



FROM THE FIELD TO THE PALACE: THE CULTURAL PRACTICE OF DELIVERING THE FIRST HARVEST BY THE KOLIMASANG COMMUNITY TO THE KING OF ADONARA, EAST FLORES, EAST NUSA TENGGARA

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Abstract

The delivery of the first harvest by the people of Kolimasang Village to the King of Sagu in Adonara represents a symbol of agrarian relations rich in cultural and spiritual meaning. In Lamaholot tradition, the king is not only a political–traditional leader but is also regarded as a representation of cosmic power that must be respected. In this perspective, the delivery of the first harvest becomes a kind of “rite of passage” from the profane world (the field) to the sacred world (the palace). Within Lamaholot tradition, this relationship is known as the 4A: Atadiken (Human), God, Nature, and Ancestral Spirits. The findings show that the procession of delivering the first harvest has been practiced for generations since the establishment of the Adonara Kingdom. The procession is carried out for two consecutive days, Tuesday and Wednesday, during the harvest week and month, usually March or April. On Tuesday, the ritual takes place in the fields during the first harvest, the yields of which are taken to the King of Adonara in Sagu. On Wednesday, the procession takes place in Lewo Sagu Atu Matang – Tanah Kota Dolu Wewang (the palace of the Adonara king), the site of the migration of King Arkian Kamba (the first Islamic King of Adonara). Both processions are preceded by traditional ritual prayers (Bao Lolon) addressed to God, Nature, and the Ancestral Spirits (3A). The equipment involved in the procession includes the harvest yield, tuak (palm wine) in bamboo containers, coconut-shell cups, gongs and drums, spears, machetes, and traditional clothing. In the procession, the king and his kin receive the harvest in a ceremonial welcome marked by traditional rituals, during which the king wears royal attire: the lipa sarong, a jacket, and a cap. The harvested produce is not only given to members of the royal family for consumption but also distributed to the wider community (ribu ratu). A tradition that remains preserved to this day—and considered the most essential—is the distribution of the first harvest by the king and his family to widows, the poor, orphans, and abandoned children. This symbolizes love, fairness, and equitable sharing—values that continue to be upheld today.

Keywords: Procession, First Harvest, King, Kolimasang Village, Widows, the Poor, Abandoned Children.



Abstrak

Penghantaran hasil panen perdana oleh Masyarakat Desa Kolimasang kepada Raja Sagu di Adonara, merupakan simbol relasi agraria yang sarat makna budaya dan spiritual. Dalam tradisi Lamaholot, raja bukan hanya sosok pemimpin politik-tradisional, tetapi juga dianggap sebagai representasi kekuatan kosmos yang harus dihormati. Dalam perspektif ini, penghantaran panen perdana menjadi semacam “ritus peralihan” dari dunia profan (ladang) ke dunia sakral (istana). Dalam tradisi Lamaholot dikenal sebagai relasi antara Atadiken (Manusia), Allah, Alam dan Arwah Leluhur atau 4A. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa prosesi penghantaran panen perdana telah dilakukan secara turun temurun semenjak Kerajaan Adonara berdiri. Prosesi dilakukan selama dua hari berturut-turut yaitu hari Selasa dan hari Rabu dalam minggu dan bulan panen, biasanya Maret atau April. Hari Selasa prosesi dilakukan di Ladang saat panen perdana yang hasilnya akan dihantar kepada Raja Adonara di Sagu. Hari Rabu, prosesi dilakukan di Lewo Sagu Atu Matang - Tanah Kota Dolu Wewang (istana raja Adonara). Lokus hijrahnya raja Arkian Kamba (Raja 1 Kerajaan Islam Adonara). Kedua prosesi tersebut didahului dengan ritual doa adat (Bao Lolon) kepada Allah, Alam dan Arwah Leluhur (3A). Peralatan yang disertakan dalam prosesi adalah hasil panen, tuak (minuman dari pohon lontar) di dalam bambu, gelas dari tempurung kelapa, gong gendang, tombak, parang, pakaian adat. Dalam prosesi penghantaran hasil panen perdana pihak raja dan kerabatnya menerima prosesi yang didahului dengan prosesi penjemputan dengan seremonial adat di mana raja mengenakan pakaian kebesaran yaitu kain sarung lipa, jas dan kopiah. Hasil panen selain diberikan kepada kerabat Kerajaan untuk dikonsumsi tetapi juga didistribusikan kepada masyarakat (ribu ratu). Suatu tradisi yang terus terjaga sampai saat ini dan merupakan tradisi yang paling hakiki adalah hasil panen perdana ini, oleh pihak raja dan kerabatnya dibagikan kepada para janda, fakir miskin dan anak-anak yatim piatu dan anak-anak terlantar. Inilah symbol cinta kasih, berbagi secara adil dan merata yang masih terawat sampai saat ini.

