



## Original Research

# Mulajadi Nabolon: From Indigenous Religious Practice to Contemporary Society in the Public Sphere

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**Abstract:** *Mulajadi Nabolon* is a personification of God in the tribal religious concept that departs and develops from within the culture of the Batak tribe in Indonesia. Its images and teachings are not only limited to epistemological constructions of religion that persist in dogmatic beliefs but become instructions, norms, ways of life, and behavioral control integrated into modern society's social life in the technological era. Even this concept rests on the harmony that humans are part of nature and vice versa, so the two should not destroy each other. This concept bequeaths knowledge and instructions to the Batak people in building social behavior wherever they are from generation to generation. The movement of religion and culture triggers the indigenous religion's travel to contemporary society. This research will answer why the *Mulajadi Nabolon* concept persists in contemporary Batak society in this all-digital era. The problem statement of this research is discussed with the critical thinking method and sociological religion approach through books, journal articles, and the old manuscripts of the concept of *Mulajadi Nabolon*. This research shows that the indigenous belief system sustains and impacts contemporary society. In conclusion, personifying *Mulajadi Nabolon* creates the space of traveling the local religion to contemporary religion through the local values as the holder for behaving and instructing ways of life.

**Keywords:** *Mulajadi Nabolon, Indigenous Religious Practice, Public Sphere, Contemporary Society*

## Introduction

*Mulajadi Nabolon* is a self-revelation as the concept of God who created the heavens and the earth for the *Toba Batak* ethnicity. This self-revelation makes God invoked as *Debata* or God and declared as the beginning and the end of the world's creation and the universe. The *Toba Batak* people call this God *Debata Mulajadi Nabolon*, claiming to be the God who created the world and everything in it (Sabbat, Hutagalung, and Ferinia 2022). For *Toba Batak*, the self-revelation of *Mulajadi Nabolon* is the guidance for religious beliefs and practices in today's society. Moreover, *Toba Batak* still exercises religious beliefs and practices through religious rites such as the distinctive weaving of Batak—called *Ulos*—used for various rituals and customs (Silitonga and Kolibu 2023). Thus, this self-revelation shapes rituals and rites and builds dogmas of beliefs, norms, instructions, ways of living according to beliefs, and behavioral control of individuals and society today. The formation of this belief and its impact to date has been influenced by two main streams of social change, religion and culture (Lamahu 2020). At the level of religion, it demands the evolution of belief into norms,

dogmas, and instructions in today's social behavior. On the other hand, cultural currents of secularism demand primitive beliefs to adapt and guide modern times. Therefore, these two main streams place indigenous religious practice to shift and adapt to anticipate social changes in the contemporary world.

The development of other religions in Indonesia and the spread of the message of salvation to individuals and society demand the concept of belief in evolution. When Protestant Christianity entered Batak lands through missionaries and proclaimed salvation and its teachings through Jesus Christ, the concept of this ancient *Batak* belief underwent evolution and transformation in keeping with the power of Protestant Christianity (Butarbutar 2016). This evolution and transformation require local belief through the Toba Batak people forming a religious name, *Parmalim*, by creating the name of their God, *Debata Mulajadi Nabolon* (Nainggolan 2021). In *Parmalim*'s belief, *Mulajadi Nabolon's Debata* is a self-manifestation of a God who created the heavens, the earth, and everything in it. The *Batak* people also created *Debata Na Tolu* as *Mulajadi Nabolon's* helper through self-revelation, which was manifested as *Si Boru Deak Parujar* as the creator God of the earth, *Si Boru Saniangnaga* as the God of water, and *Nagapadobaniaji* as the God of protecting the earth (Siregar and Gulo 2020). Therefore, the entry of other religions into *Batak* lands made a shift and development from a stream of beliefs to religion through dogmas, teachings, and instructions wrapped in rites and rituals that have been implemented until now. Sabbat, Hutagalung, and Ferinia reveal that the rituals and rites applied by *Mulajadi Nabulon* in the *Parmalim* religion form dogmas that intersect with the contextualization of Christianity (Sabbat, Hutagalung, and Ferinia 2022). The development of Christianity sparked the movement of the local *Parmalim* belief in anticipation of the growth of Christianity. The message of salvation makes local beliefs compete with foreign religions through religious messages in attitudes, behaviors, and actions. This understanding directs the power of religion to be a trigger in reflecting on the power of local culture to keep up with the times.

