



Rituals in acculturation of islam and local traditions of the Bajo Tribe in Gorontalo

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the process of assimilation of Islamic practices and indigenous customs inside the ceremonies conducted by the Bajo Tribe. The rites performed by the Bajo people encompass a fusion of Islamic tenets with their indigenous beliefs, specifically centered around their reverence for the sea's sovereign. The amalgamation of these two ideologies yields a potent synergy. The Bajo people, as Muslims, fulfill the religious obligations of Islam, which includes commemorating the birth anniversary of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. In addition, the Bajo people also perform the Massoro and Bate' rituals, which are the most significant traditional ceremonies of the Bajo Tribe in Torosiaje Village. The Bajo tribe's customs are shaped by the integration and embodiment of these two ideas, which are expressed through values, norms, and laws that serve as guiding principles for their way of life. The ceremonies performed by the Bajo people stem from established traditions passed down through generations.

1. Introduction

The Bajo ethnic group is a community that lives in a group of settlers on the coast, living not far from the sea. Bajo people are very dependent, and spend all their time, even entirely on exploiting marine resources (Artanto, 2017; Herman & Anhusadar, 2022; Mamar, 2005). The proximity to the sea causes the Bajo people to be synonymous with the marine environment and have adapted to marine life. Bajo culture is composed of knowledge about the marine environment, beliefs, and aspects of daily maritime-based technology (Utina, 2015). The characteristics of coastal communities are open to several aspects that are relevant to the social order, including those related to beliefs. So the Bajo

communities spread across Indonesia have recently embraced the Islamic religious belief in the majority (Haerulloh *et.al*, 2021).

The distribution of the Bajo community has been living on the coast of the archipelago for centuries (Poelinggomang, 2016). Before the Bajo community chose the mainland or coast as a settlement, the Bajo people were better known as nomadic people and were often called *sea gypsies* in various literature (Gobang *et.al*, 2018; Stacey & Allison, 2019; Haerulloh *et.al*, 2021; Bellina *et.al*, 2021). The Bajo tribe is spread across Southeast Asia (Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Philippines). Apart from being called the Bajo tribe, they are also often called the sea tribe, other names for the Bajo people are *Luwaqan*, *Turijene*, *Sama*, *Palaqan*, and *Pala'u* (Kurais, 2016). In ancient times, the Bajo people moved in groups and roamed the open seas using traditional boats. One opinion suggests that Bajo people often move because they feel exploited and suspected by other tribes around them (Rusba *et al*, 2018). The stereotypes attached to this society are one of the factors that encourage acculturation with cultural elements in mainland society.

The shift of the Bajo people from sea nomads occurred over hundreds of years, but as time went by the Bajo people began to settle and live in coastal areas (Maulidyna *et.al*, 2021). In Indonesia itself, currently, the Bajo tribe has spread and can be found in coastal estuaries and areas of the north and east coast of Kalimantan, Maluku Islands, along the north coast of Sumbawa, along the north and east coast of Bima, along the north and west coast of Flores, Babi Island, Archipelago Alor and Sulawesi region itself have spread to South Sulawesi, Central Sulawesi, North Sulawesi and Southeast Sulawesi (Rahmat & Usman, 2016). The Bajo tribe has its uniqueness in that all of its people's activities are at sea, including building houses to live in, economic, political, socio-cultural activities, and so on. The settlements of the Bajo tribe are identical to settlements built on water, which shows that their life cannot be separated from the sea and are completely devoted to marine resources (Yunus & Mondong, 2021).

Among several Bajo communities spread across Indonesia, one of them currently lives in Torosiaje Village, Gorontalo. Other communities in Gorontalo Province are spread across the coast of Tomini Bay in Boalemo and Puhowato Regencies. Zacot (2008) estimates that they began to settle after 1926 and before that, the Bajo people lived in *soppe-soppe* (large boats) and used Torosiaje land as a stopover (Mustamin & Macpal, 2022). As a community that claims to be Bajo, in general, the people are descendants of native Bajo people, some of whom still practice their old knowledge and traditions which have been mixed with practices in the Islamic religion. The Bajo ethnicity is inseparable from the identity of beliefs inherited from their ancestors which led them to religious practices and rituals that are full of mysticism. So there is a process of acculturation with his current religious beliefs, namely Islam.

