Environmental Ethics of Belu Society in Indonesia and Bobonaro Society in Timor Leste: An Ecological Reflection

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Abstract. Environmental ethics deals with the moral dimensions of human relations with the environment. The focus of this research is to concentrate on an effort to construct environmental ethical values based on the local indigenous people of Belu, East Nusa Tenggara Province-Indonesia, and Bobonaro District-Negara Timor Leste. The research findings show local indigenous human relations with the ecological reality of the Belu community, namely Badu Tradition (prohibition), Sau (harvest), and traditional weaving crafts. Meanwhile the local indigenous people of Bobonaro District, namely: tara bandu (prohibition), na'in (guardian of nature), diversification of plants, terraced land and stone wall fences, traditional medicines, and guarding of water sources. This finding is an important basis for making an ecological reflection based on local wisdom in the context of environmental conservation to support sustainable development. The environmental ethics of the Belu and Bobonaro people are interpreted as natural resources and ecological culture, the legacy of traditions, and the reality of the spiritual nature of the Belu and Bobonaro people in building relationships with the environment. Efforts to care for the environment are shown by respecting the social rules and norms that govern the relationship between local Belu and Bobonaro people with the environment. This local wisdom of Belu and Bobonaro can be a theoretical reference in caring for the environment. Local indigenous-based environmental ethics thinking is very important in helping to solve the problem of less than ideal relations between humans and the environment that is still happening in the implementation of the development that is being carried out. The findings of this study can make an important contribution to environmental conservation efforts to support the big idea of sustainable development.

1. Introduction
This research articulates and construct the concept of environmental ethics in the Belu-Indonesia and Bobonaro-Timor Leste communities as an important input for interested parties, including the government and local communities of the two countries which are directly next to each other. It is hoped that the governments of Indonesia and Timor Leste can pay attention to and apply environmental ethical values based on local wisdom in preserving the environment and supporting the concept of sustainable development.
2. Method
The research method used is ethical reflection and a phenomenological analysis approach to literature related to community groups and the environmental context in Belu and Bobonaro Districts as a philosophical way to get the truth. The theoretical framework uses Aristotle's ethical theory of virtue and other ethical theories relevant to environmental themes.

3. Result & Discussion
3.1. Local Indigenous Belu and Bobonaro: Natural Resources and Ecological Cultural Practices
Every community has local indigenous which is unique and distinctive concerning nature. Likewise with the people of Belu District-Indonesia and Bobonaro District-Timor Leste. Belu and Bobonaro are areas where local wisdom values are infused in the way humans have a relation with nature. The reality of Belu and Bobonaro Districts should be reflected ethically to obtain sound ethical thinking. Local wisdom or local indigenous human relations with the nature of the Belu community, which are Badu Tradition (prohibition), Sau (harvest), and traditional weaving crafts. Meanwhile the local indigenous people of Bobonaro District, tara bandu (prohibition), na'in (guardian of nature), diversification of plants, terraced land and stone wall fences, traditional medicines, and guarding of water sources. This proves that the Belu and Bobonaro people have local indigenous wealth which has certain philosophical values, especially to preserve the environment.

Local indigenous is a term that describes human interaction with natural reality as cultured creatures in the context of a particular locality. Macintyre calls the contexts the background. “I use the word 'setting' here as a relatively inclusive term. A Social setting may be an institution, it may be what I have called practice or it may be a milieu of some other humankind. But it is central to the notion of a setting as I am going to understand it that a setting has a history, a history within which the histories of individual agents not only are but have to be, situated, just because without the setting and its changes through time the history of the individual agent and his changes through time will be unintelligible. Of course, the same piece of behavior may belong to more than one setting.”

In the cultural philosophy discourse, local indigenous are categorized into microculture. “Microcultures may include ethnic groups, indigenous peoples, genders, age categories, and more.”

Local indigenous refers to the context of material objects and human subjects in certain areas who act culturally to care for and preserve the environment. Local indigenous crystallizes in themselves the value of unique local wisdom - original, interesting, and amazing. It is a pure condition or context, free from domination intervention in any form of the hegemony of manipulative power. It is perceived as a natural context that is exotic-natural and even sacred, not otherwise profane or merely material.

