Ahap: Keywords for Social Tolerance in the Pluralistic Environment of Pamatangsiantar City

by Erond L. Damanik

The International Journal of

Interdisciplinary Cultural Studies

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Ahap: Keywords for Social Tolerance in the Pluralistic Environment of Pamatangsiantar City

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Abstract: This article aims to explore and discuss social tolerance in the pluralistic environment in urban areas. The study was motivated by the predicate awarded to the Pamatangsiantar, one of the most tolerant cities in Indonesia in 2018 and 2019. Social tolerance, the focus of this study, is a dimension of democratic values. The theoretical basis referred to is democratic personalities and religious freedom. The study was carried out using a qualitative method, based on a pragmatic methodological approach to historical and contemporary paradigms. The data was collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and questionnaires. All data went through in-depth analysis according to the descriptive-qualitative paradigm. The study found delicate ("ahap"), a dimension of democratic values, had inspired delicately ("marahap"), the characteristic of democratic personalities to produce vigilance ("saahap"), attitude, and mental structure to tolerate. The conclusion of this study is an intersection of religious, ethnic, and cultural attributes to accommodate the existing differences. Democratic personalities, the basic characteristics of social tolerance are a logical consequence of historical experiences, blood relations, and contributions tolerant figures.

Keywords: Ahap, Marahap, Saahap, Morality, Intersection

Introduction

In Indonesia, a common phenomenon during the last decade (2010–2020) is that intolerant behavior has increased in urban areas compared to rural areas. We observe that the triggers for intolerant behavior are: (1) the emergence and existence of radicals, (2) the spirit of locality during the decentralization period, (3) the politicization of identity in general elections, (4) failure of multiculturalism education, (5) lack of nationalist and tolerant figures, and (6) economic disparities. This study is intended to fill a research gap by focusing on the dimensions of democratic values and religious freedom. More specifically, this study targets the roots of social tolerance in a pluralistic environment in urban areas.

More deeply, this study is a comparison amidst increasing intolerant behavior in cities in Indonesia, focusing on Pamatangsiantar City, North Sumatra. These studies are motivated by two contemporary social phenomena in the research location: (1) the second pluralistic city in North Sumatra Province, where social cohesion developed properly, and (2) holds the predicate of the most tolerant city in Indonesia 2018 and 2019. This study is an attempt to find a model to create social tolerance in a pluralistic and multicultural society. In Indonesia, social tolerance is an important issue given the diversity such as religion, ethnicity, race, skin color, origin history, language, including social system. Intolerant, even radical behavior is found in various areas such as racism, terrorism, bomb attacks, rejection and disbandment of worship, burning places of worship, and disbandment of traditional ceremonies.

This study is relatively new. Except for the 2017 and 2018 tolerant city survey reports, no other references were found for this important theme. In general, surveys are built on quantitative data without in-depth qualitative exploration and ignores historical experiences, social relationships, and contributions of tolerant figures. This study uses a social-historical paradigm, tracing the colonial to contemporary periods.

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The population of the cities before 1907 tended to be homogeneous and monoculture, Simalungunese. However, due to Dutch colonial plantations, the city turned into a pluralistic and multicultural area, marked by the presence of people from Mandailing, Minangkabau, Tobanese, Javanese, Karonese, Pakpak, Malays, Angkola, Banjar, and Ambon. In addition, the Chinese, Indians, Pakistani, and Arabs are also found in the cities. The diversity of the population is characterized by ethnicity, skin color, race, cultural attributes, including the coexistence of six official state religions; Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, as well as *Malim,* Tobanese beliefs. Another factor was the economic and political aspects that had affected social stratification and differentiation.

The social reality in the cities today is recorded in three main aspects: (1) the existence of associations based on ethnicity, religion, race, and clan; (2) stratification based on economy, political affiliation, and profession; and (3) the base office of Protestant, Catholic, Pentecostal, Methodist, Adventist, Bethel, and Islamic religious institutions. As a plural city, social differentiation usually triggers intolerance, a generally disliked attitude. However, the social reality revealed a different phenomenon where instead tolerance of thrived. City communities are united in an integrative, harmonious, and cohesive order. Each different individual or group bound by religious, ethnic, racial, cultural, or professional associations, or economic stratification or political affiliation, was never an obstacle to social harmony. More specifically, in the last three decades, the city reflects the stability of social cohesion, marked by the freedom to practice religious, cultural, and social activities. This achievement is the basis for the predicate of the most tolerant city in Indonesia.

The main problem of the study is how the initial formation of tolerance is based on historical experience, as well as its actualization in contemporary life in a pluralistic environment. The questions boil down to finding the value systems that underlie the social tolerance and habitus of democratic personalities in a pluralistic environment. The internalization and enculturation of permissive attitudes, behaviors, and actions reflect a value system, a social engineering model to create a social tolerance. The main problem is built on three secondary assumptions: (1) bad historical experiences, bloody social relations, and clashes between ethnic groups affected social tolerance; (2) social cohesion is a manifestation of social tolerance that appreciates differences; and (3) social tolerance only grows and develops if it becomes a fundamental need for every individual in a pluralistic environment. Social tolerance, the basic assumption of the study, is that a democratic value system based on the intersection of religious, ethnic, and cultural morality has inspired democratic personalities to create a cohesive order.

The urgency and significance of the study is not just exploring tolerance in pluralistic environments, adding an insight, or immersive studies. This study is more specifically directed to find the basic mechanisms of social tolerance according to situations of ethnicity in a pluralistic environment. The city's characteristics are marked by three basic aspects: (1) social diversity—ethnicity, religion, language, cultural, economic, and political attributes; (2) majority-minority relations to support tolerance; and (3) strengthening religious freedom to reduce intolerance. This study, more specifically focused on democratic personalities, typical characteristics that reflect tolerant attitudes, behaviors, and actions; (1) the value system underlying democratic personalities, and (2) its actualization in the plural environment. The city was established as one of the most tolerant in Indonesia with a complex diversity of sixteen ethnic and cultral groups. Indeed, picking up another location is great. However, the initial purpose of this article is to highlight the specific tolerance in the city. Understanding the seeds of tolerance in the city, it can be a reference for other cities to cultivate social tolerance.

Social tolerance is the internalization of value systems and tolerance morality, the intersection of religious, ethnic, and cultural identities, which serve as the basis of solidarity to accommodate differences. Social tolerance, therefore, only grows if each individual reflects a democratic personality, a trait of a tolerant society in a pluralistic environment. Tolerance is the forerunner of social cohesion. The study departs from the theory of social tolerance, particularly

the dimensions of democratic values and religious freedom. Research positioning is based on the state of the arts, as described below.