Of the several religious rituals that are carried out, they are not only focused on religious teachings, but many also carry out traditions that are still maintained (Mustamin & Macpal, 2022). The most typical tradition in the Bajo people's culture is related to marine ecology. The Bajo people embody local wisdom values through *mammia kadilao* tradition. This tradition includes several taboos for people in settlements while fishermen are on fishing voyages. These restrictions include a prohibition on throwing kitchen waste (sea cucumber washing water, wood charcoal, cigarette butts/ashes, chili water, ginger, and

wok washing water waste) into sea waters. This taboo supports the preservation of the marine environment and is one of the local wisdom inherited from the Bajo people (Utina, 2015). However, recently the practice of this tradition has begun to erode due to the lack of authority in the Bajo community to control the continuity of community fishing activities in Torosiaje (Yunus *et.al*, 2022).

The culture of an ethnicity or tribe has ancestral beliefs which undergo a process of acculturation with newly accepted religious beliefs and then form new practices in the culture. One of the previous beliefs of the Bajo people was the belief in the existence of supernatural beings who ruled the sea which they called *duata*. The Bajo people's long-standing belief in *duata* is analogous to 'friends' who will protect them from disaster. This belief has grown for a long time when the Bajo people live in a marine environment. The Bajo people respond to the challenges of the uncertain sea with mystical practices, but combined with elements of Islamic beliefs. One research on the Bajo people revealed the mantras practiced by the Bajo people in Southeast Sulawesi, showing a connection with the text of the Qur'an (Uniawati, 2007; Yunus *et.al*, 2023). The relationship between the mantra and the text of the Al-Qur'an shows a representation of the mystical Bajo identity with the spiritual aspects of people who have absorbed Islamic values.

Apart from the beliefs inherited from their ancestors, the Bajo people are also known as followers of Islam. Baskara & Abdullah Irwan (2014) stated that the religious identity of the Bajo people is a combination of Islamic beliefs and their original beliefs in the rulers of the sea. Traditional rituals are still practiced, indicating the persistence of the legacy of previous beliefs. This ritual function is still functionally implemented because it correlates with the use of marine resources. This kind of ritual practice has undergone changes in aspects of its implementation and meaning because religion itself has been able to acculturate with local traditions. Despite this, there are still many Bajo people who continue to carry out these local traditions. The dominance of cultural elements in Islam conceptually demands increased acculturation initiatives, developing new systems and values that are correlated with each other (Yanrenjing & Kutanegara, 2021). The dominant influence of Islam can press into the spiritual realm of individuals and society without abandoning old symbols, thus to find a cultural meeting point, symbolic expressions appear which are continuously negotiated (Safrillah, 2017). So, when religious teachings enter a cultural community, there will be a tug-of-war between the interests of religion and the interests of one's own culture (Buhori, 2017).

In the dynamics of the development of Islam, its entry into Indonesia was carried out peacefully through trade routes such as those carried out by Arab, Persian, and Gurajat traders which occurred since the 7th century AD and experienced development until the 13th century AD (Rozi, 2012). These traders, interact and socialize with the people of the archipelago, including the Bajo tribe, and in this way, Islamic teachings are also spread. This means that the spread of the message of Islam in Indonesia has always been by sea and from a historical glance this confirms that the Bajo people have long embraced Islam because they are a tribe of sea nomads (Hasim, 2012). Before landing in Gorontalo, the Bajo people had embraced Islam and until now are known as Muslims who adhere to the teachings of their religion and are also consistent in living up to their cultural

traditions, where their dependence on the sea makes them have confidence in other creatures who protect the ecosystem around them.

Traditions that still exist and are carried out today are the *Massoro* and *Bate'* rituals, which are traditions of repelling evil and are considered a form of community tradition in Bajo culture. This tradition is a form of acculturation of the Islamic religion with local Bajo traditions. Even though they are Muslim, the Bajo people still uphold their cultural heritage by carrying out rituals. This tradition carried out by the Bajo people is an offering to the ruler of the sea to get a good life and be kept away from all kinds of dangers (Chou, 2020). In acculturation, Islam and local traditions of the Bajo tribe have gone through such a process, however, this acculturation process still has lines of distinction between one and the other (Roibin *et.al*, 2021; Trandika, 2023). The acculturation process will pose challenges to the Bajo Tribe with the government's official version of Islam with the traditional Islam of the Bajo Tribe and also challenges from modernization and globalization which will become a commodification of religious rituals in the Bajo Tribe.

