



Traditions of Welcoming Islamic Holidays Case Study of the Transformation of the Hagaf Tradition in Gunting Saga, Labuhan Batu Utara, 2000-Present

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Abstract

HaGAF (Happy Aidilfitri Day) is a local cultural heritage of the Gunting Saga Village community, North Labuhanbatu Regency, which has since its inception served as a medium for religious and social expression in celebrating Eid al-Fitr. However, the acceleration of globalization, the penetration of popular culture, and lifestyle changes especially among the younger generation have driven a significant transformation of this tradition. This study aims to analyze the form of HaGAF transformation, identify its driving factors, and examine the role of the local community and government in its preservation. Using a qualitative approach with participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation techniques, this study found that HaGAF has evolved from a traditional, ritual-based celebration into a more inclusive and modern festival, encompassing a music festival, a digital content competition, and an e-sports tournament. Despite this modernization, traditional elements remain intact through the involvement of the younger generation and the promotion of cultural values via social media. The local government plays a crucial role in supporting the sustainability of this tradition by granting permits and securing events. Theoretically, these findings reinforce Clifford Geertz's view that culture is a dynamic system of meaning that is continually reinterpreted according to changing social contexts. On the contrary, these results challenge the structural-functional approach as proposed by Bronislaw Malinowski and Talcott Parsons which tends to see tradition as a stable component in the social system to maintain order, often ignoring the internal adaptation and progress of culture.

Introduction

One of the most prominent characteristics of Indonesia is its incredible diversity in terms of culture, race, and religion (Chandra et al., 2024; Huda, 2025). Islam has been one of the major religions in this diversity, and has greatly influenced the cultural landscape of the nation. Islam is currently the most common religion in Indonesia, having been practiced for thousands of years. However, Indonesian culture remains a peaceful place where many religions and ethnic groups live side by side. Indonesia's religious diversity is a prime example of its pluralistic and tolerant culture. In Indonesia, Islam is often referred to as "Islam Nusantara," which emphasizes the values of interfaith cooperation and indigenous knowledge. (Prasetyo, 2023; Marjani, 2023).

The concept of local wisdom encompasses worldviews, knowledge, and various life strategies demonstrated through various activities carried out by local communities to meet needs and overcome challenges. It is difficult to limit local wisdom to one area because it is a broad and

all-encompassing phenomenon with many applications. Local wisdom, which emphasizes the importance of place and locality, differs from traditional and modern knowledge, which suggests that it does not need to be passed down from generation to generation (Kabupaten et al., nd)

Local wisdom continues to be passed down and used by the community to celebrate HaGAF (Eid al-Fitr) in Sungai Kualuh, located in Gunting Saga Village, South Kualuh District, North Labuhanbatu Regency. Various customs that depict the happiness of this victory are characteristic of the Eid al-Fitr celebration. The Latin word "traditio" which means to convey or common practice, is the origin of the word "tradition". This community tradition may be rooted in local customs (Urf) that developed in the community and then spread to neighboring villages, thus becoming a model of communal life (Aunillah, 2020; Hassan & Batool, 2024; Nst & Lubis, 2024).

Local wisdom is the legacy of our ancestors in the values of life that are united in the form of religion, culture and customs (Tohari, 2025; Isra et al., 2025; Putra & Rahayu, 2024) In its development, society adapts to its environment by developing wisdom in the form of knowledge or ideas, equipment, combined with customary norms, cultural values, activities to manage the environment to meet its life needs.(Salim, 2016)

The community has a tradition called local tradition as in the Gunting Saga community. Local tradition is the behavior carried out by individuals or groups in society and has certain characteristics in each region. The local tradition in this case is the Hagaf tradition. Hagaf is a tradition that has been passed down from generation to generation by the Gunting Saga community, in its application, humans in society are regulated by norms, rules, views, traditions or certain habits that are binding. These binding things can realize the value system carried out by society so as to form customs.(Mujiati, 2020; Dalyan et al., 2024)

The fact that Hagaf was first held in 1960, towards the end of President Soekarno's administration, shows that Hagaf has existed since the Old Order era of Indonesia. Initially, when the Old Order had just begun, Hagaf was a small celebration to celebrate Eid al-Fitr. In 1966, with the help of the Gunting Saga community, the celebration continued into the New Order era, with a celebration duration of four days instead of just one day. Hagaf's 50th anniversary was in 2010, which is considered a golden year for Hagaf. Along with the establishment of North Labuhanbatu Regency, the organizing committee expanded a number of activities and entertainment to mark this milestone. In the Reformation era, Gunting Saga Village in Sungai Kualuh has made Hagaf a custom to welcome Eid al-Fitr.

Hagaf serves as a means of entertainment as well as an opportunity for the community to build bonds with guests. The traditional games that are still maintained in the Hagaf celebration and are still competed in today are duck catching and boat racing. Meanwhile, modern competitions that have been added include the call to prayer competition and the election of the queen and king of the Kualuh River. In addition to entertainment and a moment of friendship, Hagaf has enormous benefits for the Gunting Saga community. Hagaf is considered to have strong potential to increase the income of the Gunting Saga community (Pasaribu, 2020; Wu, 2024)

Traditions and cultures in the regions will certainly continue to feel the impact of globalization. As a result of some people being less concerned about diversity and local wisdom in facing global trends, some people consider globalization as a cultural phenomenon that threatens the diversity of local cultural life. There is a contradictory aspect to the dilemma that arises from the relationship between universality and globalization. According to Setyaningrum, local culture can be swept away by the waves of globalization if homogenization occurs, thus endangering its identity, sustainability, and existence.

