

Education Values of *Arat Sabulungan* Tradition in *Matotonan Mentawai*

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Abstract—The *Arat sabulungan* is an ancient tradition. However, it has educational values. This study aims to describe; (1) *Arat Sabulungan* Tradition of the Mentawai Society; (2) *arat sabulungan* tradition in *Matotonan Village*; and (3) the values of character education contained in *Arat Sabulungan*. This research is a qualitative research with an ethnographic and historical approach. The purpose of this study is to analyze the values of education in the tradition of *arat sabulungan* in the village of *Matotonan Mentawai*. The results obtained are; (1) The *arat sabulungan* tradition of the Mentawai people upholds the cultural wisdom expressed in daily activities; (2) *Arat Sabulungan* tradition is a religion for the Mentawai people; (3) the values of character education contained in the *Arat Sabulungan* tradition of the Mentawai society include; (a) grateful for the grace of God, (b) loving all creatures of God, (c) independent, honest, and responsible, (d) caring for others, obeying rules and norms, (e) discipline and hardworking, (f) be kind, humble, respectful, and polite; (g) friendly and bring happiness; and the approach used in the character education process through the Mentawai tribal dance is a holistic approach.

Keywords: *Arat Sabulungan*, educational values, *Matotonan village*

I. INTRODUCTION

Mentawai is very famous and rich of local traditions. One tradition is *arat sabulungan*. This tradition is very much found in various ethnic groups in Indonesia such as Mentawai ethnic in West Sumatra, Dayak ethnic in Kalimantan, and ethnic Sumba in NTB. Each ethnic group has its own characteristics in the art of tattoos and has different views on the meaning of a tradition, although there is little equality of functions and ways of making it. The tradition of *arat sabulungan* has long been known by the Mentawai people since their ancestors were alive. According to Ady Rosa, a Mentawai researcher, this tradition appeared in the Mentawai island in the metal age of 1500 BC-500 BC. This tradition is inherited by their ancestors from generation to generation [1].

Mentawai is an archipelago located on the west coast of Sumatera Island, which consists of four islands namely Northern Siberut, Central Sipora, North Pagai and South Pagai, southern part. Geographically, the Mentawai islands are located between 90 to 120 miles from the capital city of West Sumatra, the length of time to travel across the sea between 10-15 hours by ship, the cruise is done at night.

Mentawai people who live in the Mentawai archipelago have different customs and religions from Minangkabau

people in the city of Padang, West Sumatra. Minangkabau is identified with Islam, while Mentawai people mostly embrace Protestant Christianity by 50%, Christian Catholic 35%, and Islam 15%. Likewise with the main food, Minangkabau people eat rice, while the Mentawai people' staple food is sago, banana, and taro. In addition, the traditional house of the Minangkabau people is called *Rumah Gadang*, while the traditional house of Mentawai is called *Uma* [2].

This *Arat Sabulungan* ritual began to disappear, this was due to the insistence of the dominant external culture. This influence can also be referred to as "Coercion" culture. The root of all traditional Mentawai culture is *Arat Sabulungan*, which is used as a living guide for the Mentawai people. But in 1954, *Arat Sabulungan* was abolished from the Mentawai islands, especially in Sioban Village, Sipora Selatan Subdistrict, and all the equipment of the ceremony was destroyed by the police. However, this tradition has many educational values that exist in this *sabulungan* [3].

The condition of Mentawai traditional culture is naturally shaken, everything related to *Arat Sabulungan*, has been displaced. The exhortation of the outside culture driven by the government, to eliminate this tradition was caused by the opinion that the indigenous Mentawai customs hampered the development process that was being promoted by the government at that time

The process of starting to disappear from this tradition makes the Mentawai people worried. However, the *Arat Sabulungan* ritual, has educational values that enter into this tradition. From the background of the problems described above, the researcher is interested in doing a research entitled "Educational Values in Tradition (Case Study: *Arat Sabulungan* in *Matotonan Village*, Mentawai Regency, West Sumatra Province).

• *Arat Sabulungan* Tradition

The tradition of the *sabulungan* is synonymous with the process of making the Mentawai tattoo through the ritual process, and takes a long time, because it is part of the *Arat Sabulungan* (belief in spirits). Before performing the tattoo ritual, a customary ceremony called "punen kepa", which aims to remove evil influences and the threat of bloodshed against the hamlets they live in.

• Tatto

Tattoos or tattoos come from the Tahitian language "tatu", in the Mentawai language called "titi" which

supposedly means a sign. According to the large Indonesian dictionary, tattoo means image (painting) on the body (member). So, tattoos are one of the social symbols. Symbols in terminology have the meaning of visual language that embodies in the form of drawing material agreed upon together. Thus, agreement and human ability to interpret symbols (especially symbolism in the body of tattoos) are the most important main capital. Humans are animal symbols or creatures that are full of symbols from their existence such as tattoos which are symbolic [4].