Previous research related to the problems raised is research from Mustamin & Macpal, 2020. In their research, they found that during every life cycle in the Bajo people, both on land and at sea, traditional rituals/traditions are always carried out. The rituals described regarding the circle of life in the Bajo community in Torosiaje include rituals during the pregnancy phase, the baby phase, the adult phase, and the death phase. Local wisdom was put forward by Dai & Manahung (2020) who in their research discussed a series of wisdom sentences that contain Islamic educational values that apply in society. Locality and Islam have been featured in both studies, and through this article, we attempt to pay attention to aspects of acculturation. Therefore, this article aims to describe the rituals in acculturation to Islam and the local traditions of the Bajo people in Torosiaje Village and the way the community maintains the style of acculturation to Islam and its locality.

2. Method

This research uses a qualitative method with a descriptive type that relies on field data. The qualitative method uses open interviews, the results of which aim to enable researchers to examine and understand the attitudes, feelings, behaviors and views of both individuals and groups (Moleong, 2018). This research was conducted in Torosiaje Village, Popayato District, Pohuwato Regency, Gorontalo Province because it is the only Bajo tribe that still maintains its residence above sea level, connected between houses by wooden bridges which are administratively also recorded as a village that has 4 hamlets. The Torosiaje Village Locus includes the Bajo tribe community who still carry out local traditions and implement Islamic values.

The informants who participated in this research were Bajo tribal traditional leaders, Bajo tribal village heads, religious and community leaders from Torosiaje Village. Data was collected using observation and in-depth interviews. These observations were made on the Bajo people implementing their beliefs, namely the Islamic religion and the generalization of acculturation in Bajo traditions and culture (Gunn & Logstrup, 2014). Interviews are conducted in various forms from informal *conversations* to *in-depth*

interviews (Englander, 2012). Interview topics included the people in Torosiaje Village, knowledge about Islam and its traditions, forms of implementation of the traditions of the Bajo Tribe community which are in synergy with their religion, namely Islam, which will be a form of acculturation to Islam and local traditions of the Bajo Tribe community.

Analysis was carried out by combining data obtained from various sources (transcribed interview recordings, field notes, photo documentation, and so on). The data was then read as a whole to obtain *a general sense* and detect themes that emerged, such as the relationship between local traditions of the Bajo Tribe and Islam as well as other traditions and Islam that shape acculturation in the Bajo Tribe community.

3. Result and discussion

- *Bajo tribe in Torosiaje Village*

Torosiaje Village is located in the western part of Gorontalo Province in Pohuwato Regency. This village is located above the sea and almost all of its people depend on the sea. This community is called the Bajo Tribe. The Bajo people believe that humans and nature have a very close relationship. The Bajo tribe is unique because they have houses and activities above the sea, however, the Bajo tribe in Pohuwato is divided into two, some still live above the sea and some live on land. The author interviewed with a key informant in Torosiaje Village named Jekson regarding the narrative of the origins of the Bajo Tribe and the results of the interview revealed that the Bajo Tribe in Torosiaje Village came from the Malacca Strait. The spread of the Bajo Tribe to Indonesia started from Malaysia down to Singapore and arrived in the Batam area, between Singapore and Batam. The Bajo Tribe marked a white flag that stands to this day and is used as a marker that the Bajo Tribe was once there. Previously, from that place, the Princess of the Straits of Malacca fled to Sulawesi and married the Prince of Bone. The Bajo tribe troops who came from the Malacca Strait looked for the princess and were found in the Kingdom of Bone. Because the Bajo tribe troops had found the princess and had a long way to go back, the Bajo tribe was founded in Bone Regency.

