



Lifeworld and Symbolic Meaning: Reinterpreting *Mappaleppek Tinjak* Tradition among the Bajoe Muslim Fishermen in Coastal Indonesia

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Abstract

This study seeks to reinterpret the Mappaleppek Tinjak tradition within the Muslim fishing community of Bajoe Village, South Sulawesi, Indonesia, situating it as a cultural heritage practice intrinsically connected to Islamic theology. Employing a case study methodology, the article utilizes data collection methods including participant observation, interviews, and documentation to develop a comprehensive empirical understanding. The fieldwork reveals that the socio-economic and socio-religious dimensions of the community's lifeworld are organized across three principal levels of daily life. At the macro level, structural elements such as maritime ecology, Islamic historical context, and the indigenous Punggawa-Sawi economic system constitute the foundational framework. The mezzo level is characterized by collective practices exemplified by the Bapongka tradition, which encapsulates cultural values alongside a dynamic ecological ethic. At the micro level, meaning is constructed through symbolic and spiritual dimensions that reinforce religious observances. These three levels are interwoven through symbolic significations that generate Islamic values including monotheism, obedience, and gratitude. The broader implications of these findings encompass environmental sustainability, cultural preservation, moral economy, and the equilibrium between worldly existence and the hereafter. As a result, this research contributes significantly to the discourse on intangible cultural heritage by integrating an Islamic theological perspective to elucidate the complexities of contemporary Muslim communal life.

Abstrak

Studi ini bertujuan untuk mereinterpretasi tradisi Mappaleppek Tinjak dalam komunitas nelayan Muslim di Desa Bajoe, Sulawesi Selatan, Indonesia, sebagai bagian dari praktik warisan budaya yang memiliki keterkaitan erat dengan kajian teologi Islam. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus, penelitian ini mengandalkan teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi untuk memperoleh gambaran empiris yang komprehensif. Temuan lapangan menunjukkan bahwa dimensi sosio-ekonomi dan sosio-religius dalam lifeworld komunitas telah terstruktur ke dalam tiga level utama kehidupan sehari-hari. Pada level makro, aspek struktural seperti ekologi maritim, sejarah Islam, serta sistem ekonomi lokal Punggawa-Sawi menjadi fondasi utama. Pada level mezzo, praktik kolektif tercermin melalui tradisi Bapongka yang memuat nilai praktik budaya sekaligus etika ekologis yang terus berkembang. Sementara itu, pada level mikro, terdapat sistem makna yang beroperasi melalui simbolisme dan dimensi spiritual yang memperkuat praktik keagamaan. Ketiga dimensi tersebut saling berkelindan melalui makna simbolik yang menghasilkan nilai-nilai keislaman, seperti tauhid, ketaatan, dan rasa syukur. Implikasi dari keseluruhan temuan ini mencakup keberlanjutan lingkungan, kontinuitas budaya, ekonomi moral, serta keseimbangan antara kehidupan dunia dan akhirat. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi penting dalam memperkaya diskursus warisan budaya takbenda melalui integrasi pendekatan teologi Islam dalam memahami dinamika kehidupan Muslim kontemporer.

Keywords:

The
Mappaleppek
Tinjak
tradition;
Muslim
fishermen;
Bajoe villagers;
Cultural
heritage;
Islamic
theology;
Indonesia

Kata kunci:

Tradisi
Mappaleppek
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Introduction

The *Mappaleppek Tinjak* tradition has experienced significant shift in both its meaning and practice. However, its ongoing observance reflects a nuanced interplay among tradition, religious interpretation, and contemporary economic challenges faced by Bajoe Muslim fishing community.¹ This study critically examines the ritual's persistence not as a fixed cultural artifact but as a dynamic socio-religious phenomenon influenced by evolving economic conditions, transformations in belief systems, and the gradual withdrawal of ritual practices embodies both resilience and fragmentation, wherein cultural heritage is concurrently preserved and contested.² Within the present context, this research highlights how constraints such as financial hardship and limited time have reshaped ritual performance from a regular collective duty into an intermittent and negotiated activity.³ Utilizing a case study approach, the investigation contributes to broader scholarly discussions on living heritage and cultural sustainability by illustrating how maritime rituals among Bajoe fishermen are recontextualized within contemporary socio-economic frameworks, while continuing to function as symbolic loci of identity, ecological consciousness, and spiritual connection to the sea.⁴

The increasing academic interest in fishing traditions is frequently justified by their perceived function in maintaining national identity and revitalizing religiosity within coastal communities; nevertheless, this perspective often conceals more

¹ Ahmad Izudin et al., "Uncertainty of the Prosperous of Local Fishers in Bone District: Challenging Social Protection and Unregulated Maritime Policies," *Journal of Maritime Research* 20, no. 2 (2023): 20–30; Muhammad Syukri Sulton and Mawardi Akhmadi, *A Qualitative Study on the Impact of the PNPM-Rural in East Java, West Sumatra, and Southeast Sulawesi* (2013); Susanto Zuhdi, "Shipping Routes and Spice Trade in Southeast Sulawesi During the 17th and 18th Century," *Journal of Maritime Studies and National Integration* 2, no. 1 (2018): 31–44.

² Abdur Rozaki and Ahmad Izudin, "Peacebuilding Pesantren: The Study of Madurese Diaspora in Reinforcing Social Resilience in Post-Ethnic Conflicts West Kalimantan, Indonesia," *Ulumuna* 29, no. 1 (June 2025): 155–87, <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v29i1.1432>; Ahmad Izudin et al., "The Role of Indigenous Communities in Welfare Provision: Visiting Morella Cases, Indonesia," *Ethics and Social Welfare* 19, no. 4 (October 2025): 399–420, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17496535.2025.2522193>.

³ Chandima Daskon and Tony Binns, "Culture, Tradition and Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Exploring the Culture-Development Interface in Kandy, Sri Lanka," *Community Development Journal* 45, no. 4 (May 2009): 494–517, <https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsp019>; Mustaqim Pabbajah et al., "Pilgrimage to Bawakaraeng Mountain Among the Bugis- Makassar in Indonesia: A Contestation between Islamic Identity Makassar in Indonesia: A Contestation between Islamic Identity and Local Tradition and Local Tradition," *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage* 9, no. 1 (2021): 178–90, <https://doi.org/10.21427/s3p3-ya23>; Naima Saeed and Kevin Cullinane, "Identifying the Characteristics of China's Maritime Trading Partners on the Basis of Bilateral Shipping Connectivity: A Cluster Analysis," *Maritime Policy and Management* 50, no. 1 (2023): 42–57, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03088839.2021.1954256>.

⁴ Agung Yoga Asmoro and Muhyiddin Aziz, "Potensi Pengembangan Setigi Sebagai Destinasi Wisata," *JMK (Jurnal Manajemen Dan Kewirausahaan)* 5, no. 3 (September 2020): 228, <https://doi.org/10.32503/jmk.v5i3.1136>; Andrew M. Song et al., "Measuring, Mapping and Quantifying the Effects of Trust and Informal Communication on Transboundary Collaboration in the Great Lakes Fisheries Policy Network," *Global Environmental Change* 54 (January 2019): 6–18, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2018.11.001>.

profound analytical deficiencies.⁵ Existing scholarship – exemplified by the works of Muqoddam and Maghfiroh⁶, Schlehe⁷, and Sirait⁸-- tends to focus on the contestation and occasional delegitimization of local traditions, yet predominantly confines itself to normative assessments regarding the conformity of these practices with prevailing religious or social norms. Likewise, studies emphasizing the syncretic character of ritual practices, often associating them with animistic and dynamistic elements incorporated into Islamic expressions, frequently reduce these traditions to theological deviations or cultural adaptations, without adequately interrogating the socio-economic and political contexts that influence their persistence or transformation.⁹ Furthermore, while the literature often acknowledges the presence of interpretive biases and misrecognition within socio-religious interactions,¹⁰ it rarely elucidates the processes through which such biases are generated, negotiated, and institutionalized within communities.¹¹ This highlights a significant gap – the absence of a grounded, contextually nuanced analysis that conceptualizes fishing rituals as dynamic practices embedded within power relations and livelihood challenges. As a result, revisiting these traditions is imperative not merely for documentation, but to critically explore how meanings are rearticulated within contemporary socio-religious frameworks.

