



Theology of Badati: A Constructive Contextual Theology in Hutumury Society According to Stephen B. Bevans

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ABSTRACT

Various threats of conflict and egoism based on differences in interests can occur in the Hutumuri society. However, the *badati* inherited by the ancestors and traditional elders, carried out by the people in Hutumuri, has been proven in protecting every member of the local community to maintain the society integration of Hutumuri. Therefore, it is urgent to construct *badati* theologically as a wise and contextual basis for social relations in Hutumuri society to maintain stability and peace internally in Negeri Hutumuri, Maluku society, Indonesia, as is the aim of this research. The research method used here is qualitative research with descriptive analysis of data collected through observation, interviews with traditional and religious leaders in Hutumuri, and literature study. With the contextual theological perspective initiated by Stephen B. Bevans, which is in dialogue with the cosmology, *badati* practices of the Hutumuri society, along with a study of Galatians 6: 2, the finding of this research is that *badati* can become a theological source for strengthening society integrity in Hutumuri. Theologically *badati* is cooperation based on reciprocal hospitality, solidarity, and the fraternal nobility of society. The implication is the strengthening of common life in this nation which needs to be preserved in a sustainable manner.

Keywords: *Badati*; hospitality; solidarity; fraternity; integration

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INTRODUCTION

Badati is a tradition of Maluku that cultivates a social life that is happy to help each other. Alaidrus (2024) conveys that the term of *badati* comes from the Moluccans' ancestral language, which means "joint venture". What is shared between members of the society in the *badati* tradition is usually in the form of food, drink, money, support, energy, time, communication, interaction, and movement to maintain security in the society. *Badati* also means joint material responsibility to facilitate the major activities being carried out that require wider community involvement (Saimima, 2021).

For example, the movement of *badati* activists, who are Christians and Muslims, encouraged *badati* to stop the conflict from becoming more massive as well as to bring concrete peace when a violent communal conflict occurred in society in 2012 (Rohman, 2023). Then, the Muslim society in the Islamic Village of Siri Sori helped to build a church building for the Christian society in the Christian Village of Siri Sori in the form of money and labor donation (Saimima, 2021). On the other hand, the Christian society in the Christian Village of Siri Sori helped to build the mosque of Islamic Village of Siri Sori by providing support in the form of money and materials such as bamboo (Saimima, 2021).

This shows that *badati* is a wise and contextual foundation for the integration of society and nation. In order to ensure the preservation of *badati* inherited by the ancestors and traditional elders, there is an urgency to the study and development of the *badati* tradition that can provide protection to every member of society from various threats of conflict and egoism based on differences in interests which can occur. The reality of distortion and rejection of cultural conservation of *badati* can actually be exploited by communities who want to attack the public interests as well as the stability and unity of society and nation. Those can be reflected in hoaxes, hate speech, and negative propaganda that collides with the identities and rights of individuals or certain groups in society with moral and social obligations and responsibilities, which then crack societal social relations. This can happen to the society in Hutumuri, District of South Leitimur, Ambon City, Maluku.

There are studies that have been carried out regarding traditions such as *badati* in Maluku to maintain social relations in society. By developing a historical perspective, Saimima (2021) examines the historical awareness that strengthens the fraternity of the Christian society in the Christian Village of Siri Sori and the Muslim society in the Islamic Village of Siri Sori through various local traditions, such as: *gandong*, *badati*, and *maano*. By using a historical perspective Saimima, Sinaga, et al. (2022) also study the *masohi* in the Christian and Islamic Siri Sori Villages post-conflict. By using the historical perspective Saimima, Eiomkuy, et al. (2023) research the *pela gandong* among the people of Negeri Hatu, Haya, and Tehua that was proven to encourage them to protect each other, when communal conflict happened in 1999-2000. Then, by exploring a contextual theological perspective, Saimima, Eiomkuy, et al. (2023) develop the

theology of *baku kele* for the people of the Christian Larike Village post-communal conflict in Maluku in 1999-2004.

Especially in the context of Hutumuri society, by developing communication science Muskita and Latuheru (2022) research the role of *Marinyo* in conveying the King's message to his people both through information communicated directly and via smartphone applications. By using artistic science, Muskitta (2015) discovers that the music of *tahuri* of Hutumuri society has developed from generation to generation. Then, using anthropology science, Wattimena (2009) researches about the traditional house of *baileo* in Hutumuri society as the identity of the local society. Matitaputty (2021) examines the role of *soa* (customary institutions) in maintaining the survival of the Hutumuri society. Then, Dandirwalu (2021) writes about the contextual theology of the summoning tradition of *totem* in Hutumuri society. Meanwhile, there is also a contextual theology in another context studied by Habeahan and Prayitno (2022) for character education, especially in terms of teaching respect, decency, honesty, justice, responsibility, and care, namely from the cultural principles of Dalihan Na Tolu.

