



## The Meaning and Function of the Fishermen's Mantra of the Ternate Community, North Maluku

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### Abstract

Fishermen's incantations in Ternate constitute an integral part of the local community's cultural and spiritual life, which are still preserved today as an oral tradition. These incantations are not only believed to possess magical powers that protect and assist fishermen in obtaining marine resources, but also reflect a harmonious relationship between humans and nature, particularly the sea. However, as they continue to exist primarily as an oral tradition, Ternate fishermen's incantations are at risk of disappearing if not studied and documented. This study aims to identify the meanings and functions of fishermen's incantations as a reflection of the local wisdom of the Ternate community. A qualitative method with an ethnographic approach was employed. The data sources consisted of fishermen or fishing groups who possess such incantations, as well as local cultural experts. The sampling techniques used were purposive sampling and snowball sampling. Data were collected through interviews and focus group discussions (FGD). To ensure data validity, source triangulation and theoretical triangulation were applied. Data were analyzed using an interactive model. The findings reveal that the meanings and functions of Ternate fishermen's incantations reflect the local wisdom of coastal communities, encompassing both literal and symbolic meanings. At the heuristic level, the incantations consist of simple prayers for safety, protection, and abundant catches, whereas at the hermeneutic level they embody cosmological symbols that position the sea as a sacred entity and a space of dialogue between humans, nature, and God. Their functions include social aspects as a means of strengthening fishermen's solidarity, cultural aspects as a medium for transmitting maritime identity, and religious aspects that emphasize the value of monotheism through Islamic prayers. Thus, the incantations are not merely spiritual tools, but also value systems that preserve tradition, identity, and the cosmic balance of the Ternate fishing community.

**Keywords:** *Meaning of Incantations; Functions of Incantations; Ternate Community; Local Wisdom of North Maluku*

### Introduction

Oral literature is one of the cultural heritages passed down from generation to generation and serves as an essential element in the collective identity of society. According to Hemafitria and Nurhadio (2024), oral literature functions as a medium for transmitting local wisdom, a tool for moral education, and a means of strengthening social solidarity that sustains cultural continuity across generations. Cheung

and Wong (2024) found that the people of Hong Kong make use of oral literature in the form of prayers, collective rituals, and celebrations as part of their living traditions. Similarly, Ma et al. (2024) observed that Chinese communities that remain dependent on rice-based agricultural systems continue to preserve traditional ritual practices in their daily lives. These findings highlight that oral literature is not only of aesthetic value but also encompasses spiritual, social, and practical dimensions that underpin the survival of traditional societies.

The current condition presents a serious challenge. The forces of modernization, globalization, and lifestyle changes have contributed to the decline of oral literary traditions. Sumarwati et al. (2020) emphasized that local wisdom, as a cultural asset for younger generations, is gradually vanishing due to insufficient processes of transmission and actualization. Younger generations tend to abandon traditional values and shift towards unstable foreign cultures that fail to consistently reinforce national identity. This phenomenon is also evident in Indonesia, particularly in Ternate, which possesses a rich diversity of oral traditions. Halil et al. (2018) recorded at least eight types of oral literature in Ternate, one of which is incantations, containing religious, spiritual, and social values. However, the existence of incantations in Ternate society is increasingly eroded, both due to lack of documentation and the weakening process of intergenerational transmission.

The study of incantations, particularly those of Ternate fishermen, becomes crucial when linked to the realities of coastal communities whose livelihood depends on the sea. Sardjuningsih (2012) explained that for fishermen, incantations function not only as prayers or petitions for safety but also as representations of cosmology, worldviews, and harmonious relationships among humans, nature, and God. Alisjahbana (1975) and Danandjaja (1984) regarded incantations as rhythmic folk poetry that embody both magical powers and aesthetic beauty. Wigranto et al. (2023) and Kurmalasari et al. (2023) asserted that the magical aspect is closely tied to the community's spiritual beliefs that incantations can provide protection, inner strength, and fortune. Within the fishing domain, studies by Wulandari et al. (2020) and Ardiansyah (2023) revealed that seafaring incantations are considered the most sacred, as they are directly related to both economic sustainability and safety at sea.