Drawing upon the conducted research, this article seeks to reinterpret the significance and symbolic dimensions of the Mappaleppek Tinjak tradition within the Bajoe Muslim fishing tradition, framing it as a practice that persists amid evolving social contexts. Moving beyond the predominantly descriptive nature of prior studies,

⁵ Kathleen Schwerdtner Máñez and Sebastian C. A. Ferse, "The History of Makassar Trepang Fishing and Trade," *PLoS ONE* 5, no. 6 (2010), <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0011346>; R. Naidoo et al., "Evaluating the Impacts of Protected Areas on Human Well-Being across the Developing World," *Science Advances* 5 (2019).

⁶ Faqihul Muqoddam and Virgin Suciyaniti Maghfiroh, "Syncretism of Slametan Tradition As a Pillar of Islam Nusantara," *Journal of Social and Islamic Culture* 27, no. 1 (2019): 75–94, <https://doi.org/10.19105/karsa.v27i1.1950>.

⁷ Judith Schlehe, "Contesting Javanese Traditions: The Popularisation of Rituals between Religion and Tourism," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 45, no. 131 (January 2017): 3–23, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2016.1219494>.

⁸ Sangkot Sirait, "Religious Attitudes of Theological Tradisionalist in the Modern Muslim Community Study on Tahlilan in Kotagede," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 10, no. 2 (2016): 237–60, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2016.10.2.237-260>.

⁹ Mohammad Taufiq Rahman, Paelani Setia, and Asep Iwan Setiawan, "The Strategies of Ajengans in Mediating Islam and Local Traditions in Rural West Bandung Regency," *Jurnal Iman Dan Spiritualitas* 3, no. 1 (February 2023): 99–108, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jis.v3i1.24108>; Achmad Ubaedillah, "Sufi Islam and the Nation State: Darul Arkam Movement in the Post Suharto Era of Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 5, no. 1 (2015): 79–110, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v5i1.79-110>; Jochem van den Boogert, "The Role of Slametan in the Discourse on Javanese Islam," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 45, no. 133 (September 2017): 352–72, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2017.1345166>.

¹⁰ Mohamad Abdun Nasir, "Revisiting the Javanese Muslim Slametan: Islam, Local Tradition, Honor and Symbolic Communication," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 57, no. 2 (2019): 329–58, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2019.57.2.329-358>.

¹¹ Anton Minardi, "The New Islamic Revivalism in Indonesia Accommodationist and Confrontationist," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 12, no. 2 (2018): 247–64, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2018.12.2.247-264>.

this investigation foregrounds previously marginalized narratives and contends that the ritual's continuity can only be comprehended through its integration within the broader socio-religious and socio-cultural frameworks of Bone society.¹² Accordingly, the study concentrates on three principal analytical domains: the interpretation of the symbols and meanings embedded in the Mappaleppek Tinjak tradition, and their relationship to the socio-economic and socio-religious conditions that both shape and constrain the practice. Employing an interpretive-analytical approach,¹³ the author argues that the Mappaleppek Tinjak serves as a local cultural heritage that informs spiritual values, fosters ecological consciousness, and reinforces social identity in the face of changing temporal circumstances.

Muslim Coastal Traditions in Indonesia: A Critical Review

This study is grounded in the conceptual framework of *Islam Pesisir* (Coastal Islam) as articulated by Nur Syam,¹⁴ which conceptualizes coastal communities as social entities shaped by dynamic interactions between geographical environments (land and sea) and unique socio-religious constructs. Within this framework, coastal communities are perceived as dialectical spaces where Islamic doctrines and indigenous cultural practices engage in ongoing processes of negotiation and reinterpretation.¹⁵ Accordingly, this research operationalizes the framework through four analytical dimensions: accommodative religiosity, robust ritual culture, cosmological relationships with nature, and open, adaptive social structures.¹⁶ These dimensions serve as critical lenses to examine how the Mappaleppek Tinjak tradition among the Bajoe Muslim community undergoes transformation, resistance, and the reproduction of meaning amid contemporary social changes. Consequently, the operational definition employed herein conceptualizes coastal traditions as lived practices that

¹² Pabbajah Pabbajah et al., "Pilgrimage to Bawakaraeng Mountain Among the Bugis- Makassar in Indonesia: A Contestation between Islamic Identity and Local Tradition," *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage* 9, no. 1 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.21427/S3P3-YA23>; Geoffrey Wall and Heather Black, "Global Heritage and Local Problems: Some Examples from Indonesia," *Current Issues in Tourism* 7, nos. 4–5 (October 2004): 436–39, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500408667998>.

¹³ Jane Sutton and Zubin Austin, "Qualitative Research: Data Collection, Analysis, and Management," *The Canadian Journal of Hospital Pharmacy* 68, no. 3 (June 2015): 226–31, <https://doi.org/10.4212/cjhp.v68i3.1456>.

¹⁴ See Nur Syam, *Islam Pesisir* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2005).

¹⁵ L. Daris et al., "Types and Forms of Fishermen Conflicts in the Utilization of Coastal Resources in Maros Regency, South Sulawesi Province," *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science* 1147, no. 1 (March 2023): 012019, <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/1147/1/012019>.

¹⁶ Moh Mufid, "Fikih Konservasi Laut: Relevansi Fiqh al-Bi'ah Di Wilayah Pesisir Lamongan," *Al-Manahij: Jurnal Kajian Hukum Islam* 12, no. 1 (June 2018): 1–16, <https://doi.org/10.24090/mnh.v12i1.1356>; Emilie Wellfelt and Sonny A. Djonler, "Islam in Aru, Indonesia: Oral Traditions and Islamisation Processes from the Early Modern Period to the Present," *Indonesia and the Malay World* 47, no. 138 (May 2019): 160–83, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2019.1582895>; Hendri Hermawan Adinugraha and Muhammad Zheeva Al-Kasyaf, "Islamic Rituals and Spirituality in Southeast Asia: An Ethnographic Study of Coastal Muslim Communities," *Journal of Asian Wisdom and Islamic Behavior* 3, no. 2 (September 2025): 74–90, <https://doi.org/10.59371/jawab.v3i2.98>.

embody the interrelations among social structures, belief systems, and economic dynamics.

Multiple lines of scholarly inquiry indicate that what is frequently characterized as “religious ritualization” may be more effectively conceptualized, particularly in coastal settings, as an integral component of the broader configuration of Muslim coastal lifeworlds. Ethnographic investigations across maritime societies reveal that Islamic values are not simply enacted in isolation; rather, they are continuously expressed through interactions with indigenous traditions, ecological knowledge, and maritime livelihoods.¹⁷ This dynamic engenders diverse manifestations of Islam that serve both as markers of identity and as normative frameworks within distinct coastal communities.¹⁸ Concurrently, socio-religious scholarship underscores the pivotal role of Muslim coastal traditions in maintaining social cohesion, mediating differences, and promoting tolerance within culturally heterogeneous environments shaped by mobility and exchange. For instance, akin to the integrative function of communal practices in Javanese contexts, coastal traditions among Muslim fishing communities similarly reconcile economic interests, spiritual goals, and communal solidarity.¹⁹ Nevertheless, within international discourses concerning local wisdom and Islamic heritage, these traditions remain sites of contestation, often situated amid competing narratives of syncretism, orthodoxy, and cultural resilience.²⁰ This dialectic exposes a significant lacuna in the existing literature: the prevalent inclination to reduce coastal Muslim practices to mere ritualistic forms, rather than acknowledging them as dynamic socio-cultural systems embedded within ongoing ecological, economic, and religious transformations.

