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*Corresponding author: Ricardo Freedom Nanuru, Department of Theology, Universitas Kristen Indonesia Maluku, Ambon, Indonesia.

E-mail: ricardonanuru632@gmail.com

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Sasadu: Traditional Houses in Sahu Tribe Community Reviewed from the Philosophy of Jürgen Habermas

Ricardo Freedom Nanuru ¹¹ Department of Theology, Universitas Kristen Indonesia Maluku, Ambon, Indonesia.Email: ricardonanuru632@gmail.com

Abstract: The research entitled Construction of Public Sphere of *Sasadu* Traditional Houses in Sahu Tribe Community Reviewed from the Philosophy of Jürgen Habermas is motivated by the views of Sahu tribe community on their traditional houses which, according to the writer, only focus on the cultural-customary-religious traditions. In fact, *Sasadu* can be interpreted more than that, which is as a public Sphere in which Sahu tribe community together with the public authorities can build rational communicative discourse to reach consensus on the social, economic and political problems faced in West Halmahera for the sake of prosperity in living together. This research aimed to construct the philosophical concept of *Sasadu* traditional houses in Sahu tribe community based on the public sphere point of view of Jürgen Habermas. This research was a library study supported by field studies through observations and interviews. The method of data analysis applied in this research was philosophical hermeneutics. After conducting a search in this research, the results obtained are that *Sasadu* in Sahu tribe community in West Halmahera can be categorized as a public sphere in which private people and public authorities gather to form a “public” for developing argumentative rational discourse which will later be agreed to become a joint decision as a society which leads to public opinion. *Sasadu*, thus becomes a mediator between the private sphere of Sahu tribe community and the sphere of public authority, where social control is built and the values of universality are guarded.

Keywords: Public Sphere; *Sasadu* Traditional House; Sahu Tribe.

1. INTRODUCTION

Cultural preservation is a human responsibility as a creature of culture. Preservation is done not to bring people back to their past lives, but as an attitude of willingness to learn from the younger generation and as respect for the creations of the previous generation. One cultural element that deserves attention to be preserved is traditional houses. As one of the cultural expressions, traditional houses must be preserved, because traditional houses have a unique architecture compared to modern houses. In addition to the aspects of architectural uniqueness, in general, traditional houses reflect a value system that shapes people's behavior in a particular context and time. Therefore, through traditional house architecture, world views, life views, social systems, and respect for human life from previous generations can be known (Iwamony, Iwamony, Wakim, & Wakole, 2012; Maswekan, Nanuru, & Tahitu, 2019; Syahputra et al., 2019).

North Maluku, especially the Sahu Tribe in West Halmahera Regency, is one of the tribes in the Eastern Region of Indonesia (KTI) which has a distinctiveness that continues to be maintained from generation to generation. One of the local knowledge areas of the Sahu tribe community physically is their traditional house called *Sasadu*. *Sasadu* traditional houses can be found in every village in Sahu region. *Sasadu*, is the name of Sahu tribe community for their traditional house, as well as recognition for their identity as a community (*Sasadu* community). This means that *Sasadu* is not only limited to the name of a public building, but *Sasadu* is also a set of values that govern the social order of Sahu tribe community (Geertz, 1992; Nanuru, 2019; Nanuru, Munir, & Tjahyadi, 2019;



Tjanu, 2008). The traditional house, known by the Sahu people as *Sasadu*, seems to be interpreted at least in three terms or understanding. The first is *Sasadu* as a “Joint House” because in *Sasadu* the Sahu people discuss and resolve their social problems, and all activities related to the agricultural culture carried out by the Sahu people begin and end in *Sasadu*. The second is *Sasadu* as the “Symbolization of life” because *Sasadu* architecture by the Sahu tribe community is understood as a collection of symbols or depiction of their life's journey. The third is *Sasadu* as a source of legal and ethical values, because in the *Sasadu* building Sahu people obtain Bubitare Bererong (regulations of tribal community and their messages) from Mangomior (tribal chief) to regulate social relations as tribal community (Nanuru, 2019; Nanuru et al., 2019; Tjanu, 2008; Visser, 1989). Some of the above explanations indicate that the *Sasadu* traditional house in Sahu tribe community has a central role in the public sphere of the community. This traditional house is the center of the implementation of traditional ceremonies such as thanksgiving for harvests and ceremonies that build togetherness in local religiosity. More than that, *Sasadu* also functions as a place for settlement of social matters, and other community activities that take place in it. This cultural phenomenon certainly requires analysis through research and disclosure to prove that the very meaningful social function of *Sasadu* traditional houses is very dominant in the Sahu tribe community.