At the cultural level, the growth and movement of modernization (as it is assumed to be a progressive transition from traditional to modern society) and globalization (it describes a progress of technology creating a single world through the interdependence of all aspects) erode religious values into secularized values (Katimin 2012). The growth of modernization provides an opportunity for the decline of religious institutions and distances religious values from impacting human behavior. Developing logos (as it is described as knowledge) values changes social behavior in attitudes, values, and personality so that society has modern characteristics (Martono 2011, 200–201). This shift in cultural values places religion to follow the direction of modernization to control society through religious values (Firmando 2020). This shift forms modern humans who led modern social changes, including religion, to play a role in controlling society (Armawi 2016). It makes religious teachings handed down by traditional leaders and religious leaders to the community to produce dogmas, norms, teachings, and instructions for living life. Therefore, local beliefs try to control the

community regarding ethics and behavior in wrapping local culture and wisdom. It led the *Toba Batak* people to try to control society through revelations revealed by *Debata Mulajadi Nabolon* (Wiflihani and Suharyanto 2011). The revelation was passed down to *Mulajadi Nabolon* through community behavior and provided space for religion to follow the development of modernization culture to place its position in society. This concept allows the *Toba Batak* religion through the *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata* to expand in the modern era through teaching norms and ways of life according to the teachings of the *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata* (Pardosi et al. 2022). Value revelation—local religious values, especially *Parmalim* through the teachings of the *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata*— form the basis for forming local Batak Toba cultural values.

The two preceding elements have shifted indigenous religious practice to the contemporary realm in the form of attitudes, behavior, and actions today. This behavior places religion in control of individuals and society through dogma, norms, and instructions in the social life of society. The power of religion returns to the public sphere to become a power to guide people to have behaviors and attitudes following the teachings of the Almighty. This social change made the *Parmalim* religion place the *Debata Mulajadi Nabolon* as an intellectual actor in determining religious ethics as dogma. In previous research, the concept of *Mulajadi Nabolon* was explained as an existence in the application of Pancasila for the recognition of Human Rights (Nainggolan 2021), religious rationalization in reconstructing religious beliefs and practices in modern society (Ramadhon 2022), as well as a communication tool for religious harmony in Batak lands (Khatibah and Ritonga 2021). Turnip examines the Tortor dance culture as *Mulajadi Nabolon's* instructions to honor those who have died and bless those who are living (Turnip 2016). *Mulajadi Nabolon's* revelation becomes a linguistic symbolism in Toba Batak culture to communicate in society (Siburian 2019). It builds the concept of sedimentation between Christians and *Parmalim* in daily actions (Tambunan and Pilakoannu 2021). Therefore, the concept of *Mulajadi Nabolon* forms religious knowledge and practice as teaching, commandments, canons, and laws (Harahap and Irmawati 2020). The foregoing research has yet to answer how the concept of *Mulajadi Nabolon* as an indigenous religious practice has shifted to contemporary society in the public sphere to place local belief values as guidelines for behaving in a digital society. Furthermore, as Sonny and Fotarisman say, modern people return to the local values because the technological era does not teach values to people (Zaluchu and Zaluchu 2023). My argument for this research is that even though the indigenous values seem to be obsolete, they still metamorphose into the principles of religion today and become a teaching dogma through the indigenous religious beliefs and practices of the Batak people in the digital age.

## Method

To answer my foregoing argument, I have three subtopics to be explored through this research. First, this study explains the construction of *Mulajadi Nabolon*, which his followers believe to be the *Debata*, which is the beginning of all that is created and the end. The concept of the *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata* is a shift from the mythological concept of the *Toba Batak* to digital society through the people's understanding of religious values in community. Second, implementing the *Mulajadi Nabolon* values in Batak society through understanding life and respecting local culture. The application of the values of the teachings of *Debata Mulajadi Nabolon* has become a culture within the Toba Batak community. Third, the local belief system impacts contemporary life by applying religious values in society. The application of religious values is strengthened by developing the concept of commandments and socio-religious law enforcement. This research relies not on empirical studies but on data from the literature as intended by Zaluchu (2021). The framework of the analysis uses sociology of religion because it accesses the emic perspective through the religious understanding in personifying the *Mulajadi Nabolon* as the internalization of local belief values and practices in the digital era (Buchholz 2006).

