

THE MEANING OF THE PETAMBULI TRADITION IN THE WEDDING PROCESSION OF THE KAILI TRIBE IN NORTH SIBALAYA VILLAGE

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to determine the meaning of the *Petambuli* tradition in the wedding procession of the Kaili tribe in North Sibalaya Village and to identify the historical values embedded within the tradition. The background of this research is driven by the importance of preserving local traditions as a cultural heritage that embodies historical values and community identity amidst changing times. This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. Data collection techniques were conducted through observation, interviews, and documentation, while data analysis techniques included data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results of the study show that the *Petambuli* tradition is a customary tradition still preserved by the Kaili community as a form of respect for ancestral customs and cultural heritage. This tradition encompasses the meaning of respect, which is reflected in how the groom's family conveys their intentions to the bride's family using polite customary language; social and familial meaning, which is evident from the family's involvement in deliberations and the establishment of harmonious relationships; and religious meaning, which is manifested through the use of Islamic greetings, prayers, and traditional symbols that invoke safety and blessings. Furthermore, the *Petambuli* tradition possesses historical values reflected in its origins and development arising from the environment of the Kaili Kingdom; the value of cultural and religious acculturation through the blending of local culture with Islamic values; and the value of cultural transmission that continues to be maintained from generation to generation. Consequently, it can be concluded that the *Petambuli* tradition plays a vital role in safeguarding the cultural identity of the Kaili community, strengthening social and family bonds, and preserving local cultural heritage.

Informasi Artikel

Kata Kunci:

Nilai-nilai Pendidikan
Islam, Tradisi
Pernikahan, Suku
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ABSTRAK

Ifat Anisa, 2026. "Makna Tradisi *Petambuli* dalam prosesi pernikahan Suku Kaili di Desa Sibalaya Utara". Skripsi. Program Studi Pendidikan Sejarah, Jurusan Pendidikan Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial. FKIP Universitas Tadulako, Pembimbing (1) Hasan (2) Misnah. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui makna Tradisi *Petambuli* dalam prosesi pernikahan suku Kaili di Desa Sibalaya Utara serta mengidentifikasi nilai-nilai sejarah yang terkandung di dalam tradisi tersebut. Latar belakang penelitian ini didasari oleh pentingnya pelestarian tradisi lokal sebagai warisan budaya yang mengandung nilai sejarah dan identitas masyarakat di tengah perkembangan zaman. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi, sedangkan teknik analisis data meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Tradisi *Petambuli* merupakan tradisi adat yang masih dilestarikan oleh masyarakat Kaili sebagai bentuk penghormatan terhadap adat istiadat dan warisan budaya leluhur. Tradisi ini mengandung makna penghormatan yang tercermin dalam penyampaian maksud kedatangan keluarga mempelai laki-laki kepada keluarga mempelai perempuan melalui bahasa adat yang santun, makna sosial dan kekeluargaan yang terlihat dari keterlibatan keluarga dalam musyawarah dan pembentukan hubungan yang harmonis, serta makna religius yang tampak melalui penggunaan salam, doa, dan simbol-simbol adat yang mengandung harapan akan keselamatan dan keberkahan. Selain itu, Tradisi *Petambuli* memiliki nilai-nilai sejarah yang tercermin dalam asal-usul dan perkembangan tradisi yang berawal dari lingkungan Kerajaan Kaili, nilai akulturasi budaya dan agama melalui perpaduan budaya lokal dengan nilai-nilai Islam, serta nilai pewarisan budaya yang terus dipertahankan secara turun-temurun. Dengan demikian, dapat disimpulkan bahwa Tradisi *Petambuli* memiliki peran penting dalam menjaga identitas budaya masyarakat Kaili, memperkuat hubungan sosial dan kekeluargaan, serta melestarikan warisan budaya lokal.

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1. Introduction

Indonesia's cultural diversity is one of the nation's treasures that has flourished through a long historical journey. This wealth is evident in the various traditions and customary ceremonies that have developed in each region. Tradition exists not merely as a social habit, but also as a reflection of the value systems, social structures, and worldviews of the community that supports its existence.