In line with the above, Chandrad and Pratama (2022) demonstrated that the *Ajian Brajamusti* (AB), as one form of traditional poetry, represents cultural heritage born out of Indonesia's diverse traditions. AB not only embodies values of invincibility but also contains profound religious and personal meanings, serving functions of projection, education, and legitimation within culture. Furthermore, this incantation reflects the actualization of the first principle of Pancasila—belief in the oneness of God—alongside the moral obligation for mutual assistance and humility. Febriyanto et al. (2021) further emphasized that incantations contain strong religious meanings, particularly in aspects of surrender and monotheism, while also reflecting social meanings through harmonious relations between humans, others, and the environment. Incantations serve multiple functions, ranging from invulnerability, social cohesion, familial bonds, and love, to being a medium of human communication with God. Their transmission occurs through emotional bonds, symbolic exchanges such as dowry, the granting of incantations, and spiritual practices such as fasting for a day and night. In recitation, certain conditions must be fulfilled, including personal and spatial purity, sincere intention, and concentrated focus so that the incantation may yield its intended benefits.

To date, no research has specifically examined the forms and meanings of incantations within Ternate society. While some studies on Ternate oral traditions exist, they do not specifically address incantations. Halil et al. (2018), for example, noted that Ternate oral literature, particularly those with Sufi characteristics, not only possesses aesthetic value but is also imbued with religious, philosophical, social, and cultural dimensions. Through traditional poetry with distinctive typography, such literature functions as a medium of spiritual expression as well as a reflection of Islamic cosmology intertwined with the local wisdom of the Ternate community. Thus, oral literature in this context holds meaning as a cultural heritage that preserves identity, moral teachings, and the worldview of the Ternate people.

## **Method**

This study employed a qualitative method with a specific focus on the forms and functions of incantations within the Ternate community. The research was conducted in North Ternate District. A qualitative approach was selected as it is considered capable of exploring in depth the meanings, forms, and functions of incantations in the social context of the community (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984, p. 101). The data collected consisted of descriptive accounts, individual experiences, and perspectives, enabling the researcher to comprehensively understand the religious, social, and cultural dimensions embedded in the incantations. Therefore, a qualitative method provides an appropriate foundation for uncovering the local values that are sustained within the oral traditions of the Ternate community. In this study, an ethnographic approach was employed to describe and analyze behavioral patterns, beliefs, and language practices within the community, thereby revealing the cultural dynamics transmitted across generations (Creswell, 2012).

The research approach applied was ethnography, whereby the researcher directly engaged in fieldwork to collect data and deepen understanding of the forms, meanings, and functions of the incantations under study. The research data comprised the forms and functions of Ternate incantations, with data sources including fishermen or fishing groups who still possess incantations, as well as local cultural experts. Sampling techniques utilized were purposive sampling and snowball sampling. Data collection was carried out through interviews and focus group discussions (FGD). To ensure data validity, source triangulation and theoretical triangulation were applied. Data analysis was conducted through a process of collecting data, condensing significant information, organizing it for clarity, and ultimately drawing conclusions supported by the entirety of the data gathered (Miles & Huberman, 2014).

## **Results and Discussion**

**The Meanings and Functions of Fishermen's Incantations** Fishermen's incantations are a vital element of coastal community traditions, serving as a medium of symbolic communication between humans and the unseen world. From the perspective of Riffaterre's semiotics, the meanings of incantations emerge through the signs and symbols embedded in their diction and sentence structures (Fikry et al., 2019).

Within the Ternate fishing community, incantations are employed to establish connections with the macrocosm or spiritual realm as a form of one-way communication. Karim et al. (2024) explain that through these incantations, fishermen articulate prayers, petitions, and hopes so that their fishing activities may proceed smoothly and yield abundant catches. Linguistic and symbolic elements within the incantations, such as the repetition of certain words or phrases, contain profound meanings that reflect the spiritual and cultural values of coastal society.