Local culture can lose the opportunity to build a superior culture due to lack of growth. Without many people realizing it, local culture plays an important role in the development of national and regional cultures that are valuable and become the wealth of the country, thus requiring all levels of society to maintain and preserve it. However, in reality, some people still do not understand how important local cultural values are for the identity and soul of the nation that is evident in every aspect of daily life.

As a reference concept for Indonesian citizens in general and the Labura community in particular, the preservation and protection of local cultural values must be a top priority in facing significant changes (Nurcahyawati & Anugrahputri, 2022; Saputra, 2024). Modernization brings positive impacts in the form of innovation in materials and more efficient implementation techniques. However, on the other hand, local identity and cultural wisdom are often eroded. (Andriansyah et al., 2024; Judianto & Aslan, 2024).

The awareness that village communities have their own customs is reflected in the importance of traditional institutions that can work together with the village government to empower, maintain, and develop local customs. Community involvement and participation show a sense of responsibility and concern for improving people's standard of living (Lisdiana et al., 2022).

The local government and community have taken a number of steps to ensure the sustainability of the Hagaf tradition in the long term (McAdam, 2025; Jilcha et al., 2025). One important step is the introduction of local culture to the younger generation through Hagaf events, such as the performance of "Seni Bordah" which is part of the culture of the North Labuhanbatu community. (sugiatmo, 2023).

On the other hand, it is expected that the local government will fully support this activity through the Department of Tourism and Culture, both through budget and suggestions regarding the form of activities that can enrich the values of local wisdom in the Hagaf celebration. (sugiatmo, 2023) Improving cultural education, documenting and publishing, using information technology, and involving the younger generation in all stages of preserving traditions are further ways to preserve culture. (Rizka Alfianita & Sukarman Sukarman, 2024).

Thus, despite facing continuous modernization, the Hagaf heritage in Gunting Saga can be maintained and passed on to future generations. The Hagaf tradition that was once closely related to the social and cultural life of the community is now increasingly rarely carried out, especially by the younger generation who are more focused on technological developments and urban life.

Methods

The research methodology applied in this study is through a qualitative research methodology approach (Philips et al., 2024; Dehalwar & Sharma, 2024). Bogdan and Taylor explain that qualitative methodology is a research approach that aims to produce data in descriptive form. Descriptive data is data in the form of text (writing), speech, or actions that can be observed directly, and does not use data in the form of numbers in its research. This method focuses on an in-depth understanding of social phenomena by utilizing narrative and interpretive data to gain richer insights. The method used in this study is qualitative descriptive with two types of research, namely:

Field Research Method (Field Research Method)

MetThis event was conducted by directly reviewing the field and going down to the research location such as the Gunting Saga village office, interviewing the initiators/founders of HaGAF, the HaGAF event committee and the public visiting the HaGAF celebration.

Library Research Method(Literature Method)

The second method is to review books and written sources that are relevant and related to the research title. The goal is to make it a basis or foundation for the author in testing the data obtained so that it can be accounted for.

The location of this research was conducted in Gunting Saga Village, South Kualuh District, North Labuhanbatu Regency, North Sumatra. This location was chosen as the location of the research because it is in accordance with the place where the author raised the problem in the research. The data sources in this study consist of primary data and secondary data. Primary data comes from interviews. Interviews were conducted with related parties that the author divided into several categories. Key informants are the HaGAF initiator figures, informants are the Gunting Saga Village Head and the Head of the Gunting Saga Village Office Session and finally there are respondents as supporting information in the writing, namely the community who participated in the HaGAF celebration. While the author obtained secondary data from literature such as books, theses, papers, blocks, journals and manual articles or those circulating on internet sites related to the author's research. In collecting data, the author uses several data collection techniques and tools, namely:

Interviews

Interviews were conducted with people who could provide information to strengthen other sources that had been obtained. The key informant, Mr. Mukhtar Said Marpaung as one of the HaGAF Initiators, the author conducted a direct interview on April 14, 2025. with the same data collection techniques and tools, namely books and pens for writing and cellphones for recording. The author also conducted interviews with informants, namely the Head of Gunting Saga Village, Mr. Tigor and the Chairperson of the 66th Hagaf committee, Mr. Rio Purba on April 14, 2025 with the same data collection techniques and tools as the key informant. The interviews with respondents were people involved in the HaGAF celebration such as people who sell at the celebration location, the HaGAF celebration committee, one of whom was Dani Siagian and visitors to the HaGAF celebration with the same data collection techniques and tools as before. After conducting the interview, the author conducted documentation to complete the attachments and evidence of the research that had been carried out.

Observation

Observation was conducted to determine the condition and development of the Kualuh River in South Kualuh District as the location for the HaGAF event, for example, the infrastructure available at the HaGAF location such as motorboats for boat racing, fields for making entertainment stages (fashion shows), small stalls where residents sell. The author also conducted participant observation by participating in the HaGAF activities.

