

Conflict Resolution in Tobelo North Halmahera

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Abstract

Conflicts and religious (Islamic and Christian) violence within the Hibua Lamo Halmahera Utara community can not be solved by religious leaders' approaches, whereas in many cases, religious conflicts can be resolved through religious leaders' approaches. Conflict resolution in the Hibua Lamo community is an attempt to analyze and solve problems, considering cultural values. This study uses qualitative methods to describe and analyze conflict resolution technology in the Hibua Lamo community. Data collection techniques are done through observation, interview, and documentation. The results show that the first resolution of conflict and the realization of social cohesion within the Hibua Lamo community, due to the immediate awareness of the community played by the local elite, with the approach of traditional leaders to return to nature as indigenous people immediately. Secondly, Hein Namotemo (traditional leader), acting as a locomotive of conflict resolution, escorted himself to two powers, the Regent of North Halmahera and "Jikomakolano" (guardian of indigenous territories). With both these forces, Hein managed to maintain social cohesion. Thirdly, three factors give the spirit to maintain social cohesion within the Hibua Lamo community: "First, continuous efforts to instill and preserve the cultural values of Hibua Lamo universally to the community. Second, Always preserve mutually agreed reconciliation values on April 19, 2001. Third, local government, together with local elites, functions and empowers the role of customary institutions as a social glue and a pillar of preserving local cultural values.

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Introduction

The horizontal conflict in Ambon in 1999 can be understood through Social Identity Theory, which explains how individuals construct their identities based on membership in religious and ethnic groups, leading to polarization and tension between groups (Wilson, 2015; Rao & Vidyattama, 2017). Sustainable peace efforts require conflict transformation, involving fundamental changes in social structures and intergroup relations rather than temporarily suppressing violence (Sulaeman et al., 2022). In Ambon's context, the traditional social system known as *pela-gandong* serves as an essential social capital that binds different groups through values of solidarity and kinship (Colombijn, 2018; Dandirwalu & Qodim, 2021). Formal approaches such as "institutionalized de-escalation systems" enable rapid coordination among local elites to prevent violence escalation (Pelletier & Soedirgo, 2017). Integrating these theories with respect for local cultural structures allows for more effective and sustainable peacebuilding strategies in Ambon. It is because the social structure so close that it is known by the name of *pela* and *gandong* or, in other words, a sense of *beta* flavor that became the golden slogan of the island community of Ambon to be *fade* (Werner & Lambsdorff, 2020; Sulaeman et al., 2023). When Portuguese explorers first arrived at the spice-trading ports of Maluku in 1512, they found that the people living there had converted to Islam a few decades earlier (Kaartinen, 2019). The society that once lived in harmony and was known since the 17th century VOC because it has a very close relationship with Christians and Islam eventually became hostile to one another (Collins, 2003; Hägerdal, 2019), resulting in murder, infighting, burning houses of worship and so on. The prolonged social conflicts of 1999-2002 extended to other parts of Indonesia, such as Muslim and Christian social conflicts in Poso, Central Sulawesi province (April 2000), inter-ethnic clashes between Dayaks and Madurese in Central Kalimantan (February 2001), and riots between Malay and Madurese tribes in West Kalimantan in February 1999 (Schulze, 2017).

The social conflict between religions in Ambon began with a small fight between Christian transport drivers and a young Muslim resulted in a substantial conflict and spread to North Maluku, such as inter-ethnic conflict in Kao and Malifut, inter-religious conflict in Tidore, Ternate, Sula Islands, Central Halmahera, South Halmahera, and West Halmahera (Duncan, 2007; Al Qurtuby, 2013). North Maluku Province is an archipelago located to the east of Indonesia. Between 75% and 80% of the population are Muslim, the greatest religion in North Maluku, and the rest of the population is Protestant Christians living on the big island of Halmahera (Duncan, 2016). Many social conflicts occur throughout the world hemisphere, such as conflicts between the states of Israel and Palestine, America and Afghanistan, and other social conflicts which had taken the lives of innocent people. Much has been done to resolve these conflicts, but they all become annihilated by egoism and defend the state's sovereignty. The conflict between countries drags many cases, resulting in conflict between religion, tribe, and race in that area. One example is the religious conflicts in Tobelo in the *Hibua Lamo* community, dissolving in disputes between religious siblings. The methods used by religious leaders alone are insufficient to resolve religious conflicts in *Hibua Lamo* because of the many political, economic, and social aspects that influence them. The conflict resolution approach in Tobelo, North Halmahera, specifically within the concept of *Hibua Lamo*, requires a multifaceted strategy engaging various actors. This differs from international conflicts like Israel-Palestine or Afghanistan, where religious mediators often effectively resolve crises. In Tobelo, the spillover effects from the Ambon victims' refugee crisis in North Maluku, who carry their trauma and suffering, have played a significant role in igniting the Tobelo conflict. The complexity in Tobelo's case lies in the compounded experiences of displacement, trauma, and interconnected regional dynamics, necessitating broader involvement beyond singular religious mediation (Wilson, 2011; Spyer, 2017). The customary institutions in Halmahera play a vital function in conflict resolution and reconciliation, especially given the complex interplay of political, social, and economic factors that religious leaders alone cannot address. These institutions embody traditional wisdom and community authority, serving as legitimate mediators who can engage diverse actors and facilitate dialogue in a culturally meaningful manner. They help restore social trust and harmony fractured by conflict, particularly in multi-ethnic and religiously diverse societies like Tobelo and Malifut in North Halmahera. Their role is pivotal in bridging community divides exacerbated by external influences, such as the refugee crisis stemming from Ambon, which has infused additional trauma and tensions.