Beyond their symbolic meanings, fishermen's incantations also embody social, cultural, and religious functions (Supriadi, 2023). Socially, incantations function as a means of character education, instilling values of peace, harmony with nature, and solidarity among community members. Culturally, they serve as a medium for preserving tradition, strengthening coastal identity, and linking younger generations to ancestral heritage. Religiously, incantations are recited as prayers and supplications for safety at sea, while simultaneously affirming belief in supernatural powers believed to provide protection and sustain the livelihood of coastal communities (Dhahiyat et al., 2025; Sardjuningsih, 2012; Widiyanto et al., 2024).

## Safety Mantra at Sea

### (1) Safety Mantra at Sea

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <i>Bismillahirrahmanirrahim,</i>   | "In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful."   |
| <i>Ya jou malamo,</i>  | "O Almighty Lord, O Allah, I seek refuge in You from calamities and slanders, and from the evils of all that You have created." |
| <i>Allahumma inniaudzu bika minalbalai wal fitan wa min syarri ma halaqta,</i> | "Protect us at sea."  |
| <i>Jaga ngone tomangolo,</i>   | "Keep us away from danger."   |
| <i>Sihudu ngone toma bahala,</i>   | "Keep us away from disaster."   |
| <i>Sihudu ngone toma barang maira,</i>   |   |

This spell is a prayer in Arabic and Ternate that seeks protection from disasters, evil, and safety at sea. Heuristically, it signifies a plea to Allah for deliverance from danger, while hermeneutically, it reflects the fishermen's *tawhid* (oneness of God) and surrender to Allah. The spell functions as a medium of spiritual communication that connects humans with divine power, integrating Islamic cosmology with local traditions. Its functions are evident in the social aspect as a reinforcement of solidarity and inner peace; in the cultural aspect as an expression of identity and the transmission of oral traditions through the fusion of Arabic and local language; and in the religious aspect as an affirmation of *tawhid*, surrender, and the belief that safety lies under the authority of Allah.

### (2) Spell to Ward Off Storms

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <i>Bismillahirrahmanirrahim,</i>                    | 'In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful' |
| <i>Allahumma inniasaluka khairaha, ya jou ngone</i> | 'O Allah, I ask You for the goodness of this wind'           |
| <i>Sipela badai</i>                                 | 'O our Lord'   |
| <i>Siboi kore</i>                                   | 'Break the storm'  |
| <i>Sigudu bahaya ma ira</i>                         | 'Dispel the wind'  |
| <i>Sigudu musiba</i>                                | 'Keep disasters away'  |
| <i>Haka ngone keselamatan.</i>                      | 'Keep dangers away'  |
|   | 'Grant us safety'.   |

Heuristically, this mantra contains a prayer to Allah so that the wind may bring goodness, while storms are broken and driven away, as expressed in phrases such as *sipela badai* and *siboi kore*, which signify a plea for protection. Hermeneutically, the storm is perceived as a cosmic force that can only be subdued by divine power, reflecting the cosmological worldview of Ternate fishermen. From a functional perspective, socially, the mantra strengthens the solidarity of fishermen when facing extreme weather, since it is recited collectively as an act of shared resistance. Culturally, it preserves the maritime cosmology of Ternate, in which storms and winds are regarded as natural symbols worthy of respect,

transmitted through distinctive ritual language. Religiously, the mantra affirms the principle of *tawhid*—that only Allah has authority over storms—thus positioning the prayer for protection as part of worship and reliance on God, while simultaneously providing calmness and spiritual optimism in seafaring activities.

### (3) Mantra Before Going to Sea

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <i>Bismillahirrahmanirrahim, arkabuu</i> | ‘In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most       |
| <i>fiha bism allah majraha</i>           | Merciful’  |
| <i>wamursaha,</i>                        | ‘Embark upon it, in the name of the Lord, its course and |
| <i>Jou makuasa toma ngolo,</i>           | its anchorage’   |
| <i>Sihaka cahaya toma ngone ma</i>       | ‘O Lord who rules the seas’                              |
| <i>ngoko,</i>                            | ‘Illuminate our path’                                    |
| <i>Gasa ngone,</i>                       | ‘Guide us’   |
| <i>Sigudu ngone toma bahaya yang</i>     | ‘Keep us away from the dangers within the sea’.          |
| <i>sema toma ngolo madaha",</i>          |  |

