

# Ecotaurism through the Cultural Heritage of the Mekongga Kingdom in the Wundulako District

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**Abstract:** The advent of globalization has resulted in changes in people's lifestyles that are more modern, resulting in people being more inclined to choose new cultures that are considered more practical than local cultures. One of the factors causing local culture to be forgotten nowadays is the lack of future generations who have an interest in learning and inheriting their culture. Therefore, the aim of writing this article is to explain the community's efforts to strengthen social status through the cultural heritage of the Mekongga kingdom. The data collection technique used in this research is Snowball Sampling through observation participation and in-depth interviews. This type of qualitative research uses ethnographic research methods. The results of this research show that the people in Wundulako District, known as the Mekongga people, strengthen their social status through the cultural heritage of the Mekongga Kingdom, namely by carrying out death ceremonies, Wonua mosehe cultural rituals, mesosambakai cultural rituals, mosehe cultural rituals within the royal family, and through Mekongga cultural games, namely Mepae-pae Festival with traditional game competitions such as Metinggo (engrang), Mehule (Gasing), Mebaguli (candlenut kernel marbles), and Mesuke (picking and hitting the stem).

**Keywords:** Culture; Mekongga; Rituals; Social Status

## Introduction

Indonesia is a country that has wealth spread from Sabang to Merauke, with various tribes and races, resulting in a diverse culture. The wealth owned by the Indonesian people is not only in the form of natural resources, but the Indonesian people also have other riches such as the rich culture of Indonesian ethnic groups which are spread throughout the Indonesian archipelago. Culture is a universal phenomenon. Every nation-society in the world has a culture, although the forms and patterns vary from one nation-society to another. Culture clearly shows the similarities and dissimilarities of humans from various tribes, nations and races (Viken et al., 2021). Every culture must have a container and society is the container of that culture, so that culture and society cannot be separated.

Various characteristics of a nation that have strength in one culture (Gaygısız & Lajunen, 2022). This

cultural diversity can be seen from several aspects so that culture in Indonesia is unique and cannot be compared to other countries. These cultural products have various values and convey different meanings. A cultural value system is a series of abstract concepts that live in the minds of most citizens of a society (Hanel et al., 2018). This cultural value system functions as a guide and driving force for human attitudes and behavior in their lives, so that it functions as a system of behavior at the highest level. Humans as social creatures cannot walk alone and depend on each other. This social need can be channeled into the traditions carried out by the community, and not all traditions will survive, so as time goes by, the traditions that will survive in people's lives are traditions that have a function for the community (Dwivedi et al., 2023). The existence of a tradition certainly cannot be separated from the role of the supporting community in emphasizing that society has

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a value system that regulates its life in society (Machado, 2011).

Southeast Sulawesi has various tribes and traditions that are believed in in each area, one of which is in Wundulako District in Kolaka Regency. In Wundulako, at the end of the 13th century, precisely in 1290, a kingdom was founded called the Mekongga Kingdom, which at that time was led by the first king Sangia Larumbalangi who succeeded in killing a giant bird which made people anxious when they left the house to work. With the tactics created by Sangia Larumbalangi, the bird was killed and its carcass was washed away by the water in the river. That's when Sangia Larumbalangi was appointed as leader of the Mekongga Kingdom. This is what makes the Mekongga historical and cultural remains so numerous, one of which is the cultural rituals which are still carried out every year, this is done to strengthen the social status of the Wundulako people who have a historical background regarding the cultural remains of the Mekongga Kingdom.

The Wundulako people believe that implementing the cultural heritage of the Mekongga kingdom can strengthen their social status, because this is a royal tradition left by their ancestors in the past. The cultural heritage is: the implementation of death ceremonies for descendants of Mekongga kings, the Mosehe Wonua (Tolak Bala) cultural ritual ceremony, the Mesosambakai ritual, the Mosehe Family Circle ritual, and also the Mepae-pae Cultural Festival. Carrying out ceremonial rituals and cultural activities can strengthen the social status of the Wundulako community, not only history but also customs and culture (Takwa et al., 2022).

The concept used in this research is a concept developed through Levi-Strauss's Structural theory (1958:94), which focuses on analyzing the attitudes of relationships between relatives (Santucci et al., 2020). According to Levi-Strauss, people sometimes think in elementary ways or what is termed simple thinking. In this elementary and simple mind, it is always dominated by a kinship system which is based on a symbolic system, thus determining the classes within relatives, namely because of blood relations, marriage relations and hereditary relations. In the kin classes of Bokeo descendants in the Mekongga kingdom in Kolaka Regency, as conceptualized by Levi-Strauss, it still stems from the contexts of related and hereditary classes as shown in the funeral procession which is still elementary in nature with the attitude of the relationship between relatives and his descendants.