The previous studies above are useful to support this research theoretically. However, this research is substantially different from previous researches, namely research on contextual theology based on the tradition of *badati* in the Hutumuri society in order to strengthen their social relationships, that also contributes to the people of Maluku in supporting, maintaining, and fighting for the creation of the peace and unity of the Republic of Indonesia (RI). This description displays a critical dimension to the conventional view that always sees societal traditions as being at odds with the Christian faith. In fact, historically Christian theology and faith have encountered the traditions and culture of society, and dialogue with each other has also been enriching to build the identity and life values of society both personally and communally. Efforts to build a contextual theology from *badati* traditions in the context of the Hutumuri society are the focus of this research, as well as contributing to the development of fraternity and stability of the Hutumuri and Maluku society as an integral part of the Republic of Indonesia in the contemporary era. Therefore, the perspective of contextual theology is used as a tool to explain this reality and construct *badati* as a contextual theology in the local context of the Hutumuri society.

In order to build *badati* theology in the context of the Hutumuri society, this research refers to the main ideas of Stephen B. Bevans (2002) in his book "Models of Contextual Theology." Bevans is an American Catholic priest, theologian, and professor emeritus at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, Illinois. According to Bevans, contextual theology can be defined as a way of doing theology in which one takes into account: the spirit and message of the gospel; the tradition of the Christian people; the culture in which one is theologizing; and social change in that culture, whether brought about by western technological process or the grass-roots struggle for equality, justice,

and liberation (Bevans, 2002). Doing theology contextually is not an option, nor is it something that should only interest people from the Third World or missionaries who work there (Bevans, 2002). The contextualization of theology is the attempt to understand Christian faith in terms of a particular context (Bevans, 2002).

Bevans (2002) explains that one of the important elements in doing theology is context that includes culture, history, experience, social location, its changes, and contemporary forms of thought, also in the light of Christian tradition. This is like the Triune God, namely a dynamic and relational union of Three Persons (Bevans, 2002). Through the presence of the Spirit, as well as the concrete humanity of Logos, God works for human salvation in the midst of human contexts, various cultures, events, sufferings, as well as various joys (Bevans, 2002). Thus, contextualization is a theological imperative (Bevans, 2002).

Bevans (2002) conveys two sets of factors that point to why theology today must take into more serious account in which it is articulated. These external factors are: 1) a general dissatisfaction in both the First and Third Worlds, with classical approaches to theology; 2) the oppressive nature of older approaches; 3) the growing identity of local churches; and 4) contemporary social sciences (Bevans, 2002). These internal factors are: 1) the incarnational nature of Christianity; 2) the sacramental nature of reality; and 3) a shift in the understanding of the nature of divine revelation (Bevans, 2002). When revelation was understood in terms of eternal truths framed in unchanging and unchangeable divinely given language, theology could only be conceived of as unchanging and having little or nothing to do with the realities of culture and social change (Bevans, 2002). But as revelation has come to be conceived in terms of a personal self-offer of God's very self to men and women, an offer of friendship and loving relationship, it must be asked whether such an offer could be made in any way except in terms that men and women could understand (Bevans, 2002).

In order to respond to the post-conflict reality in Ambon in 1999-2004, Al-Qurtuby (2018) states that the noble values of local culture that have been taught by previous *datuk* (traditional leader) are important to maintain and preserve for all members of society in Ambon and Maluku. For Al-Qurtuby (2018), this recommendation is for religious leaders and communities to provide space for the spirit of "local wisdoms" that embrace and strengthen harmony in society. Furthermore, these "local wisdoms" can be dialogued with rather than being eroded and excluded from religious discourse (Al-Qurtuby, 2018). Nevertheless, Mudimeli and Khosa-Nkatini (2024) still confirm the importance of a critical evaluation of cultural practices that undermine the nature of femininity and other issues that can make discrimination and injustice in the societies.

Based on the description of the problem above, *badati* needs to be constructed into a contextual theology for the Hutumury society to strengthen their social relations from the various challenges of life's difficulties, including threats to their fraternity and

unity in the present and the future. Several research questions that need to be explored in depth in this article are: 1) what is the cosmology of the Hutumuri society regarding *badati*?; 2) how are the forms of *badati* that has been carried out by the Hutumuri society so far, as well as its contribution to the local society's life?; and 3) how is the construct of *badati* as a contextual theology that is relevant for the Hutumuri society?

This research aims to: 1) explain the cosmology of the Hutumuri society regarding *badati*; 2) explain the forms of *badati* carried out by the Hutumuri society so far, as well as their contribution to the lives of local people; and 3) build *badati* as a contextual theology that is relevant for the Hutumuri society for their wise and reconciling social lives.

