Discourse on Alternative Contextual Evangelism Models to The Bolaang Mongondow Tribe as An Unreached People Group in North Sulawesi

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Abstract

This article is a historical study of alternative contextual evangelism models to Intau (means "person") Bolaang Mongondow, which is communally called tribe or society (ethnic group/people group) Bolaang Mongondow. This study uses a literature review approach. It begins with researching the religion and beliefs of Intau Bolaang Mongondow. Then proceed with the socio-cultural phenomena of Intau Bolaang Mongondow, namely the dynamics of acculturation, openness to external influences, public attitudes towards change, and its essential element to determine alternative contextual evangelistic approaches. This study's final results show that attention to culture in developing a contextual evangelistic approach does not mean that the church must conform fully or assume harmony between the Gospel and culture. It is precisely by understanding and utilizing culture in the preaching of the contextual Gospel that it will be seen that Christian values have an advantage regarding the guarantee of eternal salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, efforts to prepare a contextual evangelist who has integrity, character, and competence regarding the Bible and culture are significant. Likewise, efforts to pioneer and develop contextual churches in the Intau Bolaang Mongondow environment must touch and empower those cultural values.

Keywords: Belief, Contextualization, Culture, Ethnicity, Gospel

Abstrak

Artikel ini merupakan studi historis mengenai model-model penginjilan kontekstual alternatif kepada *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow yang secara komunal disebut Suku bangsa atau masyarakat Bolaang Mongondow. Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan kajian pustaka yang diawali dengan melakukan penelitian mengenai agama dan kepercayaan Intau Bolaang Mongodow kemudian dilanjutkan dengan substansi sosio-kultural Intau Bolaang Mongondow yakni dinamika akulturasi, keterbukaan terhadap pengaruh luar, sikap masyarakat terhadap perubahan serta korelasinya yang penting untuk menentukan alternatif pendekatan penginjilan kontekstual. Hasil akhir dari studi ini menunjukkan bahwa perhatian terhadap budaya dalam mengembangkan pendekatan penginjilan kontekstual bukan berarti bahwa gereja harus menyesuaikan diri sepenuhnya atau menganggap adanya keselarasan antara Injil dengan budaya. Justru dengan memahami dan memanfaatkan budaya dalam pemberitaan Injil yang kontekstual, akan nampak bahwa nilai-nilai Kristiani memiliki keunggulan berkaitan dengan jaminan keselamatan kekal dalam Tuhan Yesus Kristus. Karena itu, upaya untuk mempersiapkan seorang penginjil kontekstual yang memiliki integritas, karakter, dan kompetensi mengenai Alkitab dan budaya sangatlah penting. Demikian pula dengan upaya merintis dan mengembangkan gereja yang kontekstual di lingkungan Intau Bolaang Mongondow harus menyentuh dan memberdayakan nilai-nilai budaya tersebut.

Kata-kata Kunci: kepercayaan, kontekstualisasi, budaya, suku bangsa, Injil

Introduction

The Bolaang Mongondow tribe who inhabit North Sulawesi Province according to the category of the "Persekutuan Jaringan Riset Nasional/PJRN" or Indonesian People Network are one of the unreached people groups in Indonesia. The research from the PJRN included the Bolaang Mongondow tribe in the Gorontalo cluster and divided it into two ethnic groups, namely: "Kaidipang" and "Lolak." According to them, the Kaidipang tribe has 25,000 people and a Christian population of fewer than five people. Whereas Lolak with a population of 15,000 and Christians less than ten people.¹ In this article, the author disagrees with the PJRN category and tends to follow the opinions of J. C. Mokoginta. A Bolaang Mongondow figure who uses the name of the ethnic group/people group "Bolaang Mongondow," because based on the results of historical studies, the word "Bolaang Mongondow," is known as "ethnic," while Lolak and Kaidipang are better known as the location name of the settlement.²

This research was built based on the literature study method. And it is expected to help churches, theological colleges, and mission

¹ Persekutuan Jaringan Riset Nasional/PJRN, 125-126.

² Reiner Emyot Ointoe, *Bolaang Mongondow: Etnik, Budaya dan Perubahan* (Manado: Yayasan Bogani Karya dan Pemda Kabupaten Bolaang Mongondow, 1996). 77-87.

institutions to be able to understand how to carry out contextual evangelism to the Bolaang Mongondow tribe. By using socio-cultural and religious research, which is prevalent in contextual missions. Contextual evangelism or contextual mission is expected to be an alternative approach to preach the Gospel in the present because, in past evangelism experiences with a tendency towards Christianization, it was not very effective in bringing Bolaang Mongondow people to Jesus Christ.

Method

This article is a study of alternative contextual evangelistic models to Intau Bolaang Mongondow. It is communally called the tribe or the Bolaang Mongondow people. This research was built by carrying out an ethnographic approach by analyzing the literature relevant to the topic discussed, specifically the literature on the Reality of Social Culture, Social Change, and the concept of the worldview of Bolaang Mongondow ethnic. It has long been known that it is essential to carry out an ethnographic approach in the study of Mission and Anthropology. According to Paul G. Hiebert, the three things which include culture or customs in the form of physical, emotional, mythical, and ritual status of a society like this are generally an expression of religious belief. Even the study of the symbols it uses can help. Understand the worldview of the community.³ Likewise, according to Charles Kraft, the life cycle concept that is believed and practiced by a community group is rooted in the community's worldview.⁴ Therefore, by examining the cultural elements that Intau Bolaang Mongondow believes in and practiced, we will find the concept of the worldview as the deep level or value of Intau Bolaang Mongondow. This literary research is then processed creatively and dynamically by researchers to provide an overview of the context and social and cultural substance of the Bolaang Mongondow ethnic group, enabling the implementation of alternative evangelistic approaches that are contextual to the models that will be recommended by researchers.

After examining the socio-cultural reality,⁵ social change, and the Bolaang Mongondow ethnic worldview concept, it is hoped that this research

³ Paul G. Hiebert, Cultural Anthropology (Grand Rapids-Michigan: Baker Book House Company, 1998), 372-376.