A commander from the kingdom of Bone named H. Patta Sompia and his Bajo tribe went on a journey and when they arrived at Torosiaje village they saw a white light which was a sign for the Bajo tribe to end their journey and they believed that if they continued their journey they would encounter disaster. Thus, their journey stopped in the Torosiaje area and stayed on a boat. Then in 1901, due to the increasing number of people and boats, this area was finally made into a village by the Dutch, then the traditional stakeholders started building houses from the center point of Torosiaje Village today, but the regulations at that time were that only traditional stakeholders could build houses. In 1940 other people began to build houses until in 1950 the houses were increasingly crowded. In 1960, the Bajo people began to carry out exogamous marriages, where marriages were carried out with ethnic and tribal differences. In 1983, the transfer of families per head from Torosiaje Village to the mainland began, initially 125 families, then 25 families, and finally 50 families. This relocation was carried out to empty the villages above the sea but it was never successful, so the Bajo tribe can now be divided into 2, some live on land and there are those who live at sea level.

The Bajo people in Torosiaje Village are all Muslim, they are devout followers of Islam and always carry out the teachings according to the Shari'a. The discipline of the Bajo people can be seen from the existence of several mosques in Torosiaje Village and they are always busy when carrying out Friday prayers and the five daily prayers, and there are several prayer places. Even though they are followers of Islam, the Bajo people in Torosiaje Village still practice customs that involve their belief in the unseen ruler of the sea. People also believe that the spirits in the sea will always live side by side with humans. Currently, the Bajo people's settlement in Torosiaje Village consists of several hamlets, namely Bahari Jaya Hamlet, Mutiara Hamlet, Sengkang Hamlet, and Tanjung Karang Hamlet. As of 2021, the population of Torosiaje Village is 438 families with 1,482 residents, all of whom live on the sea. From its geographical location, Torosiaje Village has an area of 200 region, not counting the sea area with life on the sea and non-permanent houses made of wood. Meanwhile, the area with a height of 1-2 meters above sea level is 100 Ha. The Bajo tribe community in Torosiaje Village depends on income from marine products (Kobi & Hendra, 2020).

- *Rituals in Islamic Acculturation and Local Traditions*

Animistic rituals are thought to be practices from the early beliefs of the Bajo people in the past. However, the blending of rituals with Islam does not necessarily mean that elements of locality are abandoned. The symbolic expressions displayed by previous Bajo people in reciting mantras are now replaced by chanting praises to Muhammad SAW. These elements cannot be said to be mantras, but the traditional tendencies of the Bajo people are manifested in the syncretization of Islamic rituals. The Bajo people in Torosiaje name each ritual according to the language that has been passed down to their generations. If you pay attention to the life cycle, it is universal and integrated into ritual patterns, in Islam and with the mention of local rituals. Through this article, six rituals are explained that are practiced by the Bajo Torosiaje community and contain Islamic values and the locality of the Bajo Tribe.

a. Birth Ritual

The birth ritual or what is called Ngana', is a ritual carried out to welcome birth. After the baby is born, the umbilical cord is cut using a bamboo cut, or what is called *uwwe*. The baby is then bathed in a basin/bucket filled with seawater. This procession is practiced by a midwife who also helps the mother give birth or if you don't use a dukun then this will be done by the baby's grandmother. The procession is continued by the baby's father, reciting *adzan* (the call to prayer in Islam) near the baby's right ear, and *iqomat* near the baby's left ear. Bathing a baby with seawater is a sign or form of initiation which states that the baby is a descendant of sea people. Apart from bathing the baby in seawater, the baby's placenta is also thrown into the sea using *tiba kaka'* ritual. In this ritual, the placenta is wrapped in a mat made of pandan leaves along with the ingredients of betel nut, salt, rice, areca nut, and tobacco and then put together in a container called *bakol*. *Bakol* was then tied up, given stones as weight, and drowned. A good time to remove the placenta is when it is no longer hot/bright, but also when it is dark. In Bajo belief, the placenta is personified as the baby's older brother (*kaka'*), twins who were born simultaneously. This practice is interpreted in this way so that when the placenta is removed it still

needs to be taken care of so that it does not return to the mother's womb or make the baby sick.