Existing scholarship on Muslim coastal traditions has predominantly framed these practices through the perspectives of rural religiosity and organizational identities, particularly within communities affiliated with groups such as Nahdlatul Ulama. This approach tends to obscure the unique characteristics inherent to maritime

¹⁷ Mabrouk Chibani Mansouri, “Holy Time and Popular Invented Rituals in Islam: Structures and Symbolism,” *Al-Jami’ah* 56, no. 1 (2018): 121–54, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2018.561.121-154>; Mundakir and Aat Hidayat, “Islamic Shari’a Configuration of Buka Luwur Tradition in Kudus,” *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies* 8, no. 1 (2020): 201–25, <https://doi.org/10.21043/QIJIS.V8I1.7999>.

¹⁸ Mikhail A. Alexseev and Sufian N. Zhemukhov, *Mass Religious Ritual and Intergroup Tolerance The Muslim Pilgrims’ Paradox* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 34–35.

¹⁹ Wening Purbatin Palupi Soenjoto, “Islam Kejawen as an Adoption of Local Wisdom and Islamic Development in Javanese Communities,” *SHAHIH: Journal of Islamicate Multidisciplinary* 7, no. 1 (June 2022): 67–76, <https://doi.org/10.22515/shahih.v7i1.4134>; van den Boogert, “The Role of Slametan in the Discourse on Javanese Islam.”

²⁰ Hijrian Angga Prihantoro, “Interfaith Maqāṣid as Religious Value Syncretism: The Case of the Nyadran Ritual in Getas Village, Indonesia,” *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations* 36, no. 1 (January 2025): 19–45, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09596410.2025.2506033>; Zoltán Szombathy, “A Trust from the Ancestors: Islamic Ethics and Local Tradition in a Syncretistic Ritual in East-Central Sulawesi,” *Die Welt Des Islams* 61, no. 4 (April 2021): 448–74, <https://doi.org/10.1163/15700607-61020004>; Minako Sakai, “Still Remembering the Origins: The Continuity of Syncretic Islamic Practice among the Gumay (Gumai) in South Sumatra, Indonesia,” *Indonesia and the Malay World* 45, no. 131 (January 2017): 44–65, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2017.1274561>.

contexts. Although discussions surrounding local wisdom and Islamic heritage continue to develop within the field of global Islamic studies, there remains a paucity of research that treats coastal Muslim practices as distinct socio-cultural formations shaped by their maritime environment.²¹ Consequently, the study of Muslim coastal traditions—especially those rooted in fishing communities—has been insufficiently theorized, frequently relegated to marginal or derivative ritualistic phenomena rather than acknowledged as foundational to emergent identity constructions.²² This research aims to address this lacuna by repositioning Muslim coastal traditions as a vital analytical locus where religion, ecology, and livelihood converge. By doing so, it seeks to broaden the disciplinary boundaries of Islamic studies beyond predominantly agrarian or urban frameworks, emphasizing the significance of maritime lifeworlds. The study contends that Muslim coastal traditions should not be narrowly interpreted as mere socio-religious expressions but rather as dynamic systems through which communities generate meaning, negotiate identities, and adapt to wider socio-economic and environmental changes.

A significant focus of this study is the Mappaleppek Tinjak tradition in Bone Regency, as practiced by the inhabitants of Bajoe Kampong, which offers a novel framework for the discourse on cultural heritage. This research aims to provide an alternative perspective on Islamic rituals and traditions that transcends conventional boundaries, particularly those confined to traditional social groups. The case studies examined herein move beyond theoretical discussion to establish a new dimension within the fishing tradition, emphasizing elements of religious ritual that are accessible and meaningful to fishermen.²³ Importantly, the fishing practices in Bone Regency

²¹ Kunawi Basyir, "The 'Acculturative Islam' as a Type of Home-Grown Islamic Tradition Religion and Local Culture in Bali1," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 13, no. 2 (2019): 326–49, <https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2019.13.2.326-349>; Andi Kaprabowo, "Beyond Studies Tarekat Rifa'iyah Kalisalak: Doktrin, Jalan Dakwah, Dan Perlawanan Sosial," *Jurnal Pemberdayaan Masyarakat: Media Pemikiran Dan Dakwah Pembangunan* 3, no. 2 (November 2019): 377–96, <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpm.2019.032-07>.

²² Muhamad Ali, "Muslim Diversity: Islam and Local Tradition in Java and Sulawesi, Indonesia," in *IJIMS, Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies*, vol. 1, no. 1 (2011); Silvia Cerisola, "A New Perspective on the Cultural Heritage–Development Nexus: The Role of Creativity," *Journal of Cultural Economics* 43, no. 1 (March 2019): 21–56, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10824-018-9328-2>; Jacques P. Feiner, Shiwen Mi, and Willy A. Schmid, "Sustainable Rural Development Based on Cultural Heritage," *disP - The Planning Review* 38, no. 151 (2002): 79–86, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02513625.2002.10556827>; Beth Perry, L. Ager, and R. Sitas, "Cultural Heritage Entanglements: Festivals as Integrative Sites for Sustainable Urban Development," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 26, no. 6 (June 2020): 603–18, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527258.2019.1578987>.

²³ Wahyudi Akmaliah, "The Demise of Moderate Islam: New Media, Contestation, and Reclaiming Religious Authorities," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 10, no. 1 (June 2020): 1–24, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v10i1.1-24>; Ashadi L. Diab et al., "Accommodation of Local Wisdom in Conflict Resolution of Indonesia's Urban Society," *Cogent Social Sciences* 8, no. 1 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2022.2153413>; Benny Ridwan et al., "Islam Nusantara, Ulemas, and Social Media: Understanding the Pros and Cons of Islam Nusantara among Ulemas of West Sumatera," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 9, no. 2 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.18326/IJIMS.V9I2.163-188>; Arif Zamhari, Muhammad Ibtissam Han, and Zulkifli Zulkifli, "Traditional Religious Authorities in

represent an Islamic heritage that has been maintained since the era of the Bone kingdom.²⁴ Consequently, this study seeks to investigate the multifaceted aspects of the rituals and traditions of fishermen in Kampung Bajoe, which have persisted over an extended historical period, predating Indonesian independence.

This study posits that revising the theoretical framework can yield a novel synthetic theory and foster a renewed discourse in the analysis of local cultural heritage, particularly within fishing Muslim communities. By examining the Mappeleppek Tinjak tradition practiced in the fishing village of Kampung Bajoe, the research seeks to uncover new perspectives on Islamic rituals as they intersect with social values and norms, grounded in the indigenous understanding of the local populace. The researcher aims to demonstrate that local tradition among the Bajoe Muslim fishermen serves as a vital source of authentic spiritual and religious expressions, deeply rooted in heritage-based local contexts. As a result, this investigation is significant in exploring innovative interpretations and meanings associated with the Mappeleppek Tinjak tradition, thereby contributing to the identification and development of localized religious practices that reflect the diversity and richness of Indonesian cultural heritage.