⁴ Charles Kraft, Anthropology for Christian Witness (Maryknoll-New York: Orbis, 1996), 228.

⁵ R. Daniel Shaw, "Beyond Contextualization: Toward a Twenty-First-Century Model for Enabling Mission," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 34, no. 4 (October 1, 2010): 214.

will be a starting point for contextual evangelistic activities for the Bolaang Mongondow ethnic group by utilizing their cultural values.

Result and Discussion

The belief of Bolaang Mongondow Tribe in Ancient Times

Since ancient times, the tribe or *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow, during the leadership of traditional leaders called *Bogani*, has known the Almighty called *Ompu Duata* or *Mongo Ompu*. There is no difference in meaning between Ompu Duata and Mongo Ompu. The two of them are used alternately by the Bolaang Mongondow people in their belief in God. *Ompu Duata* or *Mongo Ompu* means God, who has power over everything. Before doing significant work, usually, Bolaang Mongondow holds a ritual ceremony as a worship service of *Ompu Duata*. At the beginning of business activity, or during a medical ceremony (*monayuk*), they say *Mongo Ompu*, which is to say the name *Ompu Duata*. Their business is acceptable and granted by the Almighty.⁶

Likewise, at a marriage ceremony (mogama), a guhanga (folk religious leaders) will recite a prayer to Ompu Duata or Mongo Ompu. Examples of prayers recited at the wedding ceremony (mogama) are: Bo Ompu poiguman barakat, intong pa doman poruru'i togi mija in barang mopatu boogojanja doman ini barakat in umur molanggo bo rijiki kalal sin a posalehe kon tumpala umat, pobantung kon pomarentah bo posumbah ko'i togi mija (which means: We ask for blessings, may the Almighty keep away prohibited items and will give blessings, provide long life and not prohibited sustenance to nurture fellow human beings, help the government and to worship and glorify the name of God). Prayers like this continue until now even though Islam has become the majority religion of Intau Bolaang Mongondow.⁷ Because of their belief that it is not permissible for every community member to do evil things, which are not pleasing to Ompu Duata, if it is found that there is a violation or sin due to someone's crime, it will be subject to sanctions, including being excluded or expelled from the community.⁸ This took place long before religions such as Christianity and Islam spread to the Bolaang Mongondow community.

In honor of *Ompu Duata*, a long time ago in every settlement (*totabuan*) marked by the existence of sigi, which is a kind of temple

⁶ Ointoe, 97.

⁷ Ibid., 97.

⁸ Bernard Ginupit, *Kebudayaan Daerah Bolaang Mongondow* (Kotamobagu: Pemda Kabupaten Bolaang Mongondow, 1996), 1.

where worship (monibi) to Ompu Duata. Sigi is a place for storing old dishes or other antique objects from ancestors (mogoguyang). During the worship ceremony (monibi) to Ompu Duata and ancestral spirits (dimukud in mogoguyang), all community members participated at the expense of pigs, goats, and chickens whose blood was sprinkled on the ladder. Sigi is also a place for the remission of sins or mistakes for prisoners, for individual traditional violators, and as an eraser. It can be said that sigi is a symbol of *totabuan* unity. As a community unit, they appoint parents tasked with settling matters in totabuan, arranging the transfer of rights, arranging engagements, marriages, priests in monibi ceremonies, and advisors in governmental tasks guhanga. The traditional leaders (Bogani) and the king (Punu) get to the village head (sangadi, bobato, kimalaha) in deciding on something in advance, asking for directions and opinions from the guhanga. A situation like this is typical for traditional societies that adhere to animism. However, this popular religion still influences culture. even though it has embraced beliefs that were brought in from outside, such as Christianity and Islam.

Even though the people of Bolaang Mongondow in ancient times believed in the existence of an Almighty (which is called *Ompu Duata*), the Ompu Duata that they thought was an impersonal and unknown God. For them, even though there is *Ompu Duata*, those who are more active in intervening and helping in everyday life are the spirits of their ancestors (what they call in their language is *dimukud* in mogoguyang). The various ritual ceremonies that they hold in daily life are usually aimed directly at the spirits who live in the surrounding environment. The traditions they perform include momolapag, a ceremony for worshiping spirits, or dimukud in mogoguyang by providing offerings for them to be accompanied and protected.9 In addition to performing ceremonies for being dimukud in *mogoguyang*, they also often carry out traditions for exorcising evil spirits through specific dances (*metayak*) and searching for magical cues in daily life (mamalenga) with the help of being dimukud in mogoguyang.¹⁰ Metayak is also an activity to treat sick sufferers. When people do mamalenga activities, usually they hear instructions dimukud in mogoguyang in the sound of owls (menikulu). Metayak is also an activity to treat sick sufferers. When people do *mamalenga* activities, they usually hear instructions from dimukud in mogoguyang in owls' sound (menikulu). Mamalenga is intended to know the defeat or victory in the war, the success or failure of a plan,

⁹ Bernard Ginupit, Sejarah Bolaang Mongondow (Kotamobagu: Pemda Kabupaten Bolaang Mongondow, 2003), 28.

¹⁰ Ointoe, 299.

ride a new home, travel, erect buildings, and overhaul the forest. When people do *metayak* activities, they usually dance *tayok* while singing idol worship to *dimukud in mogoguyang* who are considered magic, until the dancers become unconscious and possessed (*Bolian* or other names is *burangin*).¹¹

The concept of the Bolaang Mongondow worldview for understanding the socio-cultural substance of *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow

As for learning about the history and culture of the Bolaang Mongondow community, this learning has shown that, in general, the community pays excellent attention to customs. With the entry of Christianity and Islam and cultural norms have weakened due to social changes. There are four kinds of essential traditions and practiced by Intau Bolaang Mongondow, namely ancient beliefs, attitudes of loyalty towards the leader, marriage customs, and death customs.¹² Therefore, by understanding the dimensions or cultural elements that are believed and practiced by *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow. It discovers the concept of worldview as the most profound level or value of *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow.

