

The *Padungku* Tradition in Poso Society

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Abstract: Padungku is a social tradition that unites the community in harmony with symbolic meanings. The purpose of this study is to describe the practice of padungku in Matialemba Village, East Pamona District, Poso Regency. A qualitative method was used. Data collection was conducted through observation and interviews. The results of the study show that (1) Padungku is a cultural ritual tradition and not a religious ritual, and does not have a fixed date or month, because each year the village has different harvest times and will change according to the decisions of the village elders. (2) The community perceives the Padungku tradition as a manifestation of culture that can strengthen ties between communities and ensure that the tradition continues to be practiced in the future. In addition, the Padungku tradition has values such as religious values, tolerance, hard work, responsibility, and solidarity.

Keywords: The Padungku Tradition, Poso Community, Symbolic Meaning

1. Introduction

Poso Regency is home to various ethnic groups. However, the Pamona tribe dominates the Poso Regency area. The Pamona tribe mostly adheres to Christianity, which was introduced about 100 years ago and still inhabits the area in Poso Regency today. Currently, all churches in the Poso Regency area are under the auspices of a religious organization called the Central Sulawesi Christian Church (GKST), which is based in Tentena District, Poso Regency, Central Sulawesi.

The Pamona tribe has a culture and customs that are well known to the general public, such as traditional clothing called Tuana Mahile (traditional Pamona clothing made from bark), and a famous traditional dance called the dero dance (dance of joy) performed by the Pamona tribe to welcome the planting season (farming and gardening). In addition, there are other traditions of the Pamona tribe that are also well known to the community, namely the Katiana tradition and the Padungku tradition. The Katiana tradition is one of the traditions of the Pamona tribe in the context of a ceremony to celebrate the first pregnancy of a woman from the Pamona tribe when she is 7 (seven) months pregnant.

The Padungku tradition is an activity carried out by the Pamona tribe to express gratitude after the harvest season for the blessings of success given by God Almighty. When the Padungku season arrives, a week beforehand, all villagers will be busy preparing, from

gathering leaves, bamboo, firewood, preparing the best rice, and contacting relatives in other areas to meet up. The night before Padungku day, the entire village will be surrounded by smoke from bamboo burning rice or dinaha everywhere, as well as cheers of joy. Men and women will gather at homes to sing and prepare food for the next day. When all the farmers in a village have done this, a joint festival called mo padungku is held. Molimbu is a communal meal where all residents bring food from their homes and share it with each other to eat together at the Lobo or village hall.

2. Method

This type of research is qualitative research using a descriptive approach to explore the values and experiences regarding the meaning and implementation of the Padungku tradition in the life of the Matialemba Village community. The exploration of these values is intended to gain an understanding and connection from the experiences of informants involved in the process of implementing the Padungku tradition. The author used purposive sampling (Arikunto, 2010: 135). The selection of informants in this study was based on their knowledge/information related to the Padungku tradition. There were six informants in this study, consisting of native Pamona tribe members in Matialemba Village, such as the village head, traditional leaders, religious leaders, and community members.

Data collection techniques in scientific research are systematic procedures for obtaining the necessary data (Komariah & Satori, 2011: 104). The data collection techniques that the author will use in this study are the observation method, the interview method, and the documentation method. The analysis is carried out by organizing the data, breaking it down into units, synthesizing it, arranging it into patterns, selecting what is important and what will be studied, and drawing conclusions.

3. The Implementation of the Padungku Tradition

Based on the results of the study, the term Padungku is derived from the word dungku, which means to pile up. Padungku is a tradition that is carried out after the harvest season. The Padungku tradition is held with the aim of giving thanks for the harvest or for the work done throughout the year.

The research shows that the term Padungku comes from the Pamona language, which means everything is neat, orderly, and complete. This is symbolized by two things: first, the rice has been stored in the barn. Second, the plowing tools have been cleaned and placed under the house (under the house). When both of these things have been done by all the farmers in a village, a communal celebration called mo padungku is held. In mo padungku, all farmers process the rice they have harvested and stored, especially the first rice that was harvested and stored in the barn.

The Padungku tradition is a cultural heritage that has long existed in Matialemba Village and has been passed down from generation to generation to the present day. As stated by the Head of Matialemba Village, Mr. Anuar Allo, in an interview:

"Padungku comes from the root word dungku, which means to pile up. This tradition is carried out after the rice harvest by the people of Matialemba Village. The purpose is to give thanks for the farmers' harvest throughout the year".

This statement was echoed by the Traditional Leader of Matialemba Village, Mr. My Sandi Tokede: "Padungku means gathering the harvest that we have planted throughout the year. Therefore, as an expression of gratitude to God, we hold the Padungku ceremony". The Padungku Traditional Ceremony is held as an expression of gratitude to God Almighty, the Creator. Because it comes from God, the first harvest must be offered to Him. The Padungku celebration is also expected to create a sense of unity among the people of Matialemba Village who participate in it.

