

Research Article

## Tradition of Welcoming Ramadan in Rural Gorontalo: A Study of *Huwi lo Yimelu* and *Mongolota Maluo*

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**Abstract:** This study analyzed the values contained in the *huwi lo yimelu* and *mongolota maluo* tradition in rural Gorontalo. These researches are descriptive qualitative research with an ethnographic approach. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews and participant observation and then analyzed qualitatively. The results showed that the *huwi lo yimelu* tradition was still adopted by rural communities in Gorontalo, despite some changes. The tradition of slaughtering chickens has rituals and myths that must be carried out to create a sense of pleasure in the chicken slaughter. This tradition gives birth to distinctive patterns for obtaining slaughtered chickens in *huwi lo yimelu*; the models are *mongohi* (sharing), *mohile* (asking), *moluwalo* (buying symbolically) and *motali* (buying cheaply). These traditions not only show the sharing of poverty among the poor of farm families but also show the sharing of wealth between social classes. This tradition gives birth to the value of solidarity and happiness, namely the satisfaction of gathering with family, the joy of eating a special menu, and the pleasure of welcoming the holy month of Ramadan.

**Keywords:** Ramadan, *Huwi lo Yimelu*, *Mongolota Maluo*, *Molamahu*, *Rural Gorontalo*

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## INTRODUCTION

It has become a tradition to say *marhaban* (welcome) Ramadan is a mandatory greeting in all circles or social classes ahead of Ramadan. In writing, this expression is not only scattered in the streets through banners and billboards of various sizes but also distributed in the universe of social media with a variety of creativity. The phrase *marhaban ya* illustrates that guests (Ramadan) who come are greeted with grace, excitement, and prepared an ample space to do anything in it (Shihab, M. Q. 2007).

The expression of Muslims welcoming the month of Ramadan has existed since the order came. Previously, welcoming the month of Ramadan was done with the preparation of spirituality, but today, it is more dominant in various material preparations. This shift is a consequence of changing times and is a form of culture that actualizes religious texts. That from one time to another or from one place to another, the spiritual expression always transforms (Hamzani, Y. 2020).

In addition to written expressions, the joy of welcoming Ramadan is expressed by Muslims in the form of activities. This religious activity is wrapped

neatly in the packaging of local culture. All ethnic groups in Indonesia, who are Muslim, have a unique tradition in welcoming Ramadan. These traditions usually have a lot in common but are more different in terms of naming. Some of them are pilgrimages, cleaning the house and mosque environment, festivity, sharing food, and local specialties. All activities are carried out also by rural communities in Gorontalo. In this community, what is interesting is the tradition of sharing chickens between family and close relatives before Ramadan.

In practice, rural communities in Gorontalo call it *mohimelu*. The word "*mohimelu*" means greeting or welcoming, derived from the word "*yimelu*" (greeting). The tradition of greeting each other is universal. *Mohimelu* for the Gorontalo people not only applies to fellow humans when meeting each other, but it also applies to greet Islamic sharia. In this case, the tradition of greeting/welcoming Ramadan. To greet/welcome the month of Ramadan, Gorontalo people more specifically say "*huwi lo yimelu*". *Huwi* means night. *Huwi lo yimelu* is identical to the first night eating suhoor. To liven up a meal at *huwi lo yimelu*, the rural community presents a special menu made from chicken.

This tradition is still shared by most of the rural communities in *Molamahu*. *Molamahu* Village is a village in the Pulubala subdistrict of Gorontalo Regency. The village is far from urban areas. The distance between *Molamahu* village and the district capital is around 25 kilometers, while the distance to the provincial capital is 45 kilometers. Most of the population work as peasants, corn as its flagship product. Before the modernization of agriculture, corn commodities planted were local seeds (*binte kiki*, *binte daa*, *binte damahu*). This type of corn is planted on land that has been plowed without using chemicals. Now already using agricultural technology; superior seeds, planted directly on the ground without being treated, by spraying chemicals. The results proved to be abundant, but the production cost was more expensive (Prayoga, K. *et al.*, 2019), the corn was not as good as the local corn when consumed.