Every society has confrontations from time to time, especially in areas where tensions are high. Disputes between senior government officials frequently lead to these escalations, which subsequently

ripple out and impact the larger population. A breakdown in trust at the national leadership level can set off events disturbing societal harmony. Conflicts in Indonesia that involve ethnic, racial, and intergroup differences, often referred to as SARA issues, showcase these dynamics. This pattern can be seen in the events in Malifut and Tobelo, Halmahera Utara, where local social stability has been seriously threatened by violence that is rationalized by religious differences. These incidents demonstrate the intricate connection between social strife and spiritual identity, underscoring the necessity of all-encompassing approaches to foster harmony and peace.

Violent incidents that use religious issues as a justification for religious violence have been the subject of the history of violence in Indonesia. Religion is often used as a sexy issue to wage conflict and violence, certainly not in space and apart from some of the socio-political phenomena that accompany it. Therefore, studying community conflicts is insufficient to see the actors, location, and time involved. However, politics and religion have always been the escalator of conflict by certain ambitious actors in the interests of the moment. The Tobelo society, which had previously lived in peace and harmony, was dissolved in different religious conflicts for the same reason and language, each preserving *aqidah* and self-esteem. The conflict in Tobelo, triggered by religious issues, has significantly changed the structure of the local society. There was a segregation of areas based on religion, physically and socially separating communities, which reduced interaction and reinforced differences in identity. This conflict also caused mass displacement, resulting in collective trauma that profoundly affected the social and psychological life of the people. Furthermore, traditional values such as *modotiki*, which means the spirit of cooperation and mutual assistance that had long been the foundation of Tobelo's community life, began to disappear and erode due to the tensions and divisions that arose. These changes reflect how conflicts framed by religion and politics can dismantle social harmony and alter the social order of a once peaceful and united society.

Conflicts between religious followers in North Halmahera (1999–2001) continue to impact the people's living situations, making them unstable and prone to igniting like coals concealed beneath husks. Locals frequently find themselves ensnared in a hostile environment where disparities are provocatively used to exacerbate tensions and divisions. It is feared that social cohesion will continue to be threatened and that violent conflict may reemerge in this peace zone if local elites, including government officials, religious leaders, community leaders, and traditional leaders, fail to anticipate and manage this situation adequately. As a result, the *Hibua Lamo* community in North Halmahera is the focus of this study's conflict resolution techniques (Duncan, 2016).

Hibua Lamo, known as the "big house," is the customary institution of the Tobelo ethnic group in North Halmahera, serving as a symbol of social cohesion and a mechanism for conflict resolution (Nur, 2018; Titaley & Nur, 2022). Historically, during the colonial period, *Hibua Lamo* acted as an intermediary that preserved Tobelo's cultural identity and mediated disputes, maintaining social order despite external pressures. In the era of Indonesian independence, it continued to unify the community by fostering cooperation and supporting peaceful coexistence among diverse groups (Mumulati et al., 2023). During the violent religious conflicts of 1999–2001, *Hibua Lamo* played a crucial role in mediating tensions and facilitating reconciliation within the Tobelo community, helping to restore peace and uphold traditional values such as *modotiki* (Duncan, 2016). This institution remains vital in managing social harmony and preventing conflict in North Halmahera.

From an anthropological perspective, the role of *Hibua Lamo* in Tobelo society can be better understood through Clifford Geertz's concept of religion as a cultural system that shapes social order and meaning (Zurvani, 2024). *Hibua Lamo*, as a customary institution, embodies social cohesion and a symbolic framework through which the Tobelo community interprets identity, conflict, and reconciliation. Jelle Wouters' studies on religious conflict in Indonesia emphasize how local institutions mediate tensions by transforming potentially divisive religious differences into shared cultural practices and dialogue, thus preventing escalation (Wouters, 2019). This mediation role aligns with *Hibua Lamo*'s function in managing internal and external conflicts in North Halmahera. Furthermore, local Maluku historiography highlights how indigenous institutions like *Hibua Lamo* have historically been central to maintaining peace and social harmony amid colonial pressures and post-independence challenges (Saumur et al., 2024). These perspectives underscore that *Hibua Lamo* is not merely a traditional structure but a dynamic cultural mechanism that negotiates identity, power, and conflict, sustaining Tobelo's social fabric through complex historical transformations.

The integration of competencies across disciplines trains several skills. The first skill is interpreting historical events. These skills are necessary to make learning more meaningful when combined with various skills in other disciplines. Students can understand facts and see relationships and impacts within a broader framework. Connections between fields will also help students enrich their perspectives and dig deeper into the meaning of an event. Next is the ability to write persuasive essays. This ability or skill is a place for students to express in writing about their understanding. In this case, students will be allowed to express ideas or arguments they have in-depth and convincingly. Writing persuasive essays plays an essential role in education and professionalism because, with this persuasive essay writing, students will think critically in every delivery of their ideas and ideas (Karima et al., 2024).