Literature Study

This literature study was conducted by tracing theories and books, archives, journals and electronic media found on internet sites related to the topic/study being researched. In addition, the author also used written data from the village office in the form of community data to complete the author's analysis of the HaGAF celebration.

Documents

Documents are written records such as letters and manuscripts related to the topic of study to strengthen research evidence. The author requested written data/documentation of the HaGAF celebration committee to complete the author's analysis of the HaGAF celebration.

Results and Discussion

The origins of the Hagaf tradition

According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) in (Jeklin et al., 2016), culture is human thought and reason, and includes traditional customs and traditions, meanwhile, the term "cultivating" means teaching someone to have culture, getting used to behaving well so that it becomes part of the culture in everyday life. In Sanskrit, the term "culture" comes from the word "budh" which means reason. Furthermore, this word developed into "budhi" or "bhudaya", therefore culture is interpreted as the result of ideas.(BT Putri et al., 2025)

According to another view, the term culture comes from the words "budhi" and "daya". Here, "budhi" refers to the mind which is considered a spiritual aspect in culture, while daya means action or effort which is a physical factor. So that culture can be understood as the result of a combination of reason and human effort in creating and developing various aspects of social and cultural life. (Rosyada, 2020)

Indonesia is a country known for its cultural and religious diversity. Among this diversity, Islam plays a very important role. As the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, Islam is not only the majority religion, but also one of the most powerful factors in changing and shaping local Indonesian culture. Islam also influences social norms and value systems in Indonesia. The concepts of gotong royong (collective cooperation) and musyawarah (consultation) are an important part of Indonesian culture and are also influenced by Islamic values of social solidarity and consensus in decision-making. This reflects how Islam has played a role in shaping the social structure and values of society.(Aprilia et al., 2024)



Figure 1. Hagaf atmosphere in the 1960s

North Labuhan Batu Regency is one of the areas that has many local cultural heritages. The government needs to pay attention to this as a form of effort to develop and protect local culture so that it does not become extinct. It should be realized that one of the efforts to foster national character can be done through understanding literary values, especially oral literature that is passed down from generation to generation.(Fina Mardiana Nasution et al., 2022)

In the Gunting Saga community, a custom has grown, namely a celebration to welcome Eid al-Fitr, a major Islamic holiday. This custom is a celebration held annually by the Gunting Saga community located in Sungai Kualuh, Gunting Saga Village, North Labuhanbatu Regency. Because it has been held every year and has become a major event, this celebration is named HaGAF. The abbreviation of HaGAF is "Hari Gembira Aidil Fitri". HaGAF did not just appear out of nowhere, there are figures behind the design of the celebration and the naming of this custom. The initiator of the name HaGAF was Mr. Haji Ismail Tanjung along with his colleagues.

HaGAF was first held in 1960, which means that HaGAF has existed since Indonesia's Old Order (Orla) era, namely towards the end of President Soekarno's rule. During the Old Order

(1960) when it was first held, HaGAF was only a small event with a simple celebration to welcome Hari Raya Aidil Fitri.

With the participation of the Gunting Saga community to support the HaGAF celebration, entering the New Order (Orba) in 1966, HaGAF made progress, marked by the increase in the HaGAF celebration days from one day to four consecutive days. Entering 2010, the HaGAF celebration was said to be the golden year, because HaGAF entered its 50th year. At the age of HaGAF, several events and entertainment were deliberately increased by the committee in order to welcome the expansion of North Labuhanbatu Regency. Until now, during this Reformation era, HaGAF has become a custom in welcoming Aidil Fitri for the Gunting Saga community in Sungai Kualuh.

The background to the holding of HaGAF is that parents are very concerned about local youth when Eid al-Fitr or when Lebaran arrives, some of these youth will travel to several places to seek entertainment and see various forms of performances in other areas. This makes parents very worried about the safety and security of their children. At this time, the way to find out and monitor someone is very easy to do because of the many types of communication tools available such as mobile phones and the internet with various services in them. However, at that time, apart from the fairly long distance, it was very difficult to communicate to find out the whereabouts and condition of their children who were traveling to enjoy entertainment during Lebaran.

HaGAF is a celebration to welcome the great day of the Muslim community, namely Hari Raya Aidil Fitri. HaGAF has become a tradition and custom every year carried out by the Gunting Saga community. According to Antonius (2016) Custom is part of an element of a cultural system that has a form. One form of culture is an ideal form. The nature of such a culture is abstract and intangible. It is in the minds of humans who support and have the culture. The ideal culture is also called customs of conduct or abbreviated as customs, or customs in the plural sense. The code of conduct is intended to show that the ideal culture usually also functions as a code of conduct that regulates, controls and gives direction to human behavior and actions in society.

In conclusion, customs have layers from the most abstract to the most concrete. The most abstract layer is the cultural value system while the more concrete is the system of norms and the most concrete is the legal system based on these norms. Simply put, customs regulate and give direction to human actions and works.

HaGAF is held in the form of an event that includes games and entertainment. The traditional games that are competed are duck catching and boat racing. Because it has developed, many modern competitions are held as a means of developing community talents such as fashion shows, adzan, thafidz qur'an, culinary. In addition to the competition, the HaGAF celebration is also accompanied by entertainment such as regional dances and bordah (one of the arts in Malay customs). In addition to entertainment on Aidil Fitri day, HaGAF also functions as a moment for the Gunting Saga community to socialize with outsiders who come to the HaGAF event.