Theoretical Framework

What is social tolerance? Discussing social tolerance, both theoretically and practically, scholars have different views according to the disciplines and the characteristics of the society. Discipline leads to a point of view, while the characteristics have implications for the approach used. Social tolerance in pluralistic environments differs from that in a homogeneous and monoculture society. The study of social tolerance in modern societies such as Europe and the United States cannot be equated with transitional societies like Indonesia. The social tolerance for Western society is currently focused on individual behavior, while in transitional societies it is still focused on balancing the majority-minority relationship. Furthermore, tolerance in modern countries tends to be individualistic, while in developing countries, it tends to be communalistic.

The study of tolerance requires multiple dimensions. The Global Social Tolerance Index focuses on gender, immigrants, minorities, and religion (Zanakis, Newburry, and Taras 2016). Another dimension is religious tolerance, covering three main indicators: (1) government privileges of certain religions; (2) government regulations limiting religious freedom; and (3) social regulations limiting religious freedom (Grim and Finke 2006; Finke 2013). Besides, other dimensions are emphasized on interreligious dialogue, women and religion relationship, religion and death relationship, multicultural society, and homosexuality (Liberati, Longaretti, and Michelangeli 2019). Another dimension is eight democratic values: (1) neighbors, (2) the basis for choosing a mate, (3) interpersonal trust, (4) comfort in sociopolitical institutions, (5) considerations made when choosing to house, (6) considerations made when choosing workers, (7) considerations for choosing schools, and (8) religious and cultural expressions (Inglehart 1971, 1990, 1997; Ingelhart and Baker 2000; Chavan and Kandaiya 2013; Fanggidae, Subroto, and Nareswari 2020).

Social tolerance has ten indicators: (1) support for democracy, (2) foreigners and ethnic minorities, (3) gender equality, (4) religion, (5) globalization, (6) attitudes toward the environment, work, family, and politics, (6) national identity, (7) culture, (8) diversity, (9) insecurity, and (10) subjective well-being (World Values Survey 2004; Jackman 1977). In Western society, the dimension of social tolerance is emphasized on permissiveness toward immigrants, abortion, divorce, euthanasia, suicide, prostitution, homosexuality, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, cloning, IVF, and disabilities (Lane and Reber 2008; Cochrane and Nevitte 2014; Cohen, Landegehem, Carpentier, and Deliens 2013; Dobbernack, Modood and Triandafyllidou 2013; Lane and Reber 2008; May 2000; Moors and Wennekers 2003; Nevitte and Cochrane 2006; Verbakel and Jaspers 2010; Vermeer 2012; Inglehart and Baker 2000; Cohen et al. 2013).

Permissiveness is geared toward the choice not to marry, sexual dolls, digital flesh, or artificial intelligence. The understanding of tolerance in Western or developed countries reflects the consideration of individual rights in society (Ebanda et al. 2018). Furthermore, in Asian or developing countries such as Indonesia, for example, social tolerance focuses on social harmony or majority-minority relationships. Hereinafter, the Indonesian government limits attitudes, behavior, and actions that are considered normal in Western countries or contrary to Eastern culture.

Tolerance is derived from the Latin *tolerare* which means "to bear or endure" (UNESCO 1996, 2). Tolerance becomes a reference for a personal approach, a political-institutional practice, a philosophical or religious ideal for differences in society (Mather and Tranby 2014). Tolerance is an important element of democracy and world stability (Hjerm et al. 2020), as well as freedom for civil society (Gibson 2013; Persell, Green, and Gurevich 2001). Tolerance embodies harmony over differences (UNESCO 1995). Tolerance is an attitude of respect,

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acceptance, appreciation, and accommodation for cultural differences, expressions, and ways of human life. Social tolerance, in other words, is a humanitarian action, it needs to be maintained and implemented in all living activities in the social world. Joy over differences reinforces human values and guides a sense of friendship (UNESCO 1996).

Social tolerance, in a sociocultural perspective, is "sympathy or indulgence for beliefs or practices differing from or conflicting with one's own" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary 2010, 47). Social tolerance contains "shared values, articulated as the basis of social cohesion" (Sullivan and Transue 1999, 627), and "degree of recognition and willingness to provide equal rights" (Zanakis, Newburry, and Taras 2016, 483). Furthermore, social tolerance "promotes peace among different groups to support self-actualization" (Corneo and Jeanne 2009, 23). Tolerance, thus, is the "core of life, an integral part of human rights" (Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus 1982, 23).

Tolerance and intolerance are observed in social life. The ten signs of tolerance consist of; (1) the absence of racial, pejorative, gender-biased, and insulting expressions of ethnicity and religion, (2) equality of each individual in society, (3) social relations based on mutual respect, (4) equality of political participation of minorities, male or female, (5) majority-minority and indigenous people relations, (7) communal events, (8) cultural manifestations, (9) religiosity practices, and (10) cooperation between groups (UNESCO 2004). Conversely, the fifteen signs of intolerance consist of; denial of language rights, stereotyping, teasing, prejudice, scapegoating, discrimination, ostracism, harassment, desecration and effacement, bullying, expulsion, exclusion, segregation, repression, and destruction (UNESCO 2004).

Intolerance is the "least liked" attitude toward individuals, groups, and all their social attributes (Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus 1979; Sullivan and Transue 1999). Intolerance is born on the belief in the superiority of the group, beliefs, and the way of life of someone who is believed to be superior to other groups. It is a symptom, a social disease, and a threat to social life. Social tolerance, thus, is "openness to intolerance" (Persell, Green, and Gurevich 2001, 203) and "prioritizing social cohesion" (Lane and Reber 2008, 5). Only in a tolerant order, social cohesion will be born, grow, and develop properly. Furthermore, intolerance leads to intolerant behavior and thoughts, in which groups deny each other and are unable to coexist. Social cohesion reflects closeness, collaboration, and expectations of stability for the "democratic personalities" (Inglehart 1971, 1990, 1997; Inglehart and Baker 2000; Nevitte 1996; Cochrane and Nevitte 2014; Ho 2018).

The democratic personalities are the "accumulation of values, norms, and permissiveness" (Ellison and Musick 1993, 379), preconditions of cohesion, integration mechanisms, and conflict reduction (Verkuyten 2005; Budd 2015). Democratic personalities cannot thrive in an intolerant situation. Bad and bloody relations, the majority-minority gap, the frequency of social conflicts even wars, are the reasons that encourage democratic personalities (Maksum, Surwandono, and Azizah 2019). Besides, the dominance of religion, ethnicity, race, and culture, "determines how humans can live, think and act" (Habermas 2003, 2), but it is difficult develop democratic personalities. The plural environment influences tolerance, perceptions, and political attitudes, "pluralistic intolerance" in the United States, "focused intolerance" in Israel, and "pluralistic tolerance" in New Zealand (Sullivan et al. 1984, 319).