## Method

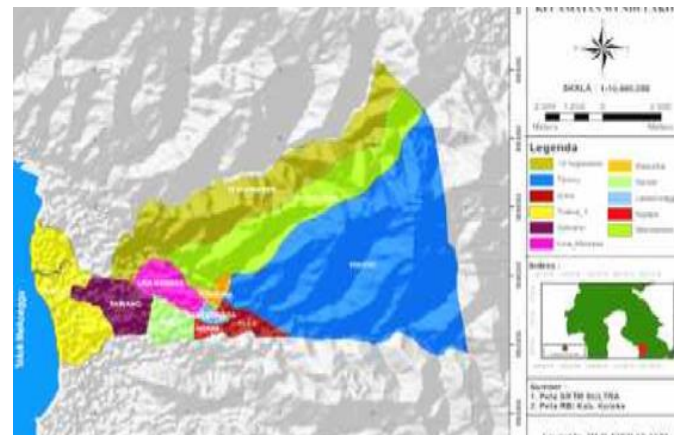
This type of research is qualitative research. The research location is in Wundulako District, Kolaka

Regency, Southeast Sulawesi Province with the consideration that Wundulako District is a location where there is still physical and non-physical evidence of cultural objects, namely historical evidence and cultural relics of the Mekongga Kingdom which are still frequently carried out every year. The collection technique used in this research is Snowball Sampling by conducting observation participation and in-depth interviews (Kirchherr & Charles, 2018). Data was collected using the data collection process through key informants Mr. Firman, Mr. Rusman, then these two informants provided information to other community figures, so that the required data could be easily obtained for categorization and classification of data from several informants.

## Result and Discussion

### *General Description of Research Locations*

Wundulako District is located in Jazirahi Southeast of Kolaka Regency. Geographically, it is located in the Southeastern part of iKolaka Regency, the regional boundaries: Wundulako District to the north borders IKolaka District; South side borders Baula District; East Kolaka Regency, and to the west it borders Bone Bay; The East side borders Tirawuta District and Ladongi District.



**Figure 1.** Location of Wundulako District, (Martono et al., 2022)

Wundulako District has an area of  $\pm 120.06$  km<sup>2</sup> consisting of 85% land area, 5% hills and 10% water. Most of the Wundulako District area is about  $\pm 15.00$  km<sup>2</sup> of land, while the water area is  $\pm 3.18$  km<sup>2</sup>. Administratively, Wundulako District in 2020 consists of eleven sub-district areas, namely Wundulako Village, Ngapa Village, Kowioha Village, Lamekongga Village, Silea Village, Unamendaa Village, 19 November Village and Bende, Sabiano, Tikonu and Towua Villages. With a population of  $\pm 21,932$  people, there are 11.22 men, 10.71 women and 5.70 heads of families (BPS Sultra). Based on

the geographical data described above, the position of Wundulako sub-district can be said to be quite strategic in the regional aspect, because it is located in the center of the urban area, causing the flow of change to occur quickly, however, in the cultural aspect, this geographical location provides benefits for the community because it is easy to access to visit graves. to the tombs of previous kings or the Mekongga kingdom site.

The Wundulako area is one of the sub-districts in Kolaka Regency, Southeast Sulawesi. Kolaka Regency experienced expansion twice, namely North Kolaka, and most recently East Kolaka Regency which was legalized towards the end of 2012. After the expansion, Kolaka Regency included land and islands with an area of 3.29 km<sup>2</sup>, and water areas (ocean) is estimated to be ±15. 000 km<sup>2</sup>. The population in Kolaka Regency in 2021 is 238.35 people with a density of 73 people/km<sup>2</sup>. Based on the results of the 2020 survey, the population in Wundulako District is ± 21.93 people, namely 11,222 men and 10.71 women, while the male population is greater than the female population, spread across 11 sub-districts. The largest population is in the 19 November District with a population of 3.79 people, while Tikonu Village is the village with the smallest population, namely 1042 people, the majority of people in Wundulako District are Muslim.

From the results of this research, it is known that the descendants of the Mekongga kings are in the Silea, Tikonu and Kowioha villages, however, this population density is also supported by the level of visits to the graves of the deceased Mekongga Kings. This was conveyed by the grave guard and when this research was carried out, residents in Wundulako District and from outside Wundulako District, one of whom was the former Governor of Kendari, Mr. Nur Alam, who always visited during holidays or certain days came to visit the grave of the Mekongga king. From this it can be analyzed that the population in the Wundulako District area still has a high enough awareness of cultural elements to be maintained to this day.