## Discussion

### A Construction of *Mulajadi Nabolon* in Toba Batak Understanding

The divinity of the *Toba Batak* people toward the understanding of God is a primitive concept based on ancient mythology that has metamorphosed into logos (Angus 2023). The *Batak* concept of the divinity of unlimited power is the concept of the divinity of one God (Warneck 1909, 28–29). The concept has the nature of purity without being contaminated and influenced by the people around them because of the isolation of their residence in the difficult mountains. The *Batak* people believe that only one God created the heavens, the earth, and everything in it. This divinity was transformed and manifested in *Mulajadi Nabolon*. This self-revelation is not recorded in a book because of the mythological concept. Therefore, the self-revelation of *Mulajadi Nabolon* was passed down orally by the *Toba Batak* people from generation to generation, thus forming the logos (Sinaga 1981, 20–25). The recording of this oral tradition creates an understanding that *Mulajadi Nabolon* controls life under the earth, is a just judge, an avenger for evil, and a giver of love without sacrifice. The absence of a book presupposes that divine belief is conveyed through short prayers in a still-alive society (Sinaga 1981, 30–33). The transformation of *Mulajadi Nabolon's* pre-logos into logos was to maintain its existence as a shift from mythological religion to modern religion.

The concept of pre-logos thinking of the Toba Batak people toward the teachings of the *Mulajadi Nabolon* religion is to create balance and harmony in ruling the sky (Sangti 1978, 204–205). This concept of thought avoids the teachings of *Mulajadi Nabolon* in the

competition between the sky gods to create wars to achieve victory. This understanding provides a place that the *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata* is not God who prioritizes war to gain societal power. The understanding of balance and harmony by *Mulajadi Nabolon* is a teaching that actualizes the right to control the sky, which is oriented toward monitoring human behavior as the heir of the earth in appreciating the work of creation (Situmeang 2007, 215–216). Based on this understanding, the ideas of the Toba Batak people in the revelation of the concept of *Mulajadi Nabolon* as *Debata*, the ruler of the sky, in the form of worship and thanksgiving for balance and harmony in the cosmos. Therefore, the Batak people's worship of the *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata* is an appreciation of the harmony between the domination of the heavens and human behavior on earth and avoiding the catastrophe of war (Vergouwen 2004, 80–85). This pre-logos concept of thinking places *Mulajadi Nabolon*'s self-revelation as God, the creator of everything in it, by placing a structure of balance and harmony in behaving and acting in society.

Understanding the concept of God or *Debata* embodies a supreme power in the universe to understand the Toba Batak people. The highest incarnation of the *Debata* concept for the Toba Batak people is *Mulajadi Nabolon* (Sinaga 1981, 13–17). The Toba Batak people believe that everything always has a “beginning” to “make” something, so they call *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata*. In this self-incarnation, *Mulajadi Nabolon* has three self-embodiments called *Tritunggal Dewa* (Wiflihani and Suharyanto 2011). The self-realization concept of *Mulajadi Nabolon* is interpreted as the ruler over the universe because he is the creator of all things. The concept of the Trinity of Gods in Toba Batak's teaching is the role of *Debata* in maintaining the order of the universe. Therefore, the role of the Trinity God is to maintain balance, harmony, and order as the ruler of the universe in its duties and responsibilities (Vergouwen 2004, 89–91). The concept of understanding the Trinity of Gods for the Toba Batak people is unity within *Mulajadi Nabolon*, and they cannot be separated from one another. It reveals the transcendence of the Highest God in His eternity in creating the universe in space-time, so the transcendence of *Mulajadi Nabolon* shows submission to his power and authority over all that he has created (Situmeang 2007, 90–92). This understanding of the Toba Batak people is embodied in *Dalihan Natolu*, where the presence of God in the life of every human being is either material or non-material.

