



An Analysis of the Cultural Values of the *Saprahan* Tradition among the Sambas Malays: A Literary-Anthropological Approach

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe and analyze the cultural values and their representations within the procession and procedural execution of the *saprahan* tradition in Pelangi Segedong Hamlet, Bengkayang Regency. The research employs a qualitative descriptive method and a literary anthropology approach. The data collected consist of both verbal and non-verbal elements. Data sources include customary leaders, cultural practitioners, the general public, and primary data regarding the *saprahan* practice itself. Data collection techniques involve participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Data analysis follows an interactive model comprising three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data validity is ensured through source triangulation and theoretical triangulation. The findings indicate that the *saprahan* tradition embodies three primary cultural values: (1) religious values, (2) social values, and (3) ecological values. These values are concretely represented through four standard elements: the sequence of dish presentation, the symbolic significance of traditional utensils, the circular seating arrangement, and the mechanism for intergenerational transmission of implicit values through the community's direct involvement in every stage of the *saprahan* procession.

Keywords: cultural values, *Saprahan* tradition, Sambas Malays, literary-anthropological

INTRODUCTION

Cultural values are abstract concepts residing in the collective mind regarding what is deemed highly valuable in life, serving as the ultimate guide for human behavior (Koentjaraningrat, 2009). Djamaris (1996) categorizes cultural values based on five types of human relationships: with God, with nature, with society, with others, and with the self. Theoretically, cultural values occupy the most abstract layer of culture; Koentjaraningrat (2009) distinguishes them from the social system—comprising the actual patterns of action and interaction among community members—and from material culture, consisting of artifacts. These three manifestations of culture—ideas, actions, and ar-

tifacts—are interconnected and inseparable; cultural values, as abstract ideas, can only be recognized through their embodiment in the sociocultural system (interaction patterns, norms, and social institutions) and through the cultural objects used in daily life. Consequently, the study of cultural values cannot be divorced from their encompassing sociocultural context, as values acquire meaning only when practiced, negotiated, and transmitted through the social interactions of a community. This study focuses on cultural values concerning human relationships with God, nature, and fellow human beings, as these three are most prominent in the sociocultural structure framing the *saprahan* procession—a space for col-

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lective interaction among the Sambas Malay community. Such values are often embodied in traditions as reflections on social phenomena, thereby serving as a means to understand the realities and value systems within a society (Darazah, 2025). This understanding underscores that the *saprahan* tradition is not merely a ceremonial legacy but a reflection of the sociocultural structure of the community that upholds it—a structure worthy of scholarly analysis and interpretation. Religious cultural values position God—the Almighty and Merciful—as the center of life. This relationship is fundamental, with humans drawing closer to the Divine through piety, obedience, and prayer. This divine connection manifests in the fulfillment of God's commandments and in daily conduct, encompassing devotion, prayer, and adherence to religious teachings (Juwati, 2018).

Cultural values regarding the human relationship with nature encompass concepts of unity and the utilization of natural forces. Humans utilize natural elements—such as land, water, forests, and animals—to sustain life. According to Koentjaraningrat (cited in Prasetyo, 2021), the human-nature relationship can be understood through the perspective that nature possesses immense power to which humans must submit. As noted by Yulsafli (2022) and Muslihah (2019), human existence is inseparable from nature; since humans live within it, they have an obligation to preserve and utilize nature responsibly (Yulsafli, 2022).

Cultural values regarding human relationships with others define society as a group of individuals who interact and communicate in ways that foster social bonds and unity (Novrianus, 2019). Within this group, members adhere to prevailing rules and customs to ensure a stable, resilient, and harmonious life. According to Marzali (cited in Hafidhan, 2017), three key cultural values in social life are *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation), *tolong-menolong* (helping one another), and *kekeluargaan* (a sense of kinship or family-like solidarity). Humans are both individual and social

beings; consequently, they must interact and connect with others (Wiranty, 2018).

One community in Indonesia that consistently maintains and preserves its cultural richness to this day is the population of Sambas Regency, West Kalimantan Province. The continuity of traditions in this region is not merely a matter of routine; rather, it is a manifestation of the community's identity—one that is deeply religious and steadfast in upholding noble values. Folklore represents a cultural tradition passed down through generations. As a form of classical literature, folklore is imbued with cultural values and heavily influenced by the customs prevailing in a specific region or community (Agustina, 2016).