Corn is a product of subsistence in the *Molamahu* community (Fadhilah, A. 2013) but began to experience changes after the green revolution program. The choice for corn farming is very rational; corn can be harvested from a young age, made a typical culinary of Gorontalo, *binte biluhuta*, and various other culinary. The presence of rice as a staple food creates a new social status in the *Molamahu* community. There are three social classes in terms of the type of food consumed, namely the class that eats rice, the class that eats rice mixed with corn, and the class that eats only corn, each representing the upper class, middle class, and lower class. This food classification gives birth to three categories in paying *Zakat al-Fitr* at the end of Ramadan. Peasants prefer to eat corn, besides being cheap and available, they are more durable. Also, it is longer powered and so strong to work.

In addition to corn farming, the people of *Molamahu* raise native chickens; the treatment is simple. Chickens are left roaming freely in the open. Occasionally fed corn, the rest find their food. There is no special treatment like broilers. When night falls, the pet chickens will naturally perch on a tree branch near the cottage or house. Also, to the hut under the roof, there are lined nests as a place to lay eggs and incubate for hens. The nest is made of woven palm leaves. The nests must be hung rather high so that predators do not eat the eggs.

The farmers' enemy in raising chickens that come to attack at any time are monitor lizards and eagles. Lizards eat chicken eggs to adult chickens, while eagles individually catch small chickens that are negligent from their mother's supervision. Farmers who knew about the arrival of the eagle immediately exclaimed "*yuuu kiii*", hearing the call, the chickens were running for cover. So that the chicks do not get eaten by eagles, breeder farmers confine their mothers in cages made of woven bamboo. Apart from monitor

lizards and eagles, the main enemy of breeders is pests and diseases. Even though it comes seasonally, its effects can be massively deadly for domestic chickens. Chicken raising is a survival strategy for rural farmers. They can sell their chickens to the market when they fail, or if there is an urgent need before the harvest arrives.

Data from the population inhabiting *Molamahu* in 2019 were 639 households. The majority of the *Molamahu* community is Muslim, which is around 99%. They have a wealth of local wisdom, both in celebrating Islamic holidays, as well as traditional rituals in solving problems in their lives—an example in *mopo'a huta* ritual as a form of harmony between humans and nature (Hunowu, M. A. *et al.*, 2020). The ceremony is undergoing acculturation with Islamic values.

The acculturation of Islamic values with previously values carried out by the community in local traditions of the past are still alive. It is unique because religious doctrine is colored with cultural trinkets without involving emotions or physical contact. It is interesting to see how religious expressions are raised in the form of tradition that is strongly rooted from ancestors to the present. Therefore, this study answers the question of how the values contained in the *huwi lo yimelu* and *mongolota maluo traditions* in welcoming Ramadan.

## LITERATUR REVIEW

There have been many research results that illustrate the traditions of Muslim communities in Indonesia to welcome Ramadan fasting. This tradition is generally expressed by sharing, both food, and food ingredients. For rural communities in Gorontalo, when entering Ramadan, there is a tradition of sharing native chickens to others. In other Muslim societies, the concept of sharing ahead of Ramadan is expressed by sharing ready-to-eat foods and food ingredients such as beef, buffalo meat, and freshwater fish.

Ridho's research (Ridho, A. 2019) in welcoming the month of Ramadan, the Javanese held the *megengan* tradition. In this, traditional food is served to neighbors as a medium to strengthen the relationship. This tradition is an expression of gratitude to God for giving various forms of favors, as a form of prayer to the ancestors who have died and a form of giving alms to others.

Megawati's research (Megawati, C. S. 2019) illustrates the tradition of *massuro ma'bac*a before Ramadan to the people of Bulukumba. This tradition has significance for maintaining the cultural cycle of the local community. This tradition, like festivity in Javanese society, functions as a glue between family and community and is an event that should not be

missed. Without *massuro ma'baka*, a traditional ceremony is said to be imperfect for them. Most people also believe that people who carry out traditional ceremonies without performing *massuro ma'baka* will get a disaster.