#### *Strengthening Social Status Through Mekongga Cultural Heritage*

(Vargas, 2021), it is explained that the analysis of social structure carried out by Levi-Strauss, especially on the kinship system, stems from the nuclear family. There are three relationships, namely, consanguinity by blood which is the relationship between an individual, let's say E, and his siblings, consanguinity by marriage which is the relationship between an individual E and his wife, and hereditary relationship which is the relationship between an individual E and his children.

According to (Das & Rao, 2022), there are two attitudes in kinship relationships, namely a positive

attitude shown by being friendly, warm, intimate and loving each other. A negative attitude is a relationship that shows a reluctant, formal and respectful attitude. Levi-Strauss formulated two contrasting hypotheses about this kinship relationship, namely; if the child's relationship with his father is positive then the kinship relationship between the child and his mother's relatives is negative, and conversely if the relationship between the child and his father is negative then the child's relationship with his mother's siblings is positive; if the relationship between husband and wife is positive then male and female siblings are negative, and conversely if the relationship between husband and wife is negative then the relationship between male and female siblings is positive.

For example, Trobian society has a matrilineal descent system. The relationship between husband and wife is very intimate, warm and loves each other, which is said to be a positive relationship. Meanwhile, the relationship between male and female siblings is constrained by various taboos and strict and formal social etiquette. A Trobian man will be offended if his face is said to be similar to his sister's face, which is said to be a negative association. Apart from that, Levi-Strauss also observed the marriage system between kinship groups. Basically, the concept of exchanging women between kinship groups originates from the taboo of incaste, namely the taboo on marriage between siblings. That's how someone looks for or seizes women from other groups, that's why each group defends itself.

Based on the findings of this research, to strengthen the social status of a descendant of Bokeo through several traditional rituals left by their ancestors. The Mekongga people have various customs or traditions that are still maintained today. Culture and customs are used as the social character of the local area. Existing customs and communities include the Mosehe Wonua traditional function as an effort to clean the village to avoid disasters and disease outbreaks, the Mesosambakai tradition for unborn children with the aim of preventing unborn children from disaster and asking God to make their sustenance easier, death ceremonies, to the traditional treatment of Bokeo called the lulo sangia dance.

#### *Preserving Mekongga Cultural Rituals*

As we know, globalization can lead to changes in people's lifestyles that are more modern. As a result, people tend to choose new cultures that are considered more practical than local cultures. One of the factors causing local culture to be forgotten nowadays is the lack of the next generation who have an interest in learning and inheriting their own culture. Therefore, in the era of globalization, information has become a very powerful force in influencing human thought patterns.



To overcome this, awareness of the importance of local culture as national identity is needed.

It is an obligation for every level of society to maintain it, where the role of the younger generation is highly expected to continue trying to inherit local culture and will be a strength for the existence of local culture, even though it is hit by the current of globalization. But this is different from the Mekongga people who still maintain and preserve their culture from the past until now. From children to old people, they help preserve the culture left by their ancestors. There are cultures that are still preserved today, such as: Mosehe Wonua cultural rituals (purification of the country), Mosehe Family Circle, Mesosambakai Cultural Rituals, and finally playing regional games, namely the Meapae-Pae Festival.

#### *Mosehe Wonua Cultural Rituals*

Mosehe (purification) is a Mekongga tradition that is carried out on a large scale and is followed by the entire community. Mosehe comes from two words, namely Mo and Sehe, which mean doing something holy, so this tradition aims to purify the area and ward off disasters and will be implemented if there is an event that befalls the country or a natural phenomenon that is detrimental to humans, for example a natural disaster, failure. harvest, the emergence of disease outbreaks, commotion between human lives that causes hostility and chaos. In ancient times, the mosehe tradition functioned as a form of conflict resolution among the Mekongga people who were influenced by the pombetudaria (oath) of their ancestors, as is still done:

Apart from that, the Mosehe traditional ritual is a hope that God Almighty (Ombu) is willing to accept this ceremony for the sake of safety and the benefit of many people. The Mekongga people in Wundulako have one of the Mosehe traditions, namely 'Mosehe Wonua' or village purification which has been carried out since the 13th century during the Mekongga Kingdom. The Mosehe Wonua ritual was carried out when two kingdoms were at war and to cleanse the situation or all sins from disputes and grudges, the king in Mekongga performed the Mosehe Wonua ceremony.

This tradition continued to be maintained until the next kings reigned. The statement above was confirmed in an interview with Mr Gufirlan (55 years old) that: "In carrying out the mosehe wonua ritual, it is not just about purifying the country or village, but there are social values that are deeply rooted in society and are never forgotten because they are supported by the social system that is formed from childhood, adolescence and the elderly. "The implementation of the mosehe wonua ritual carried out by the Mekongga community in Kolaka becomes an event for friendship, togetherness,

equality, kinship and relationships between communities" (Interview 20 May 2023).