2. Public Sphere Concept of Jürgen Habermas

Almost every discourse about public sphere always refers to Habermas's thinking which is able to explore various aspects inherent in public sphere. The perspective he used to analyze and criticize public sphere extends into various broad dimensions so that the analytical wealth contained in his concept of public sphere becomes a challenging thing to study (Prasetyo, 2012). The bourgeois public sphere may be conceived above all as the sphere of private people come together as a public; they soon claimed the public sphere regulated from above against the public authorities themselves, to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labor (Habermas, 1989). The above was also discussed by Rutherford in his book *Endless Propaganda: The Advertising of Public Goods* who stated: Habermas defined the public sphere as a virtual or imaginary community which does not necessarily exist in any identifiable sphere. In its ideal form, the public sphere is made up of private people gathered as a public and articulating the needs of society with the state. Through acts of assembly and dialogue, the public sphere generates opinions and attitudes which serve to affirm or challenge—therefore, to guide—the affairs of state. In ideal terms, the public sphere is the source of public opinion needed to “legitimate authority in any functioning democracy (Rutherford, 2000). Habermas (1989) presented three criteria which he calls “institutional criteria” leading to an understanding of what he meant by public sphere:

1. The first criterion is ignoring status or avoiding critical discussion about status.
2. The second criterion is to focus on the domain of “common concern”. In this criterion, the historical reality places several domains whose interpretation is only controlled by the ruling authorities such as the church and the state, even though the domain can be discussed by involving the wider public.
3. The third criterion is the inclusivity. No matter how exclusive the public is in certain cases, in fact in the public sphere someone remains a part of a small group.

The sphere according to Habermas is a “private sphere” and “intimate sphere”. Private spheres are spaces that are in market relations and are more commonly referred to as ownership spheres. The bourgeoisie are people who in this context are referred to as private persons, while the family sphere (intimate sphere) is the core of the private sphere. As private persons, the bourgeoisie has two things, ownership of goods and of workers. This is the kind of ambivalence of public sphere where the existence of private sphere is inevitably mixed. The ambivalence of the private sphere is also the nature of public sphere, where they as private persons are involved in critical discussions of a political reality which basically represents their status as a bourgeoisie and concerns about regulations that might disrupt their private sphere (Habermas, 1989; Nasrullah, 2012). Habermas

also stressed that in the public sphere the bourgeoisie is consciously or unconsciously representing two identities as the public. The identity is the owner of capital or workers, where they must represent the voice of the private sphere by linking it as a public interest, and the self as a pure and simple citizen (Habermas, 1989). If a simple conclusion is drawn, Habermas' public sphere is a space that works by using a practical moral discourse that involves rational and critical interactions that are built with the aim of finding solutions to political problems. Although Habermas' public sphere focused its discussion on the public sphere of bourgeois society, but through that steppingstone, public sphere can be understood as a space that provides and engages the wider public in discussing existing realities (Nasrullah, 2012).

3. Research Method and Materials

This paper was the result of library research supported by field studies through observation and interviews. The formal object of this research was the Public Sphere concept of Jürgen Habermas, while the material objects were *Sasadu* traditional houses and Sahu tribe community. The method of data analysis applied in this research was philosophical hermeneutics, with the methodological elements of interpretation, historical continuity, heuristics, and description.