This research is important in the context of developing Indonesian people, especially the society of Hutumuri and Maluku, who are aware of their responsibility to build the society and the State of Indonesia into a nation that stands firmly by adhering to *badati* as a traditional culture in dialogue with the Christian faith amidst the onslaught of globalization that often threatens the nation's integrity and culture. Apart from that, this research is important to encourage Indonesia society to actively participate in building the nation through their role in every dimension of social life, especially through preserving *badati* traditions as local wisdom of the Hutumuri society in Maluku.

METHOD

The research method used in a qualitative method refers to Moleong's (2010) view that qualitative research aims to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects. Furthermore, giving meaning to the phenomenon studied is based on its factual reality, so that the quality of the data is maintained. Therefore, the researchers prioritize awareness as well as possible and being open in order to understand various views, knowledge, values, norms, rules, relationships, and behavior of individuals and society collectively as they are (Saimima, 2020).

The data in this research is narrative or descriptive in nature with collection techniques, namely: 1) observation; 2) interviews with Empi Patalala, Filipus Waas, and Yan Lewaherilla, 70 years old, also Semy Pasalbessy, 60 years old, traditional figures in Hutumuri, and Lesnussa, 55 years old, a religious figure in Hutumuri; and 3) literature study of various books, articles, and literatures. These sources are the main actors involved in the process of regulating *badati* in Hutumuri society.

Meanwhile, also referring to Moleong's (2010, p. 36) ideas in this research, data analysis is descriptively based on the results of observations, interviews, and studies of literature summaries that were obtained, sorted, and organized to get the themes and patterns described. The next step is to interpret the data, that is an effort to obtain a deeper and broader meaning and significance for the results of the research conducted (Moleong, 2021). Then, discussion of the research results is carried out by critically reviewing the

research results with relevant theories and accurate information (Moleong, 2010) from observations, interviews, and literature studies conducted.

In this research, the *badati* phenomenon for strengthening relations of Christian society in Hutumuri is the main study material. In this research *badati* as local wisdom will be explained in relation to its social and cultural capital in the form of values related to strengthening local community relations. Then, the empirical experience is analyzed and developed into a *badati* theology for strengthening relations of Christian society in Hutumuri. By using the perspective of contextual theology initiated by Bevans, that is discussed with the cosmology and practices of the *badati* in Hutumuri society, alongside a study of Galatians 6:2, the theology of *badati* is constructed and offered here.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Cosmology of the Hutumuri Society about *Badati*

Etymologically cosmology comes from the word *kosmos* that means “world, order, or nature” and the word *logos* that means “science” (Sadulloh, 2011). Kamus Bahasa Indonesia defines “cosmology” as a branch of science that investigates the origins, structure, and relationships of space and time in the universe (Kamus Bahasa Indonesia/Tim Penyusun Kamus Pusat Bahasa, 2008). So, cosmology can be interpreted as a space where living things meet as one unit in the universe.

In a regional context that also concerns a living environment (*negeri/village/society*), cosmology of society can be interpreted as the social value of love for the society that is found in the collective subconscious of the community (Matakena et al., 2024). Watloly (2013) describes this cosmology as a habitat, namely the living space of all creatures. There encounters occur to show the existence of a person or group in their community of lives. From these encounters, various habits are born, that are then adapted as culture, and these reflect a person’s self-worth in his or her community.

Within its habitat there are cultural movements and social realities that continue to occur, that Watloly (2013) calls “conduct”. Conduct is related to the character, nature, and manners of a person in his or her community that arises from habits in the practice of living together which can give birth to social values (Watloly, 2013). Several things are included in cosmology, namely: mutual cooperation, solidarity, and togetherness, which are the basis for maintaining balance between humans, nature, and spirituality. In general, the cosmology of the society in Maluku creates a framework that includes a deep understanding of the universe, human beings, and cultural values that influence everyday life (Matakena et al., 2024).

In a complete and comprehensive cosmos, there is the Hutumuri society as a space of ownership in the practice of real life in harmony and balance. According to Perulu (Perulu, 2022), Hutumuri society is a traditional society located in the Eastern Peninsula,

South Leitimur District. Geographically the North of Hutumuri society borders the Leihitu Peninsula. To the South it borders Rutong and Batu Merah, while to the West it borders Halong. Then, to the East, it borders the Banda Sea (Perulu, 2022).