Furthermore, another community member, Mrs. Mirdaria Ngguso, said: "We eagerly await the Padungku tradition, which coincides with the harvest that we have worked on for a year. With that, we can all gather together with our families and receive blessings from the sale of our harvest".

Based on the above findings, the following are the results of the author's interview with the Head of Matialemba Village, Mr. Anuar Allo, about the history of the Padungku tradition in Matialemba Village: "For us, the Padungku tradition marks the completion of the harvest in the fields, and we always give thanks for this by conducting worship activities and festive events".

Next, the Traditional Leader of Matialemba Village, Mr. My Sandi Tokede, gave his statement about the history of Padungku: The history of the Padungku tradition refers to a celebration held after the annual harvest. Padungku has been well known since ancient times, when a leader called Mangore or Tadomburake, who was the religious leader of the tribe at that time, presided over it. Then, they brought the harvest to various places such as caves, trees, and riverbanks, which they offered to their ancestors in accordance with their beliefs at that time.

In summary, the same thing was also expressed by the religious leader of Matialemba Village, Rev. Arnela Lambaniga, in the following interview: Stories from ancient times say that the Padungku tradition originated from the story of a leader who was trusted by the community to bring the harvest to various places as offerings to the ancestors after each harvest. After that, they would worship and pray together for their harvest and hold a celebration with a communal meal to celebrate the harvest.

4. The Values of the *Padungku* Tradition

The Padungku tradition is part of the beliefs of the Matialemba Village community, which have been held since ancient times and are difficult to eradicate. As time progresses, traditions and beliefs that have existed for a long time will also develop. Therefore, the people of Matialemba Village consider the Padungku Tradition to be part of their beliefs, which are rich in meaning and have been believed since ancient times and cannot be easily forgotten.

The daily life of the people of Matialemba Village in actualizing their belief in God Almighty is reflected in the harvest festival they call the Padungku Tradition. This ceremony can also be interpreted as a ceremony of gratitude for the harvest they have received.

Regarding the above, the following are the results of the author's interview with Mr. Norman Manea, a resident of Matialemba Village, about the cultural and social values contained in the Padungku tradition, as follows: The Padungku tradition teaches that God provides sustenance to humans according to their hard work and efforts. People who still believe in the cultural values of this tradition believe that if they do not carry out the entire traditional procession, bad things will happen to them, such as crop failure and natural disasters in their area.

Furthermore, the Head of Matialemba Village, Mr. Anuar Allo, also responded to the cultural and social values contained in the Padungku tradition, stating that "We here have always been taught to carry out the Padungku tradition. This is because it embodies the values of togetherness and gratitude to God for our harvest, which we celebrate together". The traditional leader of Matialemba Village, Mr. My Sandi Tokede, spoke about the cultural and social values contained in the Padungku tradition, saying: "I, along with the elders here, continue to urge the community to uphold the Padungku tradition. For us, it is an activity that strengthens unity in our village".

The religious leader of Matialemba Village, Mrs. Arnela Lambaniga, described the cultural and social values in the Padungku tradition, saying: "Padungku is not just a tradition, but also our worship activity. Therefore, culturally, we are always grateful to God, and socially, we strengthen the bonds between our community". For the people of Matialemba Village, the beliefs contained in the Padungku tradition serve as a guide in believing in something sacred and religious in giving thanks for the blessings of God Almighty. Results of an interview with Mrs. Nona Dodu, a resident of Matialemba Village, about the cultural and social values contained in the Padungku tradition: "We really miss this tradition, because when the harvest arrives, we will hold a joint worship service and strengthen the bonds of brotherhood in our village".

The Padungku tradition in the Matialemba Village community places cultural value on belief in customs as something essential. In the Padungku tradition, they consider their abundant harvest to be a gift from God Almighty to the people of Matialemba Village. Meanwhile, in terms of social aspects, the entire community of Matialemba Village participates in communal meals and worship together at the church. Thus, the Padungku tradition fosters unity among the community and preserves the tradition for future generations.

The Padungku tradition embodies cultural values such as preserving the customs of their ancestors, worshipping together, and social values within the Matialemba Village community, such as upholding the unity of the Matialemba Village community in managing agricultural land so that the harvest is satisfactory for them.

5. The Values of the *Padungku* Tradition

Based on research findings, the *Padungku* tradition adopted by the church today has become a feast of thanksgiving after the harvest. Christian teachings emphasize the importance of offering the fruits of one's labor to God. Currently, the harvest offering is presented to the church by handing over the harvest to the church. After the offering to the church, the *Padungku* tradition is held. All farmers process the rice they harvest and store it, especially the first rice harvested and stored in the barn.