Even though numerous studies have thoroughly examined social tensions within the *Hibua Lamo* community (Duncan, 2016), these studies are typically broad in scope and do not thoroughly examine the particular and contextual mechanisms of community conflict resolution. Furthermore, most studies have not thoroughly investigated how shared identity factors like shared ancestry, despite religious differences, affect local conflict and peace dynamics. By combining theoretical viewpoints from Haynes and Marx to comprehend the dual function of religion in conflict and peacebuilding, this study seeks to close this gap by examining the conflict resolution tools used in the *Hibua Lamo* community. Therefore, this study makes a unique contribution by providing a more focused and contextualized examination of reconciliation and conflict resolution procedures based on the community's cultural and social identity. Thus, this study aims to describe and analyze conflict resolution technology within the *Hibua Lamo* community.

Like the example above, at the beginning of the paragraph students explain the concept of education. But in the next sentence students explain the concept of learning participation. Supposedly, in making a good paragraph, students need to explain the concept of education first not to combine it with learning participation. If this is done the initial sentence with a sentence which is then unsustainable (Firza & Aisiah, 2019).

Research Methods

This study uses a qualitative case study approach to provide detailed and contextualized knowledge of the *Hibua Lamo* community's role in dispute resolution and social cohesiveness. By focusing on *Hibua Lamo* as a single, confined case within North Halmahera, the study investigates the complex social dynamics, cultural values, and traditional procedures determining peacebuilding processes in this community. Data collecting methods include observation, interviews, and document analysis, which allow for the acquisition of rich descriptive data from various sources. Between 2005 and 2015, key sources included the Chairman of the Customary Institution and the Regent of North Halmahera, whose opinions provide unique insights into *Hibua Lamo's* historical and contemporary functions. The case study technique is particularly appropriate in this context because it thoroughly assesses how *Hibua Lamo* mediates conflicts and maintains communal harmony, capturing both explicit occurrences and implicit cultural meaning. This method complements broader anthropological and historical theories by anchoring them in the Tobelo people's daily reality, shedding light on the efficiency of Indigenous institutions in dealing with post-conflict difficulties.

Hibua Lamo, a customary institution in the Tobelo community of North Halmahera, has a long history as a key player in dispute resolution based on local wisdom. Its role is profoundly entrenched not just in Tobelo cultural values but also in long-standing practices of mediation and reconciliation that date back to the colonial period and continue through the religious wars of 1999–2001 (Tajima, 2014). This approach is consistent with current results in conflict anthropology and peace studies, which emphasize the vital role of local institutions as major agents in restoring social cohesion in post-war countries (Belloni, 2012; Ginty & Richmond, 2013). Contemporary oral history research emphasizes how traditional leaders, political figures, and religious authorities who serve as key informants in this study—transmit collective narratives and community memory, which are critical in preserving and conveying effective conflict resolution mechanisms (McGrattan & Hopkins, 2017; Gena & Jarra, 2023). Informants, including former regents, sub-district heads, security officials, educators, entrepreneurs, and general community members, provide diverse perspectives that contextualize *Hibua Lamo's* adaptive strategies within modern sociopolitical dynamics, particularly in social reconstruction and peacebuilding processes. Using a qualitative case study approach, this study delves into how *Hibua*

Lamo uses the ideals of *modotiki* (mutual collaboration) and customary norms as dynamic cultural processes for negotiating identity, power, and reconciliation. This theoretical paradigm promotes the notion that customary institutions such as *Hibua Lamo* are not static old structures but living entities that constantly evolve and contribute considerably to peacebuilding and social development in multi-ethnic, post-conflict settings.

Four sample parameters are used in this study, as advocated by (Miles & Huberman, 1994), i.e., background, actors, events, and processes. The four parameters determine a person's eligibility as a research subject. Someone is considered worthy of being the subject of research for Miles & Huberman (1994), if it can meet several criteria, namely: 1) Background, i.e., the presence of relevant informants in the framework of activities related to the conflict resolution process that leads to the creation and maintenance of social cohesion. 2) Performers, i.e., local elites as actors with capabilities and acceptability, play an essential role in conflict resolution in the effort to create and select social cohesion. 3) Events, i.e., local elites following and knowing well the events of mass violence within the *Hibua Lamo* community, and 4) The process, i.e., local elites entrusted with the locus of conflict resolution, is directly involved in the stages of settlement conflict, so it is hoped to understand the proper direction of creating social stability by local wisdom.

In qualitative research, various data types are collected, and the time is made as efficient as possible to gather information at the research site. According to Zahle (2023), data collection procedures in qualitative research involve four types of strategies: observation, interviews, documents, and audiovisual. Observation in a qualitative approach, i.e., direct researchers down to the field (research sites) to observe the behavior and activities of individuals and communities who have been involved in the conflict. In this observation, researchers record / note, either structured or semistructured, by asking several questions that the researcher wants to know about the activities in the research. The researcher came directly to the object of research to observe the activities of the informants and to see the sites of traditional institutions (*Hibua Lamo*) and other institutions deemed to be able to obtain information and descriptions of data related to research purposes. Researchers have attempted through careful observation, following notes, photographing, describing, and analyzing every phenomenon encountered in the field research.

