## Presenting Unique Merariq Tradition in Plambik Village as Halal Tourism Destination

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### Abstract

This paper discusses wedding ceremony in Central Lombok village of Plambik, which is potential to be a cultural attraction that supports the development of tourism. Marriage ceremony in Plambik has a number of stages, which are not necessarily similar to those customly practiced by other groups of Sasak people in order to hold a wedding ceremony. This paper aimed to explore merariq tradition which is uniquely held by Sasak community in Plambik. Data of this research were collected through library research and interviews with Plambik natives. The data were then analyzed by comparing the documentary notes with the actual practices of merariq by Plambik villagers. The finding indicated unique features of merariq stages in Plambik.

### Keywords

Merariq; Tradition; Stages; Unique; Wedding Ceremony

## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has long been known as a multicultural country. Indonesia has thirty-three provinces with not only singular culture existed in a province but rather plural. Indonesian people respect culture and still maintain it so today. West Nusa Tenggara as one of the provinces has numerous cultures maintained. West Nusa Tenggara is a province consisted with two islands, Sumbawa and Lombok. Sumbawa is an island where Sumbawanese and Bimanese (Mbojo) ethnic groups live, while Lombok island is where Sasaknese and Balinese co-exist and live together in peace. Both of the islands are rich with cultures of dances, foods, houses, songs, customs, instruments, weapons, wedding ceremonies. These cultures inform more about people in West Nusa Tenggara, because culture delivers values, belief, norms and other ways of life. As Hofstede (1997) states

‘culture refers to the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving.’ And ‘A culture is a way of life of a group of people--the behaviors, beliefs, values, and symbols that they accept, generally without thinking about them, and that are passed along by communication and imitation from one generation to the next.’

In Lombok there is a habit that Sasak people will mostly do after harvesting, it is Merariq. Since, couple done Merariq in this occasion are said to be well prepared. As part of the culture, Merariq takes an important part in Lombok. The ‘Merariq’, has many stages to be done. Sasak People have to pass these stages to fulfill the conditions of Merariq. In many villages, the stages are similar which are mostly; Midang, Merariq,
Besejati, Selabar, Sorong Serah and Nyongkolan. These stages can be found in almost all villages in Lombok.

Plambik is a village located in Central Lombok. Plambik consisted of about 2000 family that majority are farmers. Plambik is bordered by Ranggalai in the north side, Darek in the east side, Kabul in the South side, and Teduh in the west side. This village has a unique tradition maintained from generation to generation which differ it with others. The Merariq is held with some unique which characterized this village. Never, this village does other than Merariq. Not like other villages surrounded, they still maintained to do Merariq with all stages that mostly others have been affected in modern era.

From this perspective, the writer expects to study about the unique of Merariq stages done in the village. The stages are mostly the same but then, there are some stages with unique things practically. Moreover, the study will do more research on the unique that characterized the village.

**METHOD**

The method used in this research is qualitative method. It is concerned with description and explanation the unique of Merariq (marriage) stages done by the Sasak People. The method was used to analyze the things and the events that make Merariq stages became unique in the village observed, that is Plambik village, Central Lombok.

The data were collected by interviewing respondents selected with proportional sampling technique purposive that selected based on the following criteria. The people were divided into three kinds, they are: (a) One respondent as the Cultural Heritage Observer, (b) Three respondents as those that did the Merariq, and (c) Two respondents as those who watched the Merariq.

After collecting the data, the writer than, analyzed them based on problem rose in the previous one. The writer analyze the data by describing the stages in finding out the unique of Merariq tradition in Plambik village.

**RESULT**

The research was done in a day in Plambik village, Central Lombok. From the interview, the writer found the Merariq stages done in the village that were needed for further discussion. The findings are as presented below.

**Midang**

This is the stage that a man and a woman make a deal to do Merariq. The man comes to the woman’s house to date the woman and make a deal as well.

