**“Ma’Sembong” as a Living Tradition of Tompaso’s Society**

1st Donna Sampaleng  
Head of Research and Community Services of Sekolah Tinggi Teologi IKAT  
Jakarta  
donnaawana@yahoo.com

2nd Mayske Rinny Liando  
North Sulawesi Oral Tradition Association / Lecturer in Postgraduate, UNIMA  
Manado  
Mayske_rinny@yahoo.com

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**Abstract**—This study aims to examine a tradition that exists in the familiar community of Tompaso Minahasa, Ma'sembong. It is an activity of togetherness that has profound philosophical meaning. The Tompaso tradition is very different from what is known as Mapalus. Ma'Sembong is one of the auxiliary traditions that are inspired and lived up from one generation to the next generation of the Tompaso community. It may also be from the philosophy of life of the Minahasa people "Si Tou Timou Tou" and is closely related to the North Sulawesi motto "Torang Saman Basudara". They are increasingly echoing in the order of life which refers to mutual cooperation but Ma'Sembong philosophy is more profound than just being together. In this study, researchers conducted data selection and validation process using qualitative ethnography approach.

**Keywords**— Traditional Values; Modernism; Philosophy of Ma’Sembong

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**I. INTRODUCTION**

In each of group of people, an interaction-interrelation must be built; and the group of people is known as the term community. In the interaction-interrelation of the people, an order which accepts one another is created through mutual agreement. The agreed order sometimes is established through an empirical process (real experience) from the interaction process. The empirical process causes the existence of formal habits called tradition. Each culture possesses its own norms, where it can be seen from the various customs born from different cultures. Anyhow, the value of a culture should be preserved since culture is an inheritance from the ancestor. The culture and the value of customs should be legally protected since they are an identity of a nation that distinguishes the nation from the other nations.

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**II. RESEARCH METHODS**

In this present research a qualitative method was adopted. The object of this research was the people of Tompaso village, Minahasa. The objective of this research is to understand how Ma’sembong as the living tradition adopted by the Tompaso community is preserved. Some resourceful persons were involved in this research namely Rev Dr. Jimmy MR Lumintang., MBA., Ph.D; Noldy Paendong (Advisor of the Tumompaso Family Association, Jakarta), Rev. Herdi Ratu; Mr. Recki Supit (Native Inhabitant of Tompaso); Mr. Jootje Kawulur (prominent figure of Tompaso).[1]

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**III. RESEARCH DISCUSSION**

**A. Ma’Sembong Tradition**

Ma’sembong is from Tontemoan Makela’i language, namely from the word Sembong which means Help. It is a language which is used by the greatest number of people in Minahasa. Tontenboam language has two dialects namely Matana’I and Makela’I where each has its own area of speakers (Warokka, 2004). The word Ma’sembong means mutual help (ask someone to help others...) ‘Mamasembongan: mutual help without any hidden intention, without any sanction. Ma’sembongan is different from gotong royong (mutual cooperation). The gotong royong tradition means doing something together. Gotong royong is a term from Indonesian language which means doing something together to attain a common result through deliberation, verses, Pancasila (Five Basic Principle), customary laws, Divinity, and kinship.

Ma’sembong is also different from Mapalus. Mapalus means doing an activity together with the same quality and quantity among the members and the activity is well coordinated in an institution. Mapalus is a system of mutual help and is a social institution which is commonly possessed as a form of a social dignity. The members of the community really respect the Mapalus entourage and its members because each person must get a turn to be helped when one faces an obstacle such as sickness and cannot join in the Mapalus entourage as determined. And he is obliged to look for and assign another person to substitute him or he should pay some money or something with equal value. If the person cannot fulfill the obligation, he will get some sanctions for examples, he will be scorned by the people in the village, expelled from social interactions, disgraced, and he will not get his rights and obligations (Kaunang, 2011).[2]

From the results of an interview, it is known that the Ma’sembong tradition has long been practiced. It has been being implanted and practiced by the prominent figures in the village up to now...

"Kalu mo hilang kamari mo bakutulung ba iris habi, orang n'da segan mo datang , Kebudayaan ini sejak dulu tu tete nene omu opa, masih berlaku turun temurun di Tompaso..."
apa lei di talikuran Memang so dari dulu orang tua karu so ator itu e!, Toure; Tonsewer; pinabetengan; Liba; Tempok; Kamanga en kanonang lei masih ada tu Ma sembong. Apa lei kalo ada orang mati, adoooh nyandaa ada yang mo kase tinggal, apale tu orang mada ba juga sampe amper siang (jootje kawulur).

Ma’sembong tradition has been being conducted by the people in Tompaso: Kamanga – Talikuran – Sendangan - Toure – Tonsewer – Pinabetengan – Kanonang – Liba – Tempok – Tolok – Tember villages which are empirically expressed in their daily life:[3]

1. Respecting One Another. Each person should respect others. For example, when one meets a person who is older than he is in the street, he should greet or salute him first. This is called ma’sirih/ma’pokey

2. Sharing. When a neighbor lacks of something, the neighbor can tell the other to ask for something needed, for example, when one is cooking something and she needs some tomatoes or pepper, but she doesn’t have tomatoes or pepper, she can ask them to her neighbors by saying, awe’an tomat ico (ada to?... awe’an ya’! Serene mange (lia kasana joi!) sa awe’an indonem (kalo ada ambe joi)

3. Caring each other. The simplest thing to practice is for example one well may be used together. Or if there is someone who is unintentionally passing by one’s house, the host (of the house) should immediately stand up and call for the person to join in a lunch or breakfast. The call is not a lip service. The people of Tompaso greatly like to serve and have guests (Menyem tumuli kuman…! – mari jo singgah makang!)