There is more to the qualitative interview method than just getting people's thoughts. It can be used in focus groups, phone, or in-person interviews. It is an essential tool for gaining access to collective memory, which is the shared stories and experiences that a group or community holds, especially regarding disputes and reconciliation efforts they have undertaken collectively. This approach enables participants to freely and in-depthly share their memories, feelings, and experiences through open-ended, unstructured inquiries. As a result, the interview turns into a lively conversation in which the researcher actively and sympathetically listens and asks questions (Lavee & Itzhakov, 2023), making it possible to record minute details and meanings ingrained in the collective memory. Face-to-face interviews enable a more responsive and intimate exchange, enabling the researcher to modify their questioning approach based on the situation and the participant's responses. A more thorough and nuanced knowledge of the experiences of conflict and reconciliation is also achieved by including both key informants and supporting informants, who enhance the data by offering a variety of complementary viewpoints. Supporting equipment like audio recorders and written notes ensure that the entire interview process and content are adequately documented and that the collective memory imparted can be thoroughly evaluated for research purposes. According to this argument, qualitative interviews are a potent tool for examining the intricate, shared memories that influence a community's perception of conflict and reconciliation. They are not just for gathering opinions.

In the qualitative research process, researchers also attempt to collect qualitative documents, such as public documents, newspapers, papers, office reports, or private documents, such as diaries, letters, and e-mail. The technique of collecting data to obtain the document, that is, researcher trace, either by going directly to the research object or through the library, internet newspaper, magazine, journal, and other media. Efforts to collect such data are notes, official administration, either in government offices or in customary institutions (*Hibua Lamo*), or other written data held by informants according to research needs. After collecting the written documents, the following are sorted, classified, analyzed, and interpreted as needed. In this category, the data can be photographs, art objects, videotapes, or any type of sound/sound. The process of data retrieval is done through the four methods and the necessary facilities/aids to facilitate the course of research referred to. The tools

include notebooks, pens, tape recorders, cameras, and transportation services, such as motorcycles, pedicabs, cars, and lodging as needed in the field. The validity of the data in a study is required to ensure that the research data has a degree of trust, accuracy, and objectivity in the data analysis process, along with the research objectives and methods used. According to Patton (1999), data validity is controlled by the "triangulation" method. This technique performs data checks through other sources by comparing and re-checking the degree of trust of information obtained through different times and tools.

The validity of the data is achieved by comparing data information. First, the observed data is compared with interview data. Second, the public data information submitted by informants is compared with what is communicated in person. Third, comparing what people say about a study with what is delivered over time. Fourth, it compares the state of a person with various views on the social status of others, such as ordinary people, education, position, and socio-economic and socio-cultural degrees. Fifth, the results of the interviews will be compared with written documents relating to research purposes. This research data is obtained directly by the researchers through observation (observation) on the object of research, interview, and document study and has been conferred and compared with the results of previous research. Researchers conduct these efforts to avoid plagiarism against the results of prior research, except cited as a formal and academically responsible referral.

This study uses an interactive model technique for its qualitative data processing and analysis. Interpreting data presented in textual and visual formats is a part of the data analysis process. Qualitative data analysis is done interactively and continuously. Miles & Huberman (1994) explained three activities by researchers in the interactive data analysis model: word condensation and data presentation. A qualitative data analysis technique such as Milles et al., a similar data analysis model also described by Creswell, which starts from the bottom up, is described in detail in the analytical steps by Creswell (2007) as follows: Step 1. Process and prepare data for analysis. This step involves transcribing interviews, scanning material, typing field data, or sorting and compiling the data into different types depending on the source of the information.

Step 2. After reading all the data, the first step is to build a general sense of the information obtained and reflect its overall meaning—step 3. Analyze more detail by coding the data. Coding is organizing material or information into written segments before using it—step 4. Apply the coding process to describe the settings, the people, the categories, and the themes to be analyzed. This description involves detailed information about the people, locations, or events in a particular setting. Researchers create codes to describe all information and then analyze them for ethnographic studies. Step 5. This step applies the narrative approach to convey the analysis results. Such an approach may include a discussion of the chronology of events and specific themes of interconnectedness. Step 6. In this step, data analysis is used to interpret data.

Result

The role of customary institutions in conflict resolution

In indigenous communities, cultures play a role in the rule of life in society. In a conflict, for example, adat functions as a social adhesive. The Tobelo community has had one of the means of social control (*Hibua Lamo*) as a local institution that serves as a social glue. Adat acts as an intermediary in disbanding conflict (arbitrage) conflict resolution. There are several research results on the role of customary institutions in conflict resolution:

Customary arbitration has been recognized and accepted as one of the methods to resolve conflicts in Ibibioland and other African communities. This is a mechanism whereby Indigenous elders in the community play a significant role in maintaining peace. They use different approaches, such as mediation, conciliation, negotiation and arbitration. The arbitration approach used is commonly known as customary arbitration. Assessment or award is usually binding on all parties. Customary arbitration is the voluntary surrender of all parties to a court of law.