As explained above that before Christianity and Islam entered Bolaang Mongondow, in ancient times, Intau Bolaang Mongondow had believed Ompu Duata or Mongo Ompu (the Almighty) and believed in dimukud in mogoguyang (ancestral spirits). According to Arifin Assagaf, although Islam is a religion that is embraced by the majority of Intau Bolaang Mongondow, in reality the people accept Islam as a formality only.¹³ The appreciation of Islam is only a ritual. Many Madrasah Ibtidayah (formal school with Islamic style) established by the kings (datu) became displaced along with the collapse of the Kingdom of Bolaang Mongondow. No Madrasah is shown on the pure community's initiative if there are no migrants who set up and take care of it. Until the 1970s, the mosque was not routinely visited by the public for prayer. Even in the 1980s, many Intau Bolaang Mongondow did not know how to pray and could not read the Qur'an. Un-Islamic marriages are also entrenched and are considered normal by the community. Old faith ceremonies that contain elements of animism and dynamism, such as belief in Ompu Duata (the Almighty) and dimukud in mogoguyang (ancestral spirits) as well as *momolapag* practices (expulsion of evil spirits through

¹¹ J. Talumena, *Adat-Istiadat Daerah Sulawesi Utara* (Jakarta: Proyek Penelitian dan Pencatatan Kebudayaan Daerah Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1979), 79-80.

¹² Bernard Ginupit, Kebudayaan Daerah Bolaang Mongondow, 38-39.

¹³ Ointoe, 201-211.

specific dances) and *metayak* (including in it also looking for magical clues in everyday life) still imprint. The obedience of the people (*ata*) to the king or leader has brought the values of feudalism (in which the aristocrats have power over the ordinary people), which causes the people to adopt Islam as a formality, without understanding and being obedient to the Qur'an.

Intau Bolaang Mongondow is known as a community that has loyalty (bobangkalan) towards leaders. This took place since the leadership of the Bogani as traditional leaders before royal rule in each settlement (totabuan) spread throughout the region. The community's lovalty towards the leader was even more significant when Intau Bolaang Mongondow entered a period of feudalism (1400-1950). According to W. Dunnebier, a missionary in Bolaang Mongondow, Intau Bolaang Mongondow had been arranged with obedience to one voice in the era of feudalism, namely the king's voice. The king's voice is singular and legitimate, must be followed. The demand for loyalty to the leader was confirmed by the determination of class or class by King or Punu Tadohe to be six classes, namely the level of kings (mododatu), the noble class (kohongian), the class of the majority of the people (simpal or paloko or tuangi lipu), the class of ordinary people (nonow), as well as a class of slave (ata or yobuat and tahig).¹⁴ An oath confirms the division of this class through the Kinalang-Paloko declaration, which states that the leader's disobedience will cause butungon or punishment.¹⁵ Even though the form of feudalism of the royal government was changed, the people whose worldview concept had been formed during the feudalism era had difficulty abandoning integrated and sustainable society.¹⁶ The form of community loyalty towards this leader also influences people's embracing religion and their desire to progress. When King Jakobus Manoppo (1695-1730) until King Ismael Cornelis Manoppo (1829-1833) embraced Roman Catholicism, the people also embraced Roman Catholicism. When King Jakobus Manuel Manoppo (1833-1858) until King Henny Yusuf Cornelis Manoppo (1947-1950) embraced Islam, most people also embraced Islam until today.¹⁷ Likewise, suppose the king has a broad and open mindset. In that case, the community will also be available to developments that bring progress, as seen in the reign of King Datu Adrianus Cornelis Manoppo (1905-1928).

¹⁴ Ointoe, 194.

¹⁵Z. A. Lantong, Mengenal Bolaang Mongondow (Kotamobagu: U.D. Asli Totabuan, 1996), 49-50.

¹⁶ Lantong, 21.

¹⁷ Lantong, 61-70.

Loyalty to leaders also appears to traditional cultural leaders such as shamans (tonawat or talenga) and traditional elders (guhangnea or guhanga). In ancient times, Intau Bolaang Mongondow believed that the tonawat or talenga and the guhanga were mediators between humans and God (Ompu Duata or Mongo Ompu) and ancestral spirits (dimukud in mogoguyang). Therefore the community shows loyalty (bobangkalan) towards them in their daily lives. In later developments, the attitude of commitment (bobangkalan) towards guhanga continues, while loyalty towards the tonawat or talenga is replaced by adherence to the Islamic religion's leaders.

The traditional marriage process in Bolaang Mongondow is still robust now. *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow views marriage as something sacred and noble, namely the occurrence of a legitimate relationship between two people of different sexes. The relationship's legality is based on religious, customary law and other applicable regulations such as Indonesia's marriage law. Because of that, marriage requires a long process with several stages, among others: *guman*, which is the proposal made by *taba*, *pu'at in lamba*, namely issuing decorative ceremonial time for girls who are secluded because of initiation (*aimbu*), *gu'at*, namely separation the son of the parent, *le'ad*, which is a dental alignment event for the bride who has grown up and *gamma*, which is the traditional ceremony for the bride's pickup by the groom's family, the day after the wedding. Each stage in a traditional marriage requires a man to pay custom money (*tali* or *yoko*) to a woman and her family. The payment of custom money is an essential sign of the legality of the marriage.

For *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow, the marriage stages that are carried out traditionally are intended because marriage is between a man and woman and involves both parties' families. Thus, it is clear the traditional wedding ceremony contained in *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow has a value that is so sacred that it has long stages and is laden with certain symbols and meanings, so it cannot be ignored.

Likewise, with the customs of death for *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow, which is now a blend of culture and teachings of Islam. As has been stated above that the death ceremony consists of four stages, namely bathing the body (*moginggu*), shroud the body (*taputon*), praying (*shalat*) the body, and burying the body. The traditional ceremony of death in the Bolaang Mongondow community with four stages has an important purpose and value: a sign of separation from the deceased and a sign of mourning for the families left behind.