**Figure 2.** Mosehe Wonua ritual procession (Purification of the Country), (Source: (Mbetet et al., 2023)).

#### *Mesosambakai Cultural Ritual*

The Mesosambakai tradition is a ritual carried out by the Mekongga people at the birth of the first baby or first child in a family. Nowadays, most people combine this ritual at the aqiqah event. However, the mesosambakai tradition is not always combined with the aqiqah event. This tradition depends on the family who has their first baby, whether the family will carry out this ritual at the same time as the aqiqah or whether the baby's family will carry out mesosambakai first before the aqiqah. Below is a picture of the Mesosambakai ritual procession. In implementing the Mesosambakai tradition, the Mekongga tribal community believes that the aim of this tradition is that the baby born will hopefully grow up healthy and safe in life and that he will grow up to be a brave, independent child who will have a lot of good fortune, which is essentially in implementing the community's Mesosambakai tradition. The Mekongga tribe believes that things are good for the life of the child, who, like the first child, must have the soul of a leader for his siblings and family in the future.

In an interview with Mr. Gufirlan (55 years old), the traditional leader who carried out the Mesosambakai ritual said that: "The Mesosambakai ritual is one of the cultural heritages of the Mekongga kingdom which is still carried out here. This mesosambakai can be said to be almost similar to aqiqah but can be carried out at the same time if the family wants. In this ritual for a descendant and society it is different too. "If a descendant's child will be given to sit on a pillow, while the non-descendant child does not use a pillow, this ritual is only carried out on the first child because it is so that later he or she can become a leader and grow up healthily" (Interview, 20 May 2023).



**Figure 3.** Mesosambakai Ritual Procession

In implementing the Mesosambakai tradition, the Mekongga people believe that the aim of this tradition is that the baby born is expected to grow up healthy and safe in life and that he will grow up to be a brave, independent child who will have a lot of good fortune, which is essentially in the implementation of the Mesosambakai tradition of the tribal community. Mekongga believes that things are good for the child's life, who, like the first child, must have the spirit of a leader for his siblings and family in the future.

The Mesosambakai ceremony is a tradition that only occurs in Kolaka Regency, especially in the Mekongga tribe. This tradition is one of the differences from other tribes. In the implementation of the Mesosambakai tradition there is a difference between ordinary people and children who have royal bloodlines (*anakia*), namely the difference lies in the implementation of children who have royal bloodlines. During the procession the child is seated on a pillow, whereas those from ordinary people do not use pillows, in this case This is only a legacy from ancient ancestors that there were caste differences between working descendants and ordinary people.

Implementing the Mesosambakai tradition, the perpetrator or person who leads this tradition must be a descendant who has carried out this tradition for the first time, namely must be a descendant of Wasasi Wesabenggali (the first actor to carry out the Mesosambakai tradition), even if he is a traditional leader, an elder in the village, a person who is considered sacred. In a village, a person in a high position, or even a king or regent cannot lead the Mesosambakai tradition if he is not a descendant of Wasasi Wesabenggali.

#### *Mosehe Family Scope*

One of the efforts made by the descendants of King Mekongga to maintain their social status is by carrying out the Mosehe Family Circle ritual. Mosehe scope is one of the rituals for the descendants of the Mekongga kings. Mosehe scope is a ritual of apology to the family of a king who has died. In an interview with Mr. Imin

Haslow regarding Mosehe's family, he said that: "For derivative family rituals, there is a mosehe ritual within the family, where the ritual is carried out in the king's tomb and only one of his descendants can carry out the ritual. This ritual is for purification and an apology to the previous king if in the past there was a misunderstanding. "This is done by mosehe to apologize" (Interview 18 May 2023).



**Figure 4.** Family Mosehe ritual procession, (Source: (Williams, 2016)).

The picture above shows that Mosehe at the family level was held in the area of the graves of previous kings, which was attended by the current king, namely Bokeo Khaerul Dahlan and several descendants of other kings. This is done to re-purify family relations within Bokeo's descendants if there has been a misunderstanding between the families during his lifetime. This ritual is a ritual that is still often carried out by Bokeo descendants and is followed by Mekongga traditional figures.