The land of Hutumuri, as part of the cosmos locus, displays nature that is intact and synergistic to ensure the survival of its people. Therefore, respect for nature is an important part of what the Hutumuri society often do. Then the Hutumuri nature becomes a means or space for the Hutumuri society to depend on while practicing helping each other in living together as part of kinship ties that continue to be preserved (Dandirwalu, 2021). This had been systematized long ago, when the long historical journey of the Hutumuri society began with the fraternal relationship between the Timanole, Simanole, and Silaloy (Wattimena, 2009).

As Empi Patalala and Yan Lewaherilla, 70 years old, also Semy Pasalbesy, 60 years old, traditional leaders in Hutumuri say the practice of helping each other in the context of the Hutumuri society is known as *badati* and *batanggong* (Patalala, Lewaherilla, & Pasalbesy, 2024). Both have the same meaning as the meaning of mutual cooperation, namely working together in unity to complete the work easily and quickly. *Badati* reflects the integration of social and environmental aspects in the practice of living together.

Badati activities can include community work such as building infrastructure, as well as helping in certain events and celebrations. Patalala, Lewaherilla, Pasalbesy, and Lesnussa, 55 years old, religious leaders in Hutumuri, tell that the Hutumuri society view *badati* as an activity aimed at strengthening social ties within the community which is supported by both the church and the Government of Hutumuri society (Patalala, Lewaherilla, & Pasalbesy, 2024). The society fulfills work responsibilities to help each other through *badati* that also serves as a space to strengthen relationships among the society members. Thus, *badati* can be considered as part of a culture that provides opportunities for the Hutumuri society to help each other, make work easier, and uphold the values of togetherness in one Hutumuri society.

Badati in the cultural framework of the Hutumuri society is the habit of sharing feelings as fellow citizens that transcend differences in ethnic groups, clans, social groups, even religions in the Hutumuri society. According to Patalala, Lewaherilla, and Filipus Waas, 70 years old, traditional figures in Hutumuri, *badati* in Hutumuri society had been carried out by their *tatua* (parents) in the past, that was passed down from generation to generation until now following the changes and developments of era (Patalala, Lewaherilla, & Pasalbesy, 2024). In other words, *badati* has become a habit in Hutumuri society as a form of appreciation for the advice of its predecessors (customary religiosity) which has taken root in the minds of its people. Through *badati* fraternal relations also become closer as the Moluccans' philosophy, namely *ale rasa, beta rasa* ("You feel, I feel"). Awareness and feelings of sympathy, empathy, and concern become the framework of their style for practicing *badati* in Hutumuri society as well as a form of respect for others (Lesnussa &

Waas, 2024). It shows that the cultural social interaction patterns of the people cannot be separated from their inner harmony.

No	Respond	Position	Cosmology of <i>Badati</i>
1	Empi Patatala	Traditional leader	Mutual cooperation inherited by the traditional ancestors and elders is to strengthen the social relations supported by church and Government of Hutumuri
2	Filipus Waas	Traditional leader	Mutual cooperation inherited by the traditional ancestors and elders and based on awareness and feelings of sympathy, empathy, and concern become the framework of the Hutumuri society of life styles and form of respect for others
3	Yan Lewaherilla	Traditional leader	Mutual cooperation inherited by the traditional ancestors and elders is to strengthen the social relations supported by church and Government of Hutumuri
4	Semy Pasalbesy	Traditional leader	Mutual cooperation inherited by the traditional ancestors and elders is to strengthen the social relations supported by church and Government of Hutumuri
5	Lesnussa	Religious leader	Mutual cooperation inherited by the traditional ancestors and elders and based on awareness and feelings of sympathy, empathy, and concern become the framework of the Hutumuri society of life styles and form of respect for others

Table 1. Interview results on the cosmology of *badati* of Hutumuri society (Lesnussa & Waas, 2024; Patalala, Lewaherilla, & Pasalbesy, 2024)

Based on the data in Table 1. Interview results on the cosmology of *badati* of Hutumuri society, it appears that the cosmological scope of *badati* are historical, systemic, mental, social, cultural, and practical that are integrated in multiaspects of the Hutumuri society's life especially in practice of helping each other.

Practices of *Badati* in Hutumuri

Badati has become a culture that is inherent in the Hutumuri society, so that in this way one's existence as a citizen of Hutumuri society is demonstrated. This is not limited to local communities based on lineage relationships, but also immigrants who live in Hutumuri society, as well as those who have settled or migrated outside Hutumuri society based on family ties as part of the community members in Hutumuri society (Patalala, Lewaherilla, & Waas, 2024). Therefore, there are social sanctions for those who do not participate in *badati*, namely the emergence of shame towards themselves and their families for not involving themselves in *badati* carried out at an event or activity (Waas, 2024). In fact, Souhuwat (Souhuwat, 2019) says that the Hutumuri society believe that their ancestors functioned as supervisors of customs and executors of God's will, who punished anyone who violated customs in the form of punishment.

