

# Watu Pinawetengan as a Symbol of Unity and Brotherhood of the Minahasa Tribe

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**Abstract.** Watu Pinawetengan has become one of the symbols in the life of the Minahasa community from the past to the present. This research was conducted using descriptive qualitative methods to describe the meaning and purpose of Watu Pinawetengan as a symbol of unity and brotherhood of the Minahasa tribe from the beginning which is now increasingly reduced by the influence of modernity and globalization. The values of unity and brotherhood symbolized through Watu Pinawetengan are expected to be the glue that is actualized in the realization of the unity and integrity of the Minahasa tribe, especially for people living in Minahasa land in general; which now consists of eight sub-ethnics with various ethnicities and races around them.

**Keywords:** *Watu Pinawetengan*; Unity; Brotherhood; Minahasa Tribe

## 1 Introduction

The existence of Watu Pinawetengan in the life of the Minahasa tribe cannot be separated because there is a very close relationship with the cultural life of the people who inhabit most of North Sulawesi. It is believed that Watu Pinawetengan contributed greatly to the integrity of the life of the Minahasa tribe and all the people who live in Minahasa land. The Minahasa region is located in the northern part of the island of Sulawesi, and this region comes with distinctive advantages in social, cultural, historical, anthropological, ethnographic, philosophical, psychological, geopolitical, and geostrategic aspects, each of which has its charm and merits. Taken into account.

Watu Pinawetengan historically, socially, culturally, and theologically has become a reference in determining the attitude of life of the Minahasa community for generations. It is in this place that the Minahasa community, which is divided into several sub-ethnics, must be able to overcome differences of opinion as well as efforts to build unity and brotherhood among internals. Deliberations to reach consensus have been carried out in this area so that for the Minahasa tribe, Watu Pinawetengan has become a symbol of the unity and brotherhood of the Minahasa tribe.

Along with the history of the past until now, the existence of Watu Pinawetengan began to be eroded by the times. Many Minahasa people, especially young people, are starting to forget history because of the life that is influenced by modernity and globalization. The values of unity and brotherhood symbolized through the existence of Watu Pinawetengan need to be re-actualized in the life of the Minahasa community in particular, and Indonesia in general.

## 2 Literature Review

Almost all North Sulawesi people know Watu Pine Wetengan. Its existence is considered very important for the Minahasa community, and there are even a few people who make it a sacred place. The North Sulawesi Provincial Government has designated Watu Pinawetengan as a historical site on December 1, 1974, and subsequently, the government enacted Law no. 11 of 2010 stipulates Watu Pinawetengan as a protected cultural heritage building. Based on historical data, Watu Pinawetengan is considered the beginning of Minahasa civilization in the archipelago. The term Watu Pinawetengan refers to the meaning of the Stone of Division, which is believed to have existed around 1000 BC. Watu Pinawetengan is considered the beginning of Minahasa civilization in the archipelago. According to local people's beliefs, this stone is like people prostrating to God, also like a map of the Minahasa Island. This stone was used by the ancestors of the Minahasa people for deliberation to reach an agreement. Although at first, the Minahasa people had traditional beliefs before Christianity entered this area, they have been able to understand the importance of unity and brotherhood. In fact, the old belief that has been held by the Minahasa community for generations is that the population still lives a simple or primitive life, which the Dutch call *alifuru*. The existence of Watu Pinawetengan directly unites the Minahasa community which consists of various sub-ethnics that exist. Murtdaha Mutahhari stated that a society consists of groups of people who are interrelated by systems, customs, rites, and special laws, and live together

The name Minahasa is thought to have first appeared when the Tonaas gathered at Watu Pinawetengan or Batu Pinabetengan, in a cultural meeting of the Minahasa community. There is a strong suspicion that the term Minahasa was introduced in 1693, where the word minahasa consists of the root word "*esa*" which means one, then added with the prefix minahasa. So the eyes of minaha and esa in their pronunciation then become minahasa or minaesa which can be interpreted as having united. Pierre Holy Gosal asserted that the term Minahasa was then used formally on October 8, 1789, by J. D. Schierstein, who was the resident of Manado at that time. At that time there was peace between the Bantik and Tombulu sub-ethnic groups who were involved in what was known as the Tateli war. It is estimated that 2000 years BC, the Mon-Khmer peoples who long occupied the mainland of South and Southeast Asia, were pushed by Burmese prey from the Tibetan plateau and by the Tai people from the Yunan plateau, who were constantly moving to the South because they were driven out by the tribes. Wu in Greece. As a result, the Mon-Khmer people and the Continental Malays, who were essentially one family, became disorganized. Part of this family of people is scattered, almost covering the entire mainland of South and Southeast Asia.

## 3 Method

This article was written with a descriptive qualitative approach. Researchers collect and process qualitative data which is then described. Qualitative methods are part of the knowledge process which is considered a social product and also a social process. Knowledge as a process has at least three basic principles, namely empiricism based on facts and data, objectivity and control.