Religiosity, according to integration theory (Durkheim 1992), correlates with the morality of tolerance. A religious person is more affirming and adopting norms and values, and less approving of all things that are against their religion, such as multiculturalism, euthanasia, abortion, suicide, divorce, prostitution, gender equality, IVF, transgender, including LGBT (Halman and Gelissen 2009; Moore and Ovadia 2006). The more religious humans are in real life, the lower the level of tolerance (Vermeer 2012; Habermas 2004). Religious values and norms, in other words, usually exhibit intolerant behavior. Compared to Western Europe which is more stable, religious instability in Eastern Europe proves detrimental to social tolerance (Halman and Gelissen 2009; Verbakel and Jaspers 2010; Van Heuvelen and Robinson 2017).

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The positive contribution of religiosity to tolerance is influenced by economic prosperity (Achterberg et al. 2009; Inglehart 1971, 1990, 1997; Inglehart and Baker 2000; Moore and Ovadia 2006), the politics of tolerance to reduce religious moral sentiment and revert to collectivism to optimize welfare (Kaplow and Shavell 2007; D'Angelo 2007).

Besides, the politics of tolerance in favor of minorities play a role in social cohesion (Sullivan et al. 1985), built through the educational process (European Commission 2016; Scheepers, Grotenhuis, and van der Slik 2002; Doorn 2014), or historical experience, weather warfare, destruction, conquest, or violence (Agius and Ambrosewicz 2003). Parents, friends, school, family, relatives, and especially the government play an important role in fostering tolerance (Lundberg ed. 2017). Furthermore, tolerant figures help develop social tolerance (Damanik 2020a). Tolerance, regardless of any mechanism, under coercion, requires a universal value system, generally accepted morality (Corneo and Jeanne 2007; Diamond 2012), the basis of solidarity for creating social cohesion (Prasetyo 9 al. 2020).

Based on the state of the art above, compared to developed countries, the study of tolerance in developing countries is still relatively lagging. In Indonesia, especially in Pamatangsiantar, the location of this study, the emphasis is still on religious freedom and majority-minority relationship (Abdi 2018). This study, as mentioned in the introduction above, intends to explore the roots and actualization of social tolerance in Pamatangsiantar, a city with two predicates; (1) a plural city in North Sumatra, and (2) one of the "most tolerant cities in Indonesia" in 2018 and 2019" (Susanto 2018, 1). An index of 6,477 in 2018 and 6,280 in 2019, put it in the third position for "Top 10 Most Tolerant Cities in Indonesia" (Setara Institute 2018).

In Indonesia, the twenty years of the Reformation era were marked by an increase in intolerant behavior; segregation, polarization, discrimination, and violence (Damanik 2020b). Segregation is seen in the consideration of selecting housing, dormitories, selling or renting land and houses (Damanik 2020b; 2016), ethnic and clan division (Damanik 2019b), and the politicization of identity through administrative involution (Damanik 2020c). Polarization leads to strengthening ethnic, racial, religious, and cultural sentiments, including clans (Geertz 1967) through legislative and executive elections (Damanik 2018a, 2019a). Discrimination is seen in economic activities, school selection, reading including matchmaking, employment, and employee recruitment (Damanik 2020b). Violence appears prominently through frequent terrorist attacks, suicide bombings, or rejection of religious and cultural practices, including the destruction of places of worship (Kuntjara 2018). In Indonesia, contemporary social realities are paradoxical with "Unity in Diversity" and have implications for the difficulty of fostering democratic personalities (Damanik and Ndona 2020).

Pamatangsiantar transformed from a village *Semalongan* or *Semilongan* [Simalungun] (Anderson 1971) to a modern city during the colonial plantations (Damanik and Dasuha 2016; Tideman 1922). Siantar village, one of the seven autonomous regions of Simalungun, is ruled by the Damanik clan (Damanik and Dasuha 2016; Damanik, Simanjuntak, and Daud 2021; 2020, Damanik 2018b, 2017a, 2017b). The occupation of Siantar, initially, stripped the role of Sang Naualuh Damanik, the fourteenth King of Siantar (Damanik 2015, 2013; Damanik and Dasuha 2016). Pamatangsiantar became the "colonial city" (Nas 1997, 25), after being designated as a municipality on July 1, 1917 (Tideman 1922). Before the plantation period, Siantar's population tended to be homogeneous (Dijk 1894, 551; Tideman 1922, 28). A large number of contract coolies on plantation (Breman 1997, 12) turned the city demographics into a plural environment (Tideman 1922)

Apart from plantations, the German Rhenish Missionary Society (*Rheinische Missiongesellschaft* [RMG]), not only converted the *habonaron,* Simalungunese belief to Protestant Christianity but also encouraged modernization (Dasuha and Sinaga 2003; Damanik 2017c). Both factors, plantations, and RMG triggered a wave of migration as well as an origin of differentiation; religions, ethnicities, races, skin colors, and cultures (Damanik 2018b, 2017a). Apart from Javanese and Chinese (Breman 1997; Kian-Wie 1977; Damanik 2016) most

local migrants at that time were Tobanese (Cunningham 1958), followed by Mandailing and Minangkabau (Pelly 2013). Due to the large migrant population, as well as an effort to reduce rebellion, the colonial government adopted the politics of segregation (Tideman 1922; Damanik 2018b, 2017a; Damanik and Dasuha 2016).

The relationship between ethnic groups in Pamatangsiantar was not running normally. After the rebellion of Sang Naualuh Damanik (1890–1907), the lands were controlled by foreigners. Tobanese migrants were mobilized to work in the fields and became colonial collaborators. However, stubbornness and unruly were made as reasons for the Dutch to place under the authority of the King of Pamatangsiantar. This situation triggered a social conflict in 1915–1918, between Simalungunnese and Tobanese (Damanik 2017a). Ethnic relations continued to rage. Post-independence, more specific on March 3, 1946, known as the "social revolution" (Reid 1992), seven Simalungun self-governing families were massacred, and the palace was robbed and burned (Damanik 2015, 2017b). This bloody night becomes the beginning of a blurred identity. Borrowing Perret's notes, it is called "evasive identity" (Perret 2010, 45).