In older terms, this habit is known as *bakampong* (Patalala & Lewaherilla, 2024). Sharing feelings in the *badati* concept refers to the habit of helping each other, when members of the Hutumuri society experience difficulties, disasters, grief, weddings, religious celebrations, community services, and building houses and villages (Patalala, Lewaherilla, Waas, & Pasalbessy, 2024). This can take the form of collecting money or materials.

Badati begins with a family gathering and continues with a form of helping each other to bear the burden together. *Badati* also has a system that explicitly regulates and organizes the implementation process that lies in role of each *soa* as an organizing entity in the social life of the community (Patalala, Lewaherilla, & Waas, 2024). Apart from that, because in general the Hutumuri society are Christians, the church plays a big role in collaborating with the local government to implement *badati*.

This habits make people accustomed to living in an atmosphere of shared destiny, harmony, and peace. Aholiab Watloly, et. al. state that although the Moluccans have many concepts about customs based peace, they also have behaviors that are vulnerable to conflict, so that conflict is something that cannot be ignored and will occur regardless of its form and nature in the lives of indigenous people in Maluku (Watloly et al., 2016), including in Hutumuri society. In efforts to resolve conflicts in Maluku, customs and culture are often alternative tools for peace and reconciliation. *Badati* is also sometimes used as a shield to resolve disputes in the *soa*. Such *badati* practices reflect the charm of the Hutumuri society's cosmology of responsibility and mutual assistance in various forms of cooperation (Patalala, 2024).

Specifically related to weddings, there is an event called *panuli*, which is a gathering of the extended family and other relatives several months before the wedding with the aim of preparing to provide support for each person or family. There is also other event referred to as *pamana* or traditional *maso ruma* in which the distribution of necessities and the timing of marriage (wedding) are carried out (Patalala, Lewaherilla, & Waas, 2024). The form of *badati* in this wedding event can be seen in the procession of distributing necessities during the *panuli* and *pamana* events to each person and family (Patalala, Lewaherilla, & Waas, 2024). However, the practice of *badati* carried out at weddings nowadays is considered to have begun to fade due to the behavior of people who prefer to carry out marriages in private or without notifying many outside parties to participate in the wedding event. This is caused by changes in times and lifestyles in society with various economic demands and household needs which have caused the practice of *badati* at wedding ceremonies beginning to be abandoned (Patalala, 2024).

There is also another form of *badati* practice that was carried out in ancient time, namely the construction of *badati* tank or water storage tanks. This tank is intended to be a water channel for the daily life of the Hutumuri society (Patalala, Lewaherilla, Waas, Pasalbessy, et al., 2024). However, the *badati* tank has begun to lose its function, due to

modernization with updated irrigation systems that use more modern machine equipment. There is a tendency for *badati* practices to be reduced due to factors of development over time. This is caused by many parties, especially the younger generation in Hutumuri society who have begun to lose or do not know and recognize the meaning and practice of *badati* as a cultural identity in Hutumuri society (Patalala, Lewaherilla, Waas, Pasalbessy, et al., 2024).

No	Respond	Position	Practices of <i>Badati</i>
1	Empi Patatala	Traditional leader	The habit of helping each other, when members of the Hutumuri society experience difficulties, disasters, grief, weddings, religious celebrations, community services, and building houses, villages, and tank reduced due to factors of development over time
2	Filipus Waas	Traditional leader	The habit of helping each other, when members of the Hutumuri society experience difficulties, disasters, grief, weddings, religious celebrations, community services, and building houses, villages, and tank reduced due to factors of development over time
3	Yan Lewaherilla	Traditional leader	The habit of helping each other, when members of the Hutumuri society experience difficulties, disasters, grief, weddings, religious celebrations, community services, and building houses, villages, and tank reduced due to factors of development over time
4	Semy Pasalbessy	Traditional leader	The habit of helping each other, when members of the Hutumuri society experience difficulties, disasters, grief, weddings, religious celebrations, community services, and building houses, villages, and tank reduced due to factors of development over time
5	Lesnussa	Religious leader	The habit of helping each other such as community services and building tank reduced due to factors of development over time

Table 2. Interview results on the practices of *badati* of Hutumuri society (Patalala, Lewaherilla, Waas, Pasalbessy, et al., 2024)

***Badati* as Cooperation Based on Reciprocal Hospitality, Solidarity, and Nobility of Society Fraternity**

Bevans (2002) emphasizes that the contextualization process in doing theology is important for several things: 1) explaining more clearly what is expressed by the people in general or vague terms; 2) deepening the ideas of the people by preparing for them the rich treasures of Christian tradition; and 3) challenging them to broaden their horizons by presenting them the revelation of Christian theology.