The role of *Hibua Lamo* in conflict resolution in Tobelo

Horizontal conflicts and horizontal violence among religious adherents in Ambon 1999 successfully broke into various corners of North Maluku, such as in North Halmahera, especially in the *Hibua Lamo* community in Tobelo, where the people, known to uphold family values, dissolve in the case mass that leads to the loss of life. As a continuous scoop, starting from the 1999 Ambon conflict

to 2001, North Halmahera is one of the areas in North Maluku that rarely tired in the fighting. Killing each other between different religious siblings becomes an interesting scene for the provocateurs.

To immediately end the feast of sorrow, present the role of local elites and other elements of society, work to resolve conflicts and lay the groundwork for maintaining social cohesion. The active involvement of local communities and elites who are equally aware that they are just victims who dance on the drums of the interests of certain groups. Suppose compared with other areas, such as Ambon Maluku and Poso Central Sulawesi, convoluted in the settlement of the conflict, although to involve the Central Government (Malino I and II) led by Vice President Jusuf Kalla. The settlement of the conflict in Halmahera Utra, although without the involvement of the Central Government, the effort to resolve the conflict is relatively short and is considered successful in maintaining social cohesion. This can be realized thanks to the support and participation of customary institutions (*Hibua Lamo*) as a unifying symbol for all groups in North Halmahera.

The *Hibua Lamo* community's customs are highlighted in this study as valuable tools for resolving disputes and symbolic cultural manifestations. These principles actively function as proper instruments for arbitration and mediation by encouraging communication and compromise between disputing parties. Community leaders and elders use the established framework that customs and traditions give to resolve conflicts, maintain social harmony, and preserve group cohesion. These adat values go beyond their symbolic meaning and become essential to the community's ability to settle disputes sustainably by serving as efficient de-escalation and reconciliation methods. This practical function emphasizes acknowledging indigenous cultural practices as critical elements in peacebuilding initiatives in Tobelo and other settings. *Hibua Lamo* is one of the media for the people of North Halmahera who act as social glue and control. The existence of *Hibua Lamo* customary institution has been in existence since (1606). Still, before the conflict in North Halmahera, and Tobelo has not become a District, it is not widely known by the North Maluku public. *Hibua Lamo* became widely known after Tobelo became the center of the North Halmahera district government.

When Hein Namotemo became Regent of North Halmahera District, *Hibua Lamo* was enshrined as a unifying symbol for the people of North Halmahera. Hein Namotemo, from his inauguration as Regent of North Halmahera, the first period on 25 August 2005, continued with his inauguration as "Jikomakolano" (guard and protector of indigenous lands). Therefore, Hein bears two forces simultaneously: Head of Government and Leader of the Customary Council. These powers became Hein's capital in controlling the community in North Halmahera. Hein's leadership, during the two periods (2005-2015) as the Regent of North Halmahera, was thought to be able to build a community of various groups (the plural society) in a peaceful atmosphere. The dual role of Hein Namotemo as both the Regent of North Halmahera and "Jikomakolano" embodies the concept of hybrid governance or dual legitimacy, wherein formal governmental power converges with traditional customary authority. His position as Jikomakolano confers a moral and cultural legitimacy grounded in Indigenous norms and values, which complements and legitimizes his political authority as Regent. This hybrid governance model enables Hein to exercise control and unify the plural society by tapping into the state's institutional power and customary leadership's symbolic, moral authority, thereby fostering social order built on consensus and power. Is the atmosphere peaceful because it is built on the values, norms, and culture of local communities? Or is the unity of the people in that area built based on power? Dahrendorf (1959), says, "The relationship of society is built on two paradigms, namely, first, public relations is the result of mutual consent to the values, the result of the consensus omnium. Second, the bond and order in the life of society are based on power and coercion, based on the domination of one particular class and the subordination of the other, which must be reconciled with the use of force (Dahrendorf, 1959).

The thought of Dahrendorf (1958) is directly proportional to the dynamics of North Halmahera people's lives. When waves of conflict and violence hit *Hibua Lamo*'s community, they were forcibly killed, then at the same time had to be forcibly stopped. Cooperation between local elites and the state apparatus (National Soldiers of Indonesia-TNI and Police of Indonesia Republic-POLRI), under the *Hibua Lamo* spirit, will soon bring community stability under control. Furthermore, plenary cooperation by the local elite is required to maintain social cohesion. One of the local elites' efforts in the reconciliation process is to promote the traditional values of *Hibua Lamo* as the central pillar of conflict resolution. It turns out that returning to nature as an indigenous community is one of the most potent

ingredients to reunite the ever-divided ties of brotherhood. This method contributed significantly to the realization of peaceful reconciliation.