Regardless of how the Sambas community's understanding of its culture evolves, preservation efforts remain crucial for safeguarding ancestral heritage—a heritage rich in values fundamental to the social order. Various traditions—ranging from customary wedding processions and thanksgiving ceremonies (*selamatan*) to the *saprahan* dining culture—embody profound local wisdom for the communities that uphold them. However, these values often face challenges amidst the changing times. The relevance of this study is particularly significant given that *saprahan* functions not only as a socio-cultural practice but also as a medium for character education and a means of fostering intergenerational social cohesion; consequently, a scholarly understanding of the tradition holds dual implications: for cultural preservation efforts and for the development of learning models based on local wisdom. Therefore, a holistic understanding of the tradition's significance—from both internal community perspectives and external viewpoints—is essential. Against this backdrop, this research aims to describe and analyze the cultural values embedded in the *saprahan* tradition among the Sambas Malay community in Pelangi Segedong Hamlet, Bengkayang Regency, utilizing the perspective of literary anthropology.

Saprahan is a communal dining heritage of the Muslim Malay community in West Kalimantan



that persists despite the ongoing tide of modernization. Etymologically, *saprahan* derives from the word *saprah* (meaning "spread out") and is also rooted in the Arabic word *safrāh* (meaning "round" or "circular"), a concept reflected in its characteristic circular seating arrangement (*halaqah*) of five people per group. In the Sambas Malay tradition, *saprahan* is defined as a communal dining activity where participants sit cross-legged on the floor (*beselak*), embodying the principle of equality—"sitting at the same level, standing at the same height"—and the spirit of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) throughout the collective process of ingredient preparation, cooking, and serving. Originally practiced during daily family meals, this ancestral tradition has evolved into a standard gesture of respect for welcoming guests and a feature of major events such as weddings and thanksgiving ceremonies (Wahab, 2020).

This research is urgent because the *saprahan* tradition currently faces serious existential challenges driven by rapid modernization and shifting contemporary lifestyles. This situation is exacerbated by the younger generation's lack of interest and involvement in practicing and understanding the tradition's essence, resulting in an intergenerational cultural disconnect. Without systematic documentation and in-depth scholarly study, there is a genuine risk that the noble values and social norms associated with this communal dining ritual could be lost. Yet, *saprahan* represents far more than a mere dining event; it is a crystallization of the collective identity and worldview of the Sambas Malay people, upholding values of mutual cooperation, equality, and courtesy.

The Sambas Malay *saprahan* tradition possesses unique characteristics that distinguish it from similar traditions elsewhere in West Kalimantan. Its primary uniqueness lies in the circular seating arrangement—resembling a *halaqah*—comprising five people per group. This circular formation is believed to exist only in the

northern region of West Kalimantan—specifically Sambas Regency, Bengkayang Regency, and Singkawang City—areas that historically constituted the Sambas Regency administrative territory prior to the 1999 administrative division (Rahman et al., 2001). Although the Mempawah and Pontianak regions also practice *saprahan*, those areas employ a linear seating arrangement (Wahab, 2020).

The *saprahan* tradition was selected as the subject of this study because it represents a cultural heritage of the Sambas Malay community that embodies profound, noble values; yet, it currently faces the threat of extinction due to the rapid pace of modernization and the lack of youth involvement in its preservation. Through every stage of the process—from collective preparation and the circular seating formation (*halaqah*) to the practice of eating with one's hands—*saprahan* upholds fundamental values such as mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), equality, and courtesy, which serve as a moral compass for the community. Without systematic scholarly study, these values risk being lost without adequate documentation. Therefore, the younger generation must be supported and guided to ensure they carry on and preserve this culture for future generations (Lizawati & Utari, 2018).

Studying the *saprahan* tradition requires a methodology capable of deeply exploring its cultural dimensions. In this context, the anthropology of literature serves as an interdisciplinary approach that integrates literary analysis with anthropology, thereby providing a comprehensive framework. This approach not only examines the aesthetic aspects of *saprahan* but also explores the socio-cultural context that underpins it. Consequently, the cultural values embedded in both the structure and substance of *saprahan* can be interpreted holistically.

Comprehensive early documentation regarding the Malay culture of Sambas was pioneered by Arpan (2004). This study was subsequently deepened by Wahab (2017), who

defined *saprahan* as a host's gesture of respect toward guests through a communal meal where participants sit cross-legged or with legs tucked to the side (*beselak*). Aligning with this, Pridaningsih (2017) emphasizes the philosophical significance of the principle "sitting at the same level, standing at the same height" (*duduk sama rendah, berdiri sama tinggi*) as a reflection of togetherness and mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*). These characteristics are reinforced by Rahman's (2001) findings, which identify a circular seating formation—resembling a *halaqah*—as a distinctive feature of communities in the Sambas, Bengkayang, and Singkawang regions (Rahman, 2001).

