



THE DYNAMICS OF THE MEANING OF BELIS IN THE MARRIAGE TRADITION OF SUMBA PEOPLE IN WEEPATANDO VILLAGE

I Made Sila¹, I Nengah Sudiarta², Maria Goreti Amurni³

¹ Universitas Dwijendra, Indonesia

² Universitas Dwijendra, Indonesia

³ Universitas Dwijendra, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: madesila909@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Received: October 26, 2024

Received in revised: November 6, 2024

Accepted: November 23, 2024

Available online: November 30, 2024

KEYWORDS

Keyword1; Dynamics

Keyword2; Belis

Keyword3; Marriage Tradition

Keyword3: Weepatando Village

ABSTRACT

Marriage adopted in Sumba society is an effort to maintain offspring that takes place according to the patrilineal kinship system. The problem in this study is related to the form of panai money in the tradition of marriage in Weepatando village, Wewewa sub-district, southwest Sumba district. An indicator of informants using an impressive sampling technique, with informants numbering six. Data gathering techniques using interview techniques. The analysis techniques used in this research are qualitative data in analysis. This research uses qualitative research methods by conducting interviews, observation, and documentation in the research. The research location is located in Wewewa sub-district, southwest central Sumba district. The results of this study show that the Wewewa community still preserves the traditional marriage ceremony by asking for a large belis. However, the meaning of belis in the district has changed drastically. Through this research, the philosophical meaning of belis can be revealed, which is actually used as a means of tying mystical ropes between two families or between clans.

INTRODUCTION

Marriage adopted in Sumbanese society is an attempt to maintain offspring which takes place according to a patrilineal kinship system. The marriage system in this society begins with an exogamous marriage system. the woman's family as the provider of the gir (Sulitiani, 2021)l.

For the Central Wewewa community, the term marriage can be interpreted as the result of the efforts of the two prospective bride and groom, male and female and their extended families who wish to be united in the bonds of marriage. Marriage in the Central Wewewa community often involves parties who are related by blood according to the Sumba belief. called Kabisu (clan) which comes from one

descendant or one marapu (ancestor) who is bound by lineage (Santika & Sunartiyanti, 2024).

In order to be able to carry out a marriage, the prospective bride and groom must first fulfill the customary requirements determined by the Central Wewewa community, including meeting the age regulations, the consent of both parties to the marriage, and handing over the dowry which is called Belis (Tau Na Welli) These three requirements must be met with the aim of creating a harmonious relationship. Marriages are at risk of being postponed or even canceled if one of the requirements is not met.

Indigenous people in Sumba interpret the word belis as emphasizing cultural values and not nominal "exchange prices". This is closely related to local

beliefs (local genius) of the Sumbanese people (Marapu). When humans move from one cosmos to another, then The cosmos where they come from will be empty, resulting in an imbalance. For women who are ready to get married and have been paid for their belis, it means that their cosmos is not balanced. The form of belis given to women is a substitute for the emptiness of the cosmos where they come from (Wiryanawan & Sujana, 2023).

Belis has three meanings, namely the meaning of physical themes, physics, and social prestige. It is said to have a metaphysical meaning because belis in a transcendental understanding according to Marapu beliefs is intended to maintain harmony and balance in the cosmos. Physically, belis means to maintain kinship relationships and life (Utama, 2021). Together helping each other, respecting the bride and groom as well as protecting women (Anggraeni, 2003). In essence, the implementation of traditional marriage in a society always begins with an understanding of traditional procedures and different objectives regarding understanding traditional marriage itself both in terms of social, economic and socio-cultural aspects of the Southwest Sumba Community.

The most prominent influence of marriage customs in the lifestyle of the Central Wewewa people is the change in economic conditions and the level of development of life of the Central Wewewa people. The Southwest Sumba Regency Government stated that the traditional marriage ceremony is a tradition that causes poverty in Sumba. because the animals needed for ceremonies are always in large quantities, so economically this can result in waste and in the long term can make Sumbanese people poorer.

Koentjaraningrat explains that society refers to a group of people who live together in a certain place

or area in a guided unity. Culture refers to the values and way of life that are shared by members of society, therefore society and culture have different meanings but cannot be separated, meaning that the two are differentiated but cannot be separated (Mutaqin, 2011).

Society is people living together who produce culture. Thus there is no society that does not have culture and conversely there is no culture without society as a supporting medium. Soekanto explained that culture is a complex that includes knowledge, art, morals, law, customs. and other capabilities of society. Therefore, culture is the result of human work through symbols and meanings.

Humans as cultural creatures in their daily lives are always related to symbols. Through the symbol system, their existence and daily life goals are realized (Santika et al, 2023b). Therefore, the symbol system can be influenced as a medium for socializing their existence and life goals. Efforts to understand the meaning of symbols These symbols require a cultural approach (Holleman, 1973).