Furthermore, as Bevans's (2002) view, the process of contextualization is aimed at not subordinating context to theology, but instead in various cultural spheres there are "seeds of the Word," that belong to God. In the anthropological model proposed by Bevans (2002), contextual theology seeks to: 1) reveal the hidden presence of God in the

ordinary structures of certain situations; 2) understand more clearly the web of human relationships and the values that shape human culture, and the depth in that God is present, offering life, healing and wholeness, so that an adequate language for the faith of the people can be designed; and 3) developing a parallel understanding between culture and the Holy Bible, including faith traditions as products of religious experience that are socially and culturally shaped, which emerged from the life of Israel and the early Christian congregation.

Bevans (2002) confirms that this model focuses on the validity of the human as the place of divine revelation and as a source (locus) for theology that is equal to scripture and tradition. It centers on the value and goodness of *anthropos*, the human person that God manifest the divine present (Bevans, 2002). It also anthropological in the sense that it makes use of the insights of the social science of anthropology (Bevans, 2002).

Therefore, it is also urgent to develop contextual theology to see a particular culture as something that is unique, which relies on little insights from other traditions and cultures in terms of expressing faith (Bevans, 2002). The congregation members play roles as contextualizers, who are assisted by theologians in systematizing and developing their theology (Bevans, 2002). Then, Forster (2020, p. 17) adds that 1) religious beliefs and religious institutions shape social identity; and 2) society's social, cultural, and political life also shape Christianity, the Church, and theology. At the same time, contextual theology is important to affirm the goodness of all creation and how truly the world is loved, so that God sent His only begotten Son (Bevans, 2002).

Bevans (2002) adds that evangelization needs to be done in humility and the evangelizer should approach another culture with the conviction that God is already present within it, even though that culture, like all cultures, is also deeply flawed. His or her role is to bring God to full recognition within that culture, and thus to contribute to the full expression of the gospel (Bevans, 2002). The method of this kind evangelization is not one in which messenger enters a culture simply to communicate a message but more of a dialogues (Bevans, 2002). Both evangelizer and evangelized are changed, and as a result the gospel message takes on a shape and content that it never had before (Bevans, 2002).

However, cultural romanticism is avoided in building contextual theology. This is caused by several things, namely: 1) cultures continue to change over time; 2) past experiences including the Bible and tradition should be taken into account in the contextualization process; and 3) anthropology and social sciences which actually originate from the West are also methods that are not at all separate in the contextualization process (Bevans, 2002). Even for Bevans (2002), to ignore this is to ignore: 1) the living sources of theology; and 2) the mandate and presence of the living God, who grants that life in the midst of human life. This is inline with the Muswubi's (2024) statement that concept of contextualisation as the process of becoming, embodying and/or incarnation of the divine word or text in the human world or context. Then, Sunkudon et al. (2025) also tell

that by using the concept of Christ's redemption in cultural contextualization in integrating Christian teachings with a local cultural practice comparisons related to the similarities and differences between the two are needed.

Besides that, a contextual theological construction is also useful for strengthening Church Teachings in Maluku. First, contextual theology can be the direction of church services now and in the future for its community (Sinaga, 2022). Second, contextual theology can also contribute to strengthening society at large through the study and development of collective values that are also internalized by individuals for the common good rather than conflict and segregation (Sinaga & Saimima, 2022). Through the perspective of pastoral care, Sinaga says that the 'go-between' (religion, culture, even trauma) Christian faith can be expressed in the life history of the society at the post-communal conflict in Moluccas (Sinaga, 2019).

In order to build contextual theology, culture is an urgent aspect studied. Culture is the order of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meaning, hierarchy, religion, time, roles, spatial relationships, concepts of the universe, material objects, and possessions that a large group of people have acquired from generation to generation through individual efforts and group (Porter & Samovar, 2009). Then, three socio-cultural elements, namely: belief systems, values, attitudes, world view, and social organization (Porter & Samovar, 2009). In the context of Indonesia, the cultural characteristics are: mutual cooperation, friendship, and hospitality in society as a basic privilege, which can make Indonesians to love and preserve their own national culture (Lestari et al., 2019). Theodorus Pangalila and Christar A. Rumbay confirm that: 1) religious multiculturalism is a necessity for the well-being of humanity, incorporating essential monitoring, and balancing mechanism; and 2) it constitutes a valuable asset capable of making a substantial contribution to the fabric of the Indonesian nation (Pangalila & Rumbay, 2024).