The novelty of this research lies in its use of a literary anthropology approach to examine the *saprahan* tradition as a representation of cultural values through a holistic analysis of action symbols and ritual processions. Unlike previous studies that tended to focus on historical documentation or technical procedures, this research deeply explores the dimensions of social practice and the mechanisms for transmitting noble values amidst the existential challenge of intergenerational cultural disconnection in the modernization era. Furthermore, another novel aspect involves identifying how these traditional values are adapted into modern educational instruments as a concrete effort to maintain social cohesion and revitalize intangible cultural heritage.

The theoretical foundation of this study is built upon the literary anthropology perspective of Nyoman Kutha Ratna (2011), which analyzes and interprets literary works or oral traditions within a cultural framework. The analysis of cultural values is based on the concepts of Koentjaraningrat (2009), who views values as collective abstract ideas that serve as guidelines for human behavior. Field data were analyzed descriptively using the literary anthropology approach (Ratna, 2011) to uncover the representation of cultural values within every procession and procedural aspect of the *saprahan* tradition.

This research aims to identify, analyze, and interpret the cultural values embodied in the *saprahan* tradition of the Sambas Malay community in Dusun Pelangi Segedong, Bengkayang Regency, utilizing a literary anthropology approach as a framework for analyzing both value systems and cultural symbol systems.

Specifically, this study is designed to address two primary questions. First, what cultural values are contained within the *saprahan* tradition of the Sambas Malay community in Dusun Pelangi Segedong, viewed through the lens of human relationships with God, nature, and fellow human beings? Secondly, the study examines how these cultural values are symbolically represented within the *saprahan* procession and its procedural execution, enabling them to be understood, internalized, and passed down across generations amidst the challenges of modernization. These two research questions are structured sequentially—moving from the identification of values as abstract concepts to an analysis of their representation in cultural actions and artifacts—aligning with the theoretical framework of the "three forms of culture" that underpins this research.

A literary anthropology approach was selected for this study because the *saprahan* tradition cannot be fully comprehended through aesthetic or historical analysis alone; rather, it requires an analytical framework capable of holistically addressing socio-cultural dimensions. As noted by Ratna (2011), literary anthropology integrates literary analysis with anthropology, allowing researchers to dissect cultural elements—such as religious systems, customs, symbolic language, and mechanisms of tradition transmission—as they manifest within the *saprahan* procession.

Preliminary observations conducted on March 7, 2026, indicate that the Sambas Malay *saprahan* tradition continues to play a vital role in the social fabric of the Pelangi Segedong hamlet community; furthermore, it has been integrated into the Indonesian language curriculum at SMPN 1 Sungai



Raya as part of character education rooted in local wisdom. Despite the challenges posed by modernization, the community remains strongly committed to preserving *saprahan* in every celebratory event, viewing it as an irreplaceable element of their cultural identity.

Findings from SMPN 1 Sungai Raya demonstrate the pedagogical function of *saprahan*, showing that values such as mutual cooperation (gotong royong), equality, and politeness inherent in the tradition can be effectively operationalized within cross-cultural character education—a view consistent with Wahab et al. (2020), who identify *saprahan* as a medium for moral education. Thus, scientific studies on *saprahan* become very relevant and urgent to be carried out.

METHOD

A research method is a set of techniques or procedures employed to answer research questions (Razak, 2017). This section outlines the procedures and steps to be undertaken. Conducting research requires methods aimed at obtaining accurate data, establishing a research format that facilitates data presentation, and defining an approach that delimits the scope of the study to avoid overly broad results.

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method. Through this approach, the researcher conducts an in-depth field study to describe and analyze the cultural value system within the *saprahan* tradition. The choice of a qualitative descriptive method is based on its suitability for holistically and deeply uncovering the meanings, symbols, and socio-cultural contexts inherent in the *saprahan* tradition; as Sugiyono (2017) notes, qualitative descriptive research aims to understand social phenomena from the perspective of the subjects being studied.

The research site is located in Pelangi Segedong Hamlet, Bengkayang Regency, West Kalimantan Province. This location was selected because it is a hamlet that actively practices and preserves the Sambas Malay *saprahan* tradition to this day. The entire research project is scheduled

to span two months, from March to May 2026. This period encompasses the preparation phase, fieldwork for data collection, the analysis stage, and the compilation of the final report.

The study utilizes a literary anthropology approach as a framework to examine how cultural values are represented through verbal symbols and actions within the procession and rituals of the *saprahan* tradition. Throughout the research, the researcher serves as the primary instrument (human instrument) for collecting and interpreting data in alignment with the local community's cultural reality.