- Character Education Values

Character is nature or personality that distinguishes an individual from other individuals. On the other hand, character can be said also as the actual situation of an individual, which distinguishes between himself and other individuals. While, character education is a system that instill the values of character to an individual, which includes: science, awareness, willingness and action to be able to carry out these values both towards the Almighty God, himself, others, the environment and the nation and country [5].

II. METHOD

This research is a qualitative research with ethnography and historical approach [6].

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. *Arat Sabulungan Tradition of the Mentawai Society*

The traditional *Arat Sabulungan* tradition of Mentawai should not be done carelessly, but must follow a number of traditional procedures that they believe. Mentawai traditional tattoos are done in stages. The first stage at the age of 11-12 years, performed tattooing at the base of the arm, the second stage aged 18-19 years, performed in the thigh section, and the third stage after adult, is a stage to complete all the tattoo motifs that have been agreed upon. Each part of the tattoo must be repeated 3 times [7].

The top event of PENEN is to travel to Siberut Island as the cultural center of the Mentawai people, the event is called 'Bulepak', there are about 40 people boarding a boat, if you have returned safely, take the big waves from Siberut by carrying Siberut beads, then all tribesmen can tattoo themselves. According to Beriukuk (Interview with Beriukuk, date, January 28, 2017).

"In the past, in doing the tattooing, much has to be done to prepare all the requirements in tattooing according to *Arat Sabulungan*. If all the requirements have been fulfilled by the person to be tattooed, then a trip to Siberut will be requested to ask permission from the spirit of our ancestors first, because that's where our culture is. When it's done everything just come back again with a bead typical Siberut" [8].

This is according to one of the mentawai figures named *Beriukuk*. it is quite clear that in the making of tattoos many must be prepared. Therefore, many Mentawai people, especially in Sioban Village, do not tattoo their bodies,

because they cannot fulfill all the requirements that must be prepared. But the tattoo in the tradition of *Arat Sabulungan* no longer exists. This is because tattoos are considered to hurt themselves, so they are eliminated. But *arat sabulungan* still exist even though in some Mentawai island begin to disappear.

B. *Tradition of Arat Sabulungan (Tattoo) In the village of Matotonan*

Arat Sabulungan who uses a tattoo that no longer exists. But actually the Tattoo is also one of the symbols express culture and art that can be seen. Through tattoos, some tribes in the world can express what they expect in life. Thus, it means that tattoos become one of the tools people use to express their conscience and convey ideas. Tattoos that are found in individuals and certain tribes, have different meanings and functions, and the symbols used to make tattoos are usually very simple and taken from their original culture.

In Indonesia, tattoos actually have been known since the arrival of Proto Malays from the mainland of Asia in the days of metal 1500-500 BC. This can be seen in the Mentawai people who have long known tattoos. According to Ady Rosa a tattoo researcher in Indonesia, especially in the Mentawai islands that Mentawai people have body tattooing in the days of metal 1500-500 BC. In the Mentawai community, a person will be tattooed if men and women have entered adolescence which is a transition from childhood to adolescence, adolescence to adulthood, and adulthood to the mother or father (Olong Hatib Abdul Kadir, Tato, (Yogyakarta, LKis, 2006), p. 198.)

Mentawai people call tato is *ti'ti* ', which is a spirit of life. According to Mentawai philosophy that every thing that exists, life or death has spirit and soul like human, and must be treated like human being. A person is not allowed to cut down trees carelessly if there is no permission from the forest authorities (*taikaleleu*), as well as the willingness of the spirit and soul of the wood itself. To maintain balance and harmony with the spirit, human, and natural world, the Mentawai people offered various offerings and performed various rituals related to the beliefs of the Mentawai people.

According to Erwin in Marson Samaloisa's thesis (2008: 23), before the entry of the divine religion, ie before 1901 (Zending Protestant Christians) in the Mentawai islands, Mentawai traditional beliefs are *Arat Sabulungan*. *Sabulungan* consists of the word "sa" which means "set" and "bulung" meaning "leaf". So *Sabulungan* means leaves. Every ceremony performed always uses leaves. *Arat Sabulungan* is a belief, as a result of the adaptation of the community to overcome the vulnerability of the geological structures of the islands in the Mentawai islands, because the people also believe that on small islands is occupied by *Sabulungan* [9].

In the concept of *Arat Sabulungan*, nature is controlled by protective spirits that protect them from various kinds of natural disasters, and the spirit is the one who punishes them if they violate taboos or do wrong. Violation of the rules and taboo or taboo, in the Mentawai language called

Keikei or Suru 'according to *Arat Sabulungan* is considered a sin.