#### *Traditional Games of the Mekongga Community (Mepae-Pae Festival)*

One of the cultural diversity that is a historical heritage is traditional games. Traditional games in the archipelago vary from one region to another, but some also have similarities due to several factors. The traditional games that we rarely see these days are the impact of the progress of the era which is becoming more modern day by day and it is possible that existing traditional games will disappear from the historical records of culture. Traditional games are very closely related to the development of local culture, so that traditional games position themselves as one of the characteristics of local culture. Traditional games do show a function of conveying culture, because usually the games come from previous generations, in other words, playing or using the toys while learning culture.

Traditional games are a cultural heritage that has the 2 (two) important factors above, apart from being a characteristic of traditional game culture, it is also a social education for children where with traditional games social interaction can be established between one child and another. Seeing the current conditions where traditional games are increasingly marginalized and



even almost forgotten and to stem the negative impact of modernity on education, the Silea Village Cultural Care Front unites movements to jointly develop a sense of care for local culture, namely Mekongga Culture and provide social education for children. -children by holding cultural preservation activities, namely activities that show traditional Mekongga Culture games. In an interview with the Village Head, Silea Rusman (50 years old), he said: "The Mepae-pae Festival is a festival where we play traditional Mekongga games that I used to play as a child. This game is not forgotten when the Youth Pledge Day is held at this festival. "I hope that the tourism department and local education department will make this traditional game one of the local contents (Mulok) and the annual Mekongga cultural agenda" (Interview 10 May 2023)

The results of the interview can reveal that to maintain a culture not only by carrying out ritual ceremonies but also by traditional games (Mepae-Pae Festival). The millennial generation in the Wundulako area still knows and can maintain cultural games during the Mekongga kingdom era. In this festival, several arts such as the traditional lulo, mondarere dance and traditional mesosambakai rituals are displayed and in commemoration of the youth oath day, the youth oath is read in two languages, namely Indonesian and the Mekongga regional language. Some of the traditional cultural games of the Mekongga people (Mepae-pae) include: Metinggo (engrang), Mehule (Gasing), Mebaguli (candlenut kernel marbles), and Mesuke (picking and hitting the stem):

*Metinggo Kasu and Ulo (Engrang Made of Wood and Coconut Shell)*

Metinggo in the Mekongga language consists of the words Me which means to do and tinggo which means a tool in the form of a pole or stick measuring 150 – 250 cm made of wood or bamboo with a base made of sago fronds tied with rattan rope or using an old motorbike tire.



**Figure 5.** Stilts competition using wood (Metinggo Case)

The Metinggo game not only uses wooden sticks or sago fronds but can also be played using coconut shells

which are then tied using rope or plant roots. Below is the Metinggo Ulo game:



**Figure 6.** Stilts using coconut shells (Metinggo Ulu)

The picture above shows that the Metinggo game can also be made from coconut shells with rope links made from bark. The word Metinggo means playing a game that uses tools as a support. The way to play it is by racing to walk using a height (engrang) from one side of the field to the other. The person who is the fastest and doesn't fall is the winner. *Mehule (Gasing)* Mehule is a traditional game made from wood and then carved into an oval shape with a sharp tip on one side. The rope or thread used to play the top is made from bark or other plants such as roots. Mehule (top) is a game of rotating wood that has been shaped to be tapered at the bottom and a rope is wrapped around the neck of the top which will be pulled tight so that the top can spin.



**Figure 7.** Traditional wooden spinning top (Mehule)

The picture above is a traditional top made from special wood. In the process of making a top, you use a machete to cut it until the tip is sharp and the top is large. Once the top has been formed, it will be sanded to remove dust from the wood, after which it will be painted and dried in the sun. There are various types of rope used. Previously they used plant roots, but now they use macram thread. Below is a picture of the spinning top game being competed for gentlemen: The Mehule game is played on flat ground without grass, with participants one on one or in teams according to the

agreement of the participants. This game can be played at various age levels, from children, teenagers to gentlemen. The following is a picture of the Mosehe Family Circle cultural procession carried out in the cemetery area: From the interview above, it can be seen that the Mosehe Wonua ritual is one of the ancestral legacies that still survives today, as a form of gratitude for providing protection if you carry out the ritual. One of the positive aims of carrying out the Mosehe Wonua ritual is that people can stay in touch with each other and can show an attitude of cooperation in preserving culture that reflects ancestral values in the Mosehe Wonua ritual.

#### *Mebaguli (marbles from candlenut kernels)*

The Mebaguli game is one of the traditional games of the Mekongga people using candlenut seeds which resembles the marble game today. The Mebaguli game is played on the ground where 3 holes are made, each 7 -10 cm in diameter with a depth of 6 - 7 cm, and The distance between holes is approximately 120 - 150 cm. Below is a picture of the mebaguli game most often played by Mekongga children:

The pattern of this game will first create a row of candlenut seeds which are placed tightly on the ground with the length of the row corresponding to the number of candlenut seeds prepared as bets by the game participants. The row of candlenut seeds is the target for participants throwing their hands using other candlenut seeds as bullets.