The data in this study consist of both verbal and non-verbal data. Verbal data consists of interview transcripts regarding the cultural values and philosophical significance of the procession as conveyed by informants, while non-verbal data comprises observational notes on the procedural conduct and equipment associated with the *saprahan* tradition. The study draws upon data sources including traditional leaders, cultural practitioners, and representatives of the general public; the *saprahan* tradition itself serves as a primary source of information to ensure a comprehensive perspective.

Data collection techniques refer to the steps or processes employed to gather data—a set of methods acting as extensions of human senses, aimed at collecting empirical facts relevant to the research problem. This study collects data by establishing specific criteria for data sources. The acquisition process utilizes three main methods—participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis—supported by instruments such as observation guides, recording devices, and data cards.

Data analysis techniques constitute the systematic methods used to break down and address the research problem based on the collected data. In this study, the analysis is conducted descriptively, employing a literary anthropology approach to examine the representations of cultural values embedded in each stage of the procession and the procedural

details of the saprahan tradition. Consistent with Sugiyono's (2017) perspective, qualitative data analysis in this research is carried out continuously—spanning the stages prior to fieldwork, the time spent in the field, and the period following the completion of data collection (Sugiyono, 2017).

Technically, data analysis in this study employed the interactive model of qualitative analysis, comprising three interconnected stages as outlined by Miles and Huberman (Sugiyono, 2017). First is data reduction: the process of selecting, focusing, and simplifying data derived from observations, interviews, and documentation regarding cultural values and the stages of the saprahan procession, thereby setting aside irrelevant data. Second is data presentation: organizing the reduced data into descriptive narratives and value categories (religious, social, and ecological) to clearly reveal patterns and relationships among the findings. Third is conclusion drawing and verification: the process of interpreting the meaning of the presented data to formulate findings on the representation of cultural values within the saprahan tradition, subsequently verified through source and theory triangulation to ensure the validity of the interpretation. These three stages were carried out cyclically and continuously within the interactive analysis model throughout the research process. To ensure the obtained data possesses high objectivity and the research findings are credible, it was necessary to verify data validity. The techniques used to check data validity in this research on Sambas customs involved source triangulation and theory triangulation. Source triangulation is a technique for testing data credibility by comparing and cross-checking information regarding Sambas customs obtained from various perspectives—such as those of traditional leaders, cultural practitioners, and the general public. Meanwhile, theory triangulation is a technique involving the comparison of different theories to verify data validity through the application of multiple theoretical frameworks.

RESULTS

This study was conducted in Pelangi Segedong Hamlet, Sungai Duri Village, Bengkayang Regency, between March and May 2026, utilizing participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The informants included a traditional leader (Endang Saputra), a cultural practitioner who also serves as the hamlet head (Jumianto), and a member of the general public (Asdah). Observations focused on the implementation of the saprahan tradition during weddings and community thanksgiving gatherings, while interviews were conducted individually with each informant to facilitate source triangulation. The research findings are presented in accordance with the following two problem formulations.

1. Cultural Values Embodied in the Saprahan Tradition

Drawing on Koentjaraningrat (2009), cultural values are defined as abstract concepts residing in the collective consciousness of a society, serving as the ultimate guide for human behavior. These values are systemic and interconnected, forming a value system that directs daily actions. Field findings indicate that the saprahan tradition embodies three primary cultural values: religious, social, and ecological.

Religious values—representing the relationship between humans and God—form the spiritual foundation that permeates the entire saprahan process and are manifested in three key practices. First is the recitation of prayers as an acknowledgment of God's sovereignty. Every saprahan begins with a prayer before the meal and concludes with a prayer of thanksgiving; for major events such as weddings and circumcisions, this sequence is expanded to include prayers for well-being (*doa selamat*) and prayers to ward off misfortune (*doa tolak bala*), led by religious figures. Endang Saputra stated, "Before eating, it is customary to recite prayers first—such as the mealtime prayer, the prayer to ward off misfortune, and the prayer for well-being." Jumianto added that



the religious dimension extends beyond the act of eating itself; during wedding processions, for instance, the bride and groom are accompanied by prayers for well-being and the scattering of yellow rice as a symbolic plea for God's protection.