Ramadhani, S. A. Z., & Abdoeh, N. M. (2020) described the Semarang people who carried out the *punggahan* tradition one or two days before the holy month of Ramadan. *Punggahan* means ascending to a place higher than the *Sha'ban* of the month that usually goes to the holy month of Ramadan. The community commemorates this moment by carrying out *tahlilan* by bringing food, some of which are sticky rice, *apem*, banana, *pasung* with the meaning contained in each of these foods. This tradition can be a moment of friendship and strengthen the relationship because people can forgive each other, fight with each other so that there is no revenge in their hearts when entering the holy month of Ramadan. According to Ramadhani, S. A. Z., & Abdoeh, N. M. (2020), the *punggahan* tradition is not an example from the Prophet Muhammad, but this tradition is filled with positive things. It does not violate the Islamic sharia, which is to strengthen the friendship with family, friends, friends, and even neighbors themselves as a form of gratitude to Allah.

Aisyah's research (Aisyah, S. 2017) on the people of Padang Pariaman, illustrates the history that they used to only process food from the sea, along with the Islamization process carried out by Sheikh Burhanuddin, they began to recognize meat-based foods. The existence of Islamization has an impact on the consumption patterns of the Minangkabau people in consuming meat. Since then, Pariaman has a unique food derived from processed meat. In religious ceremonies, food served is *lemang* and *sambareh*. Both types of food are served in the Prophet Muhammad's birthday ceremony every month, *Rabbiul Awal* and *Shaban*, to welcome the holy month of Ramadan, even the name of the month Shaban for the people of Padang Pariaman better known by the term moon of *lamang*.

Iskandar. (2012) describes the Acehnese people with the tradition of eating meat before Ramadan. It is called the *mameugang* tradition. For two days the people must eat meat. Mameugang day falls on the last day and month before entering the month of Ramadan and the last day of the month of Ramadan to welcome the coming of the holiday. On the last day of the *Shaban*, the community rushed to buy buffalo or ox meat. For the people of Aceh to buy buffalo or ox meat to welcome the month of Ramadan, the feast of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha is a must. If there are relatives who cannot afford to buy, other close relatives have a moral and social responsibility to buy it. The obligation applies hierarchically according to patriarchal guardianship lines. All families in households in Aceh

will be honored if they have purchased *mameugang* meat.

Alhusni. (2014) found a tradition of *bebantai* in the Merangin Jambi community. *Bebantai* is an activity of slaughtering buffaloes and cows to welcome the month of Ramadan. Almost all traditional villages in the *Merangin* area hold *bebantai* joyfully. This activity is carried out five to three days before the entry of Ramadan. The ultimate goal is to meet the needs of the community's meat, although not everyone likes meat. But in the activities of slaughtering, almost all people participated in enlivening the tradition. The meat obtained from *bebantai* is cooked and eaten together. Usually, the host invites family and colleagues. In eating together, there is no special ritual. Eating together is only intended to rejoice in welcoming Ramadan, connecting and strengthening friendship, and as a sign of gratitude by sharing pleasure.

Slaughtering animals in welcoming Ramadan is also found in the Bugis community. They slaughtered cows and buffalo. The meat is cooked and eaten together. Aking, M. (2018) in his research on *mabbaca* rituals, found a presentation of meat-based food to be prayed for in welcoming Ramadan. Prayers usually prepare food that has a broad philosophy. This food symbolizes a philosophy of life that is affluent and well-established. For the Bugis migrant community, the ritual before fasting has a function to show their identity as Bugis people. With it also they are easy to find out among fellow Bugis in the overseas area.

Besides beef and buffalo meat, chicken is also a particular choice, as described by Siregar, R. M. Y. (2018) in the *Simagod* festivity that takes place in South Labuhan Batu. In the tradition found the process of slaughtering chickens to welcome the fasting month. A progenitor does chicken slaughtering. He added a spell in Batak language, meaning deliberate this chicken was slaughtered for ancestral spirits food this year. Siregar, R. M. Y. (2018) underlines the intention when slaughtering chickens that are contrary to Islamic sharia, but the implementation of the *Simagod* feast tradition has a useful purpose or has a common benefit.

In some of the communities mentioned above, it can be seen that animal meat as a particular food before Ramadan, but for Bandung community are different. They consume fish from draining ponds. Nugraha, M. F. (2018) described the tradition of the people of Bandung welcoming Ramadan by draining ponds. The fish that are caught are sold to residents to be used as food to welcome Ramadan.