April 19, 2001, is the culmination of various reconciliation efforts, namely encounter and dialogue in the frame of "O Dora and O Hayangi" (love and affection) between Muslims and Christians in North Halmahera, which is marked by a peaceful declaration held on the Hibua field Lamo. According to Tindage (2006), the declaration event is based on Tobelo customs and uses custom symbols representing peace values. These symbols include areca, betel, oil coconut, sugar cane, spear, samarang (long-sized machetes commonly used in cakalele dance), salawaku (shield used with a sageang in cakalele dance), and tabako (cigarette), a type of traditional cigarette.

The ceremony was attended by conflicting parties (Islam and Christian) divided into five groups: priests and priests; second, traditional leaders; third, girls; fourth, groups of captains (war leaders); and fifth, members of the war army. Each group has its duties; priests and pastors, for example, pray for the event. The chaplains are in charge of sticking spears to the ground and putting my samarang and salaw. Members of the war troops were required to bring spears, samarang, and salawaku, then handed to the captain—two girls carrying a basket containing coconut oil and cane sugar. Adat leaders perform the customary procession, taking the coconut oil and sugar cane brought by the two girls and then pouring it into spear, samarang, and salawaku. Furthermore, traditional leaders consisting of adherents of Islam and Christianity give each other betel, areca, and tabako placed on the edge of the samarang. Earlier one of the adat leaders pronounced the words of peace in the local language as follows: "Ino foma katinyinga doka segoroho sugar igo om doro foma mote foma goguru de foma dodara," which has the meaning "let us unite the heart like sugar and coconut oil, walk together and love each other".

Community control strategy after the North Halmahera conflict

To maintain post-conflict social cohesion and violence within the *Hibua Lamo* community, a conflict resolution model that is in direct contact with the cultural values of the local community is necessary to create a social balance climate. The following chart illustrates the *Hibua Lamo* community relationship and the dynamics of community life. The picture of the *Hibua Lamo* community relations arrangement above shows that reuniting people who have a conflict with nuance between adherents of religion can not be realized if the peace process only involves religious leaders. The difficulty of uniting communities of different religions is because each defends and maintains akidahnya. Because it must immediately return to nature, which revives the values and norms in the culture of Hibua Lamo, serving as a means of social control. The language 'O Tobelo Hoka' should be the primary language among the communities of *Hibua Lamo*. The strategy of conflict resolution within the *Hibua Lamo* community involves the role of the Local Government, local elites, and customary institutions of *Hibua Lamo*. Local elites play an essential role in mediation to synergize the two major forces: the power of power (local government) and social forces (customary institute). Both forces are considered capable of uniting the rival groups. For instance, only religious leaders participated in the early attempts at peacemaking during a dispute between two religious groups in *Hibua Lamo*. However, discussions between religious leaders were not enough to unite society because each group firmly adhered to its beliefs (akidah).

The role of the local government of North Halmahera Regency is to make the regulation a social control to protect people's comfort. Therefore, the local government made a policy that involved customary institutions (*Hibua Lamo*) as a unifying symbol in the administration of the regional government. Implementing the policy of the North Halmahera District Government attempts to bring society together and succeeds in maintaining social stability. The role of traditional institutions (*Hibua Lamo*), as social control. Hibua Lamo serves as a gathering place to build and preserve "o adati de o 'galiti" (customs and rules), ie values and norms in Tobelo ethnic culture. *Hibua Lamo* as a large house, also functions as a consensus and agreed to build consensus, which together keep and maintain the spirit of reconciliation through the peaceful declaration on April 19, 2001.

The Local Government and local elites aggressively seek to inculcate *Hibua Lamo's* cultural values across society to settle disputes and preserve social harmony in North Halmahera. These values, which form the cornerstones of all facets of the community, include empathy, respect for one another, equity, honesty, candor, and mutual acknowledgment. The local government's and local elites' efforts to resolve conflicts are always based on these cultural values and directed by the overall framework of

the North Halmahera Government's vision of "Safe, Fair, Peaceful, and Prosperous." The participation of local elites who are both capable and acceptable is essential to maintaining social cohesiveness. Their ability to effectively resolve disputes and promote communication between disparate groups is called capacity. Acceptability indicates how much the community members respect, trust, and acknowledge these elites as their rightful representatives. Because they meet these two requirements, local leaders in North Halmahera—such as TNI-POLRI members, the Regional Representative Council (DPRD), religious leaders, customary leaders, and community leaders—are essential. Together, they have the skills and social acceptance to overcome differences, promote understanding, and work closely with the local government to create and preserve community stability. The Local Government strengthens the social fabric of North Halmahera by utilizing the skills of these competent and well-liked local leaders to guarantee that efforts at dispute resolution are inclusive, successful, and sensitive to cultural differences.

Hein Namotemo, who has two powers simultaneously, namely, Head of Government and Jikomakolano, harnesses this power to manage social cohesion. Hein obtains both powers because of their hard work as locomotives with other local elites in the conflict resolution process. This opportunity is then used as a tool of social control strategy through its policies, both as head of government and as "Jikomakolano" (guardian of the region). The combination of these two forces can nurture social cohesion. Society obtaining economic justice must be directly proportional to social justice.