Local indigenous is affirmed as social capital in the social community of the Belu and Bobonaro people that their rights should be protected. Local indigenous includes cultural rights which should be protected, fought for, and preserved for their existence for its continuity. Local indigenous truly is a perspective that is oriented towards territory (context) and human actors as concrete persons who think and act in real terms. Local indigenous is a fragmentation of the reality of cultural wealth which has several main dimensions as stated by Posey and Dutfield (1996) that local indigenous is the heirloom of local indigenous people such as manufacturing objects, pictures, art goods, videos or recordings of songs, biogenetic resources and other material goods used by communities of traditional society in living their lives as cultured beings. “… The cultural heritage of local people, such as manufactured objects, pictures, crafts, or video and audio recordings of songs and performances. Other visitors may be seeking to collect biogenetic resources (biological and genetic) or other resources used by traditional communities.”

Thus local indigenous is understood as all the wealth and cultural natural resources that live, are known, owned, and maintained in traditional cultured communities in various worlds, including the people of Belu and Bobonaro Regencies. Local indigenous as a basis is local wisdom of the cultural nature possessed by traditional communities that are far from the influence of modernization and the negative impact of globalization. Because the essence of local indigenous is closely related to the
people belonging to certain primitive-traditional cultures that are unique, then potentially it can be used as an attractive proposition from the perspective of romanticism-aesthetic nature and culture. It needs to be preserved as a cultural property that guarantees and supports the dynamics of the evolution of the natural environment. In the end, the local indigenous Belu and Bobonaro are cultural elements that can be relied on to support a certain social ecology [8] order for nature’s goodness.

3.2. **Local Indigenous Belu and Bobonaro: Legacy of Ancestral Traditions**

Local indigenous relations between humans and the nature of the Belu community, namely Badu Tradition (prohibition), Sau (harvest), and traditional weaving crafts. Meanwhile the local indigenous people of Bobonaro District, namely: tara bandu (prohibition), na'in (guardian of nature), diversification of plants, terraced land and stone wall fences, traditional medicines, and guarding of water sources. All these local indigenous are the legacy of their ancestors from the past.

The local indigenous Belu and Bobonaro are a legacy from the traditions [9] of their ancestors in the past. It is usually in the form of traditions of human inheritance in the past that have been passed down through the tribes and ethnicities of the human race to the present and will continue. In this context, of course, what is meant is the traditional heritage of the Belu and Bobonaro people. Local indigenous covers the dimension of time: past, present, and future. Tradition is a certain background, where humans exist with other entities (others) in the frame of "being together" as an integral unit between generations across time to time.

MacIntyre conceptualizes tradition as a practice that is lived by the human race, both individually and socially from generation to generation, which forms a unity of living together. “A living tradition then is a historically extended, socially embodied argument, and an argument precisely in part about the goods which constitute that tradition. Within a tradition, the pursuit of goods extends through generations, sometimes through many generations. Hence the individual's search for his or her good is generally and characteristically conducted within a context defined by those traditions of which the individual's life is a part, and this is true both of those goods which are internal to practices and of the goods of single life.” [10]

Traditions are usually local practices or habits that are lived by mankind in their social territory. Tradition reveals life wisdom and human historical context in a particular era. This was detected through the relics of the people who owned the noble traditions concerned. “The answer is the key part is the exercise or the lack of exercise of the relevant virtues. The virtues find their point and purpose not only in sustaining those relationships necessary if the variety of goods internal to practices are to be achieved and not only in sustaining the form of an individual life in which that individual may seek out his or her good as the good of his or her whole life but also in sustaining those traditions which provide both practices and individual lives with their necessary historical context. [11]

The local indigenous traditions of Belu and Bobonaro crystallize in themselves moral-ethical values in the context of the environment. These moral values are in the form of norms, rules, customs, knowledge systems, habits, and ritual practices that contain internal 'wisdom values' shared by individuals or community groups that continue traditions in Belu and Bobonaro. Tradition is a source of value that directs the thoughts, attitudes, and actions of individuals in the social life of the Belu and Bobonaro people with nature. Thus, tradition is a philosophy that provides a vision, orientation, and guidelines for the behavior of individuals and the communities they own, in this case, the Belu and Bobonaro communities.