Traditional community life views customary marriage not just as a process of uniting a man and a woman, but also as a means to strengthen the relationship between two extended families and their social environment. Every stage of its implementation is carried out through customary rules and procedures passed down from generation to generation as a form of respect for ancestral traditions whose sustainability is continuously maintained (Agustin, 2022). The existence of regional culture, including the culture of the Kaili tribe in Central Sulawesi, plays a vital role as part of the national culture. It embodies the values, identity, and life guidelines of the local community passed down through generations. Preserving regional culture is essential to ensure that cultural values remain intact and serve as the foundation for creating a harmonious social life within the community, nation, and state.

The strength of a culture lies in the ability of local traditions to endure amidst the currents of modernization through community creativity and engagement. Local traditions not only continuously shape community identity but also strengthen the sense of social unity. Cultural preservation, therefore, is not solely the responsibility of indigenous communities but is also a collective interest in safeguarding the sustainability of the nation's cultural heritage (Rahmatullah, 2025).

Culture is inherently an inseparable part of human life, shaped through a long historical process. It contains elements of intellect, morals, life purposes, and customs that shape community behavior patterns. Cultural values are transmitted from generation to generation through continuous social experiences. Anthropological and cultural history studies view wedding ceremonies as a medium of cultural expression that reflects the worldview, social structure, and value system of the supporting community (Anggriani, 2021).

Customs emerge as a tangible manifestation of culture that serves as a guide for attitudes and behavior in community life. Each region possesses distinct customs corresponding to the character and habits of its respective community. These differences become unique characteristics that reflect the identity and personality of a social group or a nation (Abdulghani & Sati, 2020).

The values of deliberation and consensus (*musyawarah dan mufakat*) found in traditional marriage customs form the basis for creating harmony

within the extended family. Traditional wedding rituals also serve as a vehicle for transmitting noble values, collective identity, and local wisdom to the next generation. The presence of these traditions not only maintains social order within the community but also reinforces the continuity of cultural history passed down from generation to generation (Damayanti, 2025).

The Kaili tribe is known as one of the indigenous tribes in Central Sulawesi that possesses a wealth of culture and traditions still practiced today. In the life of the Kaili community, customs serve as a value system regulating various aspects of social life, including marriage processions. A traditional Kaili marriage is viewed as a sacred event that not only unites two individuals but also binds two extended families within a socially and customarily recognized order. Each stage of the wedding procession carries meanings that reflect values of togetherness, respect, and social responsibility within the community.

North Sibalaya Village is an area in Sigi Regency, Central Sulawesi, where the majority of the population belongs to the Kaili tribe. The community of this village still preserves various customary traditions in their social life, including wedding processions. Their community life is known for its strong spirit of togetherness and mutual cooperation, locally referred to as *sintuvu*—a principle of communal living that emphasizes family values, solidarity, and mutual social responsibility among community members (Septiwiharti, 2020).

The Petambuli tradition is an essential component of the Kaili tribe's wedding procession in North Sibalaya Village. This tradition is part of a series of customary rituals that serve as a means of communication between the families of the prospective bride and groom, customary leaders, and the community. The expression of intent, agreements, and respect for customary rules are symbolically conveyed through the petambuli tradition. Values of respect, togetherness, and obedience to ancestral customs are also reflected in every part of its implementation.

The meaning embedded in traditional wedding rituals lies not only in the sequence of ceremonies but also in the cultural values transmitted within them. Understanding the historical and cultural significance of these traditions is crucial so that their execution does not lose the meaning and cultural essence that has been guarded by the community from generation to generation.

Based on the researcher's preliminary observations, the community of North Sibalaya Village still preserves and practices the Petambuli tradition within the traditional wedding processions of the Kaili tribe. The survival of this tradition demonstrates that the community still cares about preserving the customs inherited from their ancestors. The Petambuli tradition is viewed not only as part of a series of wedding ceremonies but also as a symbol of respect for cultural values, customary norms, and social relations between

families in Kaili community life. The implementation of this tradition remains an essential part of every customary wedding procession because it is considered to hold a sacred meaning related to family honor and the continuity of the community's cultural values, particularly in North Sibalaya Village.