**Melaiq/Merariq**

In this stage the man will elope (take) the woman on the day they had a deal before. The Merariq is done at night.

**Besejati**

The man side (husband to be) will send some people telling to the woman’s (wife to be) parents that their daughter has been taken and keep in the man’s side house. It takes about three days to one week.

**Selabar**

The man side again comes to the woman’s side to discuss about the ‘good day’ to do the Ngawinan (solemnization). In this stage, the man’s side is taking ‘perwalian’ (one who will marry wife to be to the husband to be) that can be any relatives but woman’s father.

**Merebak Pucuk**
In this stage the man side will be again coming to the woman’s house to tell the parents that their daughter has done the Solemnization. In this stage both side will discuss about ‘Pisuke’ and the date to hold Sorong Serah. Pisuke is goods and money which man’s side should prepare to hold Sorong Serah.

**Sorong Serah**

Sorong Serah is giving some ‘Ajen-ajen’ (goods) and money to redeem the woman that has been married. This event usually hold by doing ‘Sesenggak’ (singing a song), like;

*Lain tutuk lain jajat  
Lain gubuk lain adat*

Pisuke varies according to the caste, to which the people belong. The castes include:

**Utama/ Menak** (honourable people) This caste is symbolized with people that has Raden title. The Pisuke is one hundred (‘satus’). Ajen-ajen brought here are;

1. Woven cloth or batik sarong about sixty pieces
2. One ‘Penginang Kuning/ bokor’ (a big jar made of silver)
3. One ‘Keris/ Perebak Kau Tindok’
4. Salin Dede (two coconuts, one jar to drink that made of clay, one gadang (a small basket made of bamboo to put rice))
5. One Sabuk seren (a long cloth used by old woman around her waist to hide money and also used by woman that just gives a birth)
6. ‘Nampak Lemah’ (money) about forty ancient money (40 kepeng bolong) or about forty thousand rupiahs
7. Pemegat as is a symbol that aji krama or Sorong serah has been done. It means that there will be no more a talk about money.
8. The pemegat should be redeem about ten thousand rupiahs

**Madya.** This caste is symbolized with people that has Lalu or Bais title. The Pisuke is sixty six. Ajen-ajen brought here are;

1. Woven cloth or batik sarong about forty six pieces
2. One ‘Penginang Kuning/ bokor’ (a big jar made of silver)
3. One ‘Keris/ Perebak Kau Tindok’
4. Salin Dede (two coconuts, one jar to drink that made of clay, one gadang (a small basket made of bamboo to put rice))
5. One Sabuk seren (a long cloth used by old woman around her waist to hide money and also used by woman that just gives a birth)
6. ‘Nampak Lemah’ (money) about twenty ancient money (20 kepeng bolong) or about twenty thousand rupiahs.
7. The pemegat should be redeem about five thousand rupiahs

**Satria or jajar Karang.** The Pisuke is one hundred thirty three. Ajen-ajen brought here are;

1. Woven cloth or batik sarong about twenty three pieces
2. One ‘Penginang Kuning/ bokor’ (a big jar made of silver)
3. One ‘Keris/ Perebak Kau Tindok’
4. Salin Dede (two coconuts, one jar to drink that made of clay, one gadang (a small basket made of bamboo to put rice))
5. One Sabuk seren (a long cloth used by old woman around her waist to hide money and also used by woman that just gives a birth)
6) ‘Nampak Lemah’ (money) about ten ancient money (10 kepeng bolong) or about ten thousand rupiahs
7) The pemegat should be redeem about three thousand rupiahs

Bulu Ketujur. The Pisuke is ‘Pituk telung ataq/ Selaksa samas (ten). Ajen-ajen brought here are;
1) Woven cloth or batik sarong about ten pieces
2) One ‘Penginang Kuning/ bokor’ (a big jar made of silver)
3) One ‘Keris/ Perebak Kau Tindok’
4) Salin Dede (two coconuts, one jar to drink that made of clay, one gadang (a small basket made of bamboo to put rice))
5) One Sabuk seren (a long cloth used by old woman around her waist to hide money and also used by woman that just gives a birth)
6) ‘Nampak Lemah’ (money) about 7 ancient money (7 kepeng bolong) or about seven thousand rupiahs
7) The pemegat should be redeem about four hundred rupiahs