Kata kunci: Prosesi, Hasil Panen Perdana, Raja, Desa Kolimasang, Janda, Fakir Miskin, Anak Terlantar.

1. INTRODUCTION

Indigenous communities in Indonesia preserve a wealth of traditions and cultural practices passed down through generations. One such practice is the delivery of the first harvest to customary leaders or traditional symbols of authority. In Kolimasang Village, Adonara Subdistrict, East Flores Regency, East Nusa Tenggara, the Lamaholot people uphold a unique cultural practice of delivering the first harvest to the King of Adonara. This tradition is not merely a gesture of respect but is also a manifestation of values such as gratitude, loyalty, and the social order embedded within customary structures.

The delivery of the first harvest symbolizes agrarian relations imbued with deep cultural and spiritual meaning. In Lamaholot tradition, the king is not only a political-traditional authority but also a representation of cosmic forces deserving reverence. Within this perspective, the harvest-delivery ritual becomes a “rite of passage” from the profane world (the fields) to the sacred world (the palace). Thus, the tradition reflects a relational concept between humans, the land, and authority, embedded in the collective consciousness of indigenous communities (Geertz, 1973; Fox, 1993). This resonates with Lamaholot’s concept of the 4A: Atadiken (Humans), God, Nature, and Ancestral Spirits.

Amid the current waves of modernization and the penetration of national law, many local traditions face pressure, fading meanings, and even the risk of losing social relevance. However, in Kolimasang Village, this practice continues to thrive and is collectively carried out by the community. This raises critical questions: How does a customary practice persist within the framework of a modern



state and formal legal system? Do younger generations still understand the values behind the delivery of the first harvest, or has it become a mere symbolic ritual devoid of deeper meaning?

By tracing this cultural practice, this study aims to explore the cultural dimensions, customary law, and social dynamics embedded within the tradition of delivering the first harvest. This is essential to understanding cultural practices not as static heritage but as a living knowledge system that continues to adapt.

Previous studies have discussed the local wisdom of Lamaholot communities, especially regarding agricultural systems, relationships with the land, and customary rituals (Keraf, 2010; Kleden-Probonegoro, 2015). However, to date, no study has specifically explored the practice of delivering the first harvest to the king from the perspectives of culture and customary law, particularly within the context of Kolimasang Village on Adonara Island.

Most studies emphasize agrarian or religious–spiritual aspects, but few examine how such cultural practices serve as instruments of power relations, symbols of political loyalty, and mechanisms for preserving customary law within local communities. Furthermore, deeper studies on the resilience and transformation of this tradition amid social change remain scarce in the literature.

Therefore, this article addresses several aspects, including:

- 1) The cultural practice of delivering the first harvest by the Kolimasang community to the King of Adonara.
- 2) The symbolic, social, and spiritual meanings embedded in this practice among the people of Kolimasang in particular and the Lamaholot community in general.
- 3) The power relations and customary structures reflected in the harvest-delivery tradition in Kolimasang.
- 4) How the Kolimasang community maintains this cultural practice amid modernization and social change.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

Approach and Type of Research

This study employs a qualitative approach using an ethnographic research design. This approach was chosen to explore in depth the cultural practices, symbolic meanings, and social dynamics embedded in the tradition of delivering the first harvest by the indigenous community of Kolimasang to the King of Adonara.

Ethnographic study allows the researcher to understand social realities from the perspective of the cultural actors themselves (emic perspective) and to capture the cultural context underlying the practice (Spradley, 1980).

Research Location

The research was conducted in Kolimasang Village, West Adonara Subdistrict, East Flores Regency, East Nusa Tenggara Province (NTT). This village is a Lamaholot indigenous community that continues to practice the tradition of delivering harvest yields to the traditional leader (King of Adonara).