The Dynamics of Acculturation in the Bolaang Mongondow Tribe

Previous studies show that the leader factor strongly influences the dynamics of the Bolaang Mongondow acculturation.¹⁸ Punu Tadohe (1600-1650) was the king of Bolaang Mongondow. He began to establish relations with Portuguese and Spanish traders, so Intau Bolaang Mongondow started to recognize items such as antique cloth (sikayu), spears, copper hats (sakapeti), swords, copper betel nuts, chandeliers, iron or copper shields, and so on. Even by the influence of the social system (caste) of Hinduism in India, which was informed by Portuguese and Spanish traders, Punu King Tadohe established society's division into mododatu, kohongian simpal or paloko or tuangi lipu, nonow and yobuat and tahig.¹⁹ The attitude of king Loloda Mokoagow or Datu Binangkang (1653-1694), which was open to the Dutch Company, provided the possibility of formal education for the king's children. Even when King Jakobus Manopo, the son of Loloda Mokoagow, embraced Roman Catholicism, the people also participated as followers of the Roman Catholic religion until the reign of King Jacobus Manuel Manoppo.²⁰ Likewise, the spread of Islam in Bolaang Mongondow began to develop when King Jacobus Manuel Manoppo converted to Islam and continued to flourish in king Abraham Sugeha (1880). In the end, most of the population of Bolaang Mongondow converted to Islam following the king.²¹ According to Z. A. Lantong, only by approaching the king of Islam's propagators had the opportunity at Bolaang Mongondow. And when the king then chose to embrace Islam, almost all of his people participated.22

Developments originating from outside towards the development of the Bolaang Mongondow community are also strongly influenced by the leader factor. In the world of education, in 1906, King Datu Adrianus Cornelis Manoppo (1905-1928), a Muslim who requested missionary to open 14 schools in the Bolaang Mongondow area so that the wider community began to get to know the world of education.²³ Like a king who has a broad and open insight into the outside world, Datu King Adrianus Cornelis Manoppo abolished slavery. He arranged the layout and location of housing, schools, and roads were built and repaired, hospitals were built, various regulations were improved, and Kotamobagu as the royal capital newly built. After conducting a

¹⁸ Bernard Ginupit, Sejarah Bolaang Mongondow, 30.

¹⁹ Lantong, 50.

²⁰ Ibid., 67-68.

²¹ Bernard Ginupit, Sejarah Bolaang Mongondow, 30.

²² Ointoe, 194.

²³ Bernard Ginupit, Sejarah Bolaang Mongondow, 30.

comparative study in the Minahasa area, the king did all of this, which had rapidly developed and the king's heart's desire to prosper the community. Comparative studies were conducted mainly on education issues.²⁴

The loss of feudalistic power became an egalitarian and plural society in *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow. It was causing shocks. They had a king leading them. However, since integration with Indonesia, the Kingdom was liquidated in Bolaang Mongondow. However, cultural values in the form of loyalty (*bobangkalan*) towards leaders remain embedded in the lives of the people of Bolaang Mongondow even though they have transformed cultural values. If the king was a "right voice" in the era of feudalism, that must be followed absolutely by the community. So now, this "right voice" has been translated as a true leader, teacher, community leader, parent, brother, and even younger ages as long as the truth became a community convention and politely delivered. Thus, the values of leadership and respect for a leader remain a belief and are respected by the community.²⁵

Intau Bolaang Mongondow today is a society that is open to changes or transformations of cultural values that are happening but still rests on the behavior, understanding, and practice of previous cultural values.²⁶ In other words, every change that comes from outside (acculturation) will be allowed to enter but will be followed by the community if it has received the leader's blessing. This is indeed one of the feudalistic symbols. Still, it has become a worldview that is both a potential and a challenge in advancing the civilization of the people of Bolaang Mongondow.²⁷

Thus, *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow originating from the development of ancient societies, which brought the values of animism and dynamism, as seen in their mythology and rite. This is related to their belief in *Ompu Duata*. And loyalty to leaders such as *Bogani* and the *punu* or kings. One of the prominent cultural values in the Bolaang Mongondow community was obedience or commitment to the leaders (*Bogani, tonawat, talenga*, and *guhanga*). The values of feudalism emerged and developed when society entered the Kingdom to establish a basis for the *punu* and *datu* (kings). The *bobangkalan* attitude towards this leader has become a worldview that determines the community to act (behavior) in choosing an adopted religion, open to the outside world (acculturation), and the development of other societies.

²⁴ Paransa, 28.

²⁵ Ointoe, 191-199.

²⁶ Ibid., 191-199.

²⁷ Ibid., 309.

Also, traditional cultural values that have become worldview Intau Bolaang Mongondow is a belief in *Ompu Duata* (God Almighty) and *dimukud in mogoguyang* (ancestral spirits). This belief causes religion only as a mere formality, so customs or traditional cultural values still stand tall beside religious teachings.

The long stages of the traditional marriage ceremony and the sacred ceremony of death are the worldviews that formed *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow into a society that maintains a life cycle based on local cultural values, even though outside influences through foreign religion culture have entered.

Intau Bolaang Mongondow and Openness to Outside Influences

As stated above, *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow originated from the development of ancient societies that originally lived dependent on nature, individual spirits and were closed to outside influences. The arrival of traders from India, China, Spain, and Portugal in the 14th century in the archipelago began to bring outside influence on society. These outside influences are seen in people who are starting to recognize livelihoods, foodstuffs, working tools, currencies, specific skills, and other objects.²⁸

The openness of society to outside influences began to increase in the government of the kings. The sixth king Bolaang Mongondow Tadohe (1600-1650), was known as the king who started to establish relations with Portuguese and Spanish traders, so *Intau Bolaang Mongondow* began to recognize Europe's goods. Indian and Pakistani traders informed the influence of the social system (*caste*) of Hinduism in India. The king of Tadohe set up new customs and governing methods, which determine the division of society in *mododatu*, *kohongian*, *simpal*, or *paloko* or *tuangi lipu*, *nonow yobuat*, and *tahig*.²⁹ The six castes in the Bolaang Mongondow tribe established during the reign of *Punu* Tadohe are: *mododatu*, namely the royal family or nobles, *kohongian*, namely the nobility, *simpal* or *paloko* or *tuangi lipu*, namely ordinary people, *nonow* are workers and *yobuat* and *tahig*.³⁰

As has been revealed that the seventh king Loloda Mokoagow or Datu Binangkang (1650-1694) also established relations with Spain, the Portuguese, and the Dutch Company so that Spanish and Portuguese influences on society began to appear, including the entry of Roman

²⁸ Ointoe, 64.