Pre-Islamic traditions are generally still manifested in the beliefs inherited from the ancestors of the Bajo people. The mixture of Islamic elements in local traditions always appears significant, so it is often associated with typical Indonesian Islam (Ramdhan, 2018). Significant changes are visible, but the roots of old traditions are still expressed. *Adzan* and *Iqomat*, even giving Islamic names to newborn babies are nothing but elements of Islam. The meaning of *ari-ari*, seawater and 'older brother' is built based on cultural interpretations of the physical environment of the Bajo people which is inseparable from the sea. Acculturation in this birth ritual constructs the identity of the Bajo people right after their new generation is born. If Islam is implemented according to its laws (sharia) along with rituals and does not conflict with each other society's interpretation, then the two will strengthen each other (Julaikha *et.al*, 2021).

b. Haircut Ritual

The hair-cutting ritual is called *aqiqah* and in the Bajo language, it is called *kukkor*. This is carried out when a new baby is born or no later than six months after birth. The essence of this ritual is cutting the baby's hair while making wishes and prayers so that the baby will have a good life. In carrying out this ritual, if the family has an excess, one male goat will be slaughtered and it will be carried out on a large scale, whereas if the opposite is true then this ritual will be carried out simply by slaughtering a male chicken. It is not uncommon for families to join together to hold this ritual together.

The requirements for this hair-cutting ritual are a coconut that has been cut to resemble a container and then used as a medium for storing baby hair cuttings. Before cutting the baby's hair, the mother is given a mark called *koron tigi* which is made from a mixture of turmeric, coconut milk, and pounded rice. Then rub it on the baby's crown, followed by the head, hands, and feet starting from the right and then to the left. The ritual is led by *imam*, when cutting the hair, *imam* sits in the place provided, followed by other religious leaders in a circle, and then the priest reads prayers and burns incense. After the prayer reading is finished, *Barazanji* (shalawat badar prayer containing praise to the Prophet Muhammad SAW) begins which is chanted by *imam* and all those who take part in the ritual. When Shalawat Badar is recited, *imam* takes the scissors provided on the tray and also places coconut, rice, and candles. Then *imam* cuts the baby's hair and keeps it in a coconut. After the cutting is complete, *imam* blows on the baby's head while praying. After this ritual is carried out and everyone has cut the baby's head, the host opens the serving hood and eats the meal together.

The Bajo people utilize the resources in the surrounding environment that are available as a ritual medium, especially coconuts. Almost all people in the archipelago in their traditional practices use coconut as a ritual element. Incense is likely to be found in the culture and supported by the environment in the Middle East, where the Islamic religion originated. In contrast to coconuts, which

ecologically only grow in tropical landscapes. Islamic values are transhistorical and the reality of presenting Islamic expressions in a geographical context is the result of interactions between Islamic teachings and local values (Aziz et.al, 2020). Therefore, the locality shown by the Bajo people using coconut can be interpreted as a characteristic related to environmental vegetation. Meanwhile, the procession and ritual instruments such as *imam*, which is defined as a spiritual leader in Islam, and the chanting of Barazanji, are elements that the Bajo people have absorbed through Islamic teachings. The ritual practice of reproduction in the lives of the Bajo people is at least one way to make maximum efforts so that babies can survive and develop into devout children in the Islamic context (Komariah et.al, 2021).

c. *Tahlilan Ritual*

Tahlilan, which the Bajo tribe calls *Maca Kamelaka* ritual, has been practiced for generations to pray for the families of those who have died. This ritual is carried out by gathering relatives and praying together accompanied by burning incense. The Bajo tribe still carries out rituals that prioritize incense. This is based on the belief inherited from their ancestors regarding incense as an element that can deliver prayers to the family of the deceased by burning incense. It is possible that the name of the previous ritual practice was *maca kamelaka* and in line with the values of Islamic teachings regarding death, this ritual was compared to *tahlilan*.

In current practice, *maca kamelaka* ritual in the procession is accompanied by the reading of verses in Al-Qur'an, namely *Surah Yasin* and *Tahlil*. The two surahs are read as an introduction to spirits or souls who have passed away. The Bajo people's belief in spirits or spirits is quite strong, and they believe that spirits still exist in the lives of living people. Because of this, the Bajo people make this ritual important to control spirits who at any time are still disturbing the world of the living. In the end, through this ritual, by reading suras from the Koran, especially those related to death, you can calm the spirits in the grave. Another context of this ritual is related to emotional connections and cultural expressions with people who have died and hopes about the world after death which Islamic teachings call the afterlife, as well as the forgiveness of the Creator.