For the people of Mentawai, *arat sabulungan* is the religion. *Arat Sabulungan* believes that suffering is seen as the result of evil deeds on the part of humans which disturbs the balance of nature. To restore the balance of nature, a certain religious ceremony should take place. Humans must adjust themselves or align themselves with the event (Marson Samaloisa, (Undergraduate Thesis), From *Arat Sabulungan* to *Samawi Religion: Religious Life of the North North Pagai Community (PUS) Sikakap Mentawai* (1901-1954), , pp. 23-24.). According to Paorik that (Interview with Paorik, the society figure, dated January 18, 2015.): "In the past our ancestors obeyed the customs (*Arat*), and they were afraid to do things that were not according to customs because in many customs there were no abstinence may be done as they please, such as cutting trees carelessly, hunting, etc. if there is no permission from Rimata as leader in Uma ".

Thus, the Mentawai people think that everything around them has a soul or spirit. Therefore, objects such as stones, animals and plants must be enshrined above the body in the form of drawings or tattoos, as a sign of respect for these spirits and as a signatural balance (Gerard Persoon and Reimar Schefold, Pulau Siberut, Bharatara Karya Aksara, Jakarta, 1985, p. 56). *Arat Sabulungan* is used in every birth, marriage, treatment, moving house, and pentato ceremony.

C. Character Education Values

The values of character education can be found in the tradition of *arat sabulungan*, Mentawai Tribal Customs. Based on the analysis result is *arat sabulungan* identified the character education values as follows:

1. Be grateful for the grace of God. The grace from God is the real thing. Any action or behavior can be said to be good if always grateful. How to be grateful for God's grace in expressiveness through action and treatment of the surrounding environment. Keeping nature and not destroying it is a very profound form of gratitude
2. Loving all creation. Having a love for all creatures of God is the most important thing in living together. Because they have to respect, treat, and understand the environment, plants, animals and the entire contents of the forest as well as humans.
3. Independent, honest and responsible. A strong person must be accompanied by honesty and responsibility for anything. In everyday life, a person will face all kinds of problems, because it must be faced, no blame, no excuses, and no escape responsibility. Life is the responsibility given by God.
4. Caring for others, obeying rules and norms. Caring for others is a value that can not be measured by anything. Generosity does not require a reply. Parental advice must be carried out. Anything that is taboo and

prohibited or abstained by indigenous tiak may be violated in order to maintain a harmonious relationship between man and the ancestral spirits.

5. Discipline and hardworking. The necessities of life will not come by itself. Everything must be worked out and done. The result of hard work will bring happiness, both for yourself, family and society. A human being must be able to distinguish himself with animals, meaning not just waiting or receiving what others have sought.
6. Good, humble, respectful, and polite. A human deed can be said good if he has a sense of sympathy and empathy towards others. Pride will only make life narrow and will be shunned. Humans who do not have respect for others will create a catastrophe for themselves.

Good and humble behavior will have many families or relatives. Be friendly will bring happiness. Good friends to anyone will bring happiness too. Happiness is not only for yourself but for many people or the environment. When experiencing difficulties others will reach out to offer help. For happiness can never be paid by money or anything. The results of the analysis identify approaches that education through traditional dance is a holistic approach. A holistic approach is an educational approach that departs from the idea that an individual can essentially discover the identity, meaning, and purpose of life through its relationship with society, nature, culture, and spiritual values. Holistic education aims to help develop the potential of individuals in a more pleasurable and stimulating, democratic, and humanist learning environment through experience of interacting with their environment.

Holistic education is expected to make people united, after a long time being apart. Finally, both are reconciled and decided to divide the average fish in front of them ". Education characteristics that can be obtained from the synopsis of the story are feuds or quarrels for whatever reason will never provide a good solution, it will actually add to the problem. The best way is to make peace and share with each other. The various conditions, circumstances and problems that exist in everyday life, whether in the family, the community environment, the workplace has become an inspiration to emphasize the importance of the importance of character education education. Reality that is confronted in every moment, often makes people forget the values of honesty, serig deliberate violation, lack of appreciation of difference, low spirit to improve, resigned to the situation, and irrelevant between words with the act of making it all a fact that is analogous to one of them through movements in the dance. Change will only occur if a person has an inner awareness that creates a strong intention to change for the better. This is stated by Nasrudin, Iyus, & Nifan (2014) that character learning constructed from the nature of human nature can be accepted by all circles, especially if presented in an entertaining form.

IV. CONCLUSION

- Traditions of Mentawai reflects the high cultural wisdom expressed in daily activities;
- *Arat Sabulungan* tradition is a religion for Mentawai people;
- The values of character education contained in Mentawai tribal customs include; (c) be self-reliant, honest and responsible, (d) caring for others, obeying rules and norms, (e) discipline and hardworking, (f) be kind, humble, respectful, and polite; (g) be friendly and bring happiness • The approach used in the process of character education through Mentawai tribal dance is a holistic approach.

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