Research Method

This research examines the Mappaleppek Tinjak tradition within the Bajoe Muslim fishing community of Bone Regency by placing it at the intersection of maritime livelihood, cultural preservation, and religious practice. Instead of treating Bajoe simply as a research location, the study treats it as an analytical focus where ritual continues as an active local experience. Kampung Bajo was chosen based on three factors: its identity as a sea-based village where the ritual is integrated into the daily lives of fishermen; its unique socio-cultural framework shaped by reliance on the sea; and its ability to maintain ancestral customs despite modern challenges. These factors indicate that the persistence of Mappaleppek Tinjak is not a passive inheritance but an ongoing process of reinterpretation and adaptation. Using a case study approach,²⁵ this research aims to reveal how ritual practice functions as a dynamic means through which Bajoe fishermen express religious significance, cultural identity, and socio-economic conditions in a changing modern environment.

New Media: A Study of the Cariustadz.Id Platform as an Alternative Cyber Fatwa and Da'wah Media among the Middle-Class Urban Muslims," *Ahkam* 21, no. 1 (2021): 65–88.

²⁴ Izudin et al., "Uncertainty of the Prosperous of Local Fishers in Bone District: Challenging Social Protection and Unregulated Maritime Policies"; Mumsi Lampe, "Bugis-Makassar and Reproduction of Maritime Cultural Values in Indonesia," *Humaniora* 24, no. 2 (2012): 121–32.

²⁵ Sim Kok Eng Amy, "The Art of Participation: The Case of Creative Communities in Indonesia," *Community Development Journal* 52, no. 1 (January 2017): 171–85, <https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsw042>; Amélia O. Carvalho, Marisa R. Ferreira, and Patrícia A. Silva, "Partners in a Caring Society-A Nonprofit Organization Case Study," *Economics & Sociology* 12, no. 2 (2019): 129–46, <https://doi.org/10.14254/2071-789X.2019/12-2/8>; John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design Choosing among Five Approaches*, 2nd ed. (London : Sage Publications, 2007).

Case studies were selected as a methodological approach to critically address positivist critiques asserting that qualitative methods inadequately substantiate the norms and ethics inherent in social phenomena.²⁶ To establish the validity and accuracy of interpreting social meanings, the author employs an interpretive paradigm aimed at revealing the subjective norms and lived realities of participants. Through comprehensive investigations, the study examines research cases by employing exploratory-descriptive procedures to analyze social facts observed during fieldwork. Furthermore, the researcher ensures the reliability of data sources by meticulously selecting pertinent issues, particularly in the contextualization of the *Mappeleppék Tinjak* ritual practiced by the inhabitants of Kampung Bajo in Bone Regency. As a result, the research facilitates an inductive exploration of social phenomena, consistent with the epistemological foundations and evolving practices of qualitative research.²⁷

This study employed a three-phase data collection approach comprising observation, interviews, and documentation. Initially, observations were conducted to meticulously examine the participants' actual conditions and behaviors during the *Mappeleppék Tinja* tradition. The author engaged actively alongside the participants, systematically recording their actions and contextual details as field notes.²⁸ These observations were carried out during each field visit to the participants' residences and locations. The primary objective was to obtain comprehensive insights into the participants' daily lives, the celebration of fishing traditions, community interactions, and all pertinent activities related to the research focus. The scope of these activities was constrained by the predetermined field research schedule established at the outset of the study during the formulation of the research topic. Consequently, the observation phase functioned as the foundational step in data mapping, which was subsequently elaborated and deepened through the interview process.

Secondly, purposive sampling was employed to select seven participants for the study.²⁹ To ensure confidentiality, participants' identities were anonymized and represented by initials accompanied by identification codes: Fishmonger (FM), Local Academicians (LA), Local Stakeholders (LS), and Local Government (LG) (see Table 1). The use of anonymous participants was intended to prevent potential conflicts of interest and to encourage openness during the interview process. Given the involvement of Bajoe Muslim Fishermen in ritual practices, all selected individuals were deemed appropriate research subjects capable of providing relevant information

²⁶ Norman K. Denzin and Yvonne S. Lincoln, "Introduction: The Discipline and Practice of Qualitative Research," chap. 1 in *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2015).

²⁷ Chareen L. Snelson, "Qualitative and Mixed Methods Social Media Research: A Review of the Literature," *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* Special Issue (February 2016): 1-15, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406915624574>.

²⁸ Michael Angrosino, *Doing Ethnographic and Observational Research* (London: Sage Publications, 2007), 53-57.

²⁹ M. Pasqualini and G. Bazzani, "Residence Registration to Cope with Homelessness: Evidence from a Qualitative Research Study in Milan," *Genus* 77, no. 1 (December 2021), <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41118-021-00147-1>.

aligned with the study's objectives. The interviews were conducted over a two-month period (October and November 2022), with visits made to participants' residences and fish auction sites within Bone Regency. Each interview lasted between 27 and 50 minutes and incorporated both structured and semi-structured techniques. An interview guide was utilized, reflecting the predetermined research topic while allowing for flexibility to explore information pertinent to the research aims. Interviews were audio-recorded using an Android device and subsequently transcribed with the assistance of two field research assistants. To preserve participant anonymity and comply with ethical research standards, initials were used in place of actual names.

Table 1. Identification of Participants

| No. | Participant Identification | Initials | Gender | Age | Interview Duration (Minutes) |
|-----|----------------------------|----------|--------|-----|------------------------------|
| 1. | FM | P1 | Female | 40 | 27 |
| 2. | LA | P2 | Male | 35 | 40 |
| 3. | LA | P3 | Male | 46 | 30 |
| 4. | LS | P4 | Male | 66 | 50 |
| 5. | LA | P5 | Male | 46 | 43 |
| 6. | LS | P6 | Male | 30 | 47 |
| 7. | LG | P7 | Male | 35 | 35 |

Source: researchers' elaboration, 2022.

Lastly, the author systematically recorded all data collection procedures, encompassing both official government documents and field research notes. The official documentation consisted of a local government regulation concerning the celebration of the fishing tradition among the Bajoe villagers. In contrast, the field notes comprised observation transcripts and efforts to identify relevant supporting literature pertinent to the research topic. This supporting literature included peer-reviewed journal articles, books addressing the socio-economic conditions of the Bajoe communities, and presentation materials from local government sources. These diverse forms of documentation are critical for substantiating the interpretation of the collected data during the preparation of research reports and scholarly publications.

The author undertook data analysis for this study from the initial phases of the research process, including the selection of the research topic. This approach distinguishes qualitative research from quantitative methodologies, wherein data

analysis is generally conducted at the final stage. The data analysis procedure employed in this study comprised three sequential steps: data reduction, data display, and data verification, culminating in a comprehensive conclusion. During the data reduction phase, the researcher systematically filtered the data to extract information pertinent to the study's objectives. This entailed identifying data related to the significance of the Mappaleppek Tinjak tradition for Bajo fishermen, the symbolic elements involved, and the narratives or perceptions held by local fishermen concerning the traditions and rituals they practice. Following the categorization of these themes, the researcher proceeded to the data display phase by organizing participants' statements into tabular formats and chimney panels, as compiled by the research team. This process included the incorporation of direct quotations from participants, aligned with the research's data exploration aims. Subsequently, the researcher engaged in a verification process through source triangulation, which involved validating the data with each participant to ensure that interpretations were sufficiently broad and not excessively specific. This method of data confirmation is essential for establishing the credibility and reliability of the research findings, consistent with the empirical evidence collected during fieldwork. Finally, the researcher formulated conclusions based on the analysis of the interpreted data, thereby revealing the underlying meanings embedded in the behaviors and statements of all participants.