HaGAF was held in the Kualuh River, Gunting Saga Village. This river is included in the Barumun/Kualuh River Basin Unit (SWS). This river flows from South to North and empties into the Malacca Strait. The condition of the river is still relatively good and the water is quite clear (Labrua.go.id/hidrologi. Accessed January, 2020). Fluctuations in water discharge are influenced by the season, in the dry season the river discharge decreases and in the rainy season the river discharge increases. The function of this river is very important for the community,

especially as a source of drinking water and toilet facilities for local residents, both those living along the Kualuh River and tributaries of the Bilah River.

Kualuh River which is used as the location of HaGAF is in Gunting Saga Village. Gunting Saga Village is located in a strategic position where this area is passed by three main transportation routes, the first as the Trans-Sumatra highway connecting provinces throughout Indonesia. Second, the position of Gunting Saga Village is precisely at Km 224 from Medan, North Sumatra Province. Finally, as the Railway Crossing Line connecting Medan-Rantauprapat.

Based on the explanation above, HaGAF is intended in this study as a celebration to welcome Hari Raya Aidil Fitri by the people of Gunting Saga Village which is held in Sungai Kualuh. Mutual cooperation behavior can certainly be used as a very valuable asset, because we already know that mutual cooperation is a culture and tradition that has existed in every level of Indonesian society and in every aspect of national life. Mutual cooperation activities will foster cooperation that results in mutual understanding and mutual assistance, with the dominance of cooperation, the level of conflict is reduced (Ans et al., 2023)

Cultural Transformation

The word cultural transformation has the meaning of a total shift. According to Rasid Yunus, transformation is an effort made to preserve culture so that it survives and can be enjoyed by the next generation so that they have a strong character in accordance with the character implied by the Pancasila ideology. Furthermore, Capra Pujileksono stated that transformation is the movement or shift of something in another or new direction without changing the structure contained therein, although in its new form it has undergone changes. The framework of cultural transformation is structure and culture. (Syamhari, 2015)



Figure 2. Hagaf atmosphere in 2025

The Hagaf tradition is a form of socio-cultural activity that has been carried out for generations in the community. Based on the results of an interview with one of the informants, it is known that Hagaf has become an annual agenda carried out collectively by residents. The implementation of this tradition shows the strong value of mutual cooperation in the social structure of the community, which is reflected in the active involvement of residents in the entire series of activities, from planning to implementation.

The community independently forms a committee every year and makes preparations for approximately one month before the day of implementation. A key informant, Mr. Muchtar (founder of Hagaf), explained: "Hagaf has been around for a long time, it is definitely there every year. We create our own committee, do community service, all residents help. Usually, it starts to get busy a month before." (Informant A, interview, April 14, 2025).

This statement shows that community participation is not symbolic, but active and substantive. In its implementation, Hagaf not only maintains fixed traditional elements, such as mandatory competitions held every year, but also shows flexibility in adjusting activities. Several additional activities are adjusted to social conditions and situations at the time of the celebration, which are determined through committee deliberations. This dynamic shows the existence of space for social negotiation and cultural adaptation in maintaining the sustainability of tradition.

The Hagaf tradition also experienced transformation and cultural development in this context, changes occurred in the aspect of implementing this tradition. This tradition is increasingly starting to adapt to the development of the times and following the tastes and needs of society. Several competitions today are still carried out traditionally, but there are several competitions that have changed and increased with the development of the times.

Visitors are presented with various competitions and events to develop the interests and talents of the community and the younger generation. These events are fashion shows, adzan, thafidz qur'an, regional dances, dangdut. For the elderly there is a nostalgic song competition. The goal is not only to channel talent in vocal training but also to remember youth through songs. In addition there are competitions to catch ducks in the water, swimming, culinary, and introduce various kinds of culinary in Labura, especially 'anyang ayam'.(sugiatmo, 2023)

The traditional games that are still maintained in the HaGAF celebration and are still competed until now are duck catching and boat racing. While modern competitions that have been added include the adzan competition and the election of the queen and king of the Kualuh River. In addition to entertainment and a moment of friendship, HaGAF has enormous benefits for the Gunting Saga community. HaGAF is considered to have strong potential to increase the income of the Gunting Saga community.(PASARIBU, 2020)

The Hagaf tradition is one of the cultural traditions rich in ethnic values and local wisdom. Initially, Hagaf was held as a sacred and simple traditional event. The goal is to strengthen community ties, honor ancestors, and preserve local culture through various rituals and traditional art performances.

However, over time, a major transformation occurred in this event. Hagaf is no longer just a local celebration that is internal, but has developed into a large-scale annual festival, which is able to attract the attention of people from various regions and even national circles.

The Hagaf tradition is one of the local cultural treasures that has survived for years. Every year, the community gathers to celebrate the heritage of their ancestors through various traditional activities, arts, and entertainment. However, what makes Hagaf special is not only its historical value, but also its ability to transform and adapt to the times.



Figure 3. Regional Dances and the Selection of Prince and Queen in Hagaf

In the past, the Hagaf tradition was more filled with traditional activities that were thick with ethnic and spiritual nuances. One of the main activities was the election of the Hagaf prince, who was a symbol of the ideal young man in society—with good character, knowledge of customs, and able to be a role model. This event was accompanied by ethnic cultural performances, such as traditional dance performances, regional music, and local craft exhibitions, which became an event to preserve the cultural identity of the local community.