The Toba Batak people place the self-revelation concept of *Mulajadi Nabolon* as a ruler in the macro and microcosmic (Sinaga 1981, 17–19). The concept of the creation of the universe in Toba Batak mythology originates from *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata*, who is believed to be the creator, who has no beginning and no end, creating the three elements of the *Debata* in the microcosmic. The three elements of the Debate are the three of his sons to master the microcosmic elements in maintaining balance for the macro-cosmic (Sinaga 2004, 20–25). His three sons were given the names *Debata Batara Guru*, *Debata Soripada Sohaliapan*, and *Debata Mangala Bulan* to master the three atmospheres as microcosmic, namely, *Banua Ginjang* (Upper Continent), *Banua Tonga* (Central Continent), and *Banua Toru*, which is Lower Continent

(Gultom, Rahmadiano, and Nugroho 2023). The three children of *Mulajadi Nabolon* represent his father in controlling every continent in maintaining macro and microcosmic balance and harmony. Therefore, *Mulajadi Nabolon* assigned the functions of his three children as givers of blessings in the Upper Continent, organizers in the Central Continent, and judgment in the Lower Continent in supporting the performance of the *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata* (Situmeang 2007). Regularity in mastering macro and microcosmic concepts refer to pre-Logos teachings in avoiding conflicts with other gods that will cause disaster for humanity. This pre-logos understanding leads to the thought of *Mulajadi Nabolon's* self-incarnation as a ruler in the macro and microcosmic to become an example for every individual to avoid conflict with others and nature as a guide for behaving and behaving in society.

#### Implementing of *Mulajadi Nabolon's* Values

The teachings on *Mulajadi Nabolon's* self-revelation in the creation of the universe were passed orally by tradition to the next generation and recorded in the rituals and spiritual rites of the Toba Batak people. Several weekly worship ceremonies illustrate the *Toba Batak* spiritual rituals to worship *Debata Mulajadi Nabolon* (Saragi, Wahyuni, and Solina 2022). Some of these worship ceremonies are *Martutuaek* as a childbirth ceremony, *Pasahat Tondi* as a ceremony in mourning, *Mardebata* as a ceremony to worship *Debata*, *Marari* Saturday as a day of worship to honor *Mulajadi Nabolon*, *Mamasu-masu* for the marriage blessing ceremony, and *Mangganggir* as a self-purification ceremony (Boni, Simbolon, and Lumbantobing 2023). These ceremonies place spiritual rituals and rites for the *Toba Batak* people to glorify *Mulajadi Nabolon* as the ruler of the sky. The concept of the ceremony forms a dogma of forgiveness for violations made by the *Toba Batak* people (Situmorang 2018). This dogma teaches the *Toba Batak* people to achieve spiritual perfection for humans and to get rid of worldly elements through these rituals and rites. Therefore, the embodiment of the *Mulajadi Nabolon* concept is a religious ceremony performed to cleanse oneself of all acts of sin. Religious ceremonies are a cultural form of the *Toba Batak* people in describing the existence of *Mulajadi Nabolon* in people's behavior.

The concept of religious rituals and rites places the *Toba Batak* people in a culture of respecting others and the environment (Anakboruna 1993, 10–15). The religious beliefs of the *Toba Batak* people are based on the concept of unity in human beings, namely, three things: *tondi* (soul), *mudar* (blood), and *sibuk* (flesh). The concept of unity in these three elements forms human dependence on soul, blood, and flesh in his life (Bangun 2004). This unity applies if one of the elements (soul/blood/flesh) is not attached to a human; it means the human is dead. Therefore, the religious concept by *Mulajadi Nabolon* in honoring human beings who died required a ceremony accompanied by *gendang* and tribal music (offerings). It places the culture of the *Batak* people in respecting human beings in the concepts of *tondi* (soul) and *begu* (evil spirit) (Sugiyarto 2017). It states that rituals and rites are very important

for creating a balance in life for the *Toba Batak* people and establishing that humans have social structures and systems to interact with their environment (Parinduri, Karim, and Lestari 2020). The environment for the *Toba Batak* people is appreciation and respect for the family, so the concept of the environment becomes the culture of the *Toba Batak* people to serve the environment and each other. The concept of rituals and rites forms the *Batak* people's understanding of the unity of nature and humans.

The concept of respect for others and the environment as a culture gives the Batak people a strong kinship social system (Parinduri, Karim, and Lestari 2020). The teaching of kinship culture by *Mulajadi Nabolon* created a social system in the three elements of social structure in heredity and marriage ties. The first element is the father's lineage (patrilineal), which is called *Dongan Sabha*. The second element is the wife's lineage in marriage and is called hula-hula. The third element comes from people who take wives called *boru* relatives (Situmorang 2021). According to *Mulajadi Nabolon's* teachings, these three elements do not exceed one another because these three elements need each other in society. This cultural concept is very strong in forming a social system based on the concept of religion in maintaining balance in society (Simanjuntak 2009, 200–201). Therefore, the *Toba Batak* people maintain a balance by serving these three elements. In the concept of *Mulajadi Nabolon's* understanding, these three elements form harmony and harmony in maintaining the culture of the Toba Batak people. It places service to others to maintain the balance that *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata* has taught toward creation.