Heuristically, this mantra contains a prayer for the sea journey to be granted light, protection, and freedom from danger. Hermeneutically, the word *light* is understood as a symbol of divine guidance that directs the way, while the sea is interpreted as a cosmological space full of mysteries that can only be subdued by God’s power. Its social function lies in strengthening solidarity among the crew members who collectively seek protection. Culturally, the mantra preserves the maritime identity of the Ternate community by presenting the sea as a sacred space. Religiously, it reaffirms the value of *tawhid* through prayer to Allah as the sole source of safety.

### (4) Mantra to Keep Your

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <i>Bismillahirrahmanirrahim,</i>                  | ‘In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most   |
| <i>Huwa alladzi yuhyi wayumitu (assafinah),</i>   | Merciful’  |
| <i>Moku-moku i jaga,</i>                          | ‘He is the One who gives life and takes it away (the |
| <i>Sihaka cahaya toma ngone ma ngoko. Ngone</i>   | ship)’   |
| <i>ma hoti i foturu badai,</i>                    | ‘Waves, beware’                                      |
| <i>Ngone ma hoti i foturu pas makodahe rato i</i> | ‘Illuminate my path’                                 |
| <i>kado,</i>                                      | ‘May our ship remain strong against the storm’       |
|   | ‘Remain steadfast when facing strong winds’.         |

### (5) Ship Strong

Heuristically, this mantra contains a prayer for the ship to remain strong in facing storms and strong winds. The phrase “*He is the One who gives life and takes life (of the ship)*” reflects dependence on God’s power. Hermeneutically, the ship is not merely understood as a means of transportation, but as a symbol of the fishermen’s life that must remain steadfast in confronting the threats of the sea, with divine light as the guiding force of safety. Socially, this mantra provides a sense of collective security for the

crew in dealing with uncertainties. Culturally, it illustrates the local wisdom of Ternate fishermen, who associate the ship with strength and resilience. Religiously, the prayer affirms that the safety of both ship and human beings rests solely in God's power, making the act of sailing both an effort and a form of spiritual devotion.

#### (6) Mantra to avoid getting lost at sea

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <i>Bismillahirrahmanirrahim,</i>         | 'In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful' |
| <i>Aalllahumm inni asaluk fi safari,</i> | 'O Allah, I ask You in my journey'                           |
| <i>Ogolo i jaga ngone,</i>               | 'May the sea protect us'                                     |
| <i>Nyinga tetap ma cahaya,</i>           | 'Keep our hearts enlightened'                                |
| <i>Ngoko ma cahaya,</i>                  | 'Keep our path peaceful'                                     |
| <i>Sigudu ngone toma bahala.</i>         | 'Keep us away from disaster'.                                |

Heuristically, this mantra contains a prayer for fishermen not to lose their way at sea, asking for protection and peace of mind. The phrase "*nyinga tetap ma cahaya, ngoko ma cahaya*" conveys the hope that both the heart and direction remain illuminated. Hermeneutically, light is interpreted as a symbol of divine guidance, while the sea is understood as a cosmic space that requires spiritual direction so that humans do not lose their path in life. Socially, the mantra cultivates a shared confidence that the sea journey will remain under control. Culturally, it reflects the maritime tradition of the Ternate community, which regards the sea as a sacred space that must be respected. Religiously, this prayer strengthens the fishermen's faith that only Allah, as the ultimate source of light and true protector, has the power to prevent humans from calamity and misguidance.