4. *Sasadu* Traditional House in Sahu Tribe Community in West Halmahera

4.1. Historical Background of *Sasadu*

The building of the *Sasadu* traditional house is not a single family house, but is a shared house belonging to the Sahu tribe. *Sasadu* is a building that is closely related to the customs of the daily life of the Sahu community. It is a large building with a roof made of woven sago leaves. The building consists of several wooden structures which are decorated with various ornaments based on the local wisdom owned by Sahu tribe community (Barjiyah, Salama, Ridwan, & Hasan, 2015; Nanuru et al., 2019). The historical narrative of *Sasadu* until it takes form as a public building as it is today, has gone through a long historical process. According to information from several oral traditions, the name of *Sasadu* was taken from the story of the life of the ancestors of the Sahu people who initially used *Sadu* or *Saduo'o* (stone pits, caves), as a refuge from various threats. Making *Saduo'o* (caves) as a place to settle for people whose lives were still moving (nomadic) was certainly not very supportive, so they later built a house roofed with areca leaves without walls (Sahu = *Calaisa*) as a shelter. The *Calaisa* house was then developed again into *Sungu* (walled house). Furthermore, this *Sungu* house was made with rooms so that it was named *Kekecong* (Tjanu, 2008; Salasa, Interview, Juli 2017).



Figure 1: *Kekecong* (Tjanu, 2008).

Kekecong House was then expanded into *Dous* or *Do'us*, which was a family home with bamboo walls and a roof made of sago leaves. At this stage of civilization of *Dous*, Sahu tribe community had begun to live by building relationships with one another. At this stage, they still lived in groups called *Rera* (family groups), in which there were several *Dous* as their house (Tjanu, 2008; Salasa, Interview: July 2017).



Figure 2: *Dous* (Do'us) (Tjanu, 2008).

The life of the community living in a few *Do'us*, experienced a dynamic of life (not static) in social processes. In such process, community life needs were increasing. With the increasing need, this community consisting of several *Do'us* also needed a place where they could jointly discuss and overcome the life problems they faced. This group of families or clans then agreed to build *Wala Lolom* (House of Gathering), a building with no walls built in the middle of the community. So *Wala Lolom* served as a place to discuss and talk over a variety of community problems (Tjanu, 2008; Salasa, Interview: Juli 2017). In the next phase of civilization, Sahu people living in Ji'o Japung valley (now Sahu Valley), began to form fleets to defend the region from threats of external expansion. One of the famous Sahu fleets was *Kagunga Tagi-tag* (*Kagunga* = Battleship; *Tagi-tag* = travelling). *Kagunga Tagi-tag* was used for regional defense in the waters of Maluku Sea. The might of the fleet was symbolized by constructing a public building, whose architecture was designed like or the same as *Kagunga Tagi-tag*, and this building was known as *Kagunga Tego-tego* (*Kagunga* = Battleship; *Tego-tego* = sitting or more precisely on land). In other words, *Kagunga Tego-tego* is a boat that doesn't float. *Kagunga Tego-tego* was a place where various war logistics were prepared, various problems were solved, agricultural activities began and ended, and diverse rituals for salvation were carried out (Tjanu, 2008; Wakim, 2015; Salasa, Interview: July 2017).



Figure 3: *Sasadu* according to W. Kiikenthal in 1896 (Tjanu, 2008).

The function of *Kagunga Tego-tego* was increasingly complex when the Sahu tribe people no longer sailed and preferred to settle as an agricultural society. *Kagunga Tego-tego*, which is the only symbol of the strength and existence of Sahu tribe community, was then considered to no longer describe the strength of the fleet of *Kagunga Tagi-tagis*; so *Kagunga Tego-tego* changed its name to *Sasadu* until today (Beolado, 2003; Tjanu, 2008). The word *Sasadu* itself, etymologically derived from the word *Falabua* (in Ternate, *Fala* = house; *Bua* = law. So *Falabua* means legal house). Another version stated that the name of *Sasadu* comes from the word *Sasa'dua* in Sahu language which means gathering, embracing, and regulating. Thus, from some of the origins of the word, the social function of *Sasadu* is a source of life's value that is for gathering purpose (Tjanu, 2008; Salasa, Interview: July 2017).