Findings

The Lifeworld of Bajoe Muslim Fishermen in a Coastal Setting

This study centers on the Bajoe Muslim community residing in the East Tanete Riattang District of Bone Regency as the primary research site. To comprehensively examine the socio-religious dynamics of this population, the investigation highlights three principal aspects. First, the Bajoe Tribe inhabits this region and is characterized by a maritime lifestyle, relying predominantly on the sea for their livelihood. Second, the area holds strategic importance as a transportation hub for goods, being located at the Waetou port, which functions as a key marketplace for agricultural and commercial exchanges. Third, the community maintains a traditional local economic system known as Punggawa-Sawi, which informs their customary practices (Unpublished observational data, 2022). These factors collectively underpin the study's focus on the socio-economic and socio-religious conditions of the Bajoe people.

The Tanete Riattang Timur sub-district, located within Bone Regency, is recognized for its robust marine sector, which upholds traditional fishing practices through a distinctive fishing method employing bubu tools—fish traps constructed from bamboo, plastic rope, and coconut shells as covers. This region encompasses a coastline of approximately 138 kilometers and spans an area of 93,929 hectares. The local fishing community comprises an estimated 12,831 fishermen, utilizing around 5,115 boats and fishing implements. The fishing industry in this area is supported by

infrastructure including six ice production facilities, three maritime fuel stations, three cold storage units, and fish marketing centers. Empirical data reveal a consistent increase in the productivity of seafarers across various fish species, with annual catches recorded as 44.6 tons in 2017, 45.7 tons in 2018, 48.3 tons in 2019, 49.5 tons in 2020, and 54.7 tons in 2021. The cumulative value of fish catches during the period from 2017 to 2021 is estimated at IDR 1.3 billion (field observation note, 2022). Collectively, these factors underscore the critical role of the marine sector in sustaining the livelihoods of local fishermen and position Bone as a marine region with significant economic potential, reliant on maritime resources as a primary source of community subsistence.

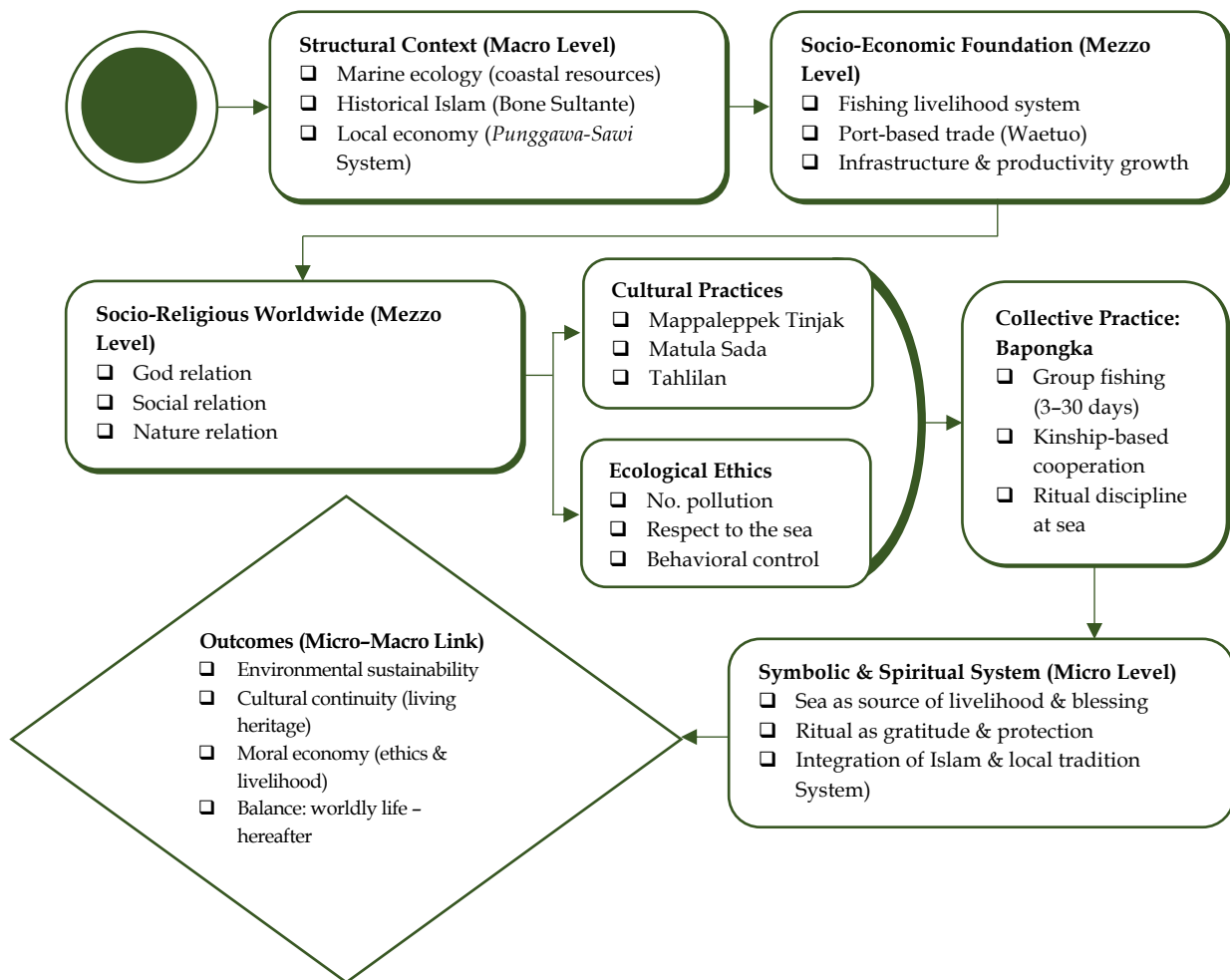
According to data from the Central Bureau of Statistics in 2022, the population of East Tanete Riattang District comprises 42,316 Muslims, 24 Protestants, 3 Catholics, and 1 Hindu. This demographic distribution indicates a predominantly Muslim community, which influences the local practice of religious traditions and rituals grounded in Islamic principles. This demographic characteristic further substantiates that the Bone Regency region is historically situated within the domain of the Sultanate of Bone, an entity established since the 12th century. The community's socio-religious practices are informed by Islamic values and are centered on three transcendental dimensions: the relationship with God (*hablum min Allah*), interpersonal relations (*hablum min an-nas*), and the relationship between humans and nature (*hablum min al-'alam*). These three transcendental aspects of worship function as foundational guidelines for the local population, as articulated by P4.

“Human responsibility encompasses not only the vertical dimension of worship directed toward God but also the horizontal dimension, which involves prioritizing the fraternity among fellow human beings and showing respect for nature to ensure its sustainability. Given our proximity to the sea, it is commonly regarded as the guardian of the marine environment; in a more specific context, this represents our expression of horizontal worship.”

Based on the participants' accounts, the author identified that the Bajoe Tribe's fishing practices are deeply rooted in an environmentally conscious tradition known as Bapongka. This tradition functions as a foundational guideline for the community to consistently engage in the preservation of the natural environment. During the observance of Bapongka, fishermen embark on sea expeditions lasting from three days up to one month, typically traveling in groups of 10 to 20 individuals per boat. To uphold the tradition and ensure environmental protection, these fishing groups are often composed of members who share kinship ties. Throughout the Bapongka practice, fishermen bring provisions and cooking utensils with them while at sea. They hold a strong belief in the sacredness of the sea as a source of fortune, which motivates them to conscientiously avoid behaviors that could harm the marine environment or disrupt ecological balance. Such behaviors include refraining from littering, speaking

carelessly, and other actions deemed disrespectful, as highlighted by participant P6 during the interview.

Figure 1. Interpreting Bajoe Muslim fishermen’s Lifeworld



Source: Author’s elaboration.