**Figure 8.** Competition for marbles from candlenut seeds (Mebaguli).

#### *Mesuke (Plucking and Hitting the Sago Leaf)*

The Mesuke game is a traditional game that uses tools made from dried sago fronds. The Mesuke game consists of 2 sticks, each measuring 45-50 cm, which is called the parent (beating) and the other measuring 15-17 cm, which is called anankan (the tool that is beaten). Below is a picture of Mesuke's game:



**Figure 9.** Mesuke Competition

Picture above shows that the mesuke game has eight players. The game is formed by two teams, each team consisting of four people. In this game, four members of team one are guarding and four members of team two are the team hitting the wood fronds. This game is similar to the baseball game, but the difference in the Mesuke game is that the tools used are wooden fronds which are referred to as saplings and broodstock. The Mesuke game is played in the yard, field or street because the punishment for participants who lose the game is to carry the participant who wins the game around the game arena. When the sapling has been hit, the players will guard the sapling that has been hit. The participant who hits will run to the place that has been marked as a stopping place or what is called a place to spend the night in this game, this is to avoid the guards or the opposing team who are looking for the saplings that were hit.

This game is very popular with various groups ranging from children to adults. Before starting, you have to form team members and have to work together in the game. This can make children have very close friendships because they have to work together as a team to beat their opponents in this game. Based on the pictures of traditional games above, the Mepae-pae festival is a cultural heritage that is really liked by children and adults because they can compete with other friends. In Silea Village, children very rarely play with cellphone gadgets, so to fill the void when they come home from school, children usually play traditional regional games from the legacy of the Mekongga Kingdom. From this event the author can analyze that it is to foster a sense of care and love for Mekongga culture, and as an effort to preserve Mekongga cultural values and provide social education for the younger generation, especially in the Silea sub-district which has held the Mepae-Pae cultural festival.



### Discussion

One form of culture is ritual ceremonies which have become traditions because they contain rules and norms in life which are still adhered to by cultural supporters (Wu, 2018). One example is Southeast Sulawesi's diverse culture. This cannot be separated from the influence of environmental, natural and social conditions between one community and another. In every region in Southeast Sulawesi, especially in Wundulako District, Kolaka Regency, the people have different cultures. This culture is a tradition that has different and unique characteristics.

Every human being has their own traditions and rituals according to their respective cultures in the form of ceremonies. In ancient times, almost all forms of performing arts functioned as a means of ritual ceremonies and this is still the case today (Carvalho & Marinho, 2010). Usually there are efforts to maintain or preserve the nation's culture so that it does not become extinct, one of which is by exploring and reviving culture through past traditions, namely in the form of traditional community rituals. Each society has its own traditions and rituals according to their respective cultures in the form of ceremonies (Baan et al., 2022).

Just as in research on rituals, local beliefs and cultural identity of the Banten Cioman community which shows that the "champion character" is the popularity of the Golok Ciomas which has historical and cultural value for the Banten community in general, it is also often compared to the figure of the jawara who is famous for his tough attitude, brave, and likes to commit crimes. In fact, for most of the Ciomas people, these distinctive characteristics actually have a more positive meaning inherited from their ancestors and still have religious values that are still maintained today (Sofyan et al., 2022).

(Cerisola & Panzera, 2021), about rituals as a Cultural Ecosystem: Creative Economy Based Performance Innovation which shows the results, namely; First, *ider bumi* is an inseparable part of the implementation of rituals based on rural agrarian culture and rituals based on maritime culture. In the Barong *Ider Bumi* ritual in Kemiren Village and Puter Kayun, Boyolangu Village, *Ider Bumi* is the primary activity. In the Barong *Ider Bumi* ritual, the journey is taken on foot, while land transportation in the form of a decorative carriage is provided for officials from the central and regional levels. The Puter Kayun Ritual, Boyolangu Village, travels from Boyolangu to Watu Dodol by riding a horse cart. Second, *ider bumi* is a ritual attraction because it is packaged using aesthetic principles. This packaging is in line with the view that *ider bumi* as part of a performative ritual. *Ider bumi* in each of the eight rituals has its own uniqueness. In the

Seblang Bakungan ritual, in terms of properties, it shows simple characteristics.