Like the Muslim community in other regions, in rural Gorontalo welcomed Ramadan by eating together to enjoy a special menu of native chicken meat. This tradition is carried out on the first meal. They are

consuming chicken meat to be a stage to be happy to welcome Ramadan. Just like the *Merangin Jambi* people, even though they make black chickens as a slaughter to repel reinforcements from the jinn, but in practice as a form of sincerity to welcome the month of Ramadan.

These studies illustrate that sharing food is a tradition to enliven the atmosphere of Ramadan, especially slaughtering chickens. The tradition of sharing in Geertz's view (Geertz, C. 1976) refers to it as shared poverty. This concept refers to a cultural value that emphasizes the interdependence and mutual assistance between people in the same village, who generally work as peasants.

The concept of shared poverty, according to Marzali, A. (2012), is the result of the interpretation of Javanese rural life that Geertz saw in the 1950s. At that time, the villagers were predominantly poor, *abangan*, and almost half of the landless family heads even became laborers on their land. The poverty that strikes them is actually fostering mutual care, mutual help, and sharing. There is a little divided a little; there is a lot of division; everyone will be many anyway. It can be seen clearly in the *slametan* (festivity) ceremony, which is distributive and consumptive. In the *slametan* ceremony, as weak as the destitute host, he still had time to provide and distribute his poverty in the form of distribution of food and cakes to the neighbors who were his guests. In Geertz's symbolic point of view, the *slametan* ceremony is not sharing food or cakes but sharing poverty. So weak were peasants that they could still share food and cakes.

Sharing chickens in the rural communities of Gorontalo is very lively when approaching Ramadan. If Geertz Geertz, C. (1976) sees a sharing with fellow villagers, but for Gorontalo rural communities, in addition to sharing with families in the village, they also share with families from the cities who come in touch.

## RESEARCH METHODS

The researchers investigated the phenomenon (Jaccard, J., & Jacoby, J. 2010). The event referred to is ahead of Ramadan in rural communities in Gorontalo. For the *Molamahu* people, where were this study conducted, the tradition of sharing ahead of Ramadan was patterned and repeated, even though it was increasingly reduced by progress. The approach used in writing the results of this study was a qualitative approach using descriptive methods. To be able to capture the phenomenon as a whole, the data collection technique used an ethnographic approach (Spradley, J. P. 2007). More data collection techniques were participatory observations and in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews were conducted to explore the meaning of the traditions (Sugiyono. 2009; & Moleong, L. J. 2007). The authors interviewed some informants,

namely the head of village, religion elites, traditional figure, etcetera. These informants were chosen because of their figures who are considered to know the topic being studied. In addition, the researchers also extracted information from several respondents who were selected based on their involvement in the tradition being studied. In this case the number of respondents is not limited, as long as the data is still lacking, interviews with new respondents continue. The appointment of new respondents is based on instructions from previous respondents who are considered to know community members who understand the topic being studied.

The research data collected was then analyzed qualitatively. The essence of this paper was to describe the expression of the community in carrying out religious traditions ahead of the Ramadan, which takes place every year. In carrying out this tradition, it was found a type of food made from native chicken meat, which was not only considered unique but also contained the value of solidarity and happiness.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

*Huwi lo yimelu* is the first night of Ramadan. Gorontalo people are very privileged that night with the *mongolota maluo* tradition (slaughtering chickens). The certainty of *huwi lo yimelu* is known to the public after doing *tonggeyamo*, the *rukayat* reckoning method, to determine the beginning of Ramadan based on local wisdom. It used to be done by *buwatula towulongo* (local government) (Ngou, S. K. 2019), but now it is just a formality. The role has been centralized by using technology to look at the new moon at specific locations (Pratama, D. A. 2016). The results were immediately known to the public, both through television broadcasts, and social media. In the past, Gorontalo people followed the manual counting method. They were guided by the count of *qamariyah* (calculation of the moon in the sky). Until now, there are still villagers who believe in the count. Then carry out *huwi lo yimelu* precede the government's decision.