Research Informants

Informants were selected purposively based on criteria such as: Traditional leaders and cultural figures of the Lamaholot community in Kolimasang; elders or direct participants in the harvest delivery procession; the King of Adonara or representatives of the royal customary institution; and community members who participated in or witnessed the tradition.



In this study, five individuals were interviewed: the head of Kolimasang Village, the head of Sagu Village, a traditional figure of Kolimasang, a royal family member, and a community elder of Kolimasang.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected using triangulated methods, including:

- 1) Participant Observation. The researcher directly engaged in customary activities to document processes, symbols, dialogues, and social relations within the cultural practice of harvest delivery.
- 2) In-depth Interviews. The researcher explored cultural meanings from the perspectives of practitioners and traditional leaders. Interviews were semi-structured but remained focused on the objectives of the study.
- 3) Document Study. The researcher collected supporting documents such as customary texts, photographs of the procession, local tradition archives, and historical records of the Adonara Kingdom.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data were analyzed descriptively and qualitatively using the interactive analysis model based on Miles & Huberman (1994), consisting of:

- 1) Data Reduction: selecting, simplifying, and organizing relevant data.
- 2) Data Display: summarizing data in narrative descriptions and thematic matrices.
- 3) Conclusion Drawing/Verification: identifying patterns, symbolic meanings, and cultural reflections within the studied tradition.

Data Trustworthiness

To ensure validity and reliability, the study applied:

- 1) Triangulation of sources and methods. Findings were verified across interviews, observations, and documentation.
- 2) Member Check: confirming the accuracy of interpretations with informants.
- 3) Audit Trail: keeping detailed notes on research processes and decisions.

Research Ethics

The researcher adhered to ethical standards by:

- 1) Obtaining informed consent from informants.
- 2) Maintaining confidentiality of informant identities.
- 3) Respecting the values and norms of the local customary community.

Customary Tradition and Local Wisdom

Local wisdom refers to systems of values, norms, and cultural practices developed over time and passed down across generations within a community. The tradition of delivering the first harvest to a customary leader is one expression of local wisdom that represents harmonious relationships among humans, nature, and authority (Keraf, 2010).



Within Lamaholot society, respect toward the king or traditional leader carries profound spiritual, cosmological, and social significance (Kleden-Probonegoro, 2015).

Cultural Symbolism

Clifford Geertz (1973), in *The Interpretation of Cultures*, emphasizes that culture is a system of symbols that gives meaning to human actions. The tradition of harvest delivery can be understood as a symbolic system that strengthens social solidarity and legitimizes authority. Through symbols—such as harvest yields, prayers, and customary processions—the community reaffirms social bonds and shared values.

Customary Law and Power Relations

Customary law in traditional societies functions not only as a legal system but also as a value system and instrument of social control (Soetandyo Wignjosoebroto, 2002). The relationship between the community and the king in such customary practices reflects a form of social and political consensus rooted in tradition, rather than merely legal-formal authority.

This aligns with Van Vollenhoven's (1931) conception of *adat rechtsgemeenschappen* (customary law communities), which possess normative sovereignty within their respective cultural contexts.

Modernization and Cultural Resilience

Several studies highlight how local traditions may experience shifts in meaning or changes in function under the influence of modernization (Koentjaraningrat, 2009; Supriyanto, 2019). Nevertheless, not all traditions disappear; some adapt to remain relevant within new social contexts.

Theoretical Framework

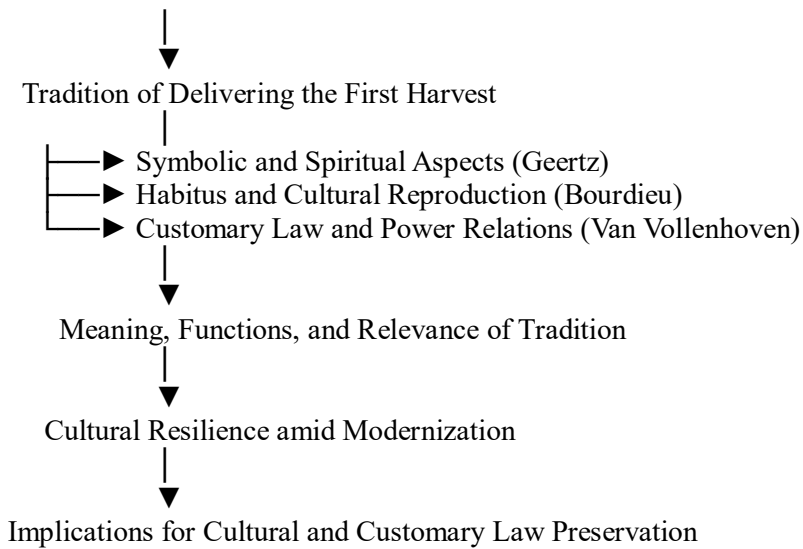
This study applies an interdisciplinary approach combining theories from cultural anthropology, sociology of law, and tradition studies, including:

- 1) Symbolic Cultural Theory — Clifford Geertz (1973). Geertz views culture as “a system of inherited meanings expressed in symbolic forms.” The harvest delivery tradition is interpreted as a symbolic expression of gratitude, loyalty, and cosmic relations. Symbols such as harvest produce, processions, and interactions with the king represent the worldview of the Lamaholot community.
- 2) Theory of Habitus — Pierre Bourdieu (1986). The tradition is not merely a symbolic act but the product of habitus—a set of dispositions and practices internalized within society. The harvest tradition is reproduced not only structurally but also through collective dispositions.
- 3) Concept of Customary Law — Van Vollenhoven (1931). Customary law is a living and dynamic legal system within indigenous communities. The harvest delivery tradition reflects customary law as a system of social organization, including the distribution of roles, authority, and social legitimacy toward traditional leaders.

Research Conceptual Framework

Based on the preceding sections, the conceptual framework illustrating the logical flow of this research is presented as follows:

Social–Cultural Context of Kolimasang Community



3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

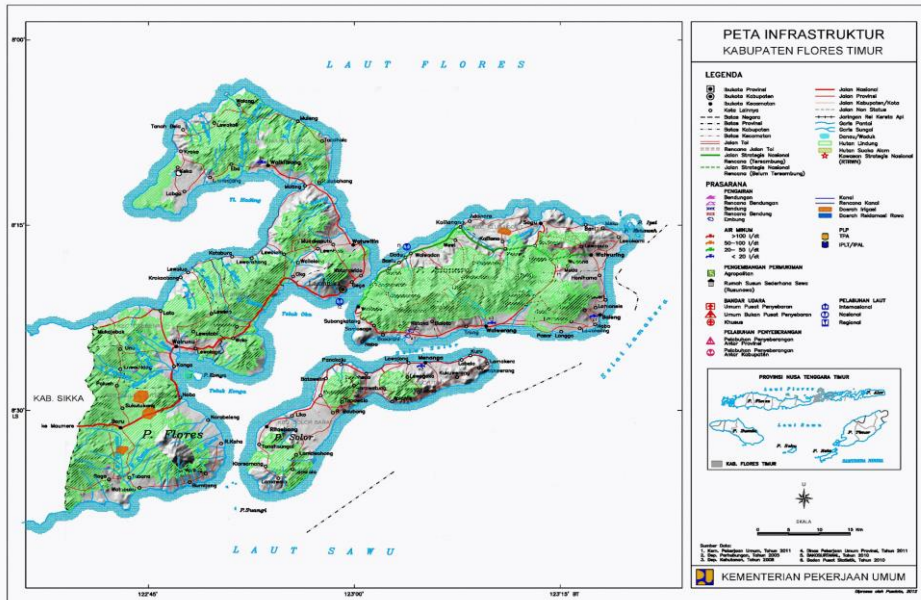
General Overview of the Research Location

Administratively, Kolimasang Village is located in Adonara District, Adonara Island, East Flores Regency, East Nusa Tenggara Province (NTT). The village belongs to the Lamaholot customary cluster. The Lamaholot cultural cluster consists of several communities, including the Paji groups (living in coastal areas) and those residing in the mountainous regions (Demong).

The coastal communities—known collectively as *Solor Watan Lema*—are composed of five coastal customary polities across the Solor Archipelago, each with its own kingdom: the Kingdom of Lama Kera on Solor Island, Lamahala on Adonara Island, Terong on Adonara Island, and Labala on Lembata Island.