Expansion of Event Content: Music Festival and Traditional Competition

Over time, Hagaf organizers began to add modern entertainment elements to broaden the appeal of the event. The presence of dangdut festivals, religious pop festivals, and Muslim fashion shows became the first steps in blending local culture with popular entertainment. These festivals invited the enthusiasm of a wider community, from children to adults, without eliminating the noble values of the original culture.

The role of local art, language, tradition, and belief systems in Islamization is evident in this study. Nusantara culture adapts to Islamic teachings, producing art forms, music, and dances that contain religious messages. Local traditions also remain alive and are integrated with Islamic values in religious celebrations and ceremonies. This shows that Nusantara culture not only influences Islam in Indonesia, but is also closely intertwined with religious values and practices. (Hidayah et al., nd)

Traditional arts are cultural assets of the community that should be maintained, guarded, grown and developed continuously. Traditional arts must remain comprehensive and not easily lost because they are eroded by other more modern arts. Traditional arts must continue to be preserved, because traditional arts are part of the identity of the community and its supporters. (Nurchayawati & Anugrahputri, 2022)



Figure 4. Poster for the 66th Hagaf Competition 2025

In addition, the Hagaf tradition also presents recreational and exciting folk entertainment, such as: 1) Swimming competitions, held in natural or artificial pools, provide a space for physical activity and healthy competition; 1) The duck catching competition, filled with laughter and camaraderie, creates a cheerful atmosphere that strengthens relationships between communities.

Event Modernization: Targeting the Younger Generation

In recent years, the Hagaf committee has increasingly realized the importance of involving the younger generation so that this tradition continues to live and is not abandoned by time. Therefore, several new competitions and performances have been introduced as a form of innovation and response to the increasingly dominant digital world.

New events that are now present at Hagaf include: 1) Stand Up Comedy Competition, provides space for young people to express ideas and social criticism through humor; 1) Content Creator Competition, which challenges participants to create creative videos about Hagaf and publish them on social media. This helps promote the tradition to the outside world digitally; 2) The Mobile Legends tournament, an e-sports competition that is very popular among teenagers and young people, proves that technology and culture can go hand in hand.

The inclusion of these activities is a real manifestation of cultural transformation, where traditions are no longer exclusive and rigid, but instead open themselves to social change and technological developments.



Figure 5. Visit of Capital City Artists to Hagaf "Wildan Academy Indosiar"

The Peak of the Celebration: The Presence of Capital City Artists

As a closing event series, every year Hagaf brings artists from the capital. Their performances are a special attraction that can raise the image of Hagaf as a large-scale cultural celebration. This is also a symbol that local traditions have now found a place at the national level, even becoming a potential cultural tourism destination.

The transformation of the Hagaf tradition is a reflection of a dynamic and adaptive culture. From a local and traditional event, Hagaf has now developed into a cultural festival that is inclusive, modern, and relevant to all groups, including the younger generation. By combining

elements of culture, entertainment, technology, and community participation, Hagaf not only preserves ancestral heritage, but also instills a spirit of innovation for the future.

The transformation of the Hagaf tradition shows how local culture can survive and thrive while maintaining ancestral values while opening itself to modern elements. Hagaf is now not only a place for cultural preservation, but also a means of education, entertainment, and regional promotion. This is a real example of how tradition can continue to be relevant and dynamic, if managed innovatively and involving all elements of society.

The Hagaf tradition in the area around the Kualuh River is not only a symbol of cultural preservation, but also develops as a form of entertainment and tourist attraction that combines traditional and modern elements. In an interview with one of the community leaders, Mr. Rio Purba, it was revealed that although traditional values are still maintained, a number of innovations have been added to this celebration in order to adapt to the times.

"Traditional rituals remain the core of Hagaf," said Mr. Rio (Chairman of the Hagaf 2025 committee). However, to reach the younger generation and increase community participation, the organizing committee also presents contemporary activities such as stand-up comedy competitions, content creator competitions, and Mobile Legends tournaments. This initiative is considered effective in creating a spirit of togetherness without neglecting local cultural values.

More than just a celebration, Hagaf has become an annual recreation and tourist destination for the local community. The beauty of the Kualuh River is a magnet in itself, especially for visitors who want to enjoy the natural atmosphere by traveling along the river using a traditional boat. The calm flow of water combined with the beautiful natural landscape creates a calming and alluring atmosphere.

In addition, the richness of local cuisine is also an inseparable part of the attraction of this celebration. Traditional dishes such as sayur asam, ayam pinadar, and arsik are widely sold by the local community, making this area a culinary heaven that is proud of its local identity. These foods are not only appetizing, but also bring visitors to a deeper cultural experience.