Intellectual figures, especially theological graduates in Laguboti and Jakarta in 1953-1955, demanded the independence of the Simalungun Protestant Christian Church (*Gereja Kristen Protestan Simalungun* [GKPS]) over the domination of the Protestant Batak Christian Church (*Huria Kristen Batak Protestan* [HKBP]) (Sinaga 2004). Inter-ethnic and religious sentiment broke out in 1955–1957, as a result of the military split in North Sumatra (Bangun 1996; Smail 1968). The struggle for GKPS independence over HKBP in 1953 was successful in 1963 (Dasuha and Sinaga 2003; Dasuha 2011; Purba 1977). The role of J.P. Siboro, J. W. Saragih, Radjamin Purba, and Laurimba Saragih, intellectuals from the inside Simalungunese, turned social relations in Siantar-Simalungun (Damanik 2017c, 2017d). Furthermore, the Simalungunese have *ampangna opat* (four kins unit), the initial mechanism for reaching-out and institutionalizing multiple kinships relations in triangle and pentagon pattern to interpret and understand the social world (Damanik 2021a). The kinship of triangles and pentagons is used to resolve disputes, both culture and social (Damanik 2021b). More specifically, this cultural value contributes to the creation of social tolerance in a pluralistic society in Pamatangsiantar city.

Based on the description above, social tolerance in the last decade did not appear suddenly but was influenced by bloody experiences. Social tolerance is influenced by situations of ethnicity, relations, dominations, even openness between individuals and groups. The role of tolerant figures cannot be ignored and without them, social tolerance is a necessity. Based on the explanation of the state of the arts above, the position of the study and the objectives to be achieved are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Position and Objectives of the Study
Source: Damanik

This study provides a historical experience and contributions to understanding contemporary social tolerance. The experience in Siantar, a pluralistic and multicultural city, as the core of

this study, focuses on the dimensions of democratic values, the intersection of religious, ethnic, and cultural morality which is constructed as a basis for tolerance to create a cohesive order. The internalization of morality and historical experience has become the habitus of democratic personalities, social capital that determines tolerance, as well as social cohesion.

Methods

Social tolerance herein is assessed using a qualitative method (Creswell 2014), using a pragmatic approach (Creswell 2007) to explore historical experience and present-day actualization. The qualitative method is intended to discuss the initial formation of tolerance, based on historical records, narrative text, and detailed explanations from informants in natural settings. Tolerance is seen as a "social phenomenon" (Russell 2016, 2017), a pragmatic social reality, which does not thrive by itself but is rather causal-functional (Ritzer 1988). The pragmatic approach is based on the "nomothetic perspective" (Denzin and Lincoln 2005), that tolerance is an abstraction of permissive attitudes, behaviors, and actions in line with social-historical experiences.

The qualitative method follows a "mixed-methods design" (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004), considering two main points; obtaining the best information about the object of study (Greene and Hall 2010), and complete single information when one source is inadequate (Creswell and Clark 2011). Data sources in qualitative studies can be objective or subjective. However, validity according to the methodology and rhetoric chose is present in all approaches. Reduction of subjectivity or bias is pursued through comparisons between data sources (Creswell and Clark 2011).

The theoretical basis referred to is the dimension of democratic values (Inglehart 1997) and freedom of religion (Grim and Finke 2006). The two theoretical bases are used for consideration of three main points: discussing the initial formation of social tolerance, analyzing social relations based on historical experience, and causal-functional actualization in the present. Based on the three considerations above, the formation of social tolerance is seen as "a conceptual model underlying human behavior" (Goodenough 1976, 4), which inspires democratic personalities to create cohesion in the social world (Berger and Luckmann 1991).

The data were collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and questionnaires according to the qualitative paradigm (Rossman and Rallis 2003; Patton 2015). Observations are focused on permissive attitudes, behaviors, and actions, including neighborhoods, settlements, location of places of worship, schools, markets, traditional ceremonies, religious expressions, political participation, economic activities, mate selection, employment, sale or rent of land, and pejorative expressions. In-depth interviews are focused on knowledge and understanding as well as detailed information about tolerance based on historical and contemporary experiences. The questionnaires were used to gather broader information with the involvement of a larger pool of informants.

Fifteen informants were determined based on two things; social position and role, consisting of ethnic, religious, and cultural leaders; and degrees of knowledge, including educational levels. Furthermore, 350 questionnaires, a means for gathering information, were distributed in seven sub-districts with randomly selected respondents, consisting of representatives of sixteen ethnic groups and six religions. Each informant was asked to provide answers on the available options according to the "Likert-scale" (Bertram 2007; Brown 2010; Vagias 2006). All data were transcribed verbatim, then tabulated, coded, categorized, and conceptualized (Russell 2016). The results were compared with the theoretical explanations referred to and analyzed in depth with a narrative-interpretive pattern according to the descriptive-qualitative paradigm. Analysis and discussion are carried out in-depth analysis to obtain the conclusion. Field research was carried out for five months from July to November 2019.

Results and Discussion

The city's social tolerance is marked by ten indicators; (1) the absence of religious, ethnic, racial, and cultural conflicts; (2) absence of violence; terrorism, suicide bombings, rejection and dissolution of religious practices; (3) location of adjacent places of worship; (4) prevalence of inter-ethnic and religious intermarriage; (5) absence of dominant culture; (6) visiting each other at traditional and religious ceremonies; (7) absence of stigma, stereotypes and pejorative expressions; (8) ability to master four–five languages; (9) freedom and ease of expressing traditional and religious ceremonies; and (10) lack of intolerant behavior; segregation, polarization, and discrimination. The tenth barometers show the stability of tolerance, more specifically, the embryo of social cohesion in a pluralistic environment in the last three decades.

The stability of tolerance in the last three decades, in fact, paradoxical with historical experiences in the land of "truth is the base" (*habonaron do bona*), the Simalungunese philosophy (Damanik 2017c, 23). In Pamatangsiantar, contemporary social tolerance is a logical consequence of poor social relations during colonialism and cannot be separated from the arrest and exile of Sang Naualuh Damanik (1890–1904) to Bengkalis, Riau. For the record, two main reasons for the arrest of the fourteenth King of Siantar are rejection of colonialism and accommodative politics for migrants, especially granting permits for places of worship. Apart from the two reasons above, the conversion to Islam was a strong reason for the Dutch to overthrow Sang Naualuh Damanik. After the king's arrest, the situation of ethnicity, especially among the host-ethnic groups, was compromised. Migrants felt superior because they were backed up by the colonial government, while ethnic hosts felt undermined. Juandaharaya Dasuha, personal communication on September 13, 2019, stated the following:

> Sang Naualuh Damanik, King of Siantar, especially for the colonial government, was considered a major obstacle to controlling Siantar. The king's accommodative politics were considered a threat to the existence of the plantation. Controlling the entire population, there was no other way but to arrest the king. However, after the arrest, relations between ethnic groups became worse. Migrants, generally Tobanese, Javanese, and Chinese felt superior to the host ethnic group who had lost their leader. Host ethnic hatred escalated, both to Dutch and migrants, in connection with the conversion of land, fields, and rice fields to plantations managed by migrants. This situation was the beginning of ethnic disharmony in the city.