All these Ajen-ajen will be brought home by the man (husband) home after Sorong Serah ceremony. He left only ‘Pemegat, and Salin Dede’. ‘Salin Dede’ is left to reply all good things that woman’s mother do when gave a birth to the woman (wife).

Nyundul/ Lampaq Nae
After doing Sorong Serah, the couples then do Nyundul/ Lapaq Nae. It is a process of visiting woman’s parents after long prohibited to see each other. It is the first time for the woman meeting her parents after Melaiq. The visitation will be done by man brings;
   a. Cakes to be given to the woman’s parents and relatives, like: tekal/ bantal, cerorot, lapisan/lemper.
   b. A traditional weapon, such as parang, pisau, pedang, etc to protect himself and the wife from things that would disturb their journey

Begawe Suke/Megatan
This is the stage of people doing a party. In this stage Plambik people will do
a. Praja
   Praja’ comes from Sanksekerta words ‘pra’ and ‘raja’ which means that this is the beginning of the couple to be king and queen in their newly family. They start the family by knowing each other right and duty.
   In ‘Praja’, the couple will be carried with wooden toys that are lifted by their relatives.
   b. The woman’s parents usually give a cow, buffalo or other precious things in doing this event as a symbol of affection to their daughter.
   c. The man (husband) should bring ‘Tembuli/ Ongsongan’ since he would feel embarrass if they come with an empty hands.
   d. This stage will be held all day and night for one day, with the following steps
      1) ‘Naikan’ (early step) that is held in the morning or afternoon
      2) ‘Malem Gawe’ (last stage) that is held in the night.

In this event Plambik people will do Merebak Jungkis/ Bedudus’. It is an act in which a white cloth is unfolded above the couple and other relatives accompanied the couples in Nyongkolan. Then, water is poured into the cloth. Each person just below the cloth should be watered with the water. It is done before the couple are carried and accompanied by relatives from man’s house to the woman’s house. Plambik people believe that if one is not exposed to the water splashes, that person will have an eyes
disease that in Plambik it is called ‘leles (mata belekan)’. After doing the Megatan, the couple will do Nyongkolan. This is the end of Merariq stages in Plambik village.

The discussion here is about the unique activities and/or stages shown in Plambik village in doing Merariq tradition. These unique has differed this village with other villages even district for years of Merariq. The unique are as follow;

**The Act of Taking ‘Wali’ in Selabar Stage**

This act is about taking ‘perwalian’ (one who will marry wife to be to the husband to be) that commonly blood related father should be the one who does this. In Plambik village, the ‘wali’ can be anyone from woman’s relatives but her parents. This person (wali) will marry the woman to the man that she has chose as they both did ‘Melaik/Merariq’. It is prohibited in this village to see even contact parents before reaching Sorong Serah. The woman will only meet her parents after Sorong Serah.

The villagers believe ‘adigame’ (taking source from Islam religion) in which man should have good base of Islam that he will get task shifted from woman’s parents to him. Man should know about 66 conditions. They are; 20 sifat wajib Allah (Twenty Obligatory Nature of Allah), 20 sifat mustahil Allah (twenty impossible nature of Allah), Jaiz, 13 rukun sholat, 4 sifat wajib Nabi (four obligatory nature of prophet) dan 4 sifat mustahil nabi (four impossible nature of prophet), four human origin (fire, wind, soil, water). With these conditions, a man can meet his parents in law. That is how the ‘wali’ in Plambik village is not the woman’s father himself.