Building upon the previously described socio-economic and socio-religious context, this study interprets the continued practice of rituals among Bajoe Muslim fishermen as a significant manifestation of their endeavor to reconcile material livelihood with spiritual aspirations (see Figure 1). The dedication to preserving traditions such as Mappaleppek Tinjak signifies not only cultural continuity but also a deliberate orientation toward harmonizing the worldly life (*kehidupan dunia*) and the hereafter (*akhirat*) within daily practices. This reflects a collective consciousness wherein ancestral heritage is not merely inherited passively but is actively maintained and reinterpreted in accordance with local religious values that have evolved since the period of the Bone kingdom. In this regard, ritual functions as a mediating framework through which fishermen navigate moral responsibilities, ecological relationships, and spiritual commitments. Accordingly, the sea is perceived not solely as an economic

resource but as a sacred domain imbued with significance, where livelihood activities are integrally connected to the pursuit of divine blessing, protection, and a more meaningful existence.

Symbolic Meaning of the Mappaleppek Tinjak Tradition

In this section, the author elucidates the symbolism and significance underlying the Mappaleppek Tinjak tradition. Prior to this, the initial subsection provides data that explicates the symbolic dimensions, as detailed in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Interpretation of Symbolic Dimensions

| Symbol | Material Form in Ritual | Interpretive Notes |
|----------------------|---|--|
| Fish (<i>Bale</i>) | Grilled fish, offerings with chicken and songkolo | Represents maritime livelihood; links economy with ritual obligation |
| Rice | White rice (± 1 liter), prepared during vows | Reflects agrarian-kingdom legacy (Bone) integrated into maritime culture |
| Plantains | One <i>Tangkep</i> (cluster), shaped like praying hands | Embodies moral optimism; sweetness symbolizes desired life outcomes |
| Water | Clean water recited with prayers | Functions as a liminal medium between physical and spiritual realms |

Source: Author's elaboration.

Symbolic dimensions of the Mappaleppek Tinjak

The author has identified four primary symbols within the Mappaleppek Tinjak tradition: fish, plantains, water, and rice. Firstly, fish (*Bale*) functions as a symbol deeply rooted in local customs, embodying the notion of good fortune for individuals who make vows. Fishermen demonstrate their gratitude for abundant catches from the sea by burning Bale sponges as a supplementary offering, accompanied by native chicken and Songkolo, which collectively serve as expressions of thanksgiving to the Supreme Giver of Fortune. Typically, this tradition entails presenting offerings consisting of grilled fish and free-range chicken, which are subsequently divided and prepared for consumption. According to informant P2,

“... For people who make vows, they cannot do it without fish and chicken... It is a customary tradition among the Bajo people... When making vows, there is a prayer ritual that involves preparing food, and it must include fish and chicken.”

Secondly, the fishing tradition is symbolically represented through rice, which is interpreted as an emblem of prosperity. This ritual holds profound symbolic significance in the lives of the community, as rice constituted the primary source of nourishment for the Bone kingdom. The utilization of rice conveys connotations related to life, embodying prosperity and possessing a mystical importance in fortifying the spirit or soul of individuals who make a vow. The white color of rice symbolizes the aspiration for strength for the departed soul and functions as a representation of health for the family. Furthermore, it is believed that rice plays a crucial role in protecting families from adverse circumstances in the future. As participant P4 articulated, “Rice will be provided by those who make a vow, approximately one liter, and they select white rice, acknowledged as a provider of sustenance for the families left behind when going to sea.” Hence, rice is profoundly trusted by fishermen and their families as both a source of sustenance and a symbol of human life.

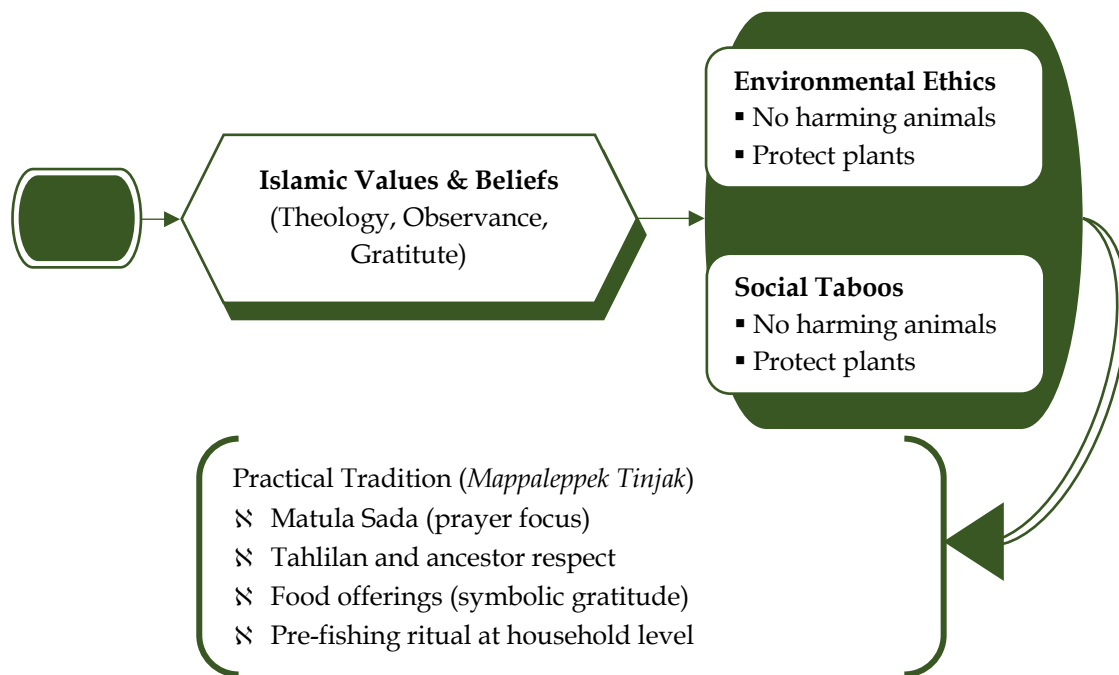
Thirdly, plantains function as a symbol of greatness and hope within the local community, embodying the concept of goodness. In various religious ceremonies, fishermen customarily present bananas as part of their ritual practices. Specifically, they utilize a single tangkep banana, arranging it to resemble the form of two human hands, which symbolizes the aspirations conveyed through prayers traditionally performed by the community. Moreover, bananas are regarded as a source of goodness, as their sweet flavor is believed to signify an additional inheritance of prosperity and serve as an emblem of happiness for human society. The selection of plantains as offerings in religious rites reflects the community’s desire to achieve greatness, success, and glory. As one interviewee (P5) noted,

“Bananas that turn yellow during the Mappaleppek Tinjak ritual become a symbol of human glory and success in the journey of life.”

Fourthly, water functions as a potent symbol of life, representing the concept of continuous flow and unceasing vitality, thereby providing a perpetual source of sustenance for the community. As noted by participant P7, during ritual practices, “clean water is recited as a prayer for those who embark on vows, such as going to sea.” Symbolically, this purified water embodies the belief that individuals must preserve their physical well-being and that all families receive protection from the Creator against various misfortunes. Furthermore, the community holds that water serves as a protective emblem capable of repelling any malevolent forces that may afflict individuals. Consequently, water assumes a critical role in the execution of fishing traditions and rituals within the Bajoe Kampong community.