The tradition of *huwi lo yimelu* and *mongolota maluo* is a form of excitement of Gorontalo people in welcoming the holy month of Ramadan. There are many messages of the Prophet Muhammad and the verses of al-Qur'an that tell the importance of having joy welcoming the holy month of Ramadan. As the following hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, "whoever is happy with the entry of the month of Ramadan, then Allah will forbid his body to go to hell (this hadith is mentioned in the book of Durrat An-Nasihin). This form of excitement is also reported in the following verse of the al-Qur'an, "Say, with the mercy of Allah, let them rejoice. The gift of Allah and His mercy are better than what they have gathered "(Qur'an, Jonah: 58).

Before the first night of Ramadan arrived, Gorontalo rural communities carried out several traditions as practiced by other Muslim communities, namely the grave pilgrimage, festivity, cleaning houses and mosques, preparing prayer equipment, finally preparing chicken slaughter. The evening was filled with joy, with relatives. At the same time, it also became a gripping night for poultry. Free-range chickens became victims that night. Hundreds of up to thousands of tails were slaughtered simultaneously in rural Gorontalo. Specifically, in *Molamahu* village, there are 639 chickens, if on average, one head of the family cuts one chicken.

*Mongolota maluo* is a tradition that accompanies *huwi lo yimelu*, accompanied by the slaughter of native chickens, both male and female, as long as they are still teenagers; also, its flesh and bones are still soft. This chicken meat has a distinctive taste, even though eating food carelessly, corn, rice, grass, insects, old food scraps even cow dung, all pegged as long as they are filling. It will taste different from the kind of chicken meat that is kept in a cage, even though it is treated special with expensive feed.

In some rural communities, there is a habit of getting chickens to slaughter, done with several patterns. First, *mongohi maluo* or sharing chickens is done in one big family, for example, older siblings to younger siblings, or vice versa, depending on who has a surplus of chicken—parents of their children, usually newly married children. Children who are already established, share with their parents. Today, the tradition of sharing chickens has begun to shift by giving cash to buy chickens. Usually said when giving, this is money to buy chicken for the meal.

Second, *mohile maluo* or ask for chicken. Requesting chicken on *Molamahu* community is done by the lower class to the upper class even though the high class does not raise chickens. The tradition of asking for chickens usually occurs in the family and relatives, usually done after knowing other relatives receive chicken gifts. Third is *moluwala maluo*. *Moluwala maluo* is symbolically buying chickens between people who know each other even though they are not one family. *Moluwala* can also be interpreted as asking for something subtly. This pattern is carried out by residents who do not have chickens to residents who have excessive chicken. This pattern is usually with an amount of money, as is, just as a symbol to ask for chicken. Sometimes by the owner of the chicken, the money is returned, and the chicken is given voluntarily.

The fourth is *motali maluo* or buy chicken at a low price. This pattern is carried out by residents who do not keep chickens and have not prepared for the first meal. This pattern applies to residents who are not familiar or do not know each other by buying and selling. Some deliberately come from the city to

purchase chicken; chicken prices are more friendly in the village. Prices on the market are more expensive. In the markets, those who sell are no longer peasants but middlemen.

There is still one more pattern that is not uncommon, namely *motao maluo*, or stealing chickens, carried out by naughty people or desperate people. This pattern rarely occurs because the act will be discovered from the sound of flapping wings and screaming chickens when caught. Stolen chicken is usually not for slaughtering the meal. Based on these patterns present a distinctive view, it can be seen in the seconds before Ramadan, where residents back and forth carrying a bound chicken, hung on a motorbike, tricycles, and the back of city transportation.

The tradition of sharing and buying chickens in preparation for *huwi lo yimelu* is a delightful gathering. Between families and relatives, social classes, city people with villagers, secure transactions occur, sometimes like barter. Families from the city bring food packages; villagers welcome them with a pair of chickens. Reciprocity is repeated, full of harmony, like reciprocating rhymes. It is what Geertz, C. (1976) calls shared poverty.

Some families who are used to sharing, there is a sense of displeasure not to give to families from afar. Vice versa, there is a feeling of questioning when suddenly relatives do not come to visit this year. There is a longing there, not because of food, but the value of meeting and happiness. One moment that the villagers had treated for the previous four-five months until several eggs gradually became juvenile chickens.