This is expressed by Simarmata (2020), who also emphasizes the importance of preserving mutual cooperation, which has existed since Before Christ (B.C.) until now, as the way of life for Indonesians, because mutual cooperation is evident in Pancasila, Bhineka Tunggal Ika, and in living a democratic life. Then, Pasoloran et al. (2023) add that *gotong-royong* or mutual cooperation is a characteristic of traditional societies and seen based on the importance of participation in the partnership (cooperative) by attending at a ceremony, and giving and returning gifts as the forms of participation. Then, the essential nature of human beings is to socialize and form relationships in the context of social life (Siswadi, 2024, p. 6). Therefore, contextual theology that explores the rich of local wisdoms of the Indonesian nation encourages Christians' love for the Indonesian nation, as well as filling it with things that are meaningful, respectful, and building the integrity of a nation consisting of cultural diversity.

Here Galatians 6:2 can be the biblical basis for *badati*. According to Sihombing and Siregar (2022), who develop the Keener's (2019) idea, Galatians 6:2 contains an

understanding of mutual assistance that is a manifestation of Christ's love both in spiritual aspect and other aspects. Such love liberates believers without distinction from the legalistic Jewish tradition of involving one another's participation to encourage each other. Strelan (1975) says that "the burdens (*ta bare*) of Galatians 6:2a refer to: 1) mistakes, sins, weaknesses, and guilt of the brothers/sisters; 2) additional supports such as a financial sense, money, and wealth; and 3) the fruits of the Spirit such as mutual aid, comfort, and humility. Besides that, Galatians 6:2 is admonition to contribute to the support of the Jerusalem apostles by participating in the collection organized by Paul as the context of this verse. Then, Ho-Hyung Cho (2023) who develops the ideas of Barclay (1988), confirms that Paul and the early churches would have known that Jesus used the love commandment in Leviticus 19:18 to sum up the Mosaic law (Matt. 7:12; 19:19; Mark 12: 31; Luke 10: 27). In other words, citing Jesus' love commandment as a summary of the law of Moses, Paul must have understood the law of Christ as the fulfillment of the Mosaic law through love (Ho-Hyung Cho, 2023, pp. 1–25). So, Gal. 6: 2 can be a biblical basis for *badati* that emphasizes the urgency for all Christians to be present and help everyone without exception completely and existentially with what they have as the implementation of the love commandment.

By referring to the cosmology and practices of *badati* of Hutumuri society as well as Bevans' views described above, *badati* that has become the language of the local community can be said to be in principle in line with Christian values. First, *badati* is a cultural system that prioritizes cooperation among members of society, that this cooperation is reciprocal as a form of hospitality and morality of society. Rathbone (Rathbone, 2024) confirms that hospitality in a society is embedded in mutual relations symbolized by an economy of gift-giving and reciprocity. Then, Rathbone also tells that: 1) the cultural significance of gifts is associated with a system of recognition and tradition as written in the Old Testament; 2) the structure of this process is supported by traditions, culture, and religious-ethical principles; and 3) the initial act of generosity comes with explicit and controlled conditions that should be respected and reciprocated with detrimental consequences in cases of non-compliances. Furthermore, the refusal of gifts from someone in power may even incur hostility. At the same time, the reciprocity advances the ethics of responsibility and accountability, which is insightful for corporate social responsibility, church, and governance among others (Rathbone, 2024).

Second, in the *badati* culture, personal interests are solely secondary, even the role of each member of society is seen as significant in pursuing welfare and the public interest through the division of labor based on mutual willingness and agreement. However, the interest questioned is for the common good in the *Orang Basudara* society (a societal context that respects to cultural fraternity with an attitude of responsibility to redeem and improve relations among members of a mutualistic society) (Watloly, 2013). Watloly (2013) emphasizes that social systems such as *badati* has become icon of solidarity and a

lifestyle of shared support, because the social systems are built on collective principles, where local communities should build social relationships based on mutual assistance and harmonious cooperation. In other words, the values of individuality and group loyalty are undermined by the values of group cohesion and harmony in society (Bartels, 2017).

Third, *badati* encourages every member of society from various gender backgrounds, as well as social and economic status to open, embracing, and even willing to sacrifice with awareness of the importance of maintaining cultural and historical kinship and fraternity. This fraternity becomes a social (genosocial) blood relationship with an inner sense of law (sacred obligation) (Watloly, 2013). Through *badati*, society is encouraged to face situations of social conflict that always exist due to political and religious disagreements, and to make this social system as a pillar of social cohesion, stability, and harmony in society (Bartels, 2017). Even Watloly (Watloly, 2013) views that the island communities in Maluku as *causa prima* are the cornerstones in maintaining authenticity and nobility, as well as maintaining the purity of national and state life.