The only kingdom not included in the *Solor Watan Lema* group is the Kingdom of Adonara, within whose territory Kolimasang Village is located.

Figure 1. Map of East Flores Regency



Source: Google Maps, 2025

Geographical Location

Kolimasang Village is located on Adonara Island, East Flores Regency. The regency is bordered by the Flores Sea to the north, the Savu Sea to the south, Sikka Regency to the west, and Lembata Regency to the east.

Kolimasang Village lies approximately at latitude -8.2703° S and longitude 123.1912° E, with an elevation of around 258 meters above sea level.

General Climate Characteristics

According to weather forecasts from the Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysics Agency (BMKG), daytime temperatures in Kolimasang range between $\pm 24-33^{\circ}\text{C}$, while nighttime temperatures drop to around $\pm 24-27^{\circ}\text{C}$. Daytime humidity varies between 55%–90%, depending on the day.

General climate data for Adonara shows daytime temperatures at approximately $31-32^{\circ}\text{C}$ and nighttime temperatures at around $24-25^{\circ}\text{C}$, with nighttime humidity reaching up to $\sim 85\%$. Wind speed is relatively calm, around 8 knots (≈ 15 km/h), with low waves around the port of Adonara.

Kolimasang Village experiences a distinct wet and dry season. Heavier rainfall generally occurs from December to March, while the dry season spans from April to September. High nighttime humidity indicates that the air rarely becomes completely dry even during the dry season, which affects agricultural activities, harvesting, and the transportation of crops.

Relatively stable temperatures (without extreme cold) allow farming and harvesting activities to occur year-round. However, differences in rainfall, terrain, and accessibility between seasons significantly affect the process of transporting the first harvest to the traditional “palace.”

During the rainy season, slippery terrain, limited access, and potential landslides can impede the procession. Periods of strong winds and heavy rainfall in Adonara have previously caused environmental damage.



Figure 2. Topography and Landform of Kolimasang Village



Source: Google Maps, 2025

Topographical Characteristics

Adonara Island's highest peak is Mount Ile Boleng/Iliboleng, with an elevation of approximately 1,659 meters above sea level. The island's geological structure consists of volcanic rocks (andesite, basalt, lava), metamorphic rocks, and intrusions of granite/diorite.

Kolimasang Village itself lies at an elevation of about 258 meters above sea level. Steep slopes and hilly contours are common across Adonara, resulting in farmland being located on slopes or terraced hills rather than flat plains.

Because of the hilly terrain, transporting harvests from the fields to the village and to the traditional "palace" location often requires traversing steep, uphill, or downhill routes—an important logistical and cultural aspect of the ritual procession.

The varied elevation influences the types of crops cultivated, harvest seasons, and the availability of transportation. In many cases, the paths to the fields are long and challenging, requiring more time for travel. Geological hazards such as landslides and flash floods have previously occurred in the area; in 2021, Adonara experienced a severe landslide/flash flood due to heavy rainfall.

From a cultural perspective, the physical terrain also holds symbolic significance: the ascent and descent from the fields to the palace forms part of the ritual of respect and sacred meaning embedded in the harvest-delivery procession.

Population and Livelihoods

According to the document "*Adonara District in Figures 2019*", Kolimasang Village had a population of 1,947 people in 2018. Based on its topographical characteristics—marked by slopes and hill farms—Lamaholot customary communities, including Kolimasang, generally rely on agriculture as their main livelihood.

Shifting cultivation and terraced farming are the primary economic activities, with crops such as vegetables, corn, cassava, and other commodities suitable for sloped terrain. Activities related to harvesting, collecting crops, and transporting them to the traditional center are not only economic practices but also intertwined with cultural traditions.

Small-scale plantations, simple livestock raising, and the use of local natural resources—such as coconut, coffee, and spices—also contribute to community livelihoods.



Process and Cultural Practice of Delivering the First Harvest by the People of Kolimasang to the King of Adonara

Concept of the Ritual

Interviews with traditional leaders explain that the ritual of delivering the first harvest, or tribute, to the king refers to the act of offering the earliest produce from the community's fields to God Almighty through the king—who is believed to have received a divine mandate to govern, protect, and serve the people. This tribute consists solely of the first harvest, offered before the people consume any of it.