With the collaboration between cultural preservation and innovation, Hagaf is not just a ceremonial event, but a manifestation of the spirit of the community in maintaining identity while adapting to the dynamics of the times. This tradition is not only alive, but also grows and inspires. This transformation also has an impact on social interaction patterns and the formation of collective identity. Religious identity is an important element in the social identity of the people of North Sumatra. Religious rituals, celebrations of Islamic holidays, and daily worship practices are an integral part of social life. This not only strengthens community ties but also creates a sense of solidarity and togetherness among members of society who share the same beliefs.(Purnamasari et al., 2024)

Cultural transformation is not always smooth. Some include resistance to change, lack of digital skills among employees, and difficulty integrating new technologies with existing systems. Overcoming these challenges often requires effective change management, employee training, and good communication strategies. Several models and frameworks have been developed to understand and implement digital cultural transformation, such as the technology adoption model, organizational change theory, and innovation management models. Literature studies often include an analysis of how these models are applied in the context of digital culture and innovation.(Marpaung et al., 2024)

The digital transformation process has formed many new orders, including; First, the way people dress today is largely influenced by culture, most of which is found on social media.

Nowadays, it is easy to find a more modern way of dressing that can reach various groups, especially the millennial generation. Second, changes in lifestyle.

Technological advances have made it easier for everyone to find various information on the internet, so that without realizing it, lifestyles or groups have begun to change due to exposure to information from social media. Third, changes in language styles that are starting to be found a lot. This change has made regional languages rarely used by the community and have begun to be replaced by Indonesian as the national language. Digital culture as an idea that originates from the use of technology and the internet. It forms a new way for people to interact, behave, think and communicate as humans in the community environment.(Ayu et al., 2022)

The existence of an increasingly interconnected modern society, characterized by technological developments and cultural transformations, presents unique challenges. Therefore, understanding how Islamic values that have developed over centuries are able to adapt and play a role amidst these changes provides valuable insights. In this context, this study not only details the transformation of Islamic values, but also analyzes how these values can be drivers of social innovation, equality, and sustainability amidst the dynamics of a rapidly evolving society.

Basically, change will occur if humans have a strong desire to change it. Humans are part of the actors of history. Activities that have existed since the time of our ancestors and have been applied from generation to generation will become history if they are not maintained and preserved. The shift and mixing of various foreign cultures that are currently occurring will easily shift the existing ancestral culture. It is important for the community and local government to commit to maintaining and introducing culture to the next generation, as a foundation so that it cannot be eroded by the development of the times.

Social life is not a dead object that can be directed in such a way. However, he believes that social life is a living organism that has its own purpose. A society cannot be considered as a dead object, therefore every real effort for change must make society the subject. With a transformative paradigm, civil society will be realized. Civil society according to Fakhri is an aggregation of mixed interests, where narrow interests become a universal view as an ideology. So that civil society has the meaning of a process of change by the people.(Prasetyo, 2023)

By highlighting the changes in population and social changes in society in the current century, that the challenges that arise as a result of the globalization process are indeed broad and numerous. New forms of colonization in the field of science and technology have also emerged. The revolution that occurred in the field of communication and transformation has also changed the behavior of society not only from the city but also from the rural environment. Therefore, if we want to survive into the current century (3rd millennium) as a modern nation, but still have an Indonesian personality, we must ask what the Indonesian personality is. Isn't the Indonesian personality can be found in its roots in traditional society.(Sari, 2019)

Culture and society are always changing or moving continuously dynamically and not the other way around, which is fixed or static. Changes in culture and society are always linked because the two cannot be separated. As discussed previously, every culture must have its society and vice versa, every society must have its culture, in other words, society is a container for the growth of culture. From the relationship between culture and society, if there is a change in culture, it will automatically also cause a change in society.(Zulaihah, 2021)

Driving Factors for Transformation The Hagaf Tradition

Cultural transformation is an inevitability in the dynamics of community life. Culture, as a system of values and symbols that become the collective identity of a community, is not static.

It experiences gradual or drastic changes, along with social interaction, developments in the era, and the adaptive needs of society to the social and global environment.

The factors causing the changes are divided by researchers into two, namely internal factors and external factors. The internal conditions of the local community are also one of the causes of changes in this tradition. One of them is the socio-cultural conditions, people live in various conditions along with the development of the times. A value adopted by a community can shift depending on the condition of the social structure of the community. This condition affects how people act. In addition to socio-cultural conditions, people's knowledge of this tradition also determines how to maintain values. The analysis is that when this happens, the inheritance of tradition will not be perfect, resulting in changes in the tradition. Another internal factor that causes changes in this tradition is the economic demands of the local community. (Azzara et al., 2018)

Internal Factors

Generational Change and Social Paradigms

One of the main factors driving cultural transformation is intergenerational change. Younger generations often have different perspectives on traditional values inherited from previous generations. This is due to life experiences, education, and exposure to the wider outside world. These different perspectives encourage reinterpretation of old traditions and value systems to better suit the aspirations of the new generation.

According to Koentjaraningrat (2009), the younger generation tends to question old values that are considered no longer in line with the development of the times. This can result in two possibilities: preservation with adjustment, or rejection of the old culture. Cultural transformation occurs when the younger generation begins to adjust cultural practices to new values, such as rationality, gender equality, and efficiency.

Social Innovation and Functional Needs

Cultural transformation can also occur due to innovation in daily life practices. This innovation arises from the needs of society to solve practical problems that can no longer be accommodated by the old cultural system. For example, ritual procedures that are time-consuming and expensive can be simplified to accommodate the economic conditions and mobility of modern society. Such cultural innovations are often pragmatic and aim to maintain cultural substance while adapting to changing socio-economic conditions.