Figure 4: *Sasadu* Traditional House in 2017 (Author Documentation)

4.2. Overview of *Sasadu* Architecture

The building structure of *Sasadu*, embracing the frame construction system (skeleton) with the main elements of the primary and secondary columns are tied together by the transverse, longitudinal and circular beams into a solid unity (rigid). All of these columns are not planted into the ground, but they rather stand on the foundation of *umpak batu utuh* (not a split stone) (Hikmansyah, 2016, 2017). The arrangement of columns can be seen in the following figure:

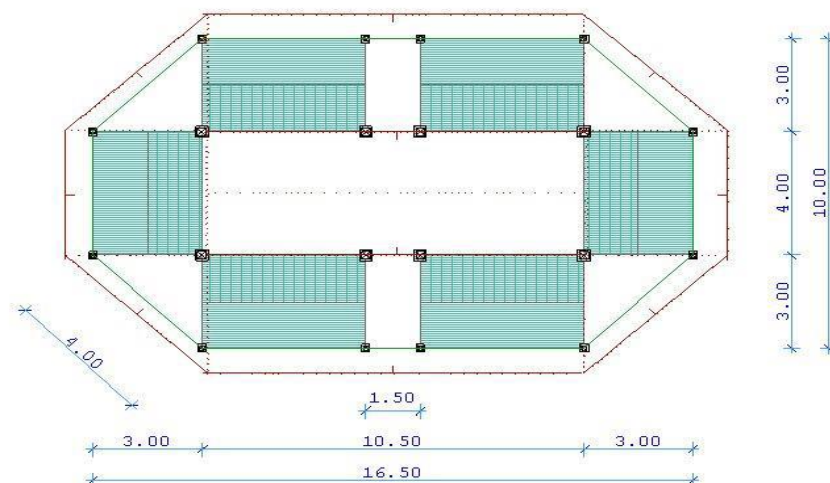


Figure 5: Structure of *Sasadu* Traditional House (Hikmansyah, 2016, 2017).

The structure of *Sasadu* traditional house (Hikmansyah, 2016, 2017) above, can be explained as follows:

- a) There are 8 main columns supporting the highest saddle roof section which are arranged in two stripes, each for 4 in the deepest row, directed lengthwise
- b) On the left and right side of the main pillars directed lengthwise, arranged side poles (secondary) 2 pieces for each. The side pillars support the saddle roof forwarding. The number of side pillars is 16 pieces
- c) At the front and back of the house, 2 secondary pillar rows are arranged in the main pillar lane, which supports the continuation of the roof. The number of secondary pillar on the back face is 8 pieces. The total number of columns is 32

Although *Sasadu* is scattered in some districts and villages, Sahu people have a similar pattern for the placement of their traditional house. In every village (gam), *Sasadu* is located between two rows of residential houses that are arranged opposite to each other. So, the houses here look like encircling a traditional house. The main door of *Sasadu* faces the sunrise or eastward (Barjiyah et al., 2015; Amo; Banya; Lesa, Interview: July 2017). The shape of the building provides an association on the shape of the battleship (*Kagunga Tagi-tagti*), an octagonal with a high center section taking saddle shape and indicates the part as the most important part of the building. This section is the most important part because at that point various social issues are discussed and resolved, various rites are performed, various inaugurations in public office as well as various cultural values are given and accepted. Meanwhile the portion of the porch is short. Generally Sahu people understand that this is meant for everyone who enters that they should bow down as a sign of respect for their culture. Building raw materials are raw materials that can easily be found around the lives of Sahu tribe community (Gufasa Wood, Bamboo, Enau, Sago, and so on) (Beolado, 2003; Hikmansyah, 2016; Tjanu, 2008).

The *Sasadu* building was constructed directly on the ground and has a rectangular geometric plane which is divided into the following arrangements, (1) The middle room is rectangular with 8 main pillars; (2) The side room that surrounds the middle room is in the form of octagonal, which is supported by 12 outer edge pillars and 12 middle pillars between the outer pillars and the main pillars of middle room; (3) The upper construction arrangement consists of a low slope side roof that adheres to the upper edge of the middle room, taking a shape of an isosceles triangle that has a pointed roof; (4) The location of the building is east-west direction (Wakim, 2015; Tjanu, Interview: July 2017). *Sasadu* Roof is made of sago leaves. Each bunch of sago leaves measuring 1.5 meters is arranged and tied to a bamboo to form a rectangle. *Sasadu* roof shape looks unique, the distance between the roof with the top of *Sasadu* look far away. The top of *Sasadu* looks higher and the roof of *Sasadu* looks lower because it has a symbolic meaning in which the higher top refers to God and the low roof is for anyone that enter to bow down to point human's respect for God and their neighbor (Barjiyah et al., 2015; Salasa, Interview: July 2017).