Second is the practice of eating with one's hands, observed as a way of honoring the Sunnah (tradition) of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). This practice is not merely a habit passed down through generations but an act whose significance is consciously understood by the participants. Asdah explained, "We eat with our hands to seek blessings and to make the food taste better." Jumianto confirmed that although some participants use spoons, the majority still choose to eat with their hands. The persistence of this practice—even when spoons and forks are widely available—demonstrates that the religious value within saprahan is not a passive legacy but a choice actively upheld by the community. Third, the use of the Aladdin teapot (kobokan)—serving as a vessel for hand-washing water before and after the meal—is a constant feature of every talam (communal serving tray). Its presence serves not merely a practical hygienic function but represents the doctrine of *thaharah* (ritual purity); it signifies the physical cleanliness required to enter the shared dining experience in a state of purity, worthy of receiving sustenance. Endang Saputra emphasizes that no saprahan procession omits this element. The fact that this functional object bears a specific name and holds a permanent place within the arrangement of utensils demonstrates the integration of religious values with the material aspects of the tradition. These three practices illustrate that the Islamic identity of the Sambas Malay community is also expressed through dining etiquette, aligning with Juwati's (2018) view that the divine relationship manifests through daily acts of obedience. Thus, saprahan can be understood as a form of social worship—a space where the vertical and horizontal dimensions converge.

Social values (governing human relationships) encompass two complementary sub-values: equality and *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation). Equality without mutual cooperation remains merely a slogan, while mutual cooperation without equality leads to a hierarchical division of roles. The value of equality is manifested in the circular seating arrangement (*halaqah*) of five people per group—a distinctive feature of Dusun Pelangi Segedong that differs from the six-person groups in Sambas town and the linear formations used in Mempawah and Pontianak. Within these circles, there are no seats of honor, tables for distinguished guests, or structurally elevated seating positions. Jumianto emphasizes, "There is no distinction between officials and farmers; everyone sits on the same level—everyone is equal—during the saprahan meal." Asdah reinforces that this equality extends across ethnic and religious lines: saprahan greatly strengthens relationships among residents, regardless of ethnicity, religion, or social status; when eating saprahan-style, everyone is equal." Thus, equality in saprahan is both vertical and horizontal, allowing non-Muslim residents to sit together without feeling marginalized. This tradition has practiced social inclusivity long before the term became a part of public policy discourse.

The value of mutual cooperation is embodied in a three-day collective preparation system that forms the logistical backbone of saprahan. The first day is known as *Mbumbu**, when residents gather to prepare spices and clean vegetables. The second day is *Motong*, marking the initial cooking phase alongside the head cook. The third day is the **Hari Besar* (Big Day), the event's climax when all dishes are served to the invited guests. Each stage involves residents of all ages through a division of tasks that is organized yet flexible—ranging from cooks, vegetable choppers, and servers to those who collect the used utensils—with groups of five rotating through these duties. Asdah recounted her experience: "There was a lot of mutual assistance—chopping vegetables alongside the

residents, helping to cook in the kitchen, and serving the saprahan meals to the guests; everything was done together to lighten the workload." Jumianto noted the significant role of gotong royong (communal cooperation), as the delivery and subsequent clearing of each saprahan meal were carried out by teams of five people working in unison. Asdah explained the fundamental reason simply: "Because one person couldn't handle it alone; through gotong royong, the work becomes faster, easier, and less burdensome." These findings align with Marzali (cited in Hafidhan, 2017), who identified *gotong royong, mutual assistance, and a sense of kinship as the three pillars of social values ??in community life—all of which are simultaneously present throughout the saprahan process.

Ecological values—reflecting the relationship between humans and nature—are represented through the wise use of local resources. On Mbumbu day, many cooking ingredients are voluntarily sourced from the immediate environment; examples include the inner palm shoots (umbut) from unproductive trees, taro from residents' gardens, and cassava leaves growing near the homes. Endang Saputra explained, "We utilize natural food sources found nearby—for instance, harvesting the inner shoots of coconut or oil palm trees that no longer bear fruit." Trees that have lost their economic value are not simply cut down and discarded; instead, their inner stems are utilized as a food source, ensuring that no resources go to waste. This principle of simplicity is also reflected in the menu, which is tailored to the availability of natural resources and the host's financial means. Asdah stated, "There is no specific menu or set of side dishes for saprahan; it depends on the host's means," while Jumianto added, "We can utilize ingredients available locally, tailoring them to each host's financial situation, so it does not require lavish dishes." This reliance on local ingredients is not merely an economic choice but a reflection of a cultural identity that keeps the saprahan tradition grounded and accessible to all strata of

society. These findings align with Muslihah's (2019) observations regarding the ethics of nature utilization among traditional communities—characterized by subsistence living and a spirit of gratitude—and reflect a cosmological view of nature as a trust to be managed with intergenerational responsibility.

In practice, these three values do not operate in isolation. Religious values ??provide the spiritual foundation for every action; social values translate this into observable practices of equality and mutual cooperation (gotong royong*); and ecological values ensure the material sustainability of both by promoting the non-exploitative use of resources.