The procession of delivering the first harvest, which must be presented by the people (*ribu ratu*) to the ruling king—often referred to in contemporary terms as “Bapa Wata”—is a tradition carried out once a year, during the young corn season. Before the community tastes or consumes their crops, the first portion must be delivered to the king. In the Lamaholot prayer chant, it is expressed as “Lewo nolo gang, tanah nolo nenu,” meaning that the king, as the leader of the kingdom, must consume it first before the people (*ribu ratu*) follow. This tradition embodies moral values (respect and honor), as well as social values (sharing, love, and solidarity).

The ritual takes place in two different locations and on two different days. The schedule has never changed since ancestral times:

- 1) Wednesday: The procession is held at Lewo Sagu Atu Matang – Tanah Kota Dolu Wewang (the palace of the Adonara king), the place where King Arkian Kamba (the first Islamic king of Adonara) settled after migrating.
- 2) Saturday: The procession is conducted at Lewo Ikung Koteng “Lewo Tadon Adonara – Tanah Jou Liang Lolong,” the earliest site of the Islamic kingdom in Adonara. However, this study focuses on the procession at the king's palace in Sagu.

This tradition is obligatory for the people in every Lewotana of the Paji region. However, due to cultural shifts and modernization, it is now practiced only in several villages: Lewo Koli Paron Bunga – Tanah Bunga Bali Barang (Kolimasang), Lewo Nisa Padu Barang – Tanah Hoing Koli Lolong (Nisanulan), and Lewo Timu Sandosi – Tanah Warat Tua Wolo (Sandosi). Other villages have discontinued the practice due to modern influences.

The communities of Kolimasang, Nisanulan, and Sandosi—comprising four villages (Sandosi I–IV)—never consume their harvest before delivering the first portion to the King of Adonara in Sagu. Only after the ritual procession can they taste the harvest.

Local wisdom in Kolimasang remains preserved. This is consistent with Keraf (2010), and Kleden & Probonegoro (2015), who state that local wisdom constitutes a system of values, norms, and cultural practices formed and inherited across generations. The tradition of delivering the first harvest to the traditional leader represents an expression of local wisdom that illustrates a harmonious relationship among humans, nature, and authority. In Lamaholot society, reverence toward the king or traditional leader contains deep spiritual, cosmological, and social dimensions.

Ritual Framework and Procession

The ritual framework and procession of delivering the first harvest by the people of Kolimasang consists of three stages:

- 1) preparation and determination of time,
- 2) the first-harvest ceremony in the field, and
- 3) delivery of the first harvest to the king/traditional palace.



Preparation and Determination of Time

Before the first harvest, the farming community in Kolimasang and other villages adhering to Adonara's Islamic kingdom traditions jointly prepare the fields—cleaning, maintaining, and completing fieldwork through communal labor (*gemohing*), a Lamaholot form of mutual cooperation.

The timing of the first harvest is determined by the traditional calendar (dry/rainy season, plant growth phases) and by approval from traditional leaders or the king's representative. A special ritual is always performed to seek permission from the ancestors or natural spirits before harvesting. This parallels other Lamaholot rituals such as *Bao Lolon*, performed using offerings such as palm wine in bamboo containers and cups made from coconut shells, accompanied by chants in the Lamaholot language.

The Lamaholot chant recited is as follows:

**“o..... Ama Tuhan Lera Wulan;
o... Ina Allah Tana Ekan.
Higun teti, wanan lali,
lein lau, weran rae,
uak tukan wai matan.
Pana pai,
mupul taling moon ribu ratu nole kayak Kolimasang;
ola man, here tuak, maan pao ribu, boe ratu.
Ribu ake susah, ratu ake tudak.”**

A free translation:

**“O Father God of Heaven,
God the Creator and ruler of the Sky and the Earth,
God of the East, West,
North, South,
and the center of this village,
Come gather with the people of Kolimasang,
work with us in the fields, bless our palm wine tapping,
and grant us abundant harvests so that the people (ribu ratu) may live in prosperity, free from
hardship.”**

This chant invites God to accompany the people of Kolimasang as they work their fields to produce corn, rice, legumes, tubers, and abundant palm wine.

First Harvest Ceremony in the Field

According to traditional leaders, community elders, and the village head, the first harvest is symbolically gathered on the day of harvest to be offered to the king at Sagu Waimatan, which represents the king's seat of authority and the sacred source of life-giving water.