The architecture of the *Sasadu* building is a traditional building model that can also be associated as a public building construction filled with symbols of social life. These symbolic meanings can be seen and understood from the uniqueness of the construction of the *Sasadu* building. The building is made by not using modern adhesive materials such as glue or nails, but only by using the science of building a traditional house that is hereditary inherited. After this building stands firmly, then it is knitted with *gumutu*, which is a rope made from the enau tree belt. One interesting thing here is that the knitted *gumutu*, or what is called *Sirang* in Sahu language, on each joint of the building, is knitted unbroken. It means only 1 rope which circles up to the entire *Sasadu* building (Barjiyah et al., 2015; Tjanu, 2008). *Sasadu* has six entrances/exits and no door leaves, which symbolize the hospitality of the Sahu community. They are open and willing to accept anyone who visits their house or region (Salasa; Bora; Kadada; Interview: October 2017). Although it looks open, there are certain rules to enter *Sasadu*. During the traditional ceremony, the door on the left side of the building corner is the main door that is only for customary elders and invited guests, while the public can enter from five other doors. The Sahu tribe built its traditional house with a certain size unit taken through customary decisions and local wisdom that has been owned

since the ancestors (Barjiyah et al., 2015). *Sasadu* is supported by eight main pillars. When the first time *Sasadu* was built, the height of the pillar was not based on the meter but based on the height of one female body. So, the woman stood up and was added with her sitting position and are added again with nine fists above her. So even if you do not use the eight-pole meter, the height will exactly match the height of the woman. The *Sasadu* floor is formerly made of compacted soil, but as it progresses, much has been replaced by a mixture of cement and sand. This floor change is due to hygiene and food hygiene that often accompany the events in it. On the floor of *Sasadu*, there are six long chairs called *dego-dego* coupled with four long tables called *tataba*. *Dego-dego* functions as the seat of men and women while *tataba* functions as a place to serve food during traditional ceremonies (Barjiyah et al., 2015). The complex architecture of this building has meaning. The building is full of symbols of Sahu people's life. The science of traditional building that does not use glue and nails above illustrates that although only with its cultural values, in *Sasadu* culture, Sahu people can survive to build their lives and social relationships. Likewise the symbolization of a rope knitted throughout the building unbroken, illustrates that in the *Sasadu* culture, the Sahu are integrated in a solid solidarity bond (Barjiyah et al., 2015; Tjanu, 2008). The architecture of this *Sasadu* building, undeniably has several cultural meanings inherent in it. There are many things in *Sasadu* architecture that are not easy to understand simply. The assumption is, to be able to comprehend the comprehensive symbolic meaning of the construction of this building; a deeper and further interpretation of this cultural context is needed (Geertz, 1992; Tjanu, 2008).

4.3. Functions of Rooms in *Sasadu*

The rooms in *Sasadu* are not walled, open, or do not have a partition that separates one room from the other. Nevertheless, there are certain places that have been made based on their respective functions at the time of the ceremony. During the traditional ceremonies, those who present are only men and women who are representatives of the most prominent clans in the *Walasae*, *Ngowarepe*, *Walangatom* and so on that were also considered as landlords in membership in one clan through the male lineage (patrilineal) and according to the hierarchical position in the larger territorial groups (*garan*), such as *Walasae* (Wakim, 2015; Salasa, Interview: July 2017). In Sahu, the clan position is always described in this way, and someone who is considered to represent the ancestors (*omenge*) occupies the ancestral seat first. Sometimes on the *Sasadu* roof blades that are above the seat (*aoto*) the representatives have carved the lineage of their ancestors. Women take seats according to the position of their husbands or fathers. What is usually referred to as tradition or custom here is nothing but the concepts of cosmological order that exist in various parts of the Sahu culture manifested, for example through certain codes relating to sphere (Wakim, 2015).