2. Representation of Cultural Values in the *Saprahan* Procession and Procedures

Drawing on Ratna (2011), every element of the saprahan procession can be interpreted as a cultural text imbued with symbolic meaning. The representation of cultural values is evident in the following three key aspects.

First, the order of serving and the seating arrangement. The serving sequence is standardized: rice served in a sanggan (ceremonial tray); side dishes in bowls and plates arranged on a talam (large serving tray); followed by dinner plates, water for hand-washing, and finally drinking water accompanied by coffee. Jumianto explained, "The saprahan sequence typically begins with the rice, side dishes, plates, and hand-washing water, followed by drinking water and coffee." This orderly arrangement represents the values of courtesy and the host's respect for the guests, while the flexibility regarding the types of side dishes reflects the value of equality, as no rigid standard of opulence is imposed. The workflow—ranging from the construction of the ceremonial canopy (tarup) and the cleaning of vegetables to the pounding of spices, the cooking process, the arrangement of food in bowls and on serving trays (talam), and finally the delivery to guests—demonstrates that saprahan follows established



execution standards passed down through generations. The practice of sitting cross-legged on the floor, without chairs, physically embodies the principle of "sitting at the same level, standing at the same height" (equality). Jumianto acknowledges minor exceptions—"usually there is a slight difference, such as the imam or religious leader sitting facing the front"—yet he emphasizes that the fundamental principle remains unchanged. These exceptions actually reinforce religious values, as the only recognized hierarchy is spiritual, rather than social or economic.

Secondly, there is the symbolic significance of the saprahan utensils. Drawing on Koentjaraningrat's (2009) framework, cultural artifacts serve as concrete manifestations of the value systems embedded in the community's collective consciousness. The Dimensions of Koentjaraningrat (2009).

First, large tray. Function: The main base for side dishes and plates. Represented value: The host's readiness and respect for guests. The Dimensions: Social system, norms of collective respect.

Second, Sanggan (2 units). Function: Rice container; locally adapted to two units for greater convenience. Represented value: Togetherness and adaptation of local values without losing the essence of tradition. The Dimensions: Technological system; an artifact adapted to the community's needs.

Third, Aladdin-style pitcher/Hand-washing vessel. Function: Water for washing hands before and after meals. Represented value: External purity (thaharah): an Islamic value integrated with Malay identity. The Dimensions: Religious system: a symbol of the self-purification ritual within an Islamic cultural context.

Fourth, Bowls and plates. Function: for side dishes with soup and main dishes. Represented value: Equality of treatment for all participants without discrimination in social status. The Dimensions: Social system, the value of social equality (egalitarianism).

Fifth, Glass. Function: Drinking vessel. Represented value: Gratitude and togetherness; the evenly served water symbolizes equality in fortune. The Dimensions: Social system; values of gratitude and equitable distribution within the community.

Sixth, Rice ladle. Function: Scooping rice together. Represented value: Collective service and respect, a spirit of sharing and shared responsibility. The Dimensions: Social system, values of mutual cooperation and mutual assistance (Marzali, 2017).

Seventh, Serving spoon. Function: Serving side dishes collectively. Represented value: Fairness and equity; every participant is entitled to an equal share. The Dimensions: Social system; the value of distributive justice within an indigenous community.

Third, cross-generational involvement. Saprahan involves three generations synergistically, namely the parents as knowledge authority holders and main chefs, the middle generation as implementers and field coordinators, and the younger generation as helpers who learn while working. Inheritance takes place through implicit learning, namely through direct involvement in practice, not through formal teaching in the classroom. Endang Saputra stated, "here it only involves mixed groups of young people with parents so that the young people learn for the future." Jumianto implemented a gradual strategy, "the way I involve young people is by inviting them and asking for help little by little so that they can get used to it." This gradual approach builds a sense of belonging organically without rigid instructions. The younger generation is not apathetic. According to Asdah, they actually like saprahan because the circular, egalitarian atmosphere gives them the freedom to add rice or side dishes, in contrast to the buffet format which makes them feel uncomfortable. This finding is in line with Lizawati & Utari (2018) that the younger generation needs to be guarded and guided so that they can pass on culture to future generations, and

in Pelangi Segedong Hamlet this guarding takes place organically through cross-generational involvement in every saprahan procession.

DISCUSSION

Based on the research results that have been presented, this section presents an in-depth discussion of the cultural values contained in the saprahan tradition as well as their representation in the procession and the procedures for carrying it out, by referring to the theoretical framework of literary anthropology and cultural values that has been described previously.