However, empirical phenomena indicate that public understanding of the meaning of the Petambuli tradition is still relatively limited. A deep understanding of the meaning, purpose, and cultural values embedded in this tradition is generally held only by customary leaders, community elders, or specific parties directly involved in the customary execution. Meanwhile, most of the community, especially the younger generation, only know the Petambuli tradition as a standard part of the wedding procession without comprehending its underlying meaning and values. This condition reveals a cultural knowledge gap between the older and younger generations in understanding ancestral traditions.

The lack of research discussing the meaning of the Petambuli tradition has resulted in information regarding its history, function, and values not being well-documented. Yet, documentation and scientific research play a critical role in ensuring the sustainability of cultural heritage so that it remains known to the wider public, especially the younger generation. This situation highlights the urgency of conducting research on the meaning of the Petambuli tradition so that its inherent cultural and historical values can be properly documented and understood by the public. In addition to local cultural preservation efforts, this study is highly relevant to history education, as it can serve as a source of local historical knowledge that helps students understand the cultural identity of the Kaili community and appreciate their ancestral heritage.

Based on the aforementioned context, a study on the "Meaning of the Petambuli Tradition in the Wedding Procession of the Kaili Tribe in North Sibalaya Village" is imperative. This research focuses on uncovering the meaning of the Petambuli tradition, the historical values embedded within it, and its relevance to the contemporary life of the Kaili community. The results of this study are expected to enrich public understanding of the meaning of the Petambuli tradition and the implementation of historical values in Kaili wedding processions in North Sibalaya Village, while simultaneously serving as an effort to document and preserve local traditions as part of the nation's cultural heritage.

2. Method

In this study, the methods used to conduct the research are explained both verbally and in writing. The data collected in this study are qualitative, consisting of visual information, narratives, and meanings, rather than numerical data. With these considerations, this study employs a qualitative research method with a descriptive approach, which aims to provide a systematic and factual description of the phenomenon

under investigation. The qualitative descriptive approach is used to understand and explain social realities based on data obtained in the field. Qualitative research emphasizes meaning over generalization, so that the obtained data are used to describe phenomena deeply and comprehensively (Sugiyono, 2020). In line with the research focus, the qualitative research method is utilized to explore in-depth the meaning of the *Petambuli* tradition in the wedding procession of the Kaili tribe in North Sibalaya Village. The choice of this method is based on the research problem formulation, which emphasizes uncovering the tradition's meaning and the historical values embedded in its implementation. These aspects cannot be fully understood through a quantitative approach; rather, they require a profound investigation into the views and experiences of the local community.

The research subjects are individuals who have a direct connection to the research focus and also serve as informants or resource persons to obtain research data. The research subjects were selected because they are deemed capable of providing relevant and in-depth information for the research objectives. The subjects in this study consist of the Village Head, two community leaders, and four customary leaders (*tokoh adat*) in North Sibalaya Village, Sigi Regency.

This study utilizes qualitative data analysis, which aims to provide a detailed and comprehensive overview of the data and facts obtained. The management of qualitative data is carried out through three stages, namely data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Sugiyono, 2022). The analysis consists of three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data display is the process of organizing information that permits conclusion drawing; in qualitative research, this data display can be performed in the form of brief descriptions, charts, and the like. The data are presented systematically and descriptively so that they are easily understood. Qualitative research allows for conclusion drawing through the methodical arrangement of data, ensuring that every piece of information regarding the *Petambuli* tradition can be explained in a detailed and holistic manner.

3. Result and Discussion

The results of the research conducted by the investigator in North Sibalaya Village—one of the villages that still preserves various traditions, including the Petambuli tradition in wedding processions—were obtained in October and March 2026. The gathered data comprise preliminary observations, interviews, and documentation involving several customary leaders and the local community. This endeavor aimed to determine the meaning and historical values embedded within the Petambuli tradition in the wedding processions of the Kaili tribe in North Sibalaya Village. The findings of this study were acquired through in-depth, face-to-face

interviews with informants as a method of data collection, supplemented by field documentation.