This simplicity has unique value because when carrying out *Ider Bumi* the lighting is turned off and relies on lighting from kerosene torches which are prepared along the main road of Krajan Hamlet. This has a symbolic function, namely that the idea of the earth is a movement to uncover darkness. Third, *Ider Bumi*'s performance is one of the targets for arts development in society. In this way, there is a mutualistic symbiosis between ritual and art development in society. Meanwhile, implementation involving the community becomes an arena for participation and development of solidarity which leads to building community cohesiveness vertically and horizontally. By building social integration, society will be able to face and overcome various life challenges. Fourth, *ider bumi* as part of a ritual is an expression of respect for ancestors, religious attitudes, awareness of historical history, and has the potential to develop social cohesiveness and social harmony in society (Sinaga et al., 2019).

The consistency and development of this behavior has the potential to be the basis for developing grounded community character. Fifth, ritual innovation occurs in non-standard parts and occurs in the Barong *Ider Bumi* ritual of Kemiren Village, Keboan Aliyan, Kebo-keboan Alasmalang, and Seblang Bakungan. The development of a ritual-based creative economy can be seen in the emergence of various creative industry products, namely souvenirs, *gandrung* and *barong batik* motifs, accessories, T-shirts, entertainment arts, painting, literary arts, and various culinary products made from local ingredients (Anoegrajekti et al., 2018). Sixth, the relationship between the state and society as ritual actors shows partnership cooperation. Cultural promotion by the government was able to increase the number of guests attending significantly. Meanwhile, holding rituals as cultural events supports the development of tourism as one of the leading developments in Banyuwangi (Hartanto et al., 2021).

As in the death ceremony, which is the last event in the circle of human life which always has sacred concerns, various kinds of assumptions always arise and there has been a transition from social status and position as an individual to the status of the deceased or deceased (de Grave, 2018). Then it is assumed that the death ceremony is an initiation process of releasing the object (human) from a natural position and a new position (worldly nature to the afterlife) and it is considered that every human being who leaves the world must be strengthened with various ceremonial systems through saying, conveying and sending prayers. to the deceased between the first night and the hundredth night as a sign of a transition from the real world to the afterlife. (Betz et al., 2023).



Then there is the ritual of the Bugis community in Totobo Village which still maintains the traditions passed down from generation to generation by their ancestors, namely the mattampung ritual, because it is considered that it still has the meanings contained in it so it needs to be maintained so that it does not disappear and experiences a shift in meaning along with current development. Death events in the Bugis community are generally believed to mean that a person who has died does not necessarily disappear immediately due to the completion of the funeral process, but the spirit of the person who has died still remains in the house or around the house, for this reason post-death rituals (mattampung) are carried out). The Mattampung ritual has several meanings for the supporting community, including religious meaning and social meaning. Religiously, the manttampung ritual is a means of connecting with a family member who has died, as well as a form of final respect for the deceased family member. Meanwhile, socially, it is a means to strengthen social relationships that may have weakened and diminished due to the routine of daily life, strengthened through the roles and activities carried out in the ritual (Nelson-Becker & Sangster, 2019). Culture is a sign system that has several roles, including ways of understanding, communicating and creating. Culture is also a system in the form of ideas, behavior and the results of behavior. In other words, culture is the result of human creativity, feeling and initiative. Symbolic forms in the form of words, objects, practices, myths, literature, paintings, songs, music, beliefs which are closely related to concepts from the knowledge system, are also inseparable from social systems, social organizations and all social behavior. Bone Regency, in South Sulawesi, which is known as a traditional city that has a variety of unique and aesthetic cultures, really respects and upholds the culture of its ancestors. On every anniversary of Bone, the "Mattumpang Arajang" ritual or routine cleaning of heirlooms is always held. These heirlooms are stored in a special room in Sao Raja, the home complex of the Regent of Bone. At the mattumpang ceremony, heirloom objects are sacred as living creatures.

Mattumpang arajang is a sacred traditional ceremony that purifies the heirlooms of the Bone kingdom. This procession is also usually called Mappepacing arajang or also known as Pangadereng dilangiri. The heirloom objects supported include Teddung Pulaweng (golden umbrella), Sembangeng Pulaweng (golden sash), Kelewang LaTea RiDuni, Keris La Makkawa, Tombak La Sagala, Kelewang Alameng Tata Rapeng (Seven traditional weapons or Ade' Pitu). The washing of heirlooms used several wells in Bone Regency, namely Bubung Parani, Bubung Bissu, Bubung

Tello', and Bubung Laccokkong. This spring water is collected as an heirloom cleansing material.