## 4 Result and Discussion

North Sulawesi Province is inhabited by several majority community groups, including the Minahasa. The Minahasa tribe consists of various sub-tribes or Pakasan which means unity, which include: Tonsea, which includes the districts of North Minahasa, Bitung, and the Tonsea Lama area of Tondano; Tolour, which includes: Tondano, Kakas, Remboken, Eris, Lembean Timur and Kombi; Tontemboan, which includes: South Minahasa district and part of Minahasa district; Tombulu, which includes: Tomohon, parts of the Minahasa district and the city of Manado; Tonsawang, including: Tombatu and Touluaan; Ponosakan, which belongs to the Belang region; and Pasan, which covers the Ratahan area. Bantik is the only Minahasa child who inhabits a fairly large area, which includes: the land of Maras, Molas, Bailang, Talawaan Bantik, Bengkol, Buha, Singkil, Malalayang (Minanga), Kalasey, Tanamon and Somoit. Archaeological evidence states that this group of people has existed for a long time, and they can build civilization. The way of life of the Minahasa community has been well-maintained from generation to generation. One of the historical witnesses about the life of the Minahasa community is Watu Pinawetengan, where this is the place where the leaders of the Minahasa community sit in deliberation to decide for the common good.

### 4.1 Watu Pinawetengan as the Identity of Minahasa Tribe

The discovery of the Watu Pinawetengan site by J. A. T. Schwarz has until now becomes a historical record. Schwarz conducted research in the Tonderukan area now known as Pinawetengan and stated that in 670 the Minahasa leaders had met and discussed, and the Tonderukan inscription which became known as Watu Pinawetengan is historical evidence of this activity. In 1888 Schwarz carried out excavations of the stone inscription at Tonderukan. The excavations carried out then placed the Watu Pinawetengan in its current condition. This site is well maintained, and even local people often hold cultural festivals related to the existence of Watu Pinawetengan in the life of the Minahasa community.

The Minahasa tribe passed down history to their descendants through stories from generation to generation which are usually recited by *Tonaas* during ceremonial activities to clean the area of things that are not good for the local community when starting a new year and from this activity, it is known that *Opo Toar* and *Opo Lumimuut* are the ancestors of the Minahasa community; although there are many versions of the history of the two men. The Toar Lumimuut family originally lived around Mount Wulur Mahatus. Furthermore, along with the history of civilization, group after group of people spread to various places in Minahasa land. The presence of Watu Pinawetengan amid the Minahasa community gives a high historical value, where for a long time the Minahasa community has become a civilized society.

### 4.2 Watu Pinawetengan as the Symbol of Unity and Brotherhood of the Minahasa Tribe

The Minahasa community believes that Watu Pinawetengan is the *tumotowa wangko* or the great altar, where it is in this place that the division of territory for the Minahasa sub-ethnic groups is mandated. Furthermore, it is at Watu Pinawetengan that the Minahasa leaders will gather whenever they face a big problem and reaffirm their loyalty to *maesaan* or unity. Historical data proves that the first residential area of the Minahasa people is located close to the current Tompaso Baru sub-district, while Watu Pinawetengan is located around the Tompaso sub-district. The existence of this location is strategic because a meeting of Minahasa sub-ethnic leaders was held.

As a meeting place to unite and build brotherhood among the Minahasa people, at Watu Pinawetengan, *Nuwu I Tu'a* was initiated, namely the elder's mandate; which came to be known as the Watu Pinawetengan Mandate, namely: "This land belongs to us together. According to the instructions of the Master. Distribute this land. Encroach on new frontiers of livelihoods, O workers! Dominate and defend the territory, O warrior! So that our descendants may live and give life! *Akad se tu'us tumou o tumou tou!*" Then some messages are still preserved in the life of the Minahasa people, namely: First, *Pute Waya*, which means that all of us are equal, the roots of Minahasa culture where there was never a big kingdom so that there is no feudal culture pattern. Second, *Nuwi I Ngeluan*: We are one, *sumerar!* *Sa we sumerar*, our one! This expression refers to understanding: if we feel one, then let's spread out! Even if we are scattered everywhere, we are one! This is where the symbol of unity and brotherhood of the Minahasa people appears, evident in the existence of Watu Pinawetengan.

### **4.3 The Value of Unity and Brotherhood of Watu Pinawetengan in Minahasa Society Today**

The ancestors of the Minahasa people have experienced a displacement of residence from Niutakan to the northern part of Awuan, which is close to Watu Pinawetengan. This displacement occurs because the life patterns of past people rely more on nature so that they will move along with the food needs they are looking for. This odyssey in the life of the community brings them closer to a family bond and this is realized through a unity deliberation at Watu Pinawetengan.

The value of this unity is getting stronger along with the entry of Christianity in the Minahasa land; where teachings that emphasize love and brotherhood continue to be echoed. Malcolm Brownlee stated that love is closely related to the savior who was willing to give His life for mankind and was punished on the Cross. His ministry permeates life and is liberating to serve others. The church became a place of worship and Watu Pinawetengan as a cultural locus. The values of unity and brotherhood in the spirit of the Watu Pinawetengan meeting carried out by the ancestors of the Minahasa community in the past, have become local wisdom; and then added to the Christian faith about love and brotherhood is what continues to be maintained until now in the life of the Minahasa community.

## **5 Conclusion**

The existence of Watu Pinawetengan historically, socially, culturally, and theologically has become a reference in determining the attitude of life of the Minahasa community for generations. It is in this place that the Minahasa community, which is divided into several sub-ethnics, must be able to overcome differences of opinion as well as efforts to build unity and brotherhood among internals. The leaders of the Minahasa sub-ethnic make Watu Pinawetengan a place for deliberation to decide for the common good. It was in this place that the unity and brotherhood of the Minahasa people were discussed when the elder's mandate, *Nuwu I Tu'a*, became known as the Watu Pinawetengan mandate. The value of this unity and brotherhood is getting stronger along with the entry of Christianity in Minahasa land; where teachings that emphasize love and brotherhood continue to grow in the life of the Minahasa community.

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