After the arrest of the king, the domination and hegemony of the colonial government became more prominent. Furthermore, the position of migrants tended to be elevated, both because they were employed by the Dutch government and German missionaries. Siantar's native who lost self-governance felt ignored and slowly held a grudge against migrants. The situation at the beginning of colonialism was very far from social tolerance. The worsening of the situation was exacerbated by the colonial policy which adopted a policy of settlement segregation. Population in the city was separated by a cultural wall, based on ethnicity and religion. Almost all ethnic groups have their territories that are separate from other ethnic group villages; Javanese, Karonese, Tobanese, Mandailingnese, Christian, Simalungunese, Islamic Village in Timbanggalung, as well as European, Chinese and Indian settlements. During the colonialism period, the spread of Protestant, Catholic, and Methodist religions continued to exist within the community. Not to be missed was the construction of churches, schools, and hospitals, a form of deaconess for city communities.

The history of tolerance during the colonialism period until the early 1960s was abnormal, tended to be bad and bloody, as summarized in the following six phases; (1) the social conflict of 1915–1918. Migrants' feelings of superiority, stubbornness, unruliness, and inclination to fight against the Dutch, triggered the social conflict. The migrants rejected the colonial government's

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policy of placing them as the native of King of Siantar. Rejection is based on the resentment for being compared to native Siantar, who are considered more conservative. Migrants insisted on being the subjects of the Dutch and not of the king. The conflict resulted in killings, burned plantations, and work strikes. The problem was resolved after the Governor of East Sumatra intervened and forced migrants to remain under the control of the king. In the initial phase, the role of the colonial government was evident in forcing "evasive tolerance" in the city.

The next phase, the social revolution, took place on March 3, 1946. Even though the social conflict of 1918 seemed to have subsided, ethnic hatred continued to rage. Pseudo tolerance exploded violently on March 3, 1946. Seven kingdoms of Simalungun are slaughtered, robbed and the palace burned down by an angry mob. The leaders at that time, such as Azis Siregar, Urbanus Pardede, and Tukidjan Pranoto, massacred the nobility in Siantar, Oscar Tambunan in Purba, Silimahuta, and Dologsilou, A.E. Saragiras in Panei and Raya. The leader of the Wild Tiger Lineup (*Barisan Harimau Liar*) provoked grassroots hatred against the Simalungun nobles. The grassroots at that time were mainly is Javanese, Tobanese, and Mandailing, during the colonialism period had hatred towards kings. They violently robbed, burned the palace and several kings were beheaded. Madja Purba, Mayor of Siantar, a graduate of the Indigenous Education School for Civil Servants *(Middlebare Opleiding School Voor Inlandsche Ambtenaren)* Bukittinggi was toppled by Urbanus Pardede. In this second phase, the barbaric actions of the migrants have implications for the evasive identity and pseudo tolerance. The Simalungun middle class eliminated the clan, left their hometown, and claimed to be Malay. The pseudo-tolerance regime, twenty years before Indonesia's independence, exploded violently in 1946 and sharpened social disintegration in the city.

Furthermore, the demand for GKPS independence over HKBP was carried out in 1953–1954. The exclusion of the identity of the host from the migrant population, especially regarding religiosity, has encouraged some intellectuals from the inside of Simalungunese to demand the independence of their ethnic-religious institutions. Intellectuals are Simalungunese educated who received theological education in Laguboti and Jakarta, such as J. W. Saragih, Jason Saragih, Menna Saragih, J. P. Siboro, and A. W. Saragih. Three main reasons behind demands for independence; (1) reducing the domination and hegemony of ethnic migrants over ethnic church institutions, (2) reducing the exclusion of the ethnic identity of the host; language, customs, and cultural attributes, and (3) accelerating the conversion from the native religion to Protestant. However, the stigma of lack of education, managerial capacity, and low intellectual resources of Simalungunese are reasons for the HKPB's highest leadership (*ephorus*) in Pearaja to reject the demands for GKPS independence. The failure resulted in high inter-ethnic hatred in Siantar, the concentration of the most developed settlements and cities in Simalungun.

Subsequently, the strengthening of ethnic and religious sentiments in 1956–1957. The split within the North Sumatra Territorial Army Command (TTSU) at the end of December 1956 had an impact on grassroots polarization. Disobedience of Maludin Simbolon, TTSU's Supreme Commander over A. H. Nasution, the Supreme Military Commander in Jakarta, has implications for the struggle for the position of Commander of TTSU. This period was known as the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia (PRRI), in which Simbolon declared his leave of the national military. Djamin Ginting, TTSU Chief of Staff, Zulkifli Lubis in Jakarta, as well as Wahab Makmur, the Medan City Military Command, were determined to replace Simbolon. Military polarization based on ethnicity and religion, Djamin Ginting, Karonese, and Protestants consolidated their ethnic militaries. The same action was taken by Makmur, who consolidated the Javanese and Islamic militaries, and Lubis, who consolidated the Mandailing and Islamic militaries.

However, ethnic and religious sentiments provoked by the military also spread to the grassroots level, not only in military organizations. The Infantry Cadet School in Siantar was controlled by the Tobanese military, which planned to attack the TTSU headquarters in Medan. The grassroots were also provoked. The PRRI incident sparked ethnic and religious hatred on a

regional scale in North Sumatra. Ethnic stereotypes are expanding; slanders such as "lousy Batak group" against the Tobanese, stupid and lazy Malays, Minangkabau con artists, and stingy Mandailings, etc. In this phase, social tolerance in North Sumatra, more specifically in Siantar, is completely torn apart, disharmonious and disintegrative.