External Factors

Globalization and Intercultural Contact

Globalization creates a very rapid and intensive flow of cultural exchange. Local cultures no longer live in isolation, but are constantly in contact with global culture through media, tourism, education, and international trade. As a result, people begin to adopt elements of foreign cultures that are considered more modern or socially and economically advantageous. However, digital culture has changed traditional cultures, which then encourages new forms of creative expression and offers new perspectives for intercultural communication. (Wignjosasono, 2022)

Robertson (1995) calls this process glocalization, which is the adaptation of global elements into a local framework. In this context, cultural transformation does not always mean homogenization, but also the creation of hybrid cultural forms that are the result of a synthesis between the local and the global.

Modernization and Urbanization

Modernization brings changes in the social and economic systems of society, such as the shift from an agrarian society to an industrial and information society. Urbanization, as an impact of modernization, causes the movement of people from villages to cities and reduced communal interaction in indigenous communities. Individualistic urban lifestyles shift traditional values such as mutual cooperation, deliberation, and respect for customs.

Giddens (1991) explains that in the era of modernity, individuals experience high reflexivity towards their identities. They form cultural identities not merely because they are inherited, but because of choice. This is what drives society to choose which culture they want to maintain, change, or abandon.

Media and Communication Technology

In general, digital technology facilitates the dissemination of information, including cultural values, on an unprecedented scale. Social media such as Instagram and TikTok provide a space for individuals and communities to express their cultural identities. These platforms allow individuals to share elements of traditional culture in creative ways, whether through video content, photos, or engaging narratives. Through this technology, cultures that may have previously only been known in local areas can now be accessed by millions of people around the world. Thus, social media plays a role in preserving and promoting local cultures that may have been marginalized in the current of modernity. (Anista, 2023)

The media also plays a role in transforming cultural meaning. Traditions that were previously sacred can be transformed into aesthetic and entertaining performances. On the other hand, the media also opens up space for cultural revitalization through digitalization and promotion of local culture globally. Then when Covid-19 has become a national disaster through Presidential Decree No. 12 of 2020.

This situation affects various daily activities, including religious services. As of this writing, there are eight religious holidays that have had to be celebrated amidst the pandemic. Many traditions need to be adjusted to the urgent situation, especially since on April 3, 2020, the government has stipulated the Regulation of the Minister of Health Number 9 of 2020 concerning Guidelines for Large-Scale Social Restrictions which are enforced in order to accelerate the handling of Covid-19 in Indonesia (Regulation of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia Number 9 of 2020 concerning Guidelines for Large-Scale Social Restrictions in the Context of Accelerating the Handling of Corona Virus Disease 2019, 2020). The implementation of Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) has resulted in various activities that are usually carried out face-to-face switching to digital-based activities.

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused socio-cultural changes in society. So that society inevitably adapts to new habits. New normality or new habits are the wisest decisions as a basis for fulfilling the needs of society as social beings. (Wignjosasono, 2022)

The Impact of the Transformation of the Hagaf Tradition

Cultural transformation not only brings changes in the form and content of culture, but also has a broad impact on social order, identity, and relationships between individuals in society. This impact can be positive, namely providing new values that are productive for society, or negative, namely threatening the continuity of the core values of the culture. Understanding both sides is important to assess whether a transformation enriches or erodes cultural identity.

Positive Impact of Cultural Transformation

Revitalization and Cultural Adaptation

Cultural transformation often encourages the revitalization of a nearly extinct culture. Local culture is modified to be more relevant to the needs of the times, without losing its main essence. This allows culture to continue to live and develop contextually.

Increasing Cultural Attraction in Tourism and the Creative Economy

Transformed cultures often become more attractive to tourism and the creative industry. This can open up new economic opportunities for local communities, such as art performances, handicrafts, traditional cuisine packaged in a modern way, and digital cultural content. Globalization and modernization facilitate access to information and communication technology. This allows people to communicate easily, access global information, and broaden their horizons. And advances in technology and international trade improve the quality of life by providing better and more diverse products and services.(Hapsah et al., 2024)

Increasing Awareness of Cultural Identity

In some cases, transformation actually triggers public awareness—especially the younger generation—to learn and preserve their culture. The transformation process that is formed to be increasingly adaptive to young people makes this tradition quickly blend in and make it a matter of pride for the culture in their area. The transformation process can be a momentum for re-identifying local culture in a global context.

Social Innovation Opportunities

Cultural transformation allows innovation in social practices, education, and intergenerational interactions. For example, the implementation of the hagaf tradition which is a medium for learning culture by the younger generation, especially in the hagaf tradition, provides a place for interests and talents from competitions held and displays cultural practices in the region. This is an effort to make this tradition an educational space with a cultural background.

Negative Impacts of Cultural Transformation

Desacralization and Reduction of Cultural Meaning

One of the negative impacts that often occurs is the loss of sacred and symbolic meaning of culture due to transformation that emphasizes too much on aesthetic or commercial aspects. Traditions that originally contained spiritual and social values turned into mere spectacle or entertainment.