Regarding the clan members during the ceremony at the traditional house, there is "opposition" between *walasae* as the younger sibling and *ngowarepe* as the older one. If you pay attention to the seats of representatives from various clans in *Sasadu*, members of *garan walasae* are at sea position and face the land, commonly referred to as the upper part (*sasa'du toma relu*), while the members of *ngowarepe* sit on the opposite of *walasae* on the land side and face the sea. The order of clans in the *garan walasae*, for example, lines up on the table from top to bottom, which is from the sea to the land. Apart from "opposition" between these groups, there is another more universal "opposition", which is between male and female participants. *Sasadu* is divided into two parts with a piece of red and white cloth that crosses the *Sasadu* (*gelo*) and big drums hung at the center of *Sasadu*. The male place is on the 'sea' side (sea direction), while the female is on the 'land' side (land direction) (Wakim, 2015).

The function of *Sasadu*, aside from being used for various customary activities, shifts to religious activities, and is used for diverse ordinary social activities. The function of *Sasadu* is transformed into a village hall when public meetings are held, such as to discuss agricultural issues related to the future planting period. In the past village leaders solved customary disputes at *Sasadu*. After the villagers live permanently in the village and already have good houses, the settlement of customary dispute in the village takes place in the house of *nyira* or village head, or at the house of one of the parties to the dispute (Wakim, 2015; Lesa; Bassay, Interview: October 2017). In Sahu, *Sasadu* is mostly used for ceremonies related to agricultural activities, for example the ceremony after sowing

the seed or usually called *sa'ai lamo'o*, massive cooking or *ngorom lamo'o*, and feast. In Sahu district, especially at interland, field rice farming is more important than other places. The processing of fields in each year is closed and opened with a ceremony which in Maluku Malay language is called *makan-makan sabua* and lasts for 3 days and 3 nights. According to actual tradition, the ceremony was more complex, which was preceded by a ritual called *walenge*, in which a shaman (*gomatere*) tried to relate to the spirits of those who had died. Now this ritual has not been held since the government banned it in the mid-1960s (Wakim, 2015).

5. *Sasadu* in the Public Sphere Concept of Jürgen Habermas

Understanding and discussing *Sasadu* in Habermas' thinking is indeed rather difficult because there are gaps in the context at hand. However, the development of the times still requires the transformation of social relations to create social integration in society. *Sasadu*, which was born into Sahu tribe community, is not only understood as part of human individuals as individuals but is more understood as a collective cultural identity that surrounds them and is lived by them. That is why in daily conversation, Sahu people always refer to themselves as *Sasadu* people. *Sasadu*, thus, is understood and expressed as a cultural bond which is at the same time seen as a unifying symbol for the Sahu tribe community in West Halmahera, North Maluku. This consensus has existed since the ancestors who lived in earlier times. If claiming to be a community or a grandchild of Sahu tribe, *Sasadu* and the values contained in it will be obeyed and respected and they must unite themselves with a pattern of life inherited from one generation to another. The bourgeois public sphere that Habermas discussed was born as a specific part of civil society which at that time established themselves as the place where commodity exchanges and social work was governed by its own rules. The origin of public and public sphere terms has its roots in numerous previous historical phases. This is in line with *Sasadu*'s birth to Sahu tribe community in West Halmahera, where *Sasadu* is present through quite long series of historical events. The historical narrative of *Sasadu* until it takes form of public building as scattered in various villages (*gam*) needs to be traced to previous traditions, including before the emergence of the influence of sultanate in North Maluku towards Sahu tribe community. *Sasadu* is also the answer to the increasing public demand for public sphere that can accommodate them in meetings involving the wider community. *Sasadu*, thus, gathers the private one into the public. *Sasadu* in the sense of a big house (*Sabua*), a shared house, makes a house a conjugated bond (private) and as a shared house that can be accessed by the entire Sahu tribe community.

