

The marbinda tradition itself also has a local wisdom value, namely cultural preservation and creativity, where marbinda itself is a hereditary habit from the ancestors of the Batak people since long ago which even now is still very easy to find at the time of Christmas in the area where the Batak people live. In the marsuan-suanan tradition itself, this marbinda stage proves the value of cultural preservation from the Tipang community who continue to carry out marbinda activities in the marsuan-suanan ritual part which is connected by other ritual stages in the marsuan-suanan tradition as a form of creativity of the surrounding community.

This marbinda also requires the value of mutual cooperation in its work because it requires a lot of energy in marbinda. The culture of gotong-royong has long been recognized in society as a way of working

together and helping to solve common needs based on social solidarity. Cooperation becomes Indonesia's social heritage. Local wisdom is often referred to as local wisdom.

### C. COMMODIFICATION OF THE MARSUAN-SUANAN TRADITION

In the world of tourism, commodification is also known as touristification, which is an effort to make tourist destination communities as tourism products (Sari, 2016). This tradition has a uniqueness that until now is still maintained by the Tipang village community. This can be a selling point because most tourists are still interested in the value of tradition, especially since Tipang village is a tourist destination village. Currently, there are many traditions that are increasingly faded by the times and there are some that are increasingly difficult for us to find.

The commodification of this marsuan-suanan tradition can be seen in each stage of the ritual as follows:

#### 1. Commodification at the Napitu Bius King Meeting

At this stage, commodification can occur, where this ritual can be used as a cultural performance such as the rapot bolon raja tradition in the village of Siallagan Samosir which is currently one of the cultural tourism destinations for tourists. This ritual as one of the cultural heritages of the tipangg community has a selling value for cultural tourists because of its high cultural value and until now it is still being preserved.

#### 2. Commodification of the Mangan Indahan Siporhis Tradition.

Mangan indahan siporhis can also experience commodification because in this ritual there is the uniqueness of the food served and the food place called bahul-bahul. The uniqueness of this food can later attract the attention of tourists as a form of culinary tourism that holds high cultural values.

#### 3. Commodification at the Marsirippa/Sihali Aek Stage

Similar to the Raja bius napitu meeting, the commodification at the marsirippa /ihali aek stage is also in the form of cultural tourism where tourists can see this as a cultural performance that has a high local wisdom value which can be an opportunity for the community to make it a tourism product because the results of its work can be seen directly with tangible evidence of water flow that remains clean and maintained.

4. Commodification at the Mangamoti Stage Mangamoti is a tradition that has a fairly high local wisdom value that can be used as a cultural performance for tourists to support the completeness of cultural tourism in Tipang village. Mangamoti itself is still preserved so that it will attract more tourists because it is not just a show but is still part of the daily life of the Tipang village community which can be seen directly by tourists and cultural observers.

5. Commodification at the Marbinda Stage Marbinda itself is a ritual that is still preserved in Tipang village. As a complement to the stages of the marsuan-suanan ritual, this ritual can experience commodification which can later complement each stage in this marsuan-suanan tradition, so that tourists can see each stage completely as a cultural performance with high local wisdom value.

### 4. CONCLUSION

The stages of the marsuan-suanan ritual begin with the meeting of the king of bius na pitu or commonly called Rapot tobuang to conduct meetings and rituals to open the siungkap-ugkapon stone. Then proceed with mangan indahan siporhis and marsirimpa or sihali aek activities and then followed by mangamoti and marbinda rituals.

The value of local wisdom contained in the marsuan-suanan tradition can be seen starting from the raja bius na pitu meeting, namely the local wisdom of harmony and conflict resolution. Then local wisdom in the tradition of mangan indahan siporhis and marsirimpa /ihali aek traditions, namely kinship and mutual cooperation. As well as the local wisdom contained in the

mangamoti stage, namely gratitude and local wisdom at the marbinda stage is escapism and cultural creativity.

Commodification can be done in the marsuan-suanan tradition in Tipang village because this tradition has a uniqueness that is still maintained by the Tipang village community. This can be a selling point because most tourists are still interested in the value of tradition, commodification can occur at every stage such as at the meeting of the king of bius na pitu which can be used as a cultural tourism show, then in the tradition of mangan indah siporhis can be commodified because the food served can be used as culinary tourism and the same is the case with the meeting of the king of bius napitu commodification at the stages of marsirippa, mangamoti and marbinda can also experience commodification by making it a cultural performance for cultural tourism.

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