Overall, the research results show that the saprahan tradition in Pelangi Segedong hamlet is a complete cultural system, not just eating activities, but rather a multi-layered cultural text that simultaneously represents religious, social and ecological values in one coherent procession frame. This is in line with Ratna's (2011) view that cultural works and oral traditions are a reflection of a society's value system which can only be understood holistically through a literary anthropology approach. Koentjaraningrat (2009) also emphasized that cultural values function as the highest system of orientation and guidance for human behavior which is internalized through the process of socialization and participation in communal rituals. The findings of this research show that these three values do not just coexist, but interlock and strengthen each other in every saprahan procession.

First, religious values (human relationship with God). Findings related to religious values in saprahan are relevant to Juwati's (2018) research which found that humans' relationship with God is manifested through daily rituals in the form of prayer and worship practices that are integrated with cultural traditions. Specifically, this research found that the religious dimension of saprahan is unique compared to the tradition of eating together in other areas. Its religiosity is not exclusive but inclusive, because religious practices such as prayer and eating with hands do not prevent non-

Muslims from sitting together in saprahan. This shows that Islam in the Sambas Malay context has developed into a cultural identity that frames collective life, not a partition that separates it. In the context of literary anthropological analysis, the practices. Religious practices in saprahan can be read as "action texts" that repeatedly reproduce the cosmological view of the Sambas Malay people that social life and spiritual life cannot be separated.

Second, social values (human relationships with others). The social values of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) and equality identified in this study align with Marzali's (Hafidhan, 2017) identification of mutual cooperation, mutual assistance, and a sense of kinship as the three primary pillars of social values in community life. Furthermore, the study's findings indicate that *saprahan* serves as a highly effective mechanism for reproducing social values because it is participatory and enjoyable. Unlike top-down, formal value-socialization programs, *saprahan* instills values of equality and mutual cooperation through direct, multisensory experiences: seeing others seated as equals, feeling a sense of togetherness within the circle, and savoring food prepared collectively. Data obtained from the three informants consistently show that they do not perceive these values as abstract concepts, but rather as concrete, memorable experiences. Asdah remarked, "I feel very happy participating in the *saprahan* tradition because I can gather with family and the community." This demonstrates that the social values within *saprahan* are not merely understood cognitively but are internalized emotionally—an ideal state referred to in character education literature as the internalization of values.

Third, ecological values (human relationships with nature). The ecological values identified here correlate with Muslihah's (2019) findings that traditional communities possess an ethic of nature utilization rooted in subsistence and gratitude, far removed from exploitative patterns. An interesting



aspect of the study's ecological findings is that the ecological values within saprahan are neither ideological nor programmatic; instead, they are practiced naturally as part of an ethic of simplicity and gratitude. While everyday conversations about saprahan may not explicitly feature narratives of "environmental conservation" or "eco-friendliness," practices such as harvesting palm hearts from unproductive trees, utilizing taro and cassava leaves from one's own garden, and tailoring the menu to the host's financial means serve as tangible manifestations of a culturally embedded ecological ethic. These findings align with Yulsafli (2022), who posits that the human-nature relationship within Malay tradition is not exploitative but mutualistic; nature is treated as a partner in life whose balance must be preserved.

These three cultural values—religious, social, and ecological—do not exist as isolated categories; rather, they form an integrated value system that is inextricably linked within the socio-cultural structure of the Sambas Malay community. Religious values provide a spiritual foundation that frames every action within saprahan as a form of social worship; social values translate this foundation into observable, concrete practices of equality and gotong royong (mutual cooperation); and ecological values ensure the material sustainability of the other two by promoting the wise, non-exploitative use of natural resources. Viewed through Koentjaraningrat's (2009) framework of the three manifestations of culture, these values can be understood as a unified concept consistently expressed through the social system—specifically in interaction patterns and role distribution—and through cultural artifacts, such as the utensils and food ingredients used in saprahan. It is this systemic interconnectedness that explains how saprahan has endured as a cohesive socio-cultural institution rather than a mere collection of disjointed habits, while also providing a comprehensive answer to the study's first research question regarding the cultural values embodied in the saprahan tradition.