#### (7) Mantra to Avoid Big Waves

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Bismillahirrahmanirrahim,</i>   | 'In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful' |
| <i>Ngolo ma kabasarang,</i>        | 'O great sea'  |
| <i>Si guci ena ma setang,</i>      | 'Calm your anger'  |
| <i>Moku-moku ma ici,</i>           | 'Let the waves subside'                                      |
| <i>Biidznillah,</i>                | 'By Allah's permission'                                      |
| <i>Sidadi ngone ma oti foturu.</i> | 'Make the ship remain strong'.                               |

Heuristically, this mantra is a prayer for the calming of large waves and for the ship to remain strong in facing the swell. The phrase "*ngolo ma kabasarang*" emphasizes the sea as a mighty entity capable of anger, while "*biidznillah*" links the calming of the waves to the permission of Allah. Hermeneutically, the sea is personified as a powerful being that must be respected, while the prayer reflects the belief that ultimate control rests in the hands of God. Socially, the mantra provides collective reassurance for fishermen confronting the dangers of great waves. Culturally, it preserves the cosmological tradition of the Ternate community, which regards the sea as a sacred space filled with power. Religiously, it contains a prayer that affirms the principle of *tawhid*: only with Allah's permission can the waves subside, ensuring the safety of both the ship and its crew.

## (8) Mantra for a Safe Return to Land

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <i>Bismillahirrahmanirrahim,</i>            | 'In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful'                |
| <i>Allahumma inniaudzu bika minalbalai</i>  | 'O Almighty God, O Allah, I seek refuge in You                              |
| <i>wal fitan, wa min syarri ma halaqta,</i> | from disasters and slander, and from the evil of all that You have created' |
| <i>Ngolo i ofi,</i>                         | 'Protect us at sea'   |
| <i>Hoi ngolo ma ngoko,</i>                  | 'O pure ocean'  |
| <i>Si gudu ngone toma marabahaya,</i>       | 'Open our way'  |
| <i>Salamat ngone manyawa.</i>               | 'Keep us away from danger'  |
|   | 'Save our lives'.   |

Heuristically, this mantra is a prayer for protection so that the return journey from the sea proceeds safely. The expression "*ngolo i ofi, hoi ngolo ma ngoko*" signifies the sacred sea that opens the path to safety. Hermeneutically, the sea is perceived not merely as a physical space but also as a sacred realm that must be respected. The inclusion of Arabic phrases reflects the integration of Islamic values with local cosmology, wherein the safety of the soul (*manyawa*) is understood as originating solely from divine power. Socially, this mantra provides collective reassurance for fishermen as they prepare to return home. Culturally, it strengthens the maritime identity of the Ternate community, which regards the sea as both a sphere of livelihood and a spiritual domain. Religiously, the prayer reaffirms the belief that true protection comes from Allah, who alone has the power to shield humans from disaster and to safeguard both body and soul.

## (9) Mantra So that the Net is Not Empty

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <i>Bismillahirrahmanirrahim,</i>             | 'In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful' |
| <i>Ya jou makuasa toma ngolo,</i>            | 'O Lord who rules over the oceans'                           |
| <i>Si wosa ngone na soma,</i>                | 'Fill our nets'  |
| <i>Supaya ngone fadahe nyao malo lamo se</i> | 'May we catch great and abundant fish'.                      |
| <i>dofu,</i>                                 |  |

Heuristically, this mantra is a prayer so that fishermen's nets will not be empty but filled with fish. The phrase "*si wosa ngone na soma*" means "fill our nets," while the mention of *ikan masi* and *ikan huru* reflects the expectation of obtaining tangible catches. Hermeneutically, the prayer represents the belief that the sea's sustenance is a divine gift. The sea is regarded as a sacred realm, while the net symbolizes hope, perseverance, and the continuity of fishermen's livelihoods. Socially, this mantra fosters a spirit of togetherness and the shared conviction that going to sea will yield results. Culturally, it preserves the cosmological tradition of the Ternate people, who place the sea as their primary source of livelihood. Religiously, the mantra affirms the belief that only Allah can fill the nets with fish, framing the act of fishing not merely as economic labor but also as a form of prayer and devotion.