When a member of a family dies, for example, the people certainly will do ma’masembong. The condolences is usually known from the sound of drum or the bell of the church. Hearing the sound, the people without any command will come and make some actions to help the concerned family. Usually, men directly put up a sabuah (a tent from wood/bamboo), even, including making a coffin. Women directly moves from their houses to bring with them anything (coffee-sugar-rice) to the family. The youth also take part in the baku tulung activities.

The activities in the family (funeral home) not only last when the corpse is still in the house, but the ma’masembongan tradition will still be done up to the 40th day. For about 40 days, the family will not feel lonely since there are always people who come to the family and bring foods or snacks which will be eat together in a relax way.

B. Knowing Tompaso

Minahasa people have a lot of uniqueness and the uniqueness refers to their cultural uniqueness and identity (Kaugan, 2011). Minahasa (in the past it was called Tanah Maleseung) is a peninsula area located in North Sulawesi province, Indonesia. This area is known to have fertile land where various types of plants and animals (either land or sea one) live in. Various plants such as coconut and clove press and also fruits and vegetables can be found out there. The fauna living in this area includes among others rare animals such as Maleo bird, Kuskus, Babirusa, Anoa and Tangiaksi (Tarsius spectrum) (hardysaerang.wordpress.com)

Etymologically, the word “Minahasa” is actually from two words, Mina that means has been conducted/occurred and Asa/Esa that means One. Therefore, Minahasa means a unity has been established or those who have been unified. When the event of unity was established, it is called “Minaes,” meaning, “unified. The first Minaesa was established in Watu Pinawetengan to determine the area for settlement, the second Minaesa was made to oppose the expansion made by the Bolaang-Mongondow kingdom, the third Minaesa was made to settle a dispute between the family of Walak Kakaskasen with the homebase in Lotta (Kakasen, Lotta, and Tateli) and the family of Bantik, who are all from the line of descent of Toar-Luminuut.[4]

Tompaso is a cool area where at average the people work in the field (kobong), Tompaso sub-district is one of sub-districts in Minahasa regency, North Sulawesi province. Before Tompaso was established to become a sub-district in 1962, this area consisted of 13 villages namely Kamanga I – Kamanga II – Talikuran II – Sendangan II – Tompaso II – Toure – Tonsewer – Pinabetengan – Liba – Tempok – Tolok – Tember. A wide land was called Kepolistan – under the government of Kawangkoan district. Tompaso was called District under the Kawangkoan and the head of the district was called Kumbesar (Hukum Besar the name given for Head of District – and Hukum Tua was for head of Kampong/Village).

Based on the Decision Letter of the Regent of the Head of the Second Level of Minahasano. PEM. 1/127/62 dated on March 15, 1962, up to July 2008, the area of Tompaso sub-district consisted of 11 (eleven) villages namely Tember, Kamanga, Sendangan, Talikuran, Liba, Tempok, Tolok, Tompaso II, Pinabetengan, Tonsewer, and Touurre. But, in July, 2008 through the local regulation of Minahasa regency, two new villages were established namely Kamanga Dua and Pinabetengan Utara.

The aspiration to establish new villages had been developing under the nuance of local autonomy. As a result, in 2011, 7 areas in Tompaso sub-district fulfilled the requirements to be expanded into new villages so that Tompaso sub-district would have 20 (twenty) villages. But, the expansion was considered to have reached the principle of efficiency and effectiveness in terms of the excellent services if it was not to be followed by the expansion of sub-district.

On the basis of the aspiration of the people by referring to the prevailing regulations, Tompaso sub-district with the area of ± 3.020 Ha and 5.398 households consisting of 17.992 persons could be expanded into 2 (two) sub-districts:

1. **Tompaso sub-district** (main sub-district) would consist of 10 villages, namely: Tember, Kamanga, Kamanga Dua, Sendangan, Talikuran, Liba, Tempok, Tempok Selatan, Tolok, and Tolok I.
2. West Tompaso sub-district would consist of 10 villages, namely: Tompaso II, Tompaso II Utara, Pinabetengan Utara, Pinabetengan, Pinabetengan Selatan, Tonsewer, Tonsewer Selatan, Touure, Touure Dua and Pinaesaan (combination of 1 Jaga from Talikuran and Tempok villages.)

(sumber: http://kecamatantompasobarat.blogspot.com/2013/06)

C. The Development of Ma’Sembong

There are a lot of reflections of morality and cultural identity that have been being preserved by the Minahasa, especially Tompaso people. Ma’Sembong is also conducted when a family moves their house where the people in the area will be voluntarily involved in moving baku tulang angka rumah (the wood house) into a new place. Such a house will be put up in the new place (namely the wet land or sawah) from the rice planting into the rice harvesting time. This tradition will not incur wage materially. [5]

According to them, this tradition still exists up to now, especially among the old and big families. However, recently when the practices of social activities have been leading to modernization, vendors have provided with complete and modern services for any programs with determined costs such as caterings for parties, complete services for funeral completed with decoration; permanent houses and the like.

IV. CONCLUSION

Human beings cannot live alone, and Ma’Sembong is part of the values of life and customs as the reflection of the unified Tompaso people (minaesa). Ma’Sembong tradition slowly but certainly will be shifted from the social order by the movement of modernization wave. If the people are not introspective and ready in this global era, these teachings and tradition will also be influenced. Therefore, it is necessary to have someone serving tou Sompaso with high morality values in order to keep the spirit of togetherness and the traditions values, and to live up the values of Torang samua basudara and Si tou timou tumou tou.

REFERENCES