²⁹ Lantong, 50.

³⁰ Ointoe, 68.

Catholicism into a religion adopted by king and society. The entry of Roman Catholicism in Bolaang Mongondow also introduced the community to the world of education/schools.³¹ When the seventeenth king Jakobus Manuel Manoppo (1833-1858), opened up to traders from Gorontalo and Bugis, the traders who embraced Islam began to have the opportunity to spread Islam to the royal family and society. Then Islam became the royal religion adopted by the people.³²

The opening of the twenty-second king named Datu Adrianus Cornelis Manoppo (1905-1928), who was Muslim towards the education implemented by the Dutch Company in Minahasa, brought progress to the world education in Bolaang Mongondow, but had become a foothold for missionaries to preach the Gospel. At the king's request, the Nederlandsche Zendelinggenotschap (NZG) sent *evangelists* and teachers from the Netherlands and Minahasa to open several schools and plant churches Bolaang Mongondow. The openness of Datu Adrianus Cornelis Manoppo to the *Zending* impacted the preaching of the Gospel by the formation of two Protestant Christian congregations in the villages of Poopo and Mariri Lama on Christmas 25 December 1904. Until the end of 1906, NZG, in cooperation with the Kingdom of Bolaang Mongondow, had established 14 zending schools that educate many students who are Muslim.³³

King Datu Adrianus Cornelis Manoppo to external influences from the Netherlands and the Minahasa was also apparent in the social and economic aspects that greatly affected the community. By a comparative study conducted by the king in Minahasa. The Dutch had built him, the king abolished slavery, arranged the layout and location of housing, schools and roads were built and repaired, hospitals were built, various regulations were improved, and Kotamobagu was the capital of the Kingdom newly built.³⁴

According to researchers' observations, in general, *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow is currently very open to migrants who come from an ethnic, cultural, religious, and social status different from theirs. This openness is imbued with the motto of *mototompiaan*, *mototabian bo mototanoban* (loving one another, loving each other and remembering or understanding one another) that applies to all levels of society, both one ethnic and different ethnicity. This openness is evident by various

³¹ Bernard Ginupit, Sejarah Bolaang Mongondow, 28-29.

³² Paransa, 15.

³³ Lantong, 68-70.

³⁴ Paransa, 28.

migrants from the Minahasa, Sangihe, Bugis, Balinese, Javanese, Toraja, Padang, and Chinese communities economic, educational and religious activities that blend in with the indigenous people. Even during the community that mostly adheres to Islam with 368,234 people and 438 mosques, there are 376 churches, 23 temples, and one monastery, which also enriches the variety of religious adherents Bolaang Mongondow.³⁵

Alternative Contextual Evangelism Models for the Bolaang Mongondow Tribe

From the anthropological-ethnographic discussion above, it has been explained that *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow has a very long historical background and cultural context that is still preserved. In general, *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow is very concerned with customs even though Islam has developed into the majority religion and development times. However, the traditional cultural values of Bolaang Mongondow are still preserved through certain rites.

Even though external influences and the rapid development of the times have caused specific changes in the life of *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow, there are still four kinds of original customs that still hold and practice the lives of Bolaang Mongondow, namely ancient beliefs, loyal attitudes towards leaders, customs marriage, and death customs. The four dimensions or elements of culture are essential in understanding and discovering the concept of worldview as the most profound level or value of the Bolaang Mongondow ethnic group.

Therefore, the contextualization models of the Gospel relevant to *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow are inseparable from efforts to understand the four dimensions or cultural elements of the Bolaang Mongondow tribe, namely ancient beliefs and attitudes loyalty towards leaders, customs of marriage and death customs.

The gospel message needs to be packaged and preached in the context of people who still believe in *Ompu Duata* or *Mongo Ompu* (God Almighty) and *dimukud in mogoguyang* (ancestral spirits). The *bobangkalan* attitude (loyalty or obedience) towards a leader who has become a Bolaang Mongondow tribe's worldview also needs to be considered in a contextual evangelistic approach. This is because this attitude is so

³⁵ Rusli Manorek, Budaya Masyarakat Suku Bangsa Bolaang Mongondow di Sulawesi Utara (Manado: Kementerian Kebudayaan dan Pariwisata Deputi Bidang Pelestarian dan Pengembangan Budaya Balai Kajian Sejarah dan Nilai Tradisional Manado Proyek Pemanfaatan kebudayaan Daerah Sulawesi Utara, 2004), 30-31.

decisive in the community's actions (behavior), both to choose the religion adopted and openness to the influence of the outside world (acculturation). Likewise, marital customs (*mogama*) and customs about death (*kinopatoyan*) as part of the life cycle, which is a local cultural value, need to get a place to approach the community and present the Gospel that touches the cultural context of *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow.

To introduce the Lord Jesus Christ to Intau Bolaang Mongondow, one can use the "orthodoxy model," which is apostolic accommodation. This model seeks to build a common ground, where unbelievers can be taught the truth of a super cultural gospel. The result is the transformation of those who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.³⁶ This is the same as the "translation model," which recognizes that the essence of Christianity is supra cultural, in the sense that the nature of Christianity is not subject to culture and culture needs to be transformed to be by the Gospel and not vice versa. Therefore, even though culture is recognized as essential and must be taken seriously, in the end, it is supra cultural news that must be a reference. In other words, the essence of Christianity must be held firmly, even when the maintenance efforts against the nature of Christianity are contrary to culture.37 This effort can also use an "adaptation model" where this model does not assimilate cultural elements in expressing the Gospel but instead uses known cultural forms and ideas. The aim is to articulate and translate the Gospel in local terms to become relevant in the cultural situation.³⁸ In other words, the adaptation model means finding ways to express the Gospel informs and ideas that are common or accustomed to in culture. The process can be through giving new meaning to words in culture. There is a connection with the ancient belief of Intau Bolaang Mongondow to Ompu Duata or Mongo Ompu (God Almighty). Then an evangelist can still use the term (form) Ompu Duata or Mongo Ompu in conveying the Gospel with meanings that are different from the understanding of the people of Bolaang Mondondow. This is made possible by operational substitute functions, namely efforts to maintain

³⁶ David J. Hesselgrave dan Edward Rommen, *Kontekstualisasi: Makna*, Metode, Dan Model (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2015), 188-189.