## (10) Mantra to See Fish Signs

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <i>Bismillahirrahmanirrahim, biidznillah,</i> | ‘In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful’ |
| <i>Moku-moku i haka ngone petunjuk,</i>       | ‘By the will of Allah’                                       |
| <i>Nyao i haka ma sahingga,</i>               | ‘The waves guide us’   |
| <i>Moko i hoi,</i>                            | ‘The fish give signs’  |
| <i>Enama hasil dofu-dofu."</i>                | ‘The way is open’  |
|   | ‘The sea yields abundance’                                   |

Heuristically, this mantra is a prayer for fishermen to receive guidance in finding fish, expressed in the phrase “*moku-moku i haka ngone petunjuk*” which means “the waves provide direction,” and “*nyao i haka ma sahingga*” which signifies “the fish reveal their presence.” Hermeneutically, waves and fish are personified as guides, symbolizing a cosmic harmony between humans and nature, while fishing success is understood as a divine blessing (*biidznillah*) that unites human effort with spiritual grace. Socially, the mantra strengthens fishermen’s collective belief that natural signs can be followed to secure a catch. Culturally, it reflects the local wisdom of Ternate fishermen in interpreting natural phenomena as ecological indicators. Religiously, the prayer affirms that successful fishing is not merely a matter of human skill, but ultimately a gift from Allah, thereby framing fishing as both effort and devotion.

## (11) Mantra to Make Fish Come Closer

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <i>Bismillahirrahmanirrahim,</i> | ‘In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful,’ |
| <i>Jou makuasa toma ngolo,</i>   | ‘O Lord who rules over the seas’                              |
| <i>Ngolo ma ogo,</i>             | ‘The sea is calm’   |
| <i>Nyao i kado</i>               | ‘The fish gather’   |
| <i>Hasil dofu foloi</i>          | ‘The sea yields abundance’                                    |

This mantra is a prayer for fish to draw near and for an abundant catch, expressed in the phrase “*ngolo ma ogo*” which signifies a calm sea as the ideal condition to attract fish to gather. Hermeneutically, the calm sea is understood as a form of cosmic harmony that brings sustenance, while the gathering of fish is interpreted not only literally but also as a symbol of blessing and the availability of resources by God’s will. Socially, the mantra fosters collective optimism that fishing efforts will be successful. Culturally, it preserves the maritime tradition of the Ternate community, which regards calm seas as auspicious signs within their local cosmology. Religiously, the prayer affirms the principle of *tawhid*, emphasizing that sustenance and the catch ultimately come solely from Allah, thus framing fishing activities as both an act of worship and a source of livelihood.

**Discussion**

The fishermen’s mantras of Ternate represent a distinctive form of oral literature that blends religious elements, local culture, and ecological knowledge. In general, these mantras are prayers that use Arabic expressions as a way of internalizing Islamic teachings, which are then combined with local



language so that the prayers feel more relevant to the fishermen's daily lives. This combination shows a syncretism between the universal values of religion and local wisdom rooted in maritime ecology. Halil et al. (2018) emphasize that Ternate's oral literature carries both aesthetic and spiritual values, functioning as a medium to pass down cultural knowledge to future generations.

According to Riffaterre (in Noviana & Saifudin, 2020), interpreting literary texts involves two stages. The first is the *heuristic* stage, which is a literal reading based on word meanings and language structure as the initial step of understanding. The second is the *hermeneutic* stage, which involves a deeper reading to uncover symbolic, connotative, cultural, religious, and social meanings hidden within the text. Thus, the heuristic stage provides the foundation, while the hermeneutic stage reveals the deeper essence of a literary work.

In terms of meaning, Liska et al. (2022) explain that heuristically, fishermen's mantras consist of literal prayers asking for safety, protection, and sustenance. Expressions such as *jaga ngone tomangolo* ("protect us at sea"), *sipela badai* ("break the storm"), or *jaring manang, hasil mangure* ("the nets are full, the catch is abundant") show direct requests connected to fishing activities. However, at the hermeneutic level, the texts carry deeper symbolic meanings. The sea is personified as a powerful entity that can either "be angry" or "grant sustenance," while prayer functions as a medium for dialogue between humans and cosmic forces (Liska et al., 2022). This aligns with Ma et al. (2024), who argue that ritual practices rooted in oral literature, whether in agrarian or maritime societies, are not only practical but also serve to build ecological awareness.