The role of *Mulajadi Nabolon* provided a substantial experience for the Batak Toba community regarding respect for and adherence to customs (Parinduri, Karim, and Lestari 2020). Respect and obedience by the Batak people, namely, worship of prostration to mother-in-law or hula-hula. The concept of hula-hula is the wife's mother-in-law, who is believed to represent *Debata Bataraguru*, son of *Mulajadi Nabolon*, as a source of supernatural strength, a source of blessings, happiness, and a place to ask for advice (Boni, Simbolon, and Lumbantobing 2023). This understanding shapes the social behavior of the Toba Batak people in respect and adherence to social norms in order to avoid suffering, distress, and requests. Social behavior is influenced by the role of the *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata* and other debates to maintain balance and harmony through equal positions and obligations in customs (Naibaho and Putri 2016). Therefore, the *Toba* people raise awareness that each clan must maintain open, natural, and mutual correction relationships to avoid misunderstandings according to the teachings of the *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata*. This symbol of equality and equality placed *Mulajadi Nabolon* in successfully forming an understanding of the social behavior of the *Toba Batak* people (Gultom 2010, 110–115). The role of *Mulajadi Nabolon* shaped the attitude and behavior of the Toba Batak people to respect all forms of teachings and demands in social life.

The Contemporary Society within the Philosophy of *Mulajadi Nabolon*

The shift from an ancient belief to a modern religion places the concept of indigenous beliefs as a rationalization in modern human culture (Beriaín and Gil-Gimeno 2016). Modernization is believed to erode religious values and institutions in determining human attitudes and behavior in society. Losing control and the role of religion provides a rationalization concept to personify the concept of God into culture (Sya'bani 2018). The personification of Allah in the myths of tribal beliefs is the concept of modern human rationalization of the loss of religious values due to modernization. The concept of rationalization shows that belief is part of the ancient order of the concept of God in human life (Lužný 2021). It means that the understanding of belief in the form of nature has become a reality in modern society to dominate and control humans. Hence, the ancient concept of belief, part of nature, becomes a teaching dogma for humans. Humans can express themselves through relations and with these beliefs to form a culture of attitudes and behavior in society. Therefore, the shift from myth in ancient beliefs to rationalization in religion shows the might of religion in guiding and teaching human attitudes and behavior in their lives (Czerniawska and Szydło 2020). This shift is well embedded through religious rituals and rites, making it a community culture. As a result, that concept applies to the picture. The modern Batak people still hold the traditional belief of *Mulajadi Nabolon* as the way and instruction of life to maintain good conduct in the digital era. Silitonga and Kolibu confirm that indigenous beliefs have become a foundation of conduct for Batak people in the digital era through cultural symbols such as Ulos, which is traditional weaving (Silitonga and Kolibu 2023).

The personification of *Mulajadi Nabolon* as *Debata* is a representative of the *Parmalim* religion, which prioritizes the concept of holiness (Ramadhon 2022). The *Parmalim* religion through the *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata* revealed several rituals that must be carried out through the Toba Batak culture. The most important aspects of worshiping the *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata* are *Gondang* and prayer (Sihombing 1997, 85–88). These two things accompany the concept of holiness for followers of *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata* through traditional ceremonies. Religious teaching focuses on maintaining good relations with others, nature, and God through offering services. In maintaining good relations, *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata* teaches five things in purity: purity in sitting, eating, speaking, and walking (Harahap and Irmawati 2020). These five things have the core of teaching: maintaining relationships vertically and horizontally through *Toba Batak* culture. Therefore, culture becomes a reality expressed in rituals and rite actions for the Toba Batak people. The personification of *Mulajadi Nabolon* is described in the concept of holiness and as outlined in the *Toba Batak* culture (Simangunsong 2013). It confirms that the religious values of the *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata* are still preserved in the sanctity of the Toba Batak culture.