³⁷ Stephen B. Bevans, Model-Model Teologi Kontekstual (Maumere: Penerbit Ledalero, 2013), 63-76.

³⁸ Yakob Tomatala, Teologi Kontekstualisasi (Malang: Gandum Mas, 2007), 78.

terms or forms known in the local context. The meaning of the content (meaning) is replaced with a gospel that functions transformational (changing/renewing) these cultural elements.³⁹

To introduce the Lord Jesus Christ to *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow, an evangelist can use *Ompu Duata* or *Mongo Ompu*. But still, explain the uniqueness of Jesus Christ's as *Ompu Duata* or *Mongo Ompu*, who became human to redeem and save people from sin according to what the Bible states. And to reveal the work of *Ompu Duata* as Jesus Christ in saving people. It needs to be explained about His sacrifice on the cross to wash away sin. He has done through the power of His blood. His sacrifice did not by sacrificing pigs, goats, or chickens whose blood is sprinkled on the steps of *sigi* (worship temples located in each *Totabuan*), which eliminates sin and error, but by the power of the *Ompu Duata* Jesus Christ blood (Romans 5:9).

As for Contextual evangelism with the orthodoxy model, the translation model and this adaptation model can also be applied in various rites practiced by *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow. The *monibi* and *momolapag* ceremonies that serve as a means of worship to get help from *Ompu Duata* and *dimukud in mogoguyang* need to be directed to worship in different forms and meanings. True *monibi* and *momolapag* is thanksgiving to God that does not depend on place and atmosphere but is an expression of faith because of the grace and sacrifice of *Ompu Duata* Jesus Christ. *Monibi* and *momolapag* are done in the form of the attitude of life, worship, and thanksgiving to *Ompu* Duata, Jesus Christ. They can be realized in obedience (*bobangkalan*) to Him (Romans 12: 1-2).

However, the ancient belief of *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow has a difference with the meaning of Gospel beliefs. The belief in being *dimukud in mogoguyang* (ancestral spirits) is often practiced through worldview (*monibi* and *momolapag* ceremonies). And the exorcism of evil spirits through specific dances (*metayak*) and searching for occult clues in daily life (*mamalenga*) needs to undergo a worldview replacement (worldview substitute). To *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow, the so-called *mogoguyang* (ancestors) are none other than *Gumalangit-Tendeduata* and *Tumotoi* Bokat, which are their long-standing ancestors. The so-called

³⁹ Yakob Tomatala, Teologi Kontekstualisasi, 41-42.

ancestral spirits or *dimukud in mogoguyang* are evil spirits who are enemies of *Ompu Duata* Jesus Christ and humans who will only destroy humans (John 10:10). Thus, the contextual preaching efforts of the Gospel to *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow concerning their ancient beliefs do not merely involve meeting concepts or truths only, but involving meetings of power or spiritual warfare. Evangelism for the Bolaang Mongondow tribe must be in the form of an adequate explanation of the person and work of God (*Ompu Duata* or *Mongo Ompu*) as the creator, redeemer, and preserver of life by what is stated in the Bible. *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow must also be convinced that being *dimukud in mogoguyang* is nothing but the power of darkness or the "god of the age" that blinds them to the light of the Gospel about the glory of *Ompu Duata* or *Mongo Ompu* of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 4:4).

In connection with the attitude of loyalty to the leader (bobangkalan), which is a cultural value of Intau Bolaang Mongondow, the form can be accommodated and given a new meaning adjusted to the stages of the approach in evangelism. Therefore, the right model to be applied in this case is the "accommodation model," which is an attitude of respect and openness to native culture carried out with attitudes, behavior, and practical approaches in missionary assignments, both theologically and scientifically. The object of accommodation is the entire cultural life of a society, both physical, social, and ideal. Here, in the preaching of the Gospel, a process of penetration takes place. In its application, there is the adoption of local culture elements to express and enhance the reception of the Gospel. In this process, there is a fusion of Christian life values, where Christ becomes the compliment and complement of cultural aspirations. Thus, there will be a positive attitude towards the Gospel based on the view that God's grace (the Gospel) does not destroy human culture but instead completes and perfects it.40 This accommodation model is also an attempt to accommodate the Word of God in the local culture. Also, local cultural contextualization through local language are mother-tongue translations⁴¹ and local understanding traditions in gospel preaching.⁴²

⁴⁰ Yakob Tomatala, Teologi Kontekstualisasi, 77-78.

⁴¹ William E. Bivin, "Mother-Tongue Translations and Contextualization in Latin America," International Bulletin of Missionary Research 34, no. 2 (April 1, 2010): 72–76.

Here it happens that culture is permitted to enter church life. Both formal leaders (such as local officials, *sangadi*/village leaders, religious leaders) approach the approach to leaders. And informal leaders (such as traditional elders/*guhanga*, community leaders, and people who have good insight) is the ideal approach to contextual evangelism of *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow. Approaching leaders will make it easier to approach the wider community to preach the Gospel. The leader has heard and trusted *Ompu Duata* or *Mongo Ompu* of Jesus Christ and His work of salvation. It will be easier for people who have the characteristics of such a basis to hear and trust *Ompu Duata* Jesus Christ as the core of the gospel message.