Historical Value in the Petambuli Tradition

Based on the research findings, the Petambuli tradition is understood not merely as a customary stage in the wedding procession, but it also contains various meanings that reflect the cultural, social, and religious values thriving within the Kaili community. Furthermore, this tradition possesses historical value evident from its origins, developmental process, the acculturation of culture and Islam, and its continuity, which remains preserved to this day. The existence of Petambuli indicates that tradition functions not only to complement customary ceremonies but also as a vehicle for transmitting cultural values and identity from generation to generation.

Therefore, this discussion focuses on the meaning embedded within the Petambuli tradition and its historical value, which allow the tradition to remain preserved and relevant amidst modern community development. This correlates with the problem addressed in this study, namely the declining understanding among the younger generation regarding the meaning and values contained in the Petambuli tradition. Even though this tradition is still practiced, not all community members understand its underlying meaning and history. Consequently, the historical value of Petambuli lies not only in its long-standing age but also in its capacity to serve as a medium for transmitting cultural knowledge from one generation to the next. If the understanding of these historical values is not continuously passed down, the tradition risks losing its meaning and being viewed merely as a ceremonial activity.

The Meaning of the Petambuli Tradition in the Wedding Procession of the Kaili Tribe in North Sibalaya Village

The Petambuli tradition is a customary stage still maintained by the Kaili ethnic community in North Sibalaya Village during wedding processions. This tradition is performed prior to the marriage ceremony as a formal expression of intent from the groom's family to the bride's family. Based on preliminary field observations, the Petambuli process is carried out by visiting the bride's home, attended by the extended family and customary leaders acting as representatives. In its execution, communication is conducted using polite and meaningful language as a form of appreciation toward the bride's family and respect for the applicable customary rules within the community. The Petambuli tradition continues to be preserved by the Kaili community in North Sibalaya Village as an integral and essential part of the wedding ritual.

Observation and interview results revealed several facts behind its implementation as part of the wedding procession; the Petambuli tradition harbors living historical values within the Kaili community. This tradition is not merely a repeated habit, but a cultural heritage that is continually guarded and passed down through generations. Its continued existence to this day

serves as evidence that the community of North Sibalaya Village still respects and maintains the cultural footprint left by their predecessors. Therefore, the historical value of the Petambuli tradition can be seen in how it endures and is practiced amidst changing times.

The first meaning identified in the Petambuli tradition is the meaning of respect. This is evident in how the groom's family conveys the purpose of their visit to the bride's family through a customary intermediary or spokesperson. In practice, the groom's side does not immediately state their intention; instead, they use polite, courteous language that adheres to established customary rules. The use of expressions such as *tabe* (excuse me/with respect) and a gradual, stepped dialogue demonstrate an appreciation for the bride's family. For the Kaili community, this demeanor represents a form of politeness and respect that must be upheld when establishing relationships between families.

The Petambuli tradition also carries social and familial meaning. This is apparent from the involvement of the extended family in every stage of its execution. Before Petambuli takes place, the groom's family holds a deliberation (*musyawarah*) to determine the arrival time and prepare family representatives who will speak during the customary dialogue. The presence of families from both sides demonstrates that marriage in Kaili society does not merely unite two individuals, but also strengthens the bond between two extended families. Through Petambuli, both families establish communication, get to know one another, and reach a mutual understanding before proceeding to the next stages of the marriage. Thus, this tradition serves as a means to reinforce social relationships and maintain harmony within the community. This finding aligns with Fariz Al Hazmi (2023), who states that traditions play both functional and symbolic roles in community life. The functional role is visible in the Petambuli tradition, which acts as a tool to build communication, tighten family bonds, and foster mutual understanding between both parties before the wedding takes place. The involvement of the extended family in deliberations and customary execution indicates that the Petambuli tradition functions to maintain harmony and social order in society.