Zuhri and Rizal (2022) note that traditional literature serves important functions in society, including fulfilling the needs of religious ceremonies. Its social function is closely tied to shared values and reciprocal influences, while also providing guidance for people to act wisely. From a cultural perspective, Sapir (1921) highlights that language and culture are inseparable, with culture acting as a form of social heritage that guides community life. This makes cultural diversity, such as that of the Bantur people, uniquely meaningful in strengthening their identity. The social function of fishermen's mantras is evident in how they strengthen group solidarity—for instance, through collective recitations before going to sea or during storms, which foster a sense of unity. Such traditions reinforce the shared belief that safety can only be achieved through submission to God. In this way, mantras function not only as religious expressions but also as psychological tools that build confidence. Similarly, Sumarwati et al. (2020) emphasize that oral traditions play a social role in fostering group bonds while internalizing norms and values.

The cultural function of mantras can be seen in their role in preserving the maritime identity of Ternate's people. Through the texts and their practice, young fishermen are taught to respect the sea as a source of life. Cosmological views that regard the sea as sacred are reflected in expressions such as *ngolo ma ogo* ("a calm sea") or *ngolo i ofi* ("a pure sea"). This shows that mantras act as a medium for transmitting cultural values essential to preserving tradition. Wulandari et al. (2020) also stress that fishing mantras are part of intangible cultural heritage that should be documented to prevent their loss to modernization.

The religious function is highly significant, as nearly all mantras begin with the *basmalah* and include prayers in Arabic. The principle of monotheism is affirmed through the belief that only Allah has the power to calm storms, strengthen boats, and provide abundant catches. Thus, fishing is not only seen as an economic activity but also as an act of worship. Wighranto et al. (2023) explain that mantras serve as spiritual instruments that strengthen the vertical relationship between humans and God, while also maintaining the cosmic balance between humans and nature. This dimension confirms that the mantra tradition is aligned with Islamic teachings, which encourage prayers in every activity.

## Conclusion

From a heuristic perspective, the fishermen's mantras of Ternate are understood as literal texts containing prayers or simple requests. Expressions such as "*jaga ngone tomangolo*" (protect us at sea) and "*sipela badai*" (break the storm) explicitly illustrate the concrete needs of fishermen, namely safety while sailing, protection from maritime dangers, and abundant catches. This heuristic reading shows that the mantras are not merely words, but rather a direct reflection of the lived experiences of coastal communities who depend on the sea for survival. However, when analyzed further through a hermeneutic approach, the meaning of the mantras goes beyond the literal level. The texts present symbols that represent the cosmology of maritime society. The sea, for instance, is personified as a sacred entity that can "be angry" by bringing storms, or conversely, "bestow sustenance" through fish catches. Thus, prayer becomes a dialogical medium between humans and the cosmic forces believed to govern life. This hermeneutic layer reveals that the mantras function not only in practical terms but also in building religious and ecological awareness about the importance of maintaining a harmonious relationship between humans, nature, and God.

In terms of function, the fishermen's mantras of Ternate hold a very complex role. Socially, the collective recitation of mantras before sailing or when facing storm threats strengthens the solidarity among fishermen groups. This collective practice fosters togetherness and shared belief that safety can only be achieved through unity and prayer to God. Such solidarity functions as a social mechanism that maintains group cohesion, ensuring that fishermen face the challenges of the sea not individually, but with the power of community. Culturally, the mantras serve as a medium for transmitting maritime values to the younger generation. The local cosmology that places the sea as a sacred space is reflected in expressions such as "*ngolo ma ogo*" (a calm sea) or "*ngolo i ofi*" (a holy sea). Through the practice of mantra recitation, the younger generation is taught to respect the sea not only as an economic resource, but also as part of a cultural identity that must be preserved. From a religious perspective, almost all mantras begin with *basmalah* and Arabic prayers, affirming the value of *tawhid* that only Allah has the power to calm storms, strengthen boats, and grant abundant catches. This indicates that fishing is not merely an economic activity but is also understood as a form of worship that cultivates gratitude and submission to God. Thus, the social, cultural, and religious functions of the mantras are interconnected, forming a value system that sustains tradition while reinforcing the spiritual identity of the Ternate fishing community.

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