Regarding the representation of cultural values in the saprahan procession and execution, the local adaptations observed—such as the five-person formation (differing from the six-person formation in Sambas city) and the use of two sanggan (serving trays) of rice—demonstrate that saprahan is not a rigid tradition fixated on archaeological purity. Instead, it is capable of adapting to local needs and contexts without losing its essential values. Wahab et al. (2020) confirm that this adaptability is a key factor in the tradition's survival amidst the currents of modernization. Furthermore, Rahman et al. (2001) identified the circular seating formation (halaqah) as a cultural identity marker for the Malay sub-ethnic groups in the Sambas, Bengkayang, and Singkawang regions, distinguishing them from the linear formations used in saprahan practices in Mempawah and Pontianak. These field findings confirm Rahman's mapping while adding a new dimension: even within the Bengkayang region itself, there are local variations (five versus six people per group) that reflect organic, micro-local adaptation dynamics. Data from informants also reveal that when saprahan is compared to the increasingly popular buffet format, the community chooses saprahan not merely out of habit, but because of the qualitatively different nature of the experience. Asdah explains, "Naturally, I feel less satisfied [with other methods] because I am accustomed to eating saprahan-style; it is not that I wouldn't get full at a buffet or with other dining models, but the food simply tastes better with saprahan. With a buffet, my appetite diminishes slightly—perhaps simply because I am so used to the saprahan way." This seemingly simple statement holds significant sociological depth: the enhanced flavor and appetite experienced during a saprahan meal are not merely functions of the food's quality, but rather the product of an atmosphere of togetherness and equality—fostered by the circular seating arrangement, the practice of eating with one's hands, and the awareness that the meal is the fruit of collective, cooperative effort. It stands as proof

that cultural values embedded in tradition can tangibly transform the physiological act of eating into a meaningful social experience.

Regarding the second research question concerning the representation of cultural values in the saprahan procession and its associated procedures, this study finds that these values do not merely exist conceptually but are concretely manifested in every element of the procession—ranging from the order of serving and seating arrangements to the choice of utensils and the mechanisms for intergenerational participation. Ratna (2011) asserts that the representation of cultural values in oral traditions is "embodied," meaning values are not simply held as mental beliefs but are lived out through the actions and bodies of the participants. These findings reinforce Pridaningsih's (2017) argument that symbols within saprahan—such as the beselak seating posture—serve as philosophical statements of togetherness that are repeatedly reproduced in every procession. Field observations confirm this; the researcher witnessed firsthand how saprahan participants of diverse ages, occupations, and social statuses—naturally and without instruction—immediately sat cross-legged to form an egalitarian circle as soon as the *talam* (serving trays) were prepared. This demonstrates that the value of equality in saprahan no longer requires verbal explanation; it has become "bodily knowledge" automatically activated by the ritual context.

These findings carry dual implications. Theoretically, the study reinforces the relevance of the literary anthropology approach in analyzing oral traditions and communal rituals as embodied cultural texts—as emphasized by Ratna (2011)—while simultaneously enriching Koentjaraningrat's (2009) framework of cultural values with concrete ethnographic data from the Sambas Malay community, a group that has not been extensively documented in previous studies. Practically, the findings regarding the pedagogical function of saprahan at SMPN 1 Sungai Raya indicate that the cultural values inherent in this tradition have the

potential to be more broadly integrated into character education curricula based on local wisdom, aligning with the views of Wahab et al. (2020) regarding the function of saprahan as a medium for moral education. However, this study is limited in scope to a single hamlet; therefore, generalizing the findings to the broader Sambas Malay region requires caution. Further research covering a wider geographical area and involving inter-regional comparisons—such as between Pelangi Segedong Hamlet, Sambas City, and Singkawang—would enrich the understanding of local variations in the representation of saprahan cultural values while also testing the consistency of these findings on a broader scale.

CONCLUSION

The saprahan tradition embodies three primary cultural values. (1) Religious values (the relationship between humans and God) are manifested through the recitation of prayers before and after the meal, the practice of eating with one's hands to honor the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and the use of the Aladdin teapot as a symbol of physical purity (*thaharah*). (2) Social values (human relationships with others) are manifested through the value of equality—reflected in the circular seating arrangement (*halaqah*) of five people regardless of rank, ethnicity, or religion, embodying the adage "sitting at the same level, standing at the same height"—and the value of mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) through a three-day collective preparation system: *Mbumbu* (seasoning preparation), *Motong* (meat preparation), and *Hari Besar* (the main event day). (3) Ecological values (the relationship between humans and nature) are reflected in the wise use of local natural resources—such as oil palm hearts, taro, and cassava leaves—embodying principles of gratitude and harmony with nature.

These three cultural values are embodied in the saprahan procession and execution through four concrete elements: (1) a standardized serving sequence that structures the narrative of religious and social values; (2) the symbolic meaning of



utensils, such as the Aladdin teapot symbolizing thaharah and the talam (large tray) serving as a vessel for togetherness; (3) the circular seating formation (halaqah) of five people, which visually and spatially represents equality; and (4) the mechanism of intergenerational transmission through direct involvement in every stage of preparation, allowing these values to be internalized as "bodily knowledge" passed down across generations. The findings of this study are expected to serve as a scientific basis for saprahan preservation efforts and contribute to the development of character education materials rooted in local wisdom within the West Kalimantan region.

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