Free-range chicken becomes the icon of Ramadan. The first night of Ramadan and native chicken, like two sides of a coin. Family members such as compulsory gathering that night. Eat native chicken meat dishes—tempting dishes prepared by mother or grandmother. The concoction can produce a culinary that is thrilling; there are *iloni* (grilled chicken plus chili sauce), *pilitode* (coconut milk chicken), *tilumiti* (stir-fried chicken), *tilinanga* (fried chicken), *uyilahe* (chicken soup) and *ilabulo*. Those are just a few examples of delicious concoctions that are matchless, pleasures that are hard to find in fancy restaurants.

Chicken meat can also be used as an ingredient for breaking the fast menu, processed into chicken porridge. All the mosques in the research location that hold iftar together provide native chicken porridge every day. It also becomes an attraction for children to break their fast together in the mosque. It is just that, this year, the atmosphere of the mosque became quiet from the iftar together. Circular of the government to maintain distance and stay at home to break the chain of distribution of COVID-19 is the reason.

Consuming chicken meat as a special menu is, at the same time showing the value of solidarity. As in the people of Aceh, residents who cannot afford to buy meat are the moral and social responsibility of their families (Iskandar. 2012). This phenomenon is also found in Gorontalo rural communities. They share chickens with families who are unable to provide chickens for slaughter on the first night of Ramadan. For other families, buying chicken is the ultimate solution if you do not have chicken. It is a business opportunity for peasants who raise chickens. They can sell chickens to the market or to residents who come directly to the village. The result will be the capital for the preparation of Ramadan and Eid Al-Fitr.

*Mongolota maluo* tradition is like an attractive magnet, reuniting family members scattered everywhere. They are gluing separated individuals for eleven months. Children who go to school or study in the city, or are married and live in nearby areas even overseas, are called to return home. Like the call of the soul, there are values of brotherhood, solidarity, encounter, and happiness that guide.

When gathered, each family member already has a favorite menu. In one family, there are subscriptions of upper thighs, and some choose lower thighs. Some asked for parts of the heart, chest, and wings. Some like to eat chicken skin and claw. What unique, some wish to enjoy chicken bones to chew. The sensation of the taste of marrow in chicken bones is a particular delight for fans. Already a distribution of chicken meat is full of harmony. There is a compromise in sharing a favorite menu. There is no fighting over each other, even if there is one; usually, the youngest child is asking for attention. When there are relatives who are overseas, often the mother will check, "What are you going to do tonight, son?" If the child answers other than chicken, this answer will be pathetic to the family in the village. A pre-dawn meal without chicken menu feels nothing special, showing incompetence as the Bugis have confidence that a complete food menu shows establishment (Aking, M. 2018). Similar to the people of Aceh, buying meat before Ramadan makes the residents feel honored. Gorontalo people who slaughter chickens, in addition to showing stability, also create a deep sense of happiness. When one day, one family member did not have time to join, because he already had a small family or had died, the tears of sadness were unstoppable when he saw his favorite chicken pieces, lying in the basin.

The traditions of the city people are different. Some city people choose broilers, in addition to being available everywhere, the chickens have been slaughtered, have been cut according to their purpose, fried or grilled, just pay. There are also city residents who are still looking for native chickens to buy or switch to buy one or two kilograms of beef, and beef

traders have recently been easy to find. In the city, everything is available, and it is just that there is no excitement created, there is no division of roles, as in the village people.

In rural areas, the excitement starts from *mohenela maluo* (catching chickens). It looks like a ball game, even more exciting than playing football; without a goal, the ball is winged, and the pitch is bushy until it has to jump over the neighbor's fence. How to catch chickens by chasing is the ultimate solution; there are still other ways. If the chicken is tame, it is enough to throw food (corn) that the chicken will scatter and just choose. There are also ways to trap with bamboo confinement. The cage is lifted with a rope, and then the food is placed underneath it. When the chicken comes, the rope is released. Alternatively, wait for the chicken to alight and then be caught by crushing shallots. The aroma of onion will make the chicken's eyes sore. In this condition, the chicken is easily caught. After the chicken is caught, it is followed by ritual slaughter.