Among the four items and foods identified in the preceding data analysis, fish, rice, bananas, and water collectively constitute an integral component of the traditional practices observed prior to fishermen's maritime expeditions. These elements also play a central role in the major fishing festivals held annually, which are often aligned with National Fishermen's Day. Such celebrations are imbued with the invocation of blessings, success, honor, prosperity, and protection from the Supreme Giver of Fortune for those who venture into the sea. These religious ceremonies are of considerable importance in reaffirming the fishing customs that have been maintained over time. Although the monthly fishing activities at sea may not always be as ceremonially elaborate as the grand festivals, the symbolic references to ancestral traditions remain evident and are enacted through simplified rituals consistent with the underlying purpose of the fishermen's observances.

Figure 2. The Practical Meanings of the Mappaleppek Tinjak Ritual



Source: Author's elaboration.

The Meaning of Mappaleppek Tinjak among Bajoe Muslim Fishermen

Prior to performing the Mappaleppek Tinjak ritual, the Bajoe Muslim community observes specific taboos that serve to honor various dimensions of life (see Figure 2). The first of these pertains to the prohibition against disturbing or harming animals. This practice embodies the community's conviction in respecting all of God's creations, viewing animals as fellow beings entitled to protection and equitable treatment. P2 articulated this perspective, noting that "we must respect all of God's creatures that

live around the environment, as they have the same right to live in the world.” Furthermore, the community holds that all living beings require safety, thereby forbidding the killing or exploitation of animals without explicit authorization from traditional leaders or collective agreement among local inhabitants. This principle is consistent with Islamic values and has been integrated into local customs. The second aspect concerns the careful stewardship of plants and trees. The community rigorously follows the injunction against indiscriminate picking of plants or felling of trees, a practice also harmonized with Islamic teachings. Violations of this tradition are believed to result in misfortunes. P3 observed that “when there are people who violate this tradition, they indirectly suffer the implications of their bad behavior, such as accidents involving their children or the loss of family members.” Accordingly, the local community places significant emphasis on preserving this tradition as a fundamental value within their social fabric.

Furthermore, within the fishing traditions of the Bajoe community, the term Mappaleppek Tinjak encompasses a prohibition against speaking during ritual ceremonies. This restriction functions to enable the community to concentrate and devote themselves fully to the worship processions. It may also be understood as a mechanism through which individuals surrender themselves to God, thereby fostering a closer spiritual connection through the ritual practice. As articulated by P5, “an individual performing the Mappaleppek Tinjak ritual must possess faith and maintain focus on God so that all aspirations expressed in prayer may be fulfilled.” This statement can be interpreted as a form of meditative reflection on human religiosity in the presence of the Divine. Similarly, participant P6 underscores the significance of maintaining Matula Sada (prayers to God) with unwavering focus and sincere faith throughout the ritual observance. From these perspectives, an important insight emerges regarding religious spirituality: every individual is called to humble submission before the Creator, as affirmed in the Qur’an, “I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me” (Qur’an 51:56). This understanding is further corroborated by P7, who stated, “Bismillahirrahmanirrahim *engka ka cudang uteppang rahung afi’e kupepperangi nianna I anu na barakka lao ri sesetta asyhadu Allah ilaha illa lah*” [We sit down to pour incense into the fire as an expression of our intention to pray to the Creator and seek blessings, reciting the two sentences of the shahada].

The Bajoe villagers regularly perform the Matula Sada ritual during every tahlilan ceremony, reflecting a deeply ingrained cultural practice. This ritual functions as a means of fostering a closer relationship with the divine and incorporates transcendental elements characteristic of numerous local customs and traditions across the archipelago. Additionally, the ritual serves to honor deceased ancestors. Although the practice may appear to involve offerings to unseen entities, the genuine intention of the community members is to direct their devotion and gratitude exclusively toward God. The communal celebration includes the slaughtering of chickens and the preparation of various traditional foods such as dumplings, bananas, bella, black and

white baje songkolo, coconut, and fish, all symbolizing gratitude for the blessings granted by the Almighty. These ceremonies are particularly observed by fishermen prior to embarking on their maritime voyages, as they seek divine assistance and favorable outcomes. As noted by participant P1, "... the Mappeleppek Tinjak ritual process is carried out by fishermen and their families in their respective homes before they go to sea ...," underscoring the continued adherence to ritual and tradition in Kampung Bajoe as expressions of religious faith and submission to the Creator. In contemporary times, the Matula Sada tradition has also come to embody an additional significance: fishermen from Kampung Bajoe abstain from going to sea on Fridays. This practice serves as a public demonstration of respect for the obligatory Muslim worship on this sacred day. By observing this custom, the fishermen simultaneously fulfill their religious duties and maintain their cultural and spiritual heritage.

Discussion

The *Mappeleppek Tinjak* in Bajoe Muslim fishermen can be interpreted as a new socio-religious norm and value. Author indicates that socio-economic and socio-religious aspects have been transformed into a value system of social change. Changes in the socio-economic aspect have led to fishermen becoming wiser in marine earnings, avoiding the over-exploitation of nature.³⁰ notes that people who value nature more wisely will benefit by protecting and paying attention to nature, resulting in more sustainable livelihoods. Meanwhile, changes in the socio-religious aspect show a more specific interpretation, namely that people are more concerned about the direction and purpose of life when they decide to become fishermen. This leads to a more organized approach, ensuring they do not exploitatively seek their livelihood solely from the sea. This means that the sea is utilized as a source of livelihood and food, and fishing practices are carried out wisely to ensure sustainable utilization. As stated by Armitage & Ling Tam³¹ and Daris³², the sea can be a sustainable source of livelihood if it is managed wisely and prudently. Therefore, the ways of the local community in maintaining religious traditions and rituals will have implications for sustainability if they are planned and accommodated within the local heritage, which has so far developed well in social life.³³

³⁰ Giovanni Perucca, "Residents' Satisfaction with Cultural City Life: Evidence from EU Cities," *Applied Research in Quality of Life* 14, no. 2 (April 2019): 461–78, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11482-018-9623-2>.

³¹ Derek Armitage and Chui Ling Tam, "A Political Ecology of Sustainable Livelihoods in Coastal Sulawesi, Indonesia," *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 28, no. 1 (2007): 39–57, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02255189.2007.9669187>.

³² L. Daris et al., "Types and Forms of Fishermen Conflicts in the Utilization of Coastal Resources in Maros Regency, South Sulawesi Province," *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science* 1147, no. 1 (March 2023): 012019, <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/1147/1/012019>.

³³ Haijing Dai, "Social Inequality in a Bonded Community: Community Ties and Villager Resistance in a Chinese Township," *Social Service Review* 87, no. 2 (2013): 269–91, <https://doi.org/10.1086/670520>; Francisia SEE Seda et al., "Social Policies, Social Exclusion & Social Well-Being in Southeast Asia: A Case Study of Papua, Indonesia," *Economics & Sociology* 11, no. 3 (2018):

Even though there are some groups that do not practice fishing rituals and traditions as a whole, *Mappaleppek Tinjak* remains a tradition that holds impartial meaning. This impartial context is associated with unbiased investigations and continues to evolve according to the context and situation of the times. Some groups view local traditions as deviating from Islamic meanings, and in this context, it can be perceived as heretical and lacking significance in life.³⁴ This interpretation may be justified, but in a broader aspect, it represents a wealth of cultural values that have grown and developed within the social dynamics of life in the archipelago. Without neglecting the essence of worship, religious traditions, and rituals, especially the Mappaleppe Tinja tradition practiced by Bajoe Muslim fishermen, will continue to thrive and prosper in accordance with local beliefs, which are part of Indonesian national identity.³⁵ This is in line with Giglito³⁶ and Wiktor-Mach³⁷ who state that as long as local culture is preserved in social life practices, it is not impossible for Indonesia, as a multicultural nation, to be a leading example in the world, accommodating local traditions as a form of indigenous diversity and national plurality. Therefore, *Mappaleppek Tinjak*, which was reinterpreted by the research participants, will become a special reference when author in the field of Islamic heritage make it the primary source of literature on religious rituals practiced by local residents.