The struggle to demand the independence of GKPS over HKBP was carried out in 1963. Since that year, J. P. Siboro and J. W. Saragih have led the church institution. At the same time, Radjamin Purba served as Regent of Simalungun. The collaboration of both institutions, the church and government, contribute to the formulation of identity, especially for the Simalungunese. Radjamin Purba's role was considered dominant in restoring the devastated social cohesion in Siantar-Simalungun. Among the Simalungunese, he was known as "the thresher from Simalungun" for his populist policy to build Simalungun University, organizing the first Simalungun Cultural Seminar, managing the Simalungun Museum and *Rumahbolon*, the only legacy of the Simalungun kingdom that exists today, provided land for the GKPS head office, and initiated and establishment of the Simalungun Traditional and Scientific Institution.

On the initiative of Radjamin Purba and center figures, intellectuals from the inside, by considering social diversity and differentiation, the first Simalungun culture seminar in 1963 formulated *ahap* or delicate as a basis for solidarity in the plural environment of Siantar-Simalungun. The formula becomes the basis of solidarity to achieve three main goals; (1) accommodating and bridging the differentiation and differences of ethnic, religious, racial, clan, cultural, economic, and political identities in a plural environment; (2) reducing and restoring inter-ethnic relations that were torn apart from the period of colonialism to PRRI; and (3) building tolerance of use creating social cohesion, peace, integration and social harmony between identities. The formula for *ahap* is the Simalungun version of belonging, in which every individual, regardless of identity, is accepted as a subject if they respect each other without differentiating one another. It is noteworthy, after 1963, inter-ethnic relations in Siantar-Simalungun slowly began to recover. This fact is seen in the absence of inter-ethnic sentiments that trigger social conflicts.

The last stage demonstrates the formulation of Pamatangsiantar's identity as a plural city in 1982. A city is a representation of the plural environment. The city's population in 1930, concerning historical data, was 4,964, consisting of 11.17 percent Tobanese, 8.26 percent Mandailing, 6.16 percent Angkola, 3.20 percent Simalungunese, and the rest were Europeans, Chinese, and Indians (Pelly 2013). Furthermore, the city's population in 2018 was 247,411, consisting of 31.23 percent Simalungunese, 18.22 percent Javanese, 16.50 percent Tobanese, 11.10 percent Chinese, 9.6 percent Mandailing, 4.3 percent Minangkabau, 2.2 percent Karonese, 1.5 percent Angkola, 0.87 percent Aceh and 2.49 percent of other groups. The demographic composition based on religion consists of 49.83 percent Protestants, 41.9 percent Muslims, 4.71 percent Catholics, 3.36 percent Buddhists, 0.11 percent Hindus, 0.01 percent Confucianism (0.01%) and 0.07 percent *Malim*, Tobanese belief (Central Bureau of Statistics [*Biro Pusat Statistik* BPS] 2018, 12–15).

The demographic data above implies three main points: (1) the balance between the ethnicity of the host and the migrants, (2) the balance of distribution of officials, civil servants, private employees, entrepreneurs, regional legislatures, including political party management, and (3) the absence of dominant culture; demographics, economic actors, and political activists. Although the three points above have implications for the high competition between ethnic groups in controlling the city, however, the absence of a dominant culture has a positive impact on social tolerance.

Laurimba Saragih, Mayor of Siantar in 1982, turned the inter-ethnic relationship in the city. The idea of a tolerant city was formulated through the slogan "collaborating to achieve the goals" (*sapangambei manoktok hitei*), confirmed through a local regulation in 1984, rooted in *ahap*, the basis of solidarity formulated in 1963. The idea is intended to transform the plural environment, accommodating plurality to accelerate urban development. The basis of solidarity

is constructed into a social capital for urban development. Through this mechanism, each individual participated in building their city by creating social cohesion. It is necessary to underline, that intermarriage based on religion and ethnicity has a common and impact on the birth of tolerant figures. Laurimba Saragih, for example, a mayor of Pamatangsiantar who is of Simalungunese and Muslim, married a Mandailing Muslim woman.

Cross-cutting through intermarriage, clan, ethnicity, and religion, affect the ethnic situation in the city, more specifically to promote social tolerance. On the one hand, every individual is bound by religious identity, but on the other hand, they are also bound by clan, ethnic, racial, and cultural identities. Individuals with different political affiliations and economic strata are united in religious, ethnic, and clan associations. Each individual or group unites with each other to celebrate moments of joy or sorrow. This situation has been felt since the mid-1960s when Radjamin Purba was the regent of Simalungun. The momentum of 1963 was the final phase, ending inter-ethnic tensions as well as a new chapter in the construction of tolerance. Furthermore, the momentum of 1984 was a clear example of when diversity was constructed into the social capital of urban development. Hisarma Saragih, personal communication on August 28, 2019, stated:

> There's no choice. The formulation of *ahap*, the basis of solidarity in 1963, became a historical turning point in Siantar, changing the bad relations between ethnic groups towards tolerance. In fact, to this day, social clashes have seldom occurred. As such, the predicate of a tolerant city, especially based on my observations, would be very appropriate for this city. Just look at the place of worship. Churches, mosques, monasteries can coexist, in joyful and sorrowful ceremonies, all of which show multiculturalism, as we have witnessed two weeks ago. In this city, apart from Indonesian, each individual also speaks 2–4 local languages. Furthermore, if you shop at a Chinese shop, you will be greeted with Simalungun or Toba language. If you shop at a Simalungunese shop, you will be greeted with Simalungun, Toba, or even Javanese language. This is truly interesting.

Based on the description above, this study finds *ahap* or delicate, the keyword for contemporary social tolerance in a pluralistic environment in Pamatangsiantar City. This finding is a value system, universal morality, the intersection of religious, ethnic, and cultural attributes, containing democratic personalities, a basis for solidarity that inspires social tolerance. The general convention in Pamatangsiantar today is that every individual is considered "a resident of the city" if they possess sensitivity (Damanik 2017c). Furthermore, attitudes, behavior, and actions that reflect a sense of belonging or sensitivity give rise *to* *marahap* or delicately. This character reflects prudence and permissiveness.

In a plural environment, the implementation of *ahap* is *marahap*, mental attitudes, and moral considerations for others. In its social implications, *marahap* appears as an attitude that takes into account all behavior, words, and actions. This mentality encourages the emergence of vigilance (*saahap*). Vigilance is a cohesive, integrative, and harmonious situation of democratic personalities that inspires social tolerance. The intersection of religious, cultural, and ethnic morality, in other words, is the origin of democratic personality, the basic values of social tolerance in multicultural societies. An explanation of contemporary social tolerance, based on the questionnaire, in support of historical experience, is described below.