Instructions for carrying out the concept of holiness for the *Toba Batak* people are determined by understanding the concept of *Poda* (commandment) for each individual in



society. The concept of commandment or guidance to the *Toba Batak* people was conveyed through worship to praise the *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata* during the *Marari* Saturday ritual (Saifudin 2020, 25–28). The submission of instructions is to live in peace with others, nature, and God, which is the mandate of the *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata* through chanting prayers and spiritual cleansing. *Marari* Saturday means that the *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata* worship falls every Saturday, with the worship leader giving religious advice to live right with others and become a way of life for the *Toba Batak* people (Sabbat, Hutagalung, and Ferinia 2022). The concept of *Poda* through worship makes life guidance meaningful and legitimized in carrying out religious values. Therefore, worship for the *Parmalim* religion has provisions that are used as customs by placing the positions of men and women separately and wearing Ulos cloth as a sign of respect for the *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata* before receiving spiritual splashes (Lumbantobing 1996, 15–16). The concept of the *Poda*, which guides individual behavior and attitudes, becomes a strong guideline for society to respect living things and the natural surroundings. It strengthens the concept of holiness in the attitude and behavior of the *Toba Batak* people in everyday life.

The *Poda* concept in society requires *Mar-Uhum* or law in carrying out the orders given by *Mulajadi Nabolon* (Armawi 2016). *Mar-Uhum* is a law applied to followers of the *Parmalim* religion to carry out a *Poda* or orders. It contains legal considerations through worship procedures for people who violate *Mulajadi Nabolon's* orders. Apart from legal considerations, the concept of *Mar-Uhum* also contains considerations of forgiveness through procedures for worshiping the guilty (Simbolon, Nasution, and Lubis 2019). With the existence of *Uhum*, the *Toba Batak* people understand and are subject to the rules set by the custom in the local cultural wrapper. Therefore, *Uhum* is submitted to *Mulajadi Nabolon* by forming noble attitudes and behavior by maintaining good manners and complying with all rules set by traditional institutions, village heads, or government (Harahap and Hasibuan 2016). The behavior and attitude of the *Toba Batak* people are a guide to submission and obedience to all the provisions that exist in society. It creates the character of the *Toba Batak* people to respect each other without distinguishing education and dignity in society everywhere (Harahap, Manullang, and Putri 2021; Samosir and Arnita 2018). Regulations (*Uhum*) become awareness in carrying out obligations as *Batak Toba* people to respect individuals, families, and communities without violating customary regulations and avoiding conflicts between people.

The values of *Poda* and *Mar-Uhum* are the direction for the actions of the *Toba Batak* people in society to avoid the catastrophe imposed by the *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata*. They place themselves without conflict with others, nature, and God (Nuraini 2015). This local wisdom is reflected in the actions of the *Toba Batak* people living in peace with nature. These values have the concept of attitudes, behaviors, and actions regarding the management, use, and preservation of nature by the *Toba Batak* people to date. The use and use of nature has two rules, namely, written rules, namely, *uhum dohot ugari* (rules and provisions), and

unwritten rules, namely, myths of *inganan rarangan*, which means places of prohibition (Kholilah, Andeska, and Ghifari 2019). The Batak people respect land use for gardening and farming and mark prohibited places that people may not use, especially having springs according to customary provisions. This prohibition must be obeyed from generation to generation, and it is believed that there is a *roguk* (guard) in the form of a *jihin* or genie (Ramadhon 2022). The concept of local wisdom values as a pattern of land use (nature) to honor the gift of the *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata*. The attitudes and behavior of the *Toba Batak* people place sacredness as a value in the philosophy of life of their ancestors. These noble values are imprinted in the soul, body, and mind as a unit within the individual (Simbolon, Nasution, and Lubis 2019). Refusal and violation are non-compliance with the decisions that have been made and violate the orders of the *Mulajadi Nabolon Debata*. Violations always invite punishment, which must be served through written procedures for worship (*uhum dohot ugari* or rules and provisions).

## **Conclusion**

This research concludes that traditional religious beliefs and practices are not outdated but still relevant and that they are maintained as behavioral guidelines among indigenous communities despite the digital era. Changes occur in how people communicate their beliefs in new forms that suit the times. This teaches that products or technologies derive morality from users who maintain their traditional philosophies. Thus, traditional philosophies must not be abandoned and replaced with new values. *Mulajadi Nabulon* proves that the intersection of traditional values and digital ethics is mutually reinforcing.

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## **Conflict of Interest**

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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