Islamic teachings or laws that are widely practiced in traditional Islamic communities in Indonesia regarding death are known as certain days when it is considered good to recite prayers, namely the 7th day, the 40th day, and the 100th day after someone's death. These teachings contribute to the natural world of the mind of the Bajo people, which to this day is still attached to supernatural realities. One of the arguments regarding acculturation is the consequence of adapting minority values to majority values (Nur'Aini, 2021), in this context translated as dominant values. With this assumption, the Bajo people tend to adapt their main beliefs regarding the supernatural to Islamic values which are manifested in *maca kamelaka* ritual.

d. *Maulu Celebration*

The celebration of the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad SAW or what is known as *Maulu*, is a tradition passed down from generation to generation which has also

been carried out by the Bajo people since they embraced Islam. The celebration of the Prophet's birthday is always a long-awaited moment for the community. As a celebration held to express gratitude for the birth of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, it is held once a year, namely in the month of Mawlid which coincides with the birth date of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, namely 12 Rabiul Awal. The implementation was centered at the mosque in Torosiaje Village. In this celebration tradition, the Bajo people still use the cooperation system to prepare food to be eaten together and make *tolangga* by attaching eggs and food and then delivering it to the mosque as the center of the celebration. The procession includes reading birthday poems containing praise for the Prophet Muhammad SAW and is usually followed by a lecture or story about the example and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad SAW by a leading religious shop. To conclude the celebration, it ended with the reading of a prayer. After that, prepare *tolangga* and scramble to take the eggs and food that is laid. The food served on this birthday is conceptually interpreted and has a blessing value for the Bajo people who follow this tradition.

Tolangga is a symbol of sharing blessings which correlates with the birth of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Symbolic relationships mark the meaning of people's values regarding the importance of blessings in their lives. *Maulu* tradition, which is accompanied by the chanting of prayers, legitimizes the belief in the blessings attached to the food they serve. In the Bajo people who live as a minority group, organizing collective structures is an important function of maintaining cohesion. Therefore, *Maulu* is a place to organize and construct social ties between the Bajo people. The embodiment of collective values expressed through symbols of religiosity in Islam is often found in traditional societies that celebrate the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad SAW in Indonesia (Nadia, 2011; Zulfa, 2014).

e. Big Ritual of the Bajo Tribe

Massoro and *bate'* are activities from the community's belief system as part of the stages of a sacred ceremony. This ritual is a major ritual of the Bajo tribe and is still often practiced. *Massoro* ritual, literally the practice of rejecting evil, has been carried out since its predecessors. During its implementation, this ritual was led by traditional elders from the Bajo tribe. In this ritual, the procession includes making and replacing the *bate* flag or flag that repels evil which is a characteristic of the Bajo tribe. The *bate'* flag is a symbol or sign of the Bajo tribe. This flag stands in the middle of the sea surrounded by the Bajo tribe village. The *bate'* flag is white and has Arabic writing on it, which they believe will ward off creatures with evil intentions from entering the village and also a ward off disease. Carrying out the *massoro* ritual and changing *bate'* flag is carried out in the traditional house and is attended by people who take part in the ritual.

The implementation of *massoro* ritual will be carried out when disease often attacks people in the settlement; livelihoods are reduced or disaster strikes the Bajo tribe village. Before *Massoro* ritual is carried out, traditional elders will gather. The offerings are prepared and delivered to the mosque, then prayed for before dropping the offerings. The figures involved in the ritual are led by traditional elders consisting of traditional leaders and traditional figures. Sometimes, a

traditional elder is a shaman or what is usually called a *sandro*. Both men and women are involved in summoning spirits when the offerings are lowered on the boat. When carrying out this ritual, *sandro* dress neatly, wearing peci and koko clothes, while the women will use a scarf as a head covering. The offerings prepared include a white rooster, fruit, white cloth, and coins.

The procession begins with beating a tambourine, then the *sandros* gather in a circle and burn incense. The *sandros* continue to recite/mention the name of Allah and begin with *bismillahirrahmanirrahim*, the aim of which is to pray for the offerings they will make. Then, in *Massoro* ritual, a boat is prepared which has been engraved with the names of the inhabitants of the sea, and the offering materials are placed in the boat. When the procession is finished the boat is released without the driver or people on it, then the boat is pushed into the sea away from the settlement. The people believe that with the boat leaving, the bad luck that befell the Bajo tribe will also go away. When the ritual of *massoro* or rejecting evil is completed, the community is forbidden to leave the village for three days, prohibited from hitting the water with paddles or bamboo sticks or rowing by hitting the water. If a boat wants to leave before the third day, the person must pay a customary fine, which can be in the form of money or goods which must be given to the shaman.