The tendency of democratic value dimension with its attributes, the results of distributing questionnaires to 350 informants is described as follows; (1) the neighborhood dimension, 39,42 percent are race or ethnicity considerations, while 35.14 percent are religious; (2) the couple dimension, 31.14 percent are economic considerations, while 19.14 percent are religion and ethnicity; (3) dimensions of interpersonal trust, 36.28 percent are based on religion, while 28.85 percent are ethnic; (4) the comfort dimension, 34 percent is based more on ethnic

considerations, while 29.42 percent is religion; (5) occupancy dimensions, 44.85 percent are based on safety and comfort, while 19.71 percent are economic; (6) the dimensions of the school, 43.42 percent are based on state or national schools, while 37.42 percent are religious schools; and (7) the dimensions of employee recruitment, 53.14 percent are based on academic abilities and skills, while 23.14 percent are religion and ethnicity.

Explanations of the questionnaire data above are summarized as follows; (1) inter-ethnic relations, freedom of expression, and social interaction reflect democratic personalities. However, aspects directly related to individuals remain focused on religious, racial, and ethnic considerations. The couple attribute, for example, has an impact on inter-marriage difficulties. A total of sixty-three couples out of 350 informants were intermarriage families, with the following variations; eight families converted to Islam, thirty-two became Protestants, thirteen became Catholics, six became Buddhists and four became Confucians.

Intermarriage between different religions is felt to be more difficult than differences in race, ethnicity, or culture. Attributes in mate selection are to some extent correlated with interpersonal trust. The current social reality in Pamatangsiantar is that the mainstreaming of religion is relatively low, thereby facilitating social tolerance, the dimensions of neighborliness and the socio-political institutions of comfort are more based on racial or ethnic attributes. The city government policy is to create patterns of mixed housing, assimilation schools, or placement of public spaces such as shopping malls, fields, schools, and government offices in zones that bring together different individuals and communities.

Furthermore, the selection of housing, schools, and employee recruitment is based more on security considerations. Except for the ethnic villages inherited from colonialism, there were no new residential segments found in the area. The spatial orientation tends to focus on heterogeneous settlement patterns. School selection is based on management. Public schools are cheaper, while private schools based on faith are of higher quality, especially Catholic and Methodist schools. Although the school is based on a certain religion, most students have different religions. Meanwhile, the main considerations for employee recruitment are based more on academic and professional reasons.

Finally, the expression of religious and cultural in Pamatangsiantar city. The attribute of democratic values is emphasized on three indicators of religious freedom; (1) 64.57 percent most strongly disagree and 28.85 percent disagree for favoritism of certain religions and culture by the government, (2) 67.42 percent strongly disagree and 27.71 percent disagree for government regulations restrict expression of religion and culture, and (3) 61.42 percent strongly disagree and 37.28 percent disagree for social regulations restricting religious and cultural freedom. The majority of informants stated that they did not agree, completely disagreed even, with the limitation of freedom of religious and cultural expression. The expression of freedom is seen in the absence of government privileges for certain religions and cultures, and the absence of government and social regulations that limit religious and cultural expressions. Based on the data above, although not yet fully established, the values of social tolerance have grown among the urban population.

The findings of this study, namely *ahap, marahap,* and *saahap,* are that the intersection of religious morality, ethnicity, and culture has universal characteristics, a social framework, and a mechanism to create social tolerance. Social tolerance is pluralistic tolerance that thrives on the morality of tolerance, the intersection of religious, ethnic, and cultural attributes, to accommodate the existing differences. This determinant is based on "truth is the base" according to the Simalungunese philosophy (Damanik 2017d). This provision is reinforced by the traditional expression "Raya, Purba, Dolog, and Panei are the same if delicate" (Damanik 2017d). This morality, even though it was born from the Simalungun culture, is based on universality, is borderless, and has no boundaries, and therefore can accommodate diversity. The denial of this social mechanism has an impact on the disharmony of life in the social world,

the effect of the magical power of the social philosophy elaborated from *"habonaron"*, Simalungunese belief (Damanik 2017d).

The findings of this study are different from the theoretical framework referred to earlier; (1) in Western countries, social tolerance tends to be born from rational ideas, whereas in this study, it is born from coercion by intellectual and tolerant figures. Inglehart's paradigm regarding the dimensions of democratic values and Grim and Finke regarding religious freedom play a role in creating democratic personalities, which on one hand is relevant to the theme of this study. However, more specifically, this study finds that democratic personalities must be adapted to the characteristics of the plural environment. This study confirms that democratic personalities require a value system, social framework, and mechanisms to affirm and accommodate social tolerance. Democratic personalities, then, in this study are not the impact of education as is the case in developed countries, but rather on cultural products that experience gradations from time to time.

Furthermore, (2) contemporary social tolerance, although it looks steady, its foundation is still unstable. Identity politics, especially during the last decade in Indonesia, has slowly influenced the ethnic situation in Siantar. However, it is feared that the politicization of identity will turn a tolerant situation into an intolerant situation. In Indonesia, social relations are relatively disturbed by the presence of religious fanatical organizations which have a pejorative impact on the tolerant order. Furthermore, the general elections for president, governor, mayor, regent, including the legislature, tend to activate identity politics and injure social tolerance. Also, the social stigmas, infidels (*kafir*), Chinese (*aseng*), Western (*asing*), etc kept on snowballing. This contemporary social reality is certain to destroy social relations and endanger social tolerance in the future.

Based on the explanation above, the main assumptions of the study confirm that social tolerance is the internalization of democratic values, universal morality of religion, ethnicity, and culture that promotes a cohesive order. This statement is built based on social reality in Siantar; (1) historical experience affects the order of tolerance, (2) tolerance appreciates every difference, and (3) tolerance develops when it takes root in each individual. According to the findings of the study, the tolerance mechanism that is *ahap* serves as a tolerant value system, while *marahap* is the attitude, behavior, and actions of being tolerant, and *saahap* is the sense of belonging to each other or being part of others. Based on the explanation above, the mechanism and keywords of social tolerance in Pamatangsiantar is shown in Figure 2.
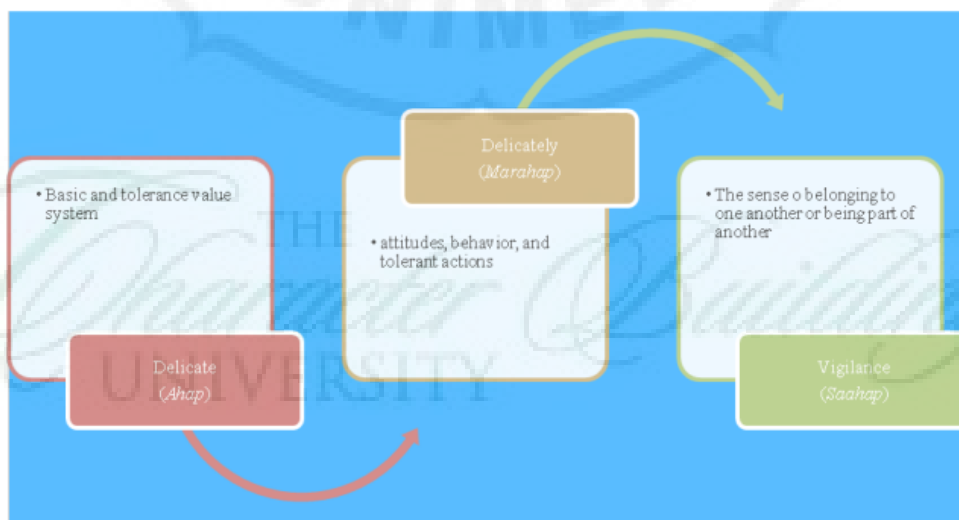