Furthermore, there is a religious meaning. Based on the interview results, religious elements are distinctly present in the Petambuli dialogue, such as the recitation of *Bismillahirrahmanirrahim*, Islamic greetings (*salam*), and prayers offered for the prospective bride and groom. The presence of these elements demonstrates that the Petambuli tradition is not based solely on customs, but is also heavily influenced by Islamic values that have developed within the Kaili community. The prayers embedded in the customary dialogue reflect the hope that the couple to be wed will attain safety, happiness, blessings, and harmony in their married life. This finding is consistent with Fiteriana (2023), who asserts that community traditions contain cultural, social, and religious meanings passed down through generations. In the

Petambuli tradition, religious values are reflected through the use of greetings, prayers, and religious expressions that form part of the customary dialogue. The presence of these elements indicates a blend of custom and Islamic teachings that have flourished in the life of the Kaili community. Consequently, the Petambuli tradition functions not only as the execution of a marriage custom but also as a means to instill religious values and invoke blessings and safety for the couple in undergoing their household life.

The sustainability of Petambuli to this day also demonstrates the capacity of local culture to withstand the currents of modernization. As explained in the research background, technological developments, shifting mindsets, and the influx of foreign cultures can affect the existence of local traditions. However, the community of North Sibalaya Village firmly maintains the Petambuli tradition as a part of their traditional wedding processions. This condition indicates that the tradition still possesses social and cultural functions deemed vital by the community. This is supported by the theory proposed by Rahmatullah (2025), which states that local traditions can endure amidst modernization if the community retains awareness and engagement in preserving their continuity.

It can be understood that the historical value of the Petambuli tradition is reflected in the origin and development of the tradition, the process of cultural and religious acculturation, and the cultural transmission that takes place from generation to generation. These three aspects show that Petambuli is not just a part of a traditional wedding procession, but also a cultural heritage that preserves historical footprints, identity, and the life values of the Kaili community. Therefore, the preservation of the Petambuli tradition is critical, not only as an effort to safeguard customs but also as a means to maintain the collective memory and cultural identity of the Kaili community in North Sibalaya Village.

4. Conclusion

Based on the research results regarding the "Meaning of the Petambuli Tradition in the Wedding Procession of the Kaili Tribe in North Sibalaya Village," it can be concluded that:

1. **The meaning of the Petambuli tradition** in the wedding procession of the Kaili tribe in North Sibalaya Village demonstrates that *Petambuli* is not merely a customary stage prior to marriage. Instead, it encompasses profound meanings of respect, familial bonds, deliberation (*musyawarah*), and religious devotion. The meaning of respect is evident in the use of courteous customary language and the involvement of a customary spokesperson to convey the marriage proposal to the bride's family. The familial meaning is reflected through the active participation of both families in the dialogue and decision-making

processes. Meanwhile, the religious meaning is manifested in the utilization of Islamic greetings, prayers, and religious expressions that encapsulate hopes for safety, blessings, and harmony in married life.

2. **The historical value of the Petambuli tradition** in the wedding procession of the Kaili tribe in North Sibalaya Village is reflected in its origins, which evolved from the royal environment and the Kaili nobility before eventually becoming an integral part of wedding processions for the general public. This historical value is apparent in the continued preservation of customary procedures, the use of the Kaili language, cultural symbols, and traditional communication rules inherited from the ancestors. Furthermore, this tradition illustrates a harmonious process of acculturation between the Kaili culture and Islamic values. The ongoing continuity of *Petambuli* to this day serves as evidence of cultural transmission from generation to generation, while simultaneously demonstrating public awareness in safeguarding cultural identity and local historical heritage amidst the currents of modernization.

The *Petambuli* tradition also retains significant relevance in the contemporary life of the North Sibalaya Village community. It functions not only as a component of the traditional wedding procession but also serves as a vehicle to strengthen social relationships, maintain the cultural identity of the Kaili community, and preserve the cultural and historical values passed down by the ancestors. Consequently, the *Petambuli* tradition continues to be upheld as a cultural heritage that possesses essential meaning and value for the life of the community in North Sibalaya Village.

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