Regarding the personal evangelist, then another model that can be applied is the "incarnation model," which relates to the reality of how Christ took human form as a model for missionaries to practically adapt to local culture. The missionary's ability is still limited, but this effort is an essential part of contextualization. An evangelist contextual for Intau Bolaang Mongondow must establish himself as an exemplary leader for the community. The preaching of the Gospel is very closely related to the personality of someone who delivers the message. In general, Intau Bolaang Mongondow saw the example or figure of a leader whom the community put trust and loyalty (bobangkalan). Thus, a contextual evangelist with the community's cultural values is as essential as the contextual preaching of the Gospel. The example of an evangelist's life as a leader needs to be manifested through credible personality and character (credibility), only the words of the evangelist's deeds (integrity), the presence of a right family in the eyes of the community, and his always honest attitude and behavior. In the end, the wrong attitude can be accommodated and placed in its right place, namely the attitude and actions of trust and loyalty to the Mongo Ompu Jesus Christ and His Word. Also, bobangkalan can be given a new meaning, namely, loving one another and faithfully serving fellow believers and other human beings as an expression of bobangkalan against Mongo Ompu Jesus Christ.

They were related to the marriage rite (*mogama*) in *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow culture, which is generally full of symbols, positively not a

⁴² Allan Heaton Anderson, "Contextualization in Pentecostalism: A Multicultural Perspective," *International Bulletin of Mission Research* 41, no. 1 (January 1, 2017): 34..

taboo for a contextual evangelistic approach, as long as it does not contradict the Word of God. These symbols can be seen at every stage in the mogama process, including guman, which is the proposal made by taba, *pu'at in lamba*. They were to issue a traditional ceremonial time decoration for secluded girls. Because of initiation (aimbu), gu'at, ie separation of children from parents, *le'ad*, which is a leveling event for teeth and gamma, is the bride's pickup by the Groom's family, the day after the wedding. Intau Bolaang Mongondow views marriage as something sacred and grand; therefore, marriage is not an easy matter. These values are very positive and by the values of God's Word because it is so important to voice these values in a contextual evangelistic approach. Thus, an evangelist needs to learn and respect the symbols/form and meaning in each of these stages of mogama as held by the community, so it is not impressed that the Christian way of marriage is not relevant to the people's culture of Bolaang Mongondow. Society's assessment of Christianity greatly influences them in understanding and accepting the gospel message. Therefore, efforts to approach contextual evangelism need to consider how the community evaluates an evangelist's attitude and views on local culture such as marriage culture. Therefore, the right evangelistic model to be applied through this mogama rite is the "transformation model" that expresses God's existence above culture. Still, through culture, God also interacts with humans by empowering cultural elements. If God renews someone, then the cultural core is also changed.⁴³ In other words, the transformation model focuses on individuals in developing transformative societies. A damaged culture is renewed or changed and is not damaged.

An evangelist must have a noble attitude and outlook towards marriage's sacredness, as held by *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow. *Mogama* rites must not be ignored but can be adopted and given new meaning. This is where an evangelist can explain the sacredness and superiority of the Gospel's teachings about marriage. According to the Bible, marriage is a union between men and women who leave their parents to become one flesh (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19: 5). The Bible so sanctifies marriage as a sacred decree of God so that in a marriage that has been united, humans should not divorce God because God hates divorce (Matthew 19:

⁴³ Yakob Tomatala, Teologi Kontekstualisasi, 79.

6; Malachi 2:16). Marriage, a union between husband and wife, is also a typology of Christ and His church. Christ loved the church and gave himself for him. Marriage must be based on the love of a husband and submission of a wife, like Christ and the church (Ephesians 5: 22-33).

Therefore, an evangelist needs to explain that true mogama is a unity of men and women as a whole (spiritual, emotional, physical, legal, economic, social, and cultural). Through this unity, they will continue the descent and color of the life cycle of society. The sacred *mogama*, which is seen in the stages of *guman*, *pu'at in lamba*, *gu'at*, *le'ad*, and *gamma*, not only symbolizes the high cost of a man or woman traditionally but symbolizes the sanctity of marriage before the *Ompu Duata* of Jesus Christ. Likewise, dowry (*tali* or *yoko*) is seen as an economic factor and an attitude of responsibility for a man to protect and care for his family.

High appreciation for marriage is part of the life order of *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow, which focuses on the family. This cultural value that focuses on the family is significant in realizing *shalom* in society because, in its importance, mentality, character, ethics, and God's fear are taught. Therefore, an evangelist's role in maintaining the mogama rite and providing new values by God's Word is significant.

The contextualization model of the Gospel to *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow is inseparable from the effort to find the gospel message's relevance to their culture. The author advocates an "orthodoxy model" or "translation model" or "adaptation model" to explain the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. This model can be applied by utilizing the people's ancient beliefs in *Ompu Duata* or *Mongo Ompu*.

The researcher, who is the author, also advocates the "accommodation model" as an appropriate model to be applied about the attitude of community loyalty towards leaders (*bobangkalan*). This model is applied to approach leaders in the community so that gospel communication can occur to the lowest level. This can be expanded by an evangelist's role as a leader. They become an example or figure for the community so that the Gospel can be received with full confidence by the community. Therefore, an evangelist can apply the "incarnation model" in conducting evangelism.

Contextualization seeks to communicate the gospel in word and deed in a way that makes sense to people in its local cultural context and presents Christian values so that it meets people who yearn for their deepest needs and enables them to follow Christ and remain in their own culture.⁴⁴ Contextualization is an effort to preach the gospel. It becomes an evangelistic strategy for difficult cultures to preach the gospel.⁴⁵ I did ethnographic research on the Baliem Papuan tribe to find a practical evangelistic approach.⁴⁶ You do this by taking the good and right things from the ancestral religions to be contextualized for the benefit of spreading the gospel.⁴⁷

Contextual evangelism is also an effort to emphasize the superiority of the values of the teachings of the Gospel over society's cultural values. The aspect of marriage (*mogama*) can be a means where the sacredness of marriage that the Bible teaches far exceeds the community's cultural value. Therefore, the authors propose a "transformation model" as an approach that can be applied in contextual evangelism towards them to empower the *mogama* and *kinopatoyan* rites.