Figure 2: Keywords and Mechanism of Social Tolerance in Pamatangsiantar City
Source: Damanik

This research proves, although social tolerance has not been fully established, seeds of tolerance have been found among the residents in the cities. The predicate of a tolerant city, at least, answers the anxiety as well as a proof of commitment to the needs for a cohesive social order. However, the social tolerance in Pamatangsiantar City today is not final. The tendency of local politics, the politicization of identity, and the emergence of radical organizations in the last decade, 2010-2020, deserves to be watched out for. The contribution of tolerant figures and city leaders with absolute regulation is needed to develop a tolerant mentality. Based on the last three trends, the findings of this study require the consistency of wise and strong leaders in nurturing social tolerance.

The keywords for social tolerance, based on the findings above, develop on a value system, universal morality that bridges all parties and submerged in everyone. Furthermore, the value system is implemented in social behavior that considers all cohesive actions, actualized and implemented in the social world. Finally, every human in a pluralistic environment has collective feelings, a social mentality, and the preconditions for social tolerance. Social tolerance grows and develops on compulsion, based on bloody experiences to create a cohesive order. Furthermore, tolerant figures have a central role and contribution by considering the interest of all parties. Social tolerance, learning from the bloody experience in Siantar, is a mechanism to frame social tolerance in a plural environment.

Conclusion

Historical experience influences the structure of tolerance in establishing and accommodating differences. Successively, social tolerance according to the findings of the study, the tolerance mechanism that is delicate (*ahap*) serves as a tolerant value system, while delicately (*marahap*) is the attitude, behavior, and actions of being tolerant, and vigilance (*saahap*) is the sense of belonging to each other or being part of others. Democratic personalities, the basic character of social tolerance is a logical consequence of historical experiences, bloody relations, and contributions made by tolerant figures. The three of them complement and support each other, are not partial, do not stand alone, but are united in a complete internalization process to establish tolerant values. Social tolerance, the conclusion of this study is pluralistic tolerance thrives on the morality of tolerance, the intersection of religious, ethnic, and cultural attributes, to accommodate the existing differences. The contribution of this study lies in the mechanism for creating social tolerance. Western countries tend to focus on human rights education, while in the location of this study the tendency is to consider historical experience. In other words, although social tolerance grows on an unstable foundation, it considers social collisions, has no choice and must be forced. This article recommends two important points, namely the need for further research beyond the eight religious themes and democratic dimensions to obtain comprehensive data on efforts to build tolerance in a pluralistic and multicultural society, and a more realistic role for city governments to support tolerance, either through regulation and especially education.

Acknowledgement

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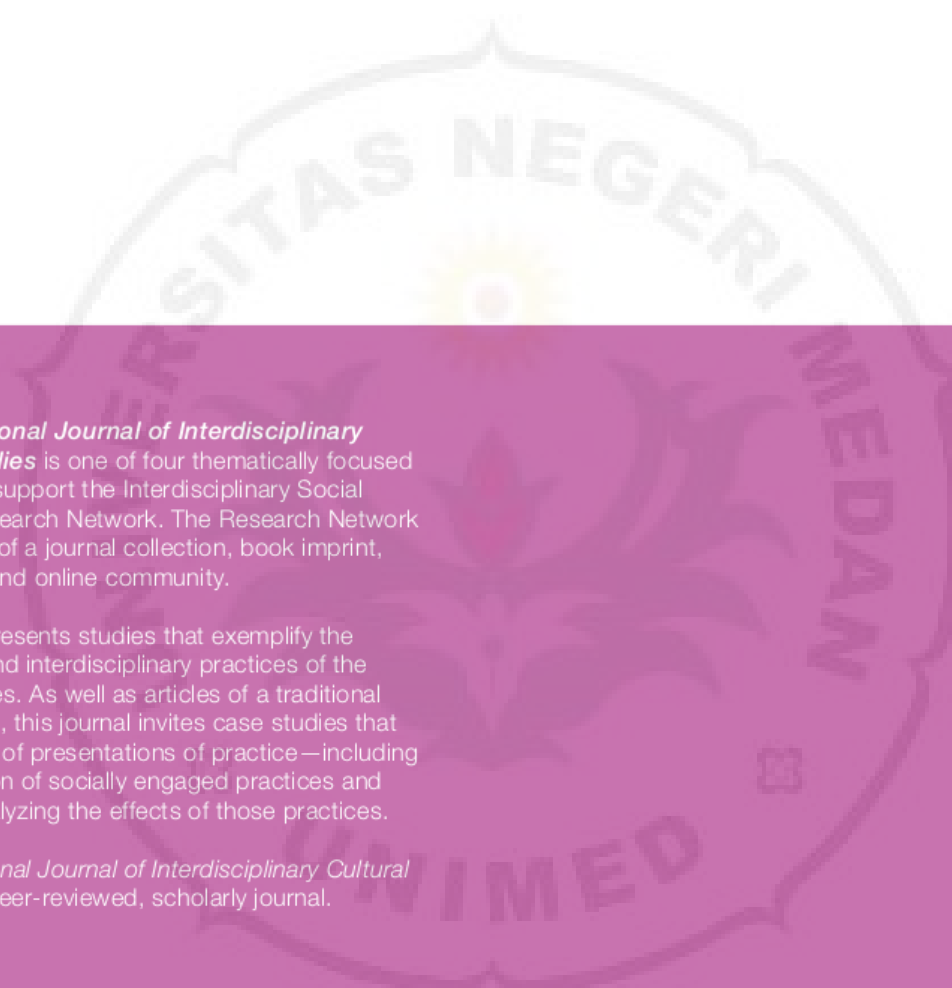
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