Results of the author's interview with the village head, Mr. Anuar Allo, about the implementation of the *Padungku* tradition in Matialemba Village

"To my knowledge, the *Padungku* tradition in Matialemba Village begins with determining the time for the *Padungku* ceremony, which is done by the elders or parents in our village. Then, they determine the location where the *Padungku* tradition will be held and prepare all the necessary equipment for the *Padungku* tradition".

Furthermore, this was responded to by the religious leader of Matialemba Village, Mrs. Arnela Lambaniga, as follows:

"This activity is always centered at the church in Matialemba Village. Of course, the *Padungku* tradition begins with a joint worship service, followed by a symbolic offering of the community's harvest and a communal meal. However, currently there are also some residents who carry out the *Padungku* tradition in their own homes with their relatives and families".

Based on the author's findings in the field, the *Padungku* tradition in Matialemba Village, East Pamona District, Poso Regency, consists of three stages, namely determining the time of implementation, the place of implementation of the *Padungku* tradition, and the various requirements and equipment needed for the *Padungku* tradition. The following is the author's description of the three stages of the *Padungku* tradition in Matialemba Village:

5.1. Time of Implementation

The *Padungku* tradition is carried out after the harvest is complete. In principle, it is an expression of joy that is poured into a process of thanksgiving. Before *Padungku* is carried out and the harvest season arrives, the time of implementation is determined based on customary and religious provisions. The timing of this traditional ceremony must take into account auspicious days and dates so that the activities carried out are not in vain and the residents of Matialemba Village can receive blessings because the elders (people who hold positions in the Pamona tribe) pray to God Almighty for a bountiful harvest.

5.2. Venue

The *Padungku* tradition also stipulates that the venue for this thanksgiving ceremony must be held at the village hall. All of the main events in the *Padungku* tradition are held and centered at the village hall so that people know that this is how the *Padungku*

traditional ceremony is held in Matialemba Village. However, the current Padungku celebration by the people of Matialemba Village indicates that the meaning of the Padungku tradition has changed, namely that the Padungku celebration does not have to be centered in the village hall, but rather in places of worship and residents' homes.

The Padungku tradition has now been adopted by the church in Matialemba Village as a thanksgiving celebration not only for farmers but also for all other types of work. Since 2002, the Padungku tradition celebration is no longer held and centered in the village hall. Instead, the harvest festival is held in the church and in the homes of each resident. The Padungku service lasts approximately two hours. It begins with singing, followed by a sermon, and ends with an auction of the harvest. The highlight of the event at the church is the auction of the harvest. Before the service begins, the congregation brings various harvest items such as bamboo rice, cakes, flowers, bananas, and various foods that have been prepared. There were also several chickens. Everything was placed in front, on a table near the main stage. After the service was over, the host began the auction. One by one, the items were mentioned, and the congregation members who were present could raise their hands to bid and mention the purchase price. As usual, the highest bidder had the right to take the item home. The total proceeds from the auction automatically went into the church treasury.

3.3. Equipment or Event Requirements

In the Padungku tradition, the implementation process, such as large events in general, is carried out enthusiastically by the people of Matialemba Village, especially the young people who are keen to make the Padungku event a success. The form of participation expressed in the Padungku tradition is extraordinary. Once the day of Padungku arrives, all residents of Matialemba Village have prepared themselves for this event. They begin by gathering banana leaves, bamboo, firewood, red or black sticky rice, and various types of livestock that will be slaughtered during the Padungku tradition.

During the Padungku tradition, various foods must be prepared, such as bamboo rice. Before the day of the Padungku celebration, the people of Matialemba Village are busy cooking on the night before. This is because each household in Matialemba Village cooks bamboo rice in their yard or kitchen using firewood. This sticky rice is harvested by the local community to make bamboo rice. If any member of the community does not have a harvest of sticky rice, they can buy it from other farmers or various sellers in traditional markets in other villages.

6. Conclusion

Padungku is a cultural ritual tradition, not a religious ritual. The Padungku festival does not have a fixed date or month, because each year the village has a different harvest time, which changes according to the decisions of the village elders. Padungku also has a meaning and function as a means of community integration, namely to build social order and acculturation as a community. There are three stages in the implementation of the Padungku tradition in Matialemba Village, namely, determining the time of implementation, the place of implementation of the Padungku tradition, and the equipment used in the Padungku tradition.

The community perceives the Padungku tradition as a manifestation of culture. The existence of religion contributes to changing ways of thinking and beliefs. In addition, the Padungku thanksgiving activities carried out in churches also contribute to various religious institutional facilities. This can be one of the things that can strengthen the bonds of friendship between communities and ensure that traditions continue to be carried out in the future. In addition, there are values in the Padungku tradition, namely religious values, tolerance, hard work, responsibility, and solidarity.

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