The Belu and Bobonaro communities were born in a certain circle or traditional context. He learns, grows, and explores life experiences based on the unique wisdom values contained in his tradition of preserving nature. They think, behave, and act based on traditional values which they accept as facticity, a fact that is given as a natural heritage and from previous generations. They cannot be outside that tradition. So, it is also impossible for them to destroy their traditions as the vein and heart of their life. They live according to the structure of the tradition as something that makes their lives safe and peaceful in life. Because tradition is a general phenomenon and a characteristic [12] that is closely attached to the history of people's life journey.
3.3. Local Indigenous Belu and Bobonaro: Nature's Spiritual Reality

Local wisdom or local indigenous human relations with the nature of the Belu community, namely Badu Tradition (prohibition), Sau (harvest), and traditional weaving crafts. Meanwhile the local indigenous people of Bobonaro District, namely: tara bandu (prohibition), na’in (guardian of nature), diversification of plants, terraced land and stone wall fences, traditional medicines, and guarding of water sources. This proves that the Belu and Bobonaro people have local indigenous wealth which has certain philosophical values, especially to preserve the environment.

In the Belu and Bobonaro communities, local indigenous is also a natural phenomenon that is believed to contain spiritual-ecological values that should be appreciated. This statement describes Auguste Comte's (1798-1857) paradigm regarding the first level of evolution of mind, namely the theological stage [13] in the history of the development of human thought. Meanwhile, eco-theologians recommend that even moral values should be based on "spiritual democracy" from God's creation of nature, including everything from the smallest (sub-atomic) creation to the spiral nebula [14]. This was confirmed by Pulitzher, a religious environmentalist who wrote the poem "ultimate democracy" in which plants, animals, and humans have the same rights as fellow citizens of God's kingdom in this network of spiritual natural ecosystems [15].

This assumption shows that local indigenous are fragments or pieces of reality that have religious, sacred, and mythic-magical nuances that demand religious respect from humans for nature. This is also following Albert Schweitzer's thinking about the principle of "reverence for life" which opens the direction of reflection on modern environmental philosophy which prioritizes the mysticism approach rather than logic [16] in the relationship between humans and natural entities. This local indigenous dimension of religiosity and sacredness becomes a normative-ethical order that regulates human attitudes to maintain harmony and unity between humans and natural elements. The local indigenous people of Belu and Bobonaro are territorial, areas of sacred value to the people who live there and inhabit them sustainably. The sacredness of the local indigenous territories of Belu and Bobonaro can be a forum that allows networks of various ecosystems to live and interact sustainably. Relational relationships that occur in the local indigenous realm occur naturally. The relationship between one element and another takes place in a 'closed cycle' as one of the basic elements in the ecological cycle (ecological circle). This presupposes that there should be no excessive human intervention to hinder the movement or dynamic-evolution of the network of relationships. Human existence in the context of local indigenous nature is only one element that needs to act to ensure and support the continuity of life that occurs among various natural elements. So it is unethical if humans destroy the dynamic evolution of natural ecosystem networks with various negative actions that are destructive.

In Belu and Bobonaro, local indigenous as a spiritual realm is represented in spiritual-normative practices around forest areas called 'protected forest' or 'forbidden forest'. In the local language, it is called the Tara Bandu tradition and the Badu tradition. The Belu and Bobonaro communities have protected and well-preserved forest areas/areas. For the people of Belu and Bobonaro, the forest is considered to have spiritual and sacred values. Protected/prohibited forests are forest ecosystems that are allowed to process in an evolutive-autonomous manner without excessive human intervention as a continuation of the tradition to manage them. This is because the forest is considered a mythic-magical entity, especially by rural communities in Belu and Bobonaro Districts. In the prohibited forest area, all ecosystem networks of biodiversity elements grow and interact in a peaceful, calm, and harmonious manner. Regarding the reality of this forbidden forest, rural communities make it a place to carry out sacred rituals or spiritual ritual practices without aiming to exploit it carelessly.

4. Closing

From the discussions that have been carried out, it is clear that the people of Belu Regency, East Nusa Tenggara Province-Indonesia, and the people of the Bobonaro District-Negara Timor Leste have local wisdom values or indigenous people with environmental ethical characteristics. The characteristics of the local indigenous people of the Belu and Bobonaro people can be an ethical contribution that is useful for the creation of environmental ethics based on local wisdom that should be preserved. The
local wisdom of the Belu and Bobonaro people presents an ethical principle that local wisdom in an ecological context is interpreted by natural resources and ecological culture, the legacy of past generations, and the reality of the spiritual nature of the Belu and Bobonaro people with the environment. One of the efforts to care for the natural environment is shown by respecting the social rules and norms that govern human relations with nature in Belu and Bobonaro. Belu and Bobonaro's local wisdom creates environmental ethics to support sustainable development in Indonesia.

5. References

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