The people of Moma Hamlet, Pantolobete Village, have a traditional ritual related to harvest day called the vunja ritual. This ceremony is usually carried out after the harvest. The vunja ceremony begins with a consultation between the city elders and the local area which is agreed to regulate the movement of all kinds related to horticulture known as tina ngata. The people who are remembered as tina ngata are people who have magical knowledge so they are very good to use as helpers in solving various problems related to agriculture, processing fields and rice fields. The results of ordinary parents' thoughts with tina ngata were then spread to the city environment. After receiving news that the vunja custom would be held locally, the traditional elders and tina ngata met again to determine the day for the custom to be held. The next activity is to notify the community and families in neighboring villages. Vunja rituals are generally held in the bantaya yard, a traditional house used every time there is a traditional ceremony with a vunja pole in the middle. Vunja poles are places where people hang processed food from their harvested rice which is made from a langsung tree and has a symbol and hope of the community so that the rice they plant will bear abundant fruit like langsung fruit. In this vunja ritual, the village community happily enjoys the food available in the form of processed mountain rice cooked using bamboo. This ritual is also a way for local people to mingle with traditional elders who wear head coverings made from tree bark called siga. When the vunja pole is erected, traditional elders recite a mantra containing an expression of appreciation for the abundant harvest and are filled with the belief that the harvest in the next planting season will be much superior. The march completed by the local area is closely related to the sign (Gazali & Widodo, 2023).

Wundulako subdistrict is one of the areas in Kolaka district, Southeast Sulawesi. In this district, the Mekongga kingdom once stood. The name Mekongga was taken from the name of the Kongga Owese bird because of the Kongga Owese incident, the area was called Lamekongga or Mekongga. This is what makes the Mekongga Region quite different from other regions in Southeast Sulawesi. With various historical and cultural events, the Mekongga region is very diverse, starting from the rituals and traditions that have existed since the Mekongga kingdom was founded, which are still maintained and carried out as a process of cultural enculturation such as the burial of the descendants of the king, Mosehe Wonua, Mesosambakai, Mosehe Scope Family and Traditional Games Festival.

It is believed that carrying out these rituals can maintain the social status of the people in Wundulako

District as the center of the Mekongga Kingdom at that time because by carrying out rituals with historical relics, it is not just about carrying them out but also a form of introducing to other areas the cultural rituals held by the Mekongga people. Very different and functions as a cultural heritage system (Perry et al., 2020). The power of socio-cultural enculturation is further strengthened in children as the successors and heirs of Mekongga cultural values which are believed to be equipped for Wundulako children in the future to continue to strengthen Mekongga culture (Jers et al., 2022).

Efforts to maintain or preserve the nation's culture so that it remains maintained is by exploring and promoting traditional culture, one of which is the traditional rituals of the Mekongga people. According to (Satrianegara et al., 2021), ritual traditions must have special characteristics and conditions in rituals that always exist in human life, namely: The time the ritual ceremony is carried out must be a predetermined time, The place where the ritual ceremony is held. must be a place that has been used for cultural activities, People as supporters in carrying out the ritual must be spiritually clean, The ritual ceremony must be led by people who have been selected and are used to leading a ritual, Offerings is a ceremonial equipment that must not be left behind (Nur'aini et al., 2022). The introduction of globalization of information is one of the forces that greatly influences human thought patterns (Bickley et al., 2021). To overcome this, it is necessary to be aware of the importance of local culture as the cultural identity of the region and the archipelago so that it is always emphasized as an obligation for every level of society to maintain it. Through the role of the younger generation in inheriting local culture and becoming a force for the existence of local culture, even though globalization is coming in, an example that we should understand is the efforts of the Mekongga people to maintain and preserve their culture from the past until now. Cultural inheritance from childhood to old age can preserve the culture left by the King of the Mekongga Kingdom.

## Conclusion

Cultural rituals are a legacy that must be maintained so that they remain a means of enculturation, that the implementation of these rituals has existed for a long time, in Wundulako District to maintain these rituals by carrying them out every year and found in the process of community life. Strengthening the social status of a Bokeo descendant through several traditional rituals inherited from his descendants and the Mekongga people have various customs or traditions which are still maintained to this

day. Culture and customs are used as the social character of the local area. Existing customs and communities include the traditional function of mosehe wonua as an effort to clean the village to avoid disasters and disease outbreaks, the mesosambakai tradition for unborn children with the aim of preventing unborn children from disaster and asking God to make their sustenance easier, mosere owuu, the practice of wedding ceremonies, to the traditional treatment of Bokeo called the Lulo Sangia dance.

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## Author Contributions

Conceptualization, E. E. K., L. L., I. A., N. R., R. Y. M., ; methodology, E. E. K; validation, L. L. and I. A.; formal analysis, N. R.; investigation, R. Y. M, and E. E. K.; resources, L. L., and I. A.; data curation, N. R.: writing—original draft preparation, R. Y. M and E. E. K; writing—review and editing, L. L.: visualization, and I. A. and N. R. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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## Conflicts of Interest

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