The Sahu tribe community which begins to settle and be open to change and develop civilization in their living spaces, in the sense of Habermas, is seen as *koine* (open policy) for every independent citizen, which is far different from sphere in the sense of *oikos*, because in *oikos* each individual is in their own world (*idia*). The public life of Sahu tribe is taking place at the centers of commodity exchange and agricultural fields. But the public sphere of Sahu tribe is not only limited to these places, but especially to *Sasadu* and the discussions built in it. This is because the decisions agreed upon in *Sasadu* will affect the joints of the life of Sahu tribe. The discussions taking place (*lexis*) in *Sasadu* can also mean consultation, or sitting in a courtroom, and are joint actions (Habermas, 1989).

Habermas' point of view (1989) regarding bourgeois public sphere that is understood as a space for private persons who gather as a public, can also be seen in *Sasadu* community in Sahu. Private persons in Sahu tribe gathered in *Sasadu* as public are the representatives of the conjugated families representing their respective clans. In the discourse built in *Sasadu*, these representatives bring the aspirations of the conjugated family which would later be agreed to be a joint decision as a society leading to public opinion. The public sphere represented by the representatives from conjugated families in *Sasadu* afore mentioned, is not the only public meeting in *Sasadu* as *Sasadu* is open to everyone. However, it should be emphasized that the main meeting on the discourse built usually involves them as part of the influence if public sphere gets larger. The point here is that access to *Sasadu* as a public sphere is open to all Sahu people as individuals who gather to communicate, but if the public becomes large, the formed public communication demands a means for dissemination and influence (Habermas, 1991). Clan leaders referred to above, in public communication at

Sasadu, have greater function in consultation and enforcement of customary law and the determination of major events in the agriculture field through discussion or deliberation.

There are three basic characteristics of bourgeois public sphere that Habermas put forward (1989): *first*, the actors did not come from the state bureaucracy or from business circles with certain channels collaborating with power, but private persons or ordinary citizens who of course were in the context of the middle class. Communication built here is autonomous from the authority and places authority as one of the elements of participants in equal communication. This is fulfilled in the discourse taking place in *Sasadu*, where the actors are ordinary people who are not from the state bureaucracy or businesspeople. In the context of Sahu tribe community, those who become actors in the main discussions are people who have a lineage that represents the clan, but in discourses leading to decision making, their position is equal. The representative authority imposed on them is only one element of the participant in equal communication. So, even though they come from *Walasae* or *Walangatom* family, their representational authority is only part of the elements in equal discussion with other elements of society.

Second, it is related to Habermas' understanding that in the public sphere there is a process of empowerment between them, through what Kant called the use of rational arguments, in terms of giving enlightenment, where rational considerations without fear are stated publicly based on concerns about problems which are detrimental to the public. Public sphere has become a place of incubation for the political anxiety of citizens who want change. As explained above, this also applies in *Sasadu* public sphere. In *Sasadu* public sphere there is an insight into rational considerations, for example in the discussion process related to the *Rion-Rion* tradition in which a tradition of mutual cooperation and mutual assistance is present. In this tradition, through an open discussion in *Sasadu*, a decision is made to form working groups that would create a separate organization consisting of chairperson, treasurers and members, who will rotate alternately in the following period. Even though there are levels in the organization, the rights and obligations remain different. In the discourse built regarding the selection of agricultural land, the timing of logging and burning of land, breeding, planting, and harvesting, those are discussed and decided equally. The tasks are done together with clear division, according to the results of the meeting. The discourse that takes place among the people in the *Sasadu* public sphere is also carried out in terms of criticizing the local government programs related to agricultural programs for Sahu tribe community. The results of this public discussion strongly influence the decision-making in the related agencies in West Halmahera Regency, even in North Maluku Province. The highlight of *Rion-Rion* is the *Orom Sasadu* (traditional customary feast) program whose preparation, formation of the committee, and other matters are discussed and agreed upon jointly by the elders and community leaders who come from family clans. Regarding the social change of public sphere in *Sasadu*, there is a pattern of cultural management in the Sahu tribe community that has changed from conventional (managed by traditional institutions) to modern (managed by the committee). Some aspects affecting this change are religion, community farming patterns, mobility of community, economic factors in this case the fulfillment of the needs of community, modern technology, and the level of community education (Beolado, 2003; Nindatu, Sarwoprasodjo, Hubeis, & Amanah, 2018). This indicates that the equality requirements in the public discussions developed in *Sasadu* are not significantly influenced by the positions or authorities present in the discussion participants, because as stated earlier that the authority they carry out is only one of the elements involved in these public discussions.