To meet the halal tourism needs for the village to be acknowledged, this unique stage of Merariq can be simulated into real. The simulation is performed in case the real stage could not be found as the Merariq is not done every day. By performing (simulating) this unique stage, the village will be acknowledged by government to be one of tourism destination for both domestic and foreign people.

**Merebak Pucuk Stage**

Merebak pucuk is a stage just right after ‘Selabar’ to tell the woman’s parents that their daughter has done the Ngawinang (solemnization). The woman’s (wife) parents and her relatives should stay at home and prepare themselves to receive the news. In this stage, ‘Pisuke’ (goods and money that should be prepared by the husband side) are discussed along with taking ‘a good day’ to hold Sorong Serah.

The examples of Pisuke can be stored and shown to the foreign and domestic people as they visit the village for tourism purpose. This imitation stuff can also be sold to increase local people income.

**Nyundul/ Lampaq Nae**

Nyundul/ Lampaq Nae is a stage right after Sorong Serah in order to visit wife’s parents after long (since merariq to Sorong Serah stage that takes about more than a week) prohibited to see or contact each other between parents and their daughter. This is the first time for the woman (wife) seeing her parents again that becoming a sad part of Merariq.

By performing the simulation of the stage as one of the village’s cultural wealth, the unique of Merariq tradition in Plambik will attract people to come and visit. The local government needs to care this local benefit that will invest more income for the region.

**Megatan / Begawe Suke Stage**

This stage is about holding a party. The unique is that Plambik people will do ‘Praja’. ‘Praja’ comes from Sanksekerta words ‘pra’ and ‘raja’ which means that this is the beginning of the couple to be king and queen in their newly family. They start the family by knowing each other right and duty. In ‘Praja’, the couple will be carried with wooden toys that are lifted by their relatives.
Simulating this unique performance of Merariq stage, will take more attention to foreign and local people. It introduces what is different and unique of Merariq tradition performs in the village. By doing so, the villagers will get more opportunity to spread their unique culture and get more income as well.

**Merebak Jungkis/Bedudus in Begawe Suke Stage**

Merebak Jungkis is an act to unfold a white cloth above the couple and some other people that will be carried in ‘Praja’. After that, the cloth will be filled with water that people (the couple and some people that will do ‘Praja’) just below the cloth would be watered with that. This is also what makes the village rich with unique of Merariq tradition. The simulation of performing this will take the government attention that later will be introduced and recognized as one of cultural wealthy in NTB.

Those stages were given by six respondents during interview. Below are the results of the interview.

a) 'Plambik is a village consist of about 2000 family that mostly they live from farming. Plambik is located in Central Lombok with borders are Ranggagate in the North side, Darek in the East side, Kabul in the South side and Teduh in the west side. Plambik has been maintaining its Merariq Tradition from generation to generation. Never in my life, have I seen changes done by people. The Merariq comes from Sasak word ‘melaik’ which means a process of eloping a girl to do marriage. The tradition of Merariq began when used to be people were living not as close as today. Since they live on the mountain that each house were having such a distance, that quiet impossible for them to do Melamar (asking) a woman that they love. The Tradition then continued with some stages; Besejati..., Selabar... Merebak pucuk..., Sorong Serah..., Nyundul/ Lampaq nae..., Begawe Suke/ Megatan..., Nyongkolan...It is the last stage of Merariq. It is an option actually in as in ‘Megatan’ they already did the ‘meaning of Nyongkolan’ which is telling all people in the village about their marriage status. (Pak Anggrat, 54 years old, a Cultural Heritage Observer. Sunday, 24 December 2017)

b) ...villagers believe ‘adigame’ (taking source from Islam religion) in which man should have good base of Islam that he will get task shifted from woman’s parents to him. Man should know about 66 conditions. They are; 20 sifat wajib Allah (Twenty Obligatory Nature of Allah), 20 sifat mustahil Allah (twenty impossible nature of Allah), Jaiz, 13 rukun sholat, 4 sifat wajib Nabi (four obligatory nature of prophet) dan 4 sifat mustahil nabi (four impossible nature of prophet), four human origin (fire, wind, soil, water). With these conditions, a man can meet his parents in law...