In Lamaholot society, harvest is not merely an economic activity—it has religious and customary dimensions. It expresses gratitude to God, Nature, and Ancestor Spirits (3A) through the king as the mediator who serves the people.

Traditional artifacts—offerings, palm wine, woven cloth, and customary tools—are used to symbolize gratitude to nature and ancestral spirits. The offerings acknowledge that the 3A partake of the food first before the people consume it.



The first-harvest ceremony expresses gratitude for protection throughout the year and acknowledges that whatever the yield—large or small—is the blessing of the 3A. It also symbolizes the value of mutual cooperation (*gemohing*) in both fieldwork and harvesting.

The next step is packaging the first harvest for delivery to the adat center (“palace”) in Sagu. Before departure, the village head and traditional leaders announce preparations and perform the *Bao Lolon* ritual in the traditional house and the village hall.

Delivery of the First Harvest to the King/Traditional Palace

The people of Kolimasang deliver the first harvest to the King of Adonara as a gesture of social and customary relations between the farmers and the traditional authority. The procession includes:

- 1) Packaging the harvest (corn, tubers, nuts) in traditional containers (woven lontar baskets, trays).
- 2) Procession from the village to the palace, with all villagers wearing Adonara’s traditional woven garments (*kewatek*, *nowing*, shawls, *kenobo*) as symbols of honor to the 3A through the King of Adonara in Sagu.
- 3) Traditional ceremony at the palace: welcoming rituals, presentation of harvest, thanksgiving, customary prayers, and traditional dance or music.

The symbolic significance is that the offering is not merely economic but affirms the social and customary position of Kolimasang in relation to the king and strengthens unity, solidarity, and the human relationship with the 3A through the king.

Practice of Delivering the First Harvest (“Bapa Wata”)

In Kolimasang tradition, the process is guided by *kenahang/ kenapen* (public announcement) by the traditional authority (Belen Lewo) to the community (Ribu Ratu).

The chant reads:

**Le’e ribu leinem plau ratu weran prae
Hikun teti wanan lali,
Uaken tukan wai matan
Hari Rabu, tite bapa Wata lali lewo Sagu Atu Matan,
Wahan kae pana gohuk-gohuk.”**

It invites all villagers to join the procession to deliver the first harvest to the king Adonara in Sagu, preceded by *Bao Lolon* rituals at the traditional house.

The stages include:

- 1) Preparation: On Tuesday afternoon, farmers prepare their young corn harvest at home to be brought to the palace the next day.
- 2) The Procession: On Wednesday, the village officials, traditional leaders, and community jointly bring the first harvest to the King of Adonara at the palace.
- 3) Palace Ceremony: The offerings are received according to traditional protocol and placed in the sacred corner (*rie hikun lima wanan*) where God, Nature, and Ancestor Spirits are believed to dwell.
- 4) Distribution: The harvest brought by the people is shared fairly among the residents of Sagu village. Although certain clans such as Bajau/Bajo/Buton (Malaysia) and Binongko (South Sulawesi) may help distribute it, priority is given to widows, the poor, and neglected children.

Names, Symbolism, Cultural Values, and Social Meaning



According to Kolimasang traditional elders, Adonara Island (*Lewotana Adonara*) is regarded as the great traditional house of the Adonara people. The name *Adonara* is believed to derive from the Portuguese words *Don* (King) and *Nara* (people, siblings), meaning “a community of siblings under the authority of the kings.”

There are two prominent Lamaholot kingdoms:

- 1) the Kingdom of Adonara with its palace in Sagu Atu Matan (descendants of Seran Goran from Maluku), and
- 2) the Kingdom of Larantuka in Kota Rehna (descendants of Sara Biti Wai Hali).

The first harvest is also delivered to Adonara Village (Lewo Tadon Adonara – Tanah Jou Liang Lolong) on Saturdays, but this research focuses on Sagu.

Symbols appearing in the ritual include:

- 1) Gong and drum – symbols of joy.
- 2) Traditional attire (nowing, kewatek) – indicating social strata. Certain motifs are reserved for specific clans or royal lineage.
- 3) Royal attire – The King of Adonara wears a ceremonial suit, lipa sarong, kopiah, and carries a machete, spear, and bow/arrow symbolizing male valor.
- 4) First-Harvest Produce (wata laruk bala) – collected in even numbers symbolizing total submission of the people’s offering to the king.