Discussion

The role of customary institutions in conflict resolution

The conflict resolution role of *Hibua Lamo* in Tobelo society shares notable similarities with traditional conflict resolution mechanisms found in African societies such as the Yoruba and Igbo in Nigeria and the Pondo tribes in South Africa. Like *Hibua Lamo*, these African institutions emphasize community-based approaches that prioritize stakeholder engagement, consensus building, and the reconstruction of social relations to restore public order after conflict (Ajayi & Buhari, 2014; Aboh et al., 2023). In both contexts, traditional authorities such as elder councils, kings, and community assemblies are pivotal in mediating disputes through culturally grounded methods, including mediation, adjudication, and reconciliation. This contrasts with Western judicial systems that often rely on formal legal procedures detached from local social dynamics. The *Hibua Lamo* institution, functioning as a custodian of Tobelo customary law and social values, similarly provides a neutral space for dialogue and conflict management, fostering the spirit of *modotiki* (cooperation) to heal divisions caused by religious and social tensions (Pasteruk, 2020). Anthropological theories, such as Clifford Geertz's interpretation of religion as a cultural system shaping social order (Susen, 2024) and Jelle Wouters' insights into the mediation of religious conflicts in Indonesia (Wouters & Subba, 2013), further illuminate how these traditional mechanisms operate not merely as dispute resolution tools but as dynamic cultural processes that sustain social cohesion. Thus, *Hibua Lamo's* role in North Halmahera exemplifies how indigenous conflict resolution institutions, akin to African societies, offer effective, culturally resonant pathways for peacebuilding and social harmony in post-conflict settings.

In general, people in rural communities recognize the critical role played by traditional leaders in conflict resolution. It is said that some traditional leaders implement their mandated duties, especially when dealing with the issues of political parties. Generally, people recognize traditional leaders' critical role in resolving conflicts (Gunkel et al., 2016; Paalo & Issifu, 2021). Traditional rulers play an important role in maintaining law and order in society. This is particularly the case in the settlement of land disputes in various communities in Nigeria (Bayeh et al., 2015). The settlement of traditional conflicts has been widely practiced in the West Shewa Zone, especially Ambo woreda. According to traditional elders, this conventional conflict resolution mechanism has many advantages over modern court systems in terms of effectiveness, cost, time, and energy savings as they do at work in the morning and near residential areas, as well as a relatively permanent or sustainable solution for the warring parties. Conflict resolution can be achieved by creating specific clear and constitutional roles for traditional rulers with transparent mechanisms for either making or approving choices and demotivating or rejecting those who fail in their duties (Adebayo et al., 2013).

Customary institutions in handling or resolving conflicts in the Community of Kembata in Kembata-Tembaro Zones in the Nation Country, Nationalities and Southern Communities (SNNPRS),

conducted at KEDIDA. Customary law is central to maintaining order in communities, and it is developed and managed by local communities according to local circumstances (Ndulo, 2011).

From the description of the research results of several regions from various countries, it can be concluded that customary leaders have an essential role in conflict resolution efforts in indigenous peoples. Customary approaches in the conflict resolution process can work because indigenous peoples uphold their cultural values. Ethnic Tobelo before, including a community that values customs in *Hibua Lamo*. Therefore, when the wave of conflict that had ravaged the dynamics of the life of this community, through the initiative of the adat leaders, they shared rise and reactivated the function and role of *Hibua Lamo* as a social glue, agreed as a media of conflict resolution. The Tobelo community's traditional values, which include a strong feeling of kinship and respect for traditional leaders, are the foundation of *Hibua Lamo's* success. The Adat leaders have rightful authority as dependable mediators who settle disputes by discussion and agreement. Restoring social harmony and bolstering community solidarity are the main goals of this procedure. Furthermore, in light of the community's shifting dynamics, *Hibua Lamo* is a powerful tool for social bonding and conflict resolution due to the shared understanding of adat as a living tradition.

The role of Hibua Lamo in conflict resolution in Tobelo

Food objects and procedures implementation that is, 1). The spear pinned to the ground, followed by the laying of my samarang and salaw, illustrates that the hostility between the two sides is over. 2). Coconut oil and cane sugar poured onto my spear, my samarang and salaws illustrate that both sides are restarting a new life side by side and peacefully and sweetly applying between them like the sweetness of sugar. 3). Giving each other betel, betang, and tabako illustrates the brotherhood's intimacy and forgiving each other.

Customary institutions in Tobelo society function and serve as a tool in the administration and development of humanity in various areas of life. Hein Namotemo, as Head of Government and "Jikomakolano" (guardian of indigenous territories), played an essential role in uniting two institutions (Local Government Institutions and Customary Institutions) in North Halmahera Regional Government Administration. Attempting to break the conflict with violence in a plural society like the people of North Halmahera is not easy. Furnivall and Smith, who introduced his "pessimism theory", said that people of different ethnicities could almost certainly not coexist peacefully, so they must be separated. "The Hibua Lamo community is of the same ethnicity, the Tobelo ethnic group, but along with its development, social change occurs in social life; they are in the plural zone (Titaley & Nur, 2022).