(Pak Awaludin, 40 years old, a teacher and Historian. Sunday, 11 June 2018)

c) 'I have been married for three years. Three years ago I did ‘Merariq’ with my wife. At first I did ‘Midang’. I made a deal with the woman that I love to do Merariq that night. My date agreed that we did Merariq silently without her parents knowing that. Then after 2 days, my representative did Besejati. Then, again my side, went to my wife to be house to discuss about a good day to get married. We did the solemnization after getting the ‘good day’ Then, my parents and my relatives went to my wife’ house to discuss about Sorong Serah. They discuss about the day and the pisuke. After Sorong serah, we did Megatan. That’s the Merariq stages that I went through three years ago.’
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(Sandy, 25 years old, a farmer and Sahdan, 32 years old. An officer. Sunday, 24 December 2017)

d) I have watched a couple did Merariq and sometimes I helped my friends to do merariq. We usually did that at night. But I think I never see people doing ‘Merariq’ in the day. We, then bring the girl to my friend’s house. The next day or the next two or three days, there will be ‘Besejati’ and ‘Nyelabar to tell that the girl has been eloped and to decide the ‘good day’ to do Ngawinag (solemnization). My friend then, get married ad after that his relatives went to his wife’s house to tell about the marriage. They then did Sorong serah. After Sorong Serah They did Megatan. It was so crowd with traditional music and many people (relatives, neighbors, friends, etc) accompanied them from my friend’s house to his wife’s house. They did Praja that they were carried with wooden horse along the way. But before that, the couple and we were sitting under a white cloth and we were watered with water filled on the white cloth. It was so fun at that time. We laughed and danced.

(H. Sahlan, 28 years old, A jobless. Sunday, 24 December 2017)

e) I have watched my friend did the Merariq. Actually because, I’m a woman, so I just heard that my friend did merariq and the night she did that she called me about that. She was happy, nervous and afraid as well. We had a long talk that night. I tried to comfort her. The next day, her parents were told about ‘Melaik’ last night. Then the next three days, she got married with her boyfriend that she went ‘Melaik’ with. They then, did Sorong serah. After a week, she could meet her parents for the first time after ‘Melaik’. They did ‘Megatan’ after that. My friend was carried with the wooden horse. I did accompany her. The ceremony was very crowd with music, people, laugh etc. After that she did Nyongkolan.


CONCLUSION

The merariq tradition done in Plambik village, Central Lombok has many stages they are; Midang, Melaik, Besejati, Selabar, Merebak Pucuk, Sorong serah, Nyundul/ lampaq Nae, Begawe Suke/ Megatan and Nyongkolan. The uniques of the Merariq process in Plambik Village are: a) the ‘wali’ is not woman’s father blood related, but instead the ‘wali’ is one of woman’s relatives, b.) merebak pucuk stage. A stage to tell about the solemnization done to woman’s parents, c.) Nyundul/ Lampaq Nae. A stage that the newly couple visit woman’s parents and relatives, d.) Begawe Suke/ Megatan. A stage were likely to Nyongkolan. The couple was carried with wooden horse along the way from man’s house to woman’s house (Praja), e.) Merebak Jungkis/ Bedudus. It is an act contained in Begawe Suke stage. This an act of splashing water to couple and their companion before doing Praja.

The unique of merariq tradition in Plambik village needs to be considered as halal tourism destination. As the unique are quiet different with those performed by the Sasak people in other villages. Certainly, the Merariq is not performed every day, that by doing simulation of the Merariq tradition especially the unique ones, the village will be acknowledged and popular. Also, this concept will bring more tourist of both domestic and foreign to come and watch the tradition in which it will increase the villagers’ income as well as the local government income.
REFERENCE