There is excitement when slaughtering chickens for the meal menu. Villagers do not directly play slaughter, like broilers. There are still stages that are passed. When slaughtering chickens, there are special readings, beginning with greetings and reading *basmallah* (in the name of Allah) followed by request to use the local language, as if having a dialogue with chickens. "O chicken, your delicious enter through your breath in. O chicken, your fishy odor, your stench, come out through your breath. According to residents, the taste of the chicken is cut by following this ritual from the usual ones. In rural areas, people who are skilled at slaughtering chickens will always be visited by residents for voluntary assistance. The spell uttered by the butcher in the village at the time of slaughtering is different from the spell criticized by Siregar, R. M. Y. (2018), namely by reciting the request to make chicken as an offering to ancestral spirits.

Several myths must be obeyed by residents when slaughtering chickens. First, the armpit must be closed, and the crotch should not lead to the chicken. If not, the aroma and taste of the chicken turns fishy and urine. Second, people who slaughter and hold the chicken must not stay tight, *let al.*, one close their teeth tightly, and there is a belief that the chicken meat has become hard. Third, after the chicken died, its head slipped between the wings, in addition to respect for the chicken, it was not beautiful to let the bloody neck hang down. Fourth, lifeless chickens are soaked in boiling water, so that the feathers are easily plucked out. No conversation while plucking chicken feathers. Villagers believe that chicken feathers will grow again. Fifth, in chicken meat that has been cut into pieces, there are certain parts attached to the chicken meat that must be distributed to other creatures, thrown into nature, there are parts of eagles, monitor lizards, and supernatural

beings. There is a belief that eagles and monitor lizards will not prey on domestic chickens. While supernatural beings will not present pest diseases that kill chickens en masse, this practice also shows that the community believes that there is a part that must be divided into possessions. If not, it will result in misery (Hunowu, M. A., & Pakuna, H. B. 2020).

When the dawn comes, all will be easily awakened. It is one reason to cook a special menu. All at the same time are feasting, enjoying a special menu until full so that the prime fast was successfully passed. There is a belief of the villagers; if the first day of fasting can withstand hunger and thirst until it is time to break the fast, then the following days can certainly be passed easily. Thus, a month of fasting can be run perfectly. That is one of the reasons why the first meal was privileged with this special menu. In the next meal, it is enough to consume sea fish or other menus.

In the end, this tradition is not just a tradition without meaning, but a manifestation of religious advice. There is an encounter of Islam with the local culture. There are values of solidarity formed, and there are values of happiness imprinted. Being a very memorable event, patterned and repetitive, as well as being the most missed moment every year. Besides, it becomes the rhythm of the solemn enhancer during the night of the glorification of Allah ending Ramadan.

On the one hand, providing chicken as the first meal menu is to show social class, as well as expressing respect for the people of Aceh. To care for social classes is done by sharing chicken with relatives who do not have chicken preparation for the first meal, as the people of Aceh are morally responsible to their families who cannot buy meat. The tradition of sharing with families from cities that are synonymous with wealth shows that Gorontalo rural communities not only share poverty but also share wealth and happiness.

This tradition, on the other hand, shows how Gorontalo people respect the holy month of Ramadan by welcoming it with great joy. Celebrate it by making friends, sharing and gathering, and enjoying a prime menu of flavorful dawn. An expression of excitement welcoming the blessed month. This year the *huwi lo yimelu* and *mongolota maluo* traditions are not as lively as in previous years due to the ban on going back and forth from the government as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak.

## CONCLUSION

Sharing poverty is very visible in this tradition. The *huwi lo yimelu* tradition becomes a necessity for residents to hold slaughtered chickens. The patterns carried out by the people of *Molamahu* show the division of poverty, especially in the patterns of *mongohi* (sharing), *mohile* (asking), *moluwalo* (buying

symbolically), and *motali* (buying at low prices). In addition to sharing poverty, this tradition is found in the sharing of wealth. The upper-middle class in the village will share with the lower level. Family from a more established city, repaying the gift of chicken from a villager with a package of food that exceeds the economic value of a chicken. Also, this tradition is a moment of sharing happiness. It is the end of all forms of traditions and rituals to welcome Ramadan. There is a value of joy that is built up, namely satisfaction when gathering with a nuclear family, and happiness enjoying a special menu to welcome a special month. Sharing wealth and sharing happiness is what escaped Geertz's senses.

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