Moreover, the meaning and symbolization contained in the fishing tradition continue to evolve, holding genuine and contextual interpretive values within religious phenomena in the contemporary era. The four elements in the fishermen's religious ritual practices [fish, banana, rice, and water] symbolize Indonesian cultural diversity, which continues to flourish through the socio-religious practices of the local community. Local culture that thrives on grassroots practical values plays a crucial role

147–60, <https://doi.org/10.14254/2071>; Arini Wahyu Utami and Lori A. Cramer, "Political, Social, and Human Capital in the Face of Climate Change: Case of Rural Indonesia," *Community Development* 51, no. 5 (2020): 556–74, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15575330.2020.1804956>.

³⁴ Cecilia Benedetti, "Showing Themselves: Indigenous People, Cultural Heritage Promotion and Community Development in Northern Argentina," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 27, no. 10 (2021): 1025–37, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527258.2021.1922932>; Muhammad Zaffwan Idris, Norsimaa Binti Mustafa, and Syed Osman Syed Yusoff, "Preservation of Intangible Cultural Heritage Using Advance Digital Technology: Issues and Challenges," *Harmonia: Journal of Arts Research and Education* 16, no. 1 (December 2016): 1, <https://doi.org/10.15294/harmonia.v16i1.6353>.

³⁵ Trinidad Rico, "The Limits of a 'heritage at Risk' Framework: The Construction of Post-Disaster Cultural Heritage in Banda Aceh, Indonesia," *Journal of Social Archaeology* 14, no. 2 (2014): 157–76, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1469605314527192>.

³⁶ Danilo Giglito, Luigina Ciolfi, and Wolfgang Bosswick, "Building a Bridge: Opportunities and Challenges for Intangible Cultural Heritage at the Intersection of Institutions, Civic Society, and Migrant Communities," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 28, no. 1 (2022): 74–91, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527258.2021.1922934>.

³⁷ Dobrosława Wiktor-Mach, "Cultural Heritage and Development: UNESCO's New Paradigm in a Changing Geopolitical Context," *Third World Quarterly* 40, no. 9 (September 2019): 1593–612, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2019.1604131>.

in fostering moderation and diversity in social sub-cultures in Indonesia.³⁸ Furthermore, the meaning of the tradition conveyed by the participants does not conflict with Islamic values contextually Parker³⁹ emphasizes that a shared commitment to the process of cultural coexistence and its practices at the grassroots level will always make an epic contribution to the sustainability of a plural nation. Therefore, the greatest challenge faced by locality-based rituals and traditions does not originate from the beliefs of local people, but rather from transnational movements with political agendas that may not align with the essence of the traditions themselves.⁴⁰

The distinctive feature of this research, when compared to previous studies, lies in the continuous growth and development of socio-economic and socio-religious conditions in accordance with the demands of the local Bajo community's life. Moreover, the meaning of fishermen's religious symbols and rituals also holds a value of diversity, which is a unique characteristic of the diverse Indonesian nation. This study presents typical case studies based on cultural narratives, which have played a significant role in social development and socio-religious contextualization in practical settings. As a result, it creates a new narrative in the realm of socio-cultural and Islamic heritage knowledge, which has so far been overlooked in locality-based religious anthropological-sociological discourses. As such, the ways of the local community in preserving objects and food that serve as symbols of religious rituals must continue as a rich tradition in Indonesia.

An explanation for the continued practice of the Mappaleppek Tinjak tradition among the Bajoe fishing community may not fully encompass all dimensions of the discourse on Islamic heritage. It is acknowledged by researchers that this study is constrained by limitations related to time, operational design, and methodological approaches. In light of these constraints, case studies presented within this discourse warrant greater attention from scholars who seek to conduct in-depth investigations into local religious rituals and traditions, particularly those observed by fishing communities. Future research directions and scopes are anticipated to adopt a more expansive perspective when examining fishing traditions, which embody significant cultural and symbolic meanings. For example, the concepts of blessings, glory, and prosperity—frequently articulated by study participants—should be reexamined

³⁸ Ina Helena Agustina, "Socio-Cultural Heritage for Tourism at Cirebon Palaces Indonesia," *MIMBAR: Jurnal Sosial Dan Pembangunan* 36, no. 2 (December 2020): 511-19, <https://doi.org/10.29313/mimbar.v36i2.6876>; Singgih Tri Sulistiyono and Yety Rochwulaningsih, "Contest for Hegemony: The Dynamics of Inland and Maritime Cultures Relations in the History of Java Island, Indonesia," *Journal of Marine and Island Cultures* 2, no. 2 (December 2013): 115-27, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.imic.2013.10.002>.

³⁹ Lyn Parker, "Religious Education for Peaceful Coexistence in Indonesia?," *South East Asia Research* 22, no. 4 (December 2014): 487-504, <https://doi.org/10.5367/sear.2014.0231>.

⁴⁰ Raymond Adongo and Seongseop Kim, "The Ties That Bind: Stakeholder Collaboration and Networking in Local Festivals," *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* 30, no. 6 (July 2018): 2458-80, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-02-2017-0112>.

within a more comprehensive conceptual framework. Such considerations are essential for researchers intending to undertake similar studies in different geographical and contextual settings. Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that subsequent research on Islamic heritage incorporate alternative theoretical frameworks and pursue broader interpretative analyses. This approach should extend beyond the exploration of meanings and symbols to include an examination of governmental policy responses aimed at promoting local traditions as components of sustainable tourism development.

Conclusion

This research makes a significant contribution to the scholarly discussion on the preservation of local maritime traditions, especially those that have historically been marginalized in academic studies. Contrary to earlier views that characterized these practices as fragmented and in decline, the present study reveals them to be resilient cultural systems that continue to adapt and develop. The persistence of these traditions involves not only continuity but also transformation, as community members actively reinterpret and ascribe new meanings to the ritual symbols embedded within their customs. These dynamics underscore an important avenue for the preservation of Islamic heritage, which is intricately intertwined with local cultural practices, demonstrating how cultural conservation is negotiated in context-specific manners. Moreover, the findings challenge prevailing assumptions that fishermen constitute a social group largely disengaged from spiritual or religious involvement. Instead of representing a solely secular or occupational identity, fishermen exhibit a complex relationship with belief systems that resists simplistic categorization. The study reveals a paradox wherein their practices possess religious forms but are not always directly linked to the doctrinal or devotional dimensions of Islamic worship. This nuanced perspective challenges conventional understandings and highlights the necessity of reevaluating interpretations of spirituality and religious expression within coastal communities.

This article makes a noteworthy contribution by establishing a novel reference framework for the reinterpretation of Muslim fishermen traditions, which have frequently been overlooked in conventional analyses of Islamic ethics and values. By foregrounding these practices within academic discourse, the study expands the analytical horizon and fosters a more profound engagement with themes such as Islamic heritage, sustainable tourism, and the multicultural complexities inherent to the Indonesian archipelago. Furthermore, the research underscores the strategic importance of local traditions in informing tourism development. The author advocates for policymakers to recognize and incorporate these cultural dimensions as integral components of innovative strategies aimed at attracting international tourists. Indonesia's Islamic heritage, characterized by its symbolic depth and cultural plurality, constitutes a significant resource that warrants further exploration and promotion.

Through a more sophisticated comprehension of these traditions, policymakers are positioned to enhance Indonesia's standing as a unique cultural tourism destination while concurrently safeguarding its distinctive socio-religious identity.

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