Therefore, contextual evangelism must preach the Gospel that has its source in the Bible and touches and empowers the culture of the people receiving the Gospel. Währisch-Oblau agrees that evangelistic messages should be contextual by finding the contact points where the message is spoken local people.⁴⁸ Lazerte argued understanding of the local religious landscape and demographics discussed together to reflect as a strength of service evangelism.⁴⁹ A missionary does not have to respond negatively to culture or radically reject local culture. Still, he must prepare to learn from the culture of the community in which he was sent. Terfassa revealed that a strong commitment to evangelism is not enough to win others' trust but requires a missionary who mingles with the people and lives in their midst. A missionary to build good relationships with the community with the aim of the gospel being

⁴⁴ Darrell L. Whiteman, "Contextualization: The Theory, the Gap, the Challenge," International Bulletin of Missionary Research 21, no. 1 (January 1997): 2.

⁴⁵ Armin Sukri Kanna, "The Implementation of Incarnational Mission Among The Bugis Using Cultural Approach," *Jurnal Jaffray* 12, no. 1 (April 1, 2014): 93.

⁴⁶ Marde Christian Stenly Mawikere, "Pendekatan Penginjilan Kontekstual Kepada Masyarakat Baliem Papua," *Jurnal Jaffray* 16, no. 1 (March 17, 2018): 25.

⁴⁷ Anderson, "Contextualization in Pentecostalism," 36.

⁴⁸ Claudia Währisch-Oblau, "Power Evangelism in a Protestant Context? Reflections after a Workshop in Samosir/Indonesia: Power Evangelism," *International Review of Mission* 107, no. 1 (July 2018): 151.

⁴⁹ Darcey Ryan Lazerte, "Evangelism in the Emerging Ecumenical Paradigm" (Thesis, Faculty of Trinity College and the Toronto School of Theology, 2013), ii, accessed October 28, 2020, https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/handle/1807/35537.

conveyed. Paul reveals that he has become all things to all people to share their blessings (1 Corinthians 9:19-23).⁵⁰

Conversely, a missionary does not have to accept the culture of the community altogether. Still, he must be able to sort out the cultural elements that can be used in preaching the Gospel through the functional substitute process and discard cultural factors that are incompatible with gospel values through worldview subtitles.

Conclusion

The Bolaang Mongondow tribe has a long history of a traditional society led by *Bogani* carrying the values of animism and dynamism, as seen in their mythology and rite. The transition period of the government system or leadership from the *Bogani* to the royal government system occurred in the 14th century. The traditional leadership of the *Bogani*, *tonawat*, *talenga*, and *guhanga* and the kings (*Punu* and *Sultan*) have formed the Bolaang Mongondow community's worldview in which society places loyalty (*bobangkalan*) towards its leaders. The *bobangkalan* attitude towards the leader determines the community to behave in choosing the religion they embrace, open to the outside world (acculturation), and develop other societies. Therefore, as the author of this article, the researcher advocates contextual evangelism with the "accommodation model" as a relevant model to be applied to community loyalty attitudes towards leaders (*bobangkalan*).

In a broad sense, the foundation values are applied in the form of obedience and loyalty to God and harmony and loyalty in family, community, national, and state life. As such, efforts are needed to approach leaders as part of contextual evangelism. This is where an evangelist's role as an exemplary figure (*doduduyan*) as a leader needs to be manifested through actions, speech, personality, and character that can be trusted (credibility). Therefore, the author recommends contextual evangelism "incarnation models" applied by an evangelist in presenting himself as a role model (*doduduyan*) for *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow. In the end, the detrimental attitude can be accommodated

⁵⁰ Dawit Olika Terfassa, "The Impact of Migration on Evangelism in Europe: The Impact of Migration on Evangelism in Europe," *International Review of Mission* 103, no. 2 (November 2014): 272.

and placed in its right place, namely the attitude and actions of trust and loyalty to the *Mongo Ompu* Jesus Christ and His Word. Also, foul play can be given a new meaning, namely, loving one another and faithfully serving fellow believers and other human beings as an expression of *bobangkalan* against *Mongo Ompu* Jesus Christ.

This study has shown that in ancient beliefs, Intau Bolaang Mongondow acknowledged God's existence (*Ompu Duata* or *Mongo Ompu*) and ancestral spirits (dimukud in mogoguyang). The people of Bolaang Mongondow still hold this belief by continuing to perform rites such as monibi (worship to Ompu Duata), momolapag (expulsion of evil spirits through specific dances), and *metayak* (looking for occult clues in daily life). This causes religion only as a mere formality, so that customs still stand tall beside religious teachings. Therefore, the authors advocate contextual evangelism "orthodoxy models" or "translation models" or "adaptation models" in approaching Intau Bolaang Mongondow. Bolaang Mongondow's Belief in Ompu Duata or Mongo Ompu can be "reconciled" with gospel values through a functional substitute process towards their understanding. An evangelist can use the term Ombu Duata or Mongo Ombu to Jesus Christ, but still explain the unique personality and work of Jesus Christ as Savior by what the Bible states. The beliefs about "infidel" are settled in mogoguyang must be discarded through the worldview substitute process.

In this study, it also appears that *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow views marriage (*mogama*) as something sacred and great. Here is the important role of an evangelist who respects and accommodates the community's cultural values regarding marriage (*mogama*) in the contextual gospel approach to them. Therefore, the author advocates the contextual evangelism "transformation model" relating to using the *mogama* rite in the preaching of the Gospel to *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow. The contextual evangelism is carried out by proclaiming the superiority of biblical values regarding mogama. *Mogama* is not just a rite filled with certain conditions, but it is God's plan for husband and wife to realize love, unity, mutual service, and responsibility.

Using the contextual evangelistic models above that utilize and empower aspects of the Bolaang Mongondow tribe's culture. It is hoped that alternative contextual evangelism will replace the evangelistic model that has been carried out so far, namely the "Christianization model."

In connection with the results of the study of *Intau* Bolaang Mongondow above, the need arises to formulate a "contextual evangelism paradigm" that departs from the Bible, which at the same

time touches the culture of the recipient community of the Gospel. The paradigm is to respond to the need for evangelism relevant to the community and respond to the community's need to hear and reflect the gospel message in their cultural context. By utilizing and empowering aspects of community culture through contextual evangelism "orthodoxy models" or "adaptation models" or "translation models," as well as "accommodation models," "incarnation models," and "transformation models." It is expected to increase the Bolaang Mongondow ethnic group's evangelism as unreached people groups in North Sulawesi, Indonesia.

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