Besides that, *badati* is in line with Maspaitella's (Maspaitella, 2022) view that the human beings of Maluku are traditional human beings who find their existence in their traditional communities, that were born and formed in a traditional order, which was determined long ago by local ancestors. Alfons (2020) also emphasizes that the existence of institutionalized totemism within indigenous communities is still maintained in the development of modern religion, science, and technology. The determining factor lies in the inheritance of the identity of traditional children and the pattern of kin relationships between internal and external genealogical groups of *soa* in Hutumuri society (Alfons, 2020). Likewise, Latuheru and Muskita (2020) stated that Hutumuri society is indeed and controlled by indigenous people who have culture, customs, and customary laws which have been protected, maintained, and practiced for generations in the community's daily social interactions.

However, social life that is not strengthened by the spirit and values of fraternity as contained in *badati* will be easily polluted by various narrow and exclusive interests of certain people or groups with the impact of strong individual lifestyles, desires for contestation that ignore the rights of individuals, as well as expressions of hatred that divide unity, even compromising peace in society by sharpening primordial differences. On the other hand, pluralism in society in the current era also demands adequate spaces for various cultural systems to color social life in multidimensional ways. However, in a multicultural context, Mirsel et al. (2023) emphasize that social capitals that include values, such as: openness and willingness to accept others and differences, upholding unity and fraternity, even traditional norms, customs (including kinsip ties), symbols and language, the role of religious leaders, community leaders, and traditional leaders, are to strengthen tolerance and prevent intolerance among the people. However, it is not uncommon for cultural diversity to be deliberately manipulated to negate local wisdom, which has implications for

the ease of social clashes to occur among members of society, as well as the increasingly fading local wisdom that binds religious relations in the Christian community in Hutumuri society. *Badati* in the context of Hutumuri society is rooted in local culture, so it is important to preserve and revitalize it as the identity of the Christian community of Hutumuri society to strengthen their social relations as part of Indonesian society.

Badati is no less important than other traditions for Hutumuri society both in terms of maintaining their ancestral heritages and perpetuating internal stability and peace within the society, that also contributes to the people of Maluku and Indonesia at large. Such preservation efforts, which are enriched by the perspective of the Christian faith held by the Hutumuri society, are essential, because the *badati* tradition and the Christian religion can be seen as partners in dialogue with one another. This action can be considered important to maintain and strengthen the fraternity of the Hutumuri society, so that they have a love and constructive attitude towards *badati* in a contextual theological way that supports the unity and integrity of the society and nation in the current era of globalization. This can also be said as another way of strategies to end religious conflict and foster tolerance and understanding include a commitment to justice and fairness, as well as the advancement of inclusive theology and multicultural Christian education (Labobar, 2024). Even, this is in line with the essence of *The Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together* studied by Meo et al. (2024) where the essence of the Christian faith is the belief that all human beings are equal in the fraternity of humanity who are called to understand each other, work together, and live as sisters and brothers who love each other.

CONCLUSION

As a local wisdom, *badati* contributes to strengthening social relations in Hutumuri. *Badati* is a social action of the Hutumuri society that was inherited by traditional ancestors and elders and continues to be implemented today amidst the challenges of globalization and the reality of conflicts of interests in society. *Badati* reflects the integration of social and environmental aspects in the practice of living together. *Badati* in the cultural framework of the Hutumuri society is the habit of sharing feelings as fellow citizens that transcend differences in ethnic groups, clans, social groups, even religions in the Hutumuri society. Awareness and feelings of sympathy, empathy, and concern become the framework of their style for practicing *badati* in Hutumuri society as well as a form of respect for others. Thus, *badati* can be considered as part of a culture that provides opportunities for the Hutumuri society to help each other, make work easier, and uphold the values of togetherness in one Hutumuri society. Sharing feelings in the *badati* concept refers to the habit of helping each other, when members of the Hutumuri society experience difficulties, disasters, grief, weddings, religious celebrations, community services, and building houses and villages. This can take the form of collecting money or materials. Then,

Galatians 6:2 can be a biblical basis for *badati* that emphasizes the urgency for all Christians to be present and help everyone without exception completely and existentially with what they have as the implementation of the love commandment.

By developing the perspective of contextual theology initiated by Bevans, that is in dialogue with the cosmology, practices of the *badati* in Hutumuri society, also study of Gal. 6:2, *badati* which has become the language of the local community can be said to be in principle in line with Christian values. Theologically *badati* is a form of cooperation based on reciprocal hospitality, solidarity, and the nobility of fraternity of society, that the implication is to strengthen living together in the midst of this nation. Therefore, *badati* needs to be revitalized and preserved from generation to generation.

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We have no competing interests related to the research or writing of this article.

Author contributions

R.R.T.S. conceptualised and designed the study, acquired data, performed the analysis and drafted the manuscript, the completion of the final article, besides edited, reviewed, and finalized the article for submission. J.R.S., J.C.R., and I. participated in the data analysis and article writing.

Ethical considerations

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