Furnivall (1954) doubts the harmony of the pluralistic society with his pessimism theory. Still, the Prophet Muhammad, on the contrary, with his Medina Charter, succeeded in unifying the pluralistic society that existed in the City of Madinah, the Islamic society with Jewish and Christian institutions in free, harmonious, and peaceful. "The apostle did not develop a discriminatory consensus. The conciliation technology of the Prophet Muhammad was made fairly and not politicized with politics. Prophet Muhammad does not lead reconciliation to a consensus that harms the other side" (Surwandono, 2012).

Persistent tensions and conflicts occur daily in plural societies, which are defined by the coexistence of multiple ethnic, religious, or cultural groups, according to Furnivall's thesis of pessimistic pluralism. Furnivall contends that the absence of a dominant group or unifying national identity in these countries breeds social fragmentation, rivalry, and mistrust. Because he argued that such differences make it difficult to produce stable administration and social cohesiveness, frequently leading to chronic instability, his perspective is generally negative. The situation at Tobelo, on the other hand, offers a complex and somewhat different reality. The Tobelo community exhibits notable religious plurality despite being ethnically homogeneous, with most members belonging to a single ethnic group. As Furnivall explains, in ethnically plural civilizations, this theological diversity creates intricate conflicts and even fractures lines within the community. But in contrast to Furnivall's gloomy perspective, Tobelo has shown to be a remarkable conflict manager and resolver (Furnivall, 1954).

The contribution of traditional values that cut across religious lines is crucial to this achievement. Tobelo's religious communities share and uphold these adat principles, a strong unifying factor. Despite theological differences, the adat system offers a shared cultural framework that promotes respect, understanding, and collaboration. *Hibua Lamo*, a traditional leader who serves as a mediator and steward of these interfaith customary norms, is essential to this process. The leadership of

Hibua Lamo is a prime example of how adat-based local organizations may successfully handle social harmony and dispute settlement. *Hibua Lamo* aids in mending divisions and preserving peace within the community by evoking common customs and standards that transcend religious boundaries. Therefore, the Tobelo example shows that pluralism, particularly religious diversity within a single ethnic group, does not always result in conflict or fragmentation, even if Furnivall's pessimistic pluralism theory emphasizes the difficulties of diverse societies. Instead, inclusive traditional values and capable local leadership may turn potential points of contention into pillars of harmony and peace.

The historical context and symbolic meanings of the Medina Charter and the Jakarta Charter illustrate how foundational documents serve as powerful social adhesives in plural societies, linking directly to deliberation and compromise theories in managing diversity. The Medina Charter functioned as a pioneering governance framework in a plural society by instituting norms that balanced different community interests through deliberative consensus and mutual respect, making it a "technology" of social cohesion and conflict resolution. Similarly, the Indonesian pioneers faced the challenge of uniting a diverse nation under the Jakarta Charter, where the deliberate removal of the phrase "the obligation to implement the Islamic shari'a" reveals a pragmatic compromise essential to maintain unity and peace in a multi-ethnic, multi-religious republic. This act echoes theories of democratic deliberation, which emphasize inclusivity, negotiation, and the prioritization of collective harmony over rigid ideological demands, reflecting the "spirit" of conflict resolution embedded in these charters.

A social institution is needed to unite the conflicting society as a symbol that all parties can accept. To create and maintain social cohesion for the people already in the disaster zone, *Hibua Lamo* comes as the Medina Charter and the Jakarta Charter become "Social control and unifying symbols. If the community kinship system of the Tobelo people within the *Hibua Lamo* community can be well preserved, then the condition of the society could be a percentage symbol of social cohesion in North Halmahera. The presence of *Hibua Lamo* as a unifying social institution in North Halmahera exemplifies the critical role of localized symbols and structures in fostering reconciliation and social cohesion in post-conflict societies. As a culturally resonant "social control" mechanism, much like the Medina Charter or Jakarta Charter in other contexts, *Hibua Lamo* embodies the kinship-based values, norms, and socio-cultural fabric of the Tobelo people. This indigenous institution acts as a conflict resolution "technology" that draws legitimacy from deeply rooted local traditions, enabling acceptance and cooperation among diverse groups and serving as an emblem of stable social cohesion despite previous conflicts.

Conclusion

Conflict and violence within the *Hibua Lamo* community can not be resolved through the approach of religious leaders. In contrast, in many cases, religious conflicts can be resolved through religious leaders' approaches. The conciliation and conflict resolution process in North Halmahera can succeed and immediately unite conflicting communities through a local elite (customary) approach under the spirit of *Hibua Lamo* cultural values. Hein Namotemo (traditional leader), as a locomotive of conflict resolution, brought him two powers, as Head of the Regional Government and "*Jikomakolano*" (guardian of customary territory) in North Halmahera. Hein's two powers succeeded in creating the stability of a conflicted society under the control of government institutions (regulatory control) and customary institutions (social control). Both forces always synergize to maintain social cohesion. Three factors give the spirit to maintain social cohesion within the *Hibua Lamo* community; those are: "*First*, the effort to instill and preserve the cultural values of *Hibua Lamo* universally to the community such as the value of affection, mutual value, fair value, honesty, and truth value and immediately eliminate feelings of resentment. *Second*, Always preserve mutually agreed reconciliation values on April 19, 2001. *Third*, it enables and empowers the role of customary institutions as a social glue and pillar of the preservation of local cultural values.

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