For the people of the Bajo Tribe, this is not shirk but an effort to protect and respect each other with the sea authorities who protect the Bajo Tribe. The Bajo people believe in *Duata*, who they call the ruler of the sea. *Massoro* in the sense is a repentance carried out as a repellent to protect the Bajo people. However, when the ritual has been carried out, but the disease cannot be cured, *Sandro* will call his friends or what is called *Duata* (sea lords) to enter someone's body and explain the disease they are suffering from. Currently, the implementation of *Massoro* has been implemented for almost 3 years and has never been carried out again. In this implementation, the government must involve the government and use a large budget, but even though *massoro* ritual has not been carried out, the replacement of *bate'* flag is still being carried out.

The major rituals carried out by the Bajo Tribe are a form of acculturation to Islam and the local traditions of the Bajo Tribe community. Judging from the local tradition of the Bajo people, this big ritual, giving offerings, summoning spirits and the ruler of the sea, while the Islamic form of the Bajo tribe which is carried out from *massoro* and *bate'* rituals is that before carrying out the ritual, the procession is first carried out in the mosque and prayed for. by saying the name of Allah, even the flag which they consider to repel evil has the word Allah written on the flag. This is a form of acculturation and everyone will accept this. This big ritual of the Bajo tribe not only contains religious and cultural values, but by carrying it out you will get peace and tranquility because you are under the protection of Allah and the creatures their around.

- *Maintaining Bajo Tribe Rituals*

Massoro and *bate'* rituals, which are major rituals of the Bajo Tribe, can be seen from the existence of this tradition which is still maintained and carried out by the Bajo Tribe

community. This ritual is a form of cultural richness and tradition owned by the Bajo tribe and this *Massoro* tradition is still remembered even though it was last implemented 3 years ago, but *bate'* still stands strong and the ritual process of changing the flag is still being carried out. This ritual is a tradition that has been carried out for generations by the Bajo people. In this way, local values are also inherited so that they can continue to be sustainable. Bajo tribal culture is part of the multicultural and multiethnic aspect which contains traditions and rituals. Eating and cultural values are always contained in a tradition intertwined with religious beliefs that guide people's lives (Yani, 2021).

One effort to maintain the rituals of the Bajo Tribe is to establish a traditional institution in the Bajo Tribe and traditional leaders who carry out development by attending Bajo Tribe meetings from all over Indonesia, even those from abroad so that what is in the Bajo Tribe remains sustainable and the rituals can be carried out. adjustments but do not damage the values and meaning contained therein so that they can appear more attractive and able to attract the interest of many people and tourists who come to watch these rituals take place. Involving the community in traditional processions is also a form of maintaining Bajo tribal rituals. Starting from planning to implementation, it always involves the Bajo tribe community taking part in this tradition, but this ritual procession, especially *massoro* and *bate'* rituals, requires large costs and must involve the government in its implementation.

4. Conclusion

Rituals such as *massoro*, *bate'*, *tahlilan*, birth rituals, and rituals for the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad SAW have been carried out by the Bajo people since ancient times after embracing Islam as part of their form of belief. Therefore, rituals are the foundation of his life, regardless of religion or belief. The rituals carried out by the Bajo tribe show a form of acculturation that does not merely emphasize the more dominant local traditions, but rather the Islamic religion which is also part of the implementation of the Bajo tribe rituals. Islam is a complete religion that has ideal values that should be a guide to behavior for everyone who embraces it. However, in the Bajo tribe, Islam has been internalized and influenced by socio-cultural concepts. Acculturation is a concept that describes the long process of meeting two or more values between Islam and the local traditions of the Bajo Tribe community, where this acculturation is also part of their love for the old (local) values of the Bajo Tribe community. Currently, the struggle of the Bajo people is how to ensure that the rituals, especially the big rituals of the Bajo people, remain sustainable. Several rituals were not conveyed in this research because the Bajo people are now starting to experience the influence of modernization, such as wedding rituals where there is only a contract and reception, there are no special rituals that are characteristic of the Bajo tribe, even bridal clothing is not typical of the Bajo tribe. has also been acculturated into Gorontalo culture.

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