Third, the public sphere itself mediates between the private issues of individuals in their family, business and social life, so that economic and political interests are overcome through the search for public interests. Speaking of which, it can be seen that this also happens to the modern Sahu tribe community, where their economic and business interests also become important discussions in *Sasadu's* public sphere. Based on observations and the results of interviews with several village heads (*gam*), it is seen that market conditions that are not available for domestic agricultural products of the Sahu tribe community in particular and West Halmahera society in general, become a serious discussion in community meetings at *Sasadu*. Commodity prices, which are not balanced with transportation prices, are also important topics in these discussions. Economic interests and fulfillment of the necessities of life of the conjugated families begin to be used as a shared issue

discussed in the *Sasadu* public sphere. *Sasadu* public sphere, thus, mediates between the private issues of individuals in Sahu tribe community regarding economic and social politics. The results of this mediation become public opinion which urge the Regional Government of West Halmahera to overcome economic and social political problems as the results of the discourse of *Sasadu* community. In 2017, the Regional Government of West Halmahera was quite good at responding to public pressure by issuing a flagship program and prioritizing three main sectors, namely in the fields of agriculture, fisheries and tourism. In the agricultural sector, the West Halmahera Planting program was also planned. The issue of prices and transportation was also addressed through a program to procure commodity transport cars, from transport ports to markets in the provincial capital, so that the community no longer paid for transportation costs that exceeded the cost of production (Info Agribisnis, 2017; Mouw & Nanuru, 2018).

Based on the explanation, *Sasadu* has become a public sphere that contains information organs and automatically contains meetings and discourses on various issues. In modern *Sasadu* as a public sphere, it is seen that freedom to gather, speak, and participate in discourse is upheld. The community becomes more critical of decision-making processes that do not take the side of the public interest and have an impact on the presence of discourse that results in what is called public opinion. Sahu tribe community which used to be in their domestic private spheres, in the modern era begins to expand their area of life beyond those domestic boundaries. The effect of the loss of agricultural areas due to the shifting agricultural system, the inclusion of religion (especially Christianity), population mobility, technological developments, and the level of education make people's patterns of life change. Increasing intelligence and increasing number of businessmen and traders in Sahu tribe community are the ones who are active in the *Sasadu* public sphere. They are what are called "public" with claims of knowledge about the public interest, seeking to transform society into a sphere for private autonomy that is free from political interference and making the state (government) an authority limited to several functions and supervised by "the public". Here in lies the rationality of the struggle to uphold public sphere (Sumaryanto, 2008). So, between the sphere for private autonomy of the conjugated families of Sahu tribe community on one hand and the public sphere of the state (government) on the other, *Sasadu* has the function as the successor to the interests of the Sahu tribe community to the state. Ideally, the state authority (government) is transformed into rational authority in *Sasadu* public sphere. This rationality is measured by the extent to which the public interest of Sahu people is represented, and *Sasadu* public sphere serves to guarantee the achievement of that rationality.

Sasadu's change in management in the modern era made things happen and anything could be disputed in them (Mouw & Nanuru, 2018). Although this seems anarchic, that does not mean *Sasadu* public sphere does not have rules and principles. When public opinion discussed in *Sasadu* public sphere becomes more rational and increasingly represents the public interest of the Sahu tribe, its discursive quality will enter moral discourse. The opinion formed in *Sasadu* public sphere will be included in the filter, called the legal system. This is a concept derived from modernity in which the use of discursive ratios, freedom, universality, all of which are considered to be achieved through discourse that leads to consensus (Sastrapratedja, 2010; Supartiningsih, 2012).

6. Conclusion

Sasadu in Sahu tribe community in West Halmahera can be categorized as a public sphere in which private persons and public authorities gather to form a "public" to build argumentative rational discourse which will later be agreed to become a joint decision as a society which leads to public opinion. *Sasadu*, thus mediates between the private sphere of the Sahu tribe community and that of public authority, where social control is built, and the values of universality are guarded.

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