Cultural values conveyed include:

- 1) Reverence toward leaders (the king), a central character of Adonara identity
- 2) Recognition of the king’s supreme authority

This resonates with Clifford Geertz’s *The Interpretation of Cultures* (1973), which views culture as a symbolic system that provides meaning to human actions. The first-harvest tradition functions as a symbolic system reinforcing social solidarity and legitimizing authority.

Impact of the Ritual on Farmers’ Socioeconomic Life

The people of Kolimasang believe that adherence to traditional rituals protects crops from pests and ensures abundant harvests.

The social meanings include:

- 1) Respect of the people (ribu ratu) toward the king
- 2) A tangible practice of sharing love and fairness—not only to the king and his clan but to the whole community, especially widows, the poor, orphans, and neglected children.

While some areas experience shifts in this tradition, as noted by Koentjaraningrat (2009) and Supriyanto (2019), many traditions do not disappear; instead, they adapt to remain relevant in modern contexts.

Thanksgiving Feast and Communal Meal

The ritual does not end with the offering. It is followed by a thanksgiving feast—an age-old tradition. The feast includes communal dining, drinking palm wine, singing, dancing, and performances (sole oha – lia namang), marking the completion of the ritual and the harmony between Humans, God, Nature, and Ancestor Spirits (4A: Aten Diken, God, Nature, Ancestors).

The value of mutual cooperation (gemohing) is highly visible—from land clearing, planting, weeding, pest control, to delivering the harvest to the king.

Post-Ritual: Management and Distribution of Harvest



The harvest offered to the king is redistributed symbolically or as part of ongoing rituals. It is **not** kept for the king and his relatives alone but shared with widows, orphans, the poor, and neglected children as a symbol of love and the king's role as God's representative caring for all.

The king ends the procession by reminding the community to uphold ancestral values, religion, and customs, and to protect the environment—avoiding forest burning, tree-cutting, and environmental destruction. The moral message emphasizes that the earth belongs to future generations; adults merely borrow it from their descendants and must return it in its original condition.

4. CONCLUSION

There are several important points in the study of the First Harvest Delivery Procession conducted by the people of Kolimasang Village to the King of Adonara.

- 1) The main actors in this procession are the village head as the government representative, clan leaders as representatives of customary and cultural aspects, the people of Kolimasang Village, and the King of Adonara along with members of the royal family.
- 2) The symbols that continue to be preserved as ancestral heritage and remain in practice today include: customary ceremonies, stages of the procession, and various ceremonial objects such as harvest produce, corn, palm wine, gongs and drums, spears, machetes, traditional cloths, and the royal ceremonial garments.
- 3) The spiritual impact that continues to this day is the traditional belief that God, Nature, and the Ancestral Spirits always accompany the community—from preparing the fields, clearing them, planting, harvesting, up to the delivery procession and the expression of gratitude.
- 4) The cultural and customary impacts show that customary values and cultural traditions remain well preserved to this day.

Recommendations

Several recommendations of this study are as follows:

- 1) This research is closely related to language, customs, and culture. Extra efforts are required from various stakeholders to continue preserving and maintaining traditional prayer chants in the local language, which are at risk of being forgotten by younger generations due to the passage of time.
- 2) The customary and cultural procession has been abandoned by several villages that were once under the Adonara Kingdom. Therefore, cultural preservation is needed, especially through the writing of academic manuscripts and historical documents, so that customary and cultural values remain sustainable and continue to serve as a source of internal strength for the community.
- 3) Further research is needed in other villages that still conduct the first harvest delivery procession to the King of Adonara in order to identify the historical connections, the implementation practices, and the values contained within the tradition, including the possibility of shifts in its execution.

Research Limitations

This research still contains several limitations, including:

- 1) Limited number of respondents. The respondents in this study were limited to the village heads of Kolimasang and Sagu, customary leaders, community leaders, and members of the royal family. Future research should involve more respondents related to this procession.
- 2) Limited analytical tools. This study only employed descriptive analysis by summarizing respondents' views related to the procession, symbols, objects, and traditional chants. There



may be other analytical tools that can be used to further improve and refine studies of this nature.

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