Cultural Identity Crisis

Modernization has also affected the identity and cultural roots of the younger generation, including the Identity Crisis which is characterized by some young generations experiencing an identity crisis, seeking their identity outside their own culture. This can result in self-identification with foreign or popular cultures. In addition, there is urbanization, migration from rural to urban areas often makes the younger generation disconnected from their cultural roots, due to changes in the environment and lifestyle.(LO Putri et al., 2023)

The lifestyle changes of millennial society are very prominent in consumer behavior where everything that society uses for bodily pleasure must be of modern standards so that the globalization values that are touted as international can add to the lifestyle that society wants today. Things that are traditional and old-fashioned or tacky are considered as something that is left behind and no longer suitable for use. This concerns efficiency and effectiveness, where modernity emphasizes speed and instant while the traditional tends to be slow or requires a complicated and long-winded process.(Ans et al., 2023)

Value Conflict and Social Inequality

Cultural transformation often gives rise to conflict between conservative groups (who want to maintain the old culture) and progressive groups (who push for renewal). In addition, commercialized culture can create social inequality, when only a few parties gain economic benefits from the shared culture.

Government Efforts and Role in Preserving the Hagaf Tradition

In order for the culture to become long-lasting values, there must be a process of cultural internalization. Internalization is the process of instilling and developing a value or culture into a part of the person's self. The instillation and development of these values are carried out through various didactic methods of education and teaching.²⁸ The process of cultural formation consists of interrelated sub-processes, including: cultural contact, cultural exploration, cultural selection, cultural consolidation, cultural socialization, cultural internalization, cultural change, cultural inheritance that occurs in relation to its environment continuously and sustainably.(Sumarto, 2019)

The role of humans in forming and maintaining society and culture is very large, from those who create to those who maintain it (Khairani & Barus, 2024; Arifin et al., 2024). However, in modern times, many humans only focus on themselves so that they forget to socialize and carry out their roles as humans in society. However, many also continue to carry out their roles as humans, such as continuing to socialize with the people around them and also carrying out established habits. Because in essence humans are social creatures(Hapsah et al., 2024)

The Hagaf tradition, as part of the local cultural heritage, has high historical, social, and spiritual value for its supporting community. However, in the era of globalization and modernization, this tradition faces challenges in the form of shifting values, decreasing participation of the younger generation, and commercialization of culture that threatens its authenticity. Therefore, the role of the government is very strategic in maintaining the continuity of the Hagaf tradition so that it does not disappear or lose its original meaning.

Cultural Preservation Policy

The government through the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbudristek) has developed various programs oriented towards protecting and developing local culture, including the Hagaf tradition. These efforts are realized through: 1) Legal regulation and recognition of customary law: Traditions such as the Hagaf can be proposed as Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICCHR) to receive formal protection nationally; 2) Regional Regulation (Perda) on the preservation of local arts and culture, which is the legal basis for budget allocation and preservation activities at the district/city level; 3) *Law Number 5 of 2017 concerning the Advancement of Culture* become the main legal basis for cultural preservation in Indonesia.(Culture, Ministry of Education, nd)

Facilitation and Funding

The central and regional governments play a role in providing physical and non-physical facilities for the continuation of the Hagaf tradition, including:

According to Mr. Tigor, the Head of Gunting Saga Village, the village provides full support for the implementation of the Hagaf tradition. The form of support includes facilitating the permit for the place and guaranteeing security during the event. In addition, the village also contributes to enlivening the event by occasionally donating prizes to the winners of the competition. This shows the commitment of the village government in maintaining and preserving local traditions that have become part of the cultural identity of the community.

Promotion and Digitalization

Social media is a communication medium and is carried out online which allows people to interact with each other without being limited by space and time. It makes it easy for users to create, share, and exchange content and interact with others virtually. Social media includes a variety of services, including social networking, photo and video sharing, blogs, forums, and instant messaging services. Examples of popular social media include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, LinkedIn, and YouTube. Social media has many functions in our daily lives, one of which is as a source of information and content, meaning that we can share various types of content such as news, articles, photos, videos, etc. so that the information can be quickly obtained. distributed and known by many people.(Rizka Alfianita & Sukarman Sukarman, 2024)

Digitization of cultural documentation (photos, videos, audio archives) stored and accessed through platforms such as the Ministry of Education and Culture's Cultural Heritage. The use of local government social media to promote traditions such as Hagaf to the younger generation and the outside world, one of the accounts that always promotes activities and traditions in Labura is an account called "Laburaku" which can be accessed by many people.

Conclusion

The HaGAF (Hari Gembira Aidilfitri) tradition in Gunting Saga Village is a reflection of the dynamics of local culture that has undergone transformation along with social, cultural, and technological changes. Initially, HaGAF functioned as a space for religious and social expression of the community after Eid al-Fitr, with a strong traditional nuance through the election of traditional princes, traditional art performances, and various cultural rituals. However, along with the development of the times and changes in the lifestyle of the younger generation, this tradition has shifted its form to become more inclusive and modern. The transformation of HaGAF does not eliminate elements of tradition, but instead expands its scope by presenting popular activities such as music festivals, digital competitions, Muslim fashion shows, to e-sports tournaments and creative content competitions. The active participation of the younger generation is the main key in the process of regeneration and preservation of this tradition. On the other hand, the local government also plays an important role in supporting the sustainability of HaGAF through granting permits, providing infrastructure, and media and tourism-based promotions. This tradition now not only functions as a place for entertainment and celebration, but also as a means of intergenerational dialogue and a symbol of how cultural heritage can adapt to the modern context without losing its basic identity.

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