The existence of the Sumbanese people as an association of people with a territorial genetic nature, of course pays great attention to cultural values which emphasize collectivity and harmonious social relations. Because in this case their existence as a people who are related by blood, they show an attitude of empathy, helping each other and paying close attention. reciprocal (reciprocal). These attitudes give birth to a very cohesive pattern of relations between them (Santika & Konda, 2023). The cohesiveness of very close social relations like this contains a creative social and cultural energy, namely a constructive idea that society strives for to fulfill the hopes and ideals of friendship. between the perpetrators. In relation to the behavior of the people

of East Wewewa sub-district in traditional marriage ceremonies, this is due to the consideration of maintaining the harmony and cohesiveness of the alliance that has been built and to achieve a harmonious kinship system as a symbol of a sense of solidarity in society (Gauri, 2010).

Social change is perceived by society as a reality as evidenced by the symptoms that often occur in the lives of community groups (Santika, 2021). The impacts of social change include: disruption of the balance between the social units of society; weakening of family relationships in society; and the emergence of prolonged conflict in society.

Based on the background above, the author is interested in conducting research entitled "The Dynamics of Belis Meaning in the Sumba Community Marriage Tradition in Weepatando Village, Central Wewewa District, Southwest Sumba Regency, East Nusa Tenggara"

METHODS AND MATERIALS

The type of research used is qualitative research with a sociological approach. The data collection method used by the author is by using interview, observation and documentation techniques. Interviews were conducted with community leaders who knew very well the marriage customs in Weepatando Village. The observation technique is to make direct observations in the field to find out what is happening. and the documentation technique is carried out by collecting photographs or images when the research takes place. The data analysis technique used in this research is qualitative analysis technique.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

Wedding tradition procession in the Sumbanese community in Weepatando village. In the mating

process, usually both parties (men and women) have prepared a plan that is quite mature and careful, especially regarding belis/ranga and the time or time for mating. the number of belis/ranga really depends on the status of the male parents of the female (future wife) (Telephone interview 4 July 2020) with informants Mr Ama Kallu as spokesperson and Mr Matius Dappa Zogara as village head.

If the status of the male parent is well-off, then the belis/ranga given to the girl's family will definitely be a lot and it also depends on what the girl's parents ask for, but if the male parent's socio-economic status is low then the belis/ranga will be given. given to the parents of the little girl. The negative impacts of giving belis include:

- a) Women's dignity is lowered By giving belis to women's families, men feel they can act freely towards women so that women's dignity is lowered and women are less respected in married life.
- b) The man feels embarrassed If the man cannot afford the belis then the man will stay in the woman's family's house and work for the woman's family. The woman feels her status is higher than the man so the man will feel embarrassed.
- c) Conflict between the two families This happens because the belis demanded by the woman is too high so that the man is unable to pay it.
- d) Create debts and receivables Because they were unable to pay for the belis, the man's family took a shortcut by borrowing money from another party, resulting in a debt.

Factors That Cause a Shift in the Meaning of Belis. The true meaning of the belis philosophy is a

means of tying ties between families or between clans/kabisu (clans) who marry each other's children and hope to build a life of mutual help. The cultural wisdom contained in the concept of belis is power or magical power in the Marapu belief. In the past, belis could be metal objects that were classified as rare and very valuable, such as iron, machetes, spears, axes, gongs, and so on (Santika, 2020).

In the period around 1950, the meaning of belis began to shift. Belis was given in debt between the men's family and the woman's family. The bride's family first takes the animal that will be given to the woman from the groom's family from a different clan (kabisu). This process is usually called the matchmaking system before or since the baby girl is born. The people of Sumba believe that before the time of arranged marriages, debt ties between the families of a man and a woman had already occurred which resulted in the decision to match a man and a woman (Buka et al, 2022).

When a child is born and has grown up, the girl is deliberately asked to go to the market or collect water, but the woman will not be told that she will be taken to the man's family's house, beforehand the man's family and the woman's family will make an agreement first at the woman's place. will be appointed, if the man's family wants a place with lots of people, then the market is chosen as a place to bring a woman to be suddenly appointed (Sujana & Kandia, 2024). This event is like taking animals or grouse but the number of animals is not the same as now. The current value of belis is very large compared to previously, namely around 10-20 to 40-60, even up to 100. After the daughter of the woman's family has been adopted, the woman's family will wait for a call from the man's family to follow their child with all

their belongings. This further emphasizes the shift in the meaning of belis in Sumba (Buxbaum, 1968).

From the above, it can be seen that as a result of the changes in purchasing, influences emerged which resulted in changes in social, cultural and economic aspects in West Sumba. The attitude of mutual cooperation, kinship systems and kinship between clans (kabisu) in society has changed its meaning and one of the reasons is because the demand for belis is not being met.

A very significant shift in the meaning of values and elements of local culture can have a wider impact, one of which is the emergence of conflict between families who are bought and those who are bought (Putra, 2023). Another impact is that the economic life of the lower middle class community is increasingly deteriorating, harmony in the home The family relationship is not well established between children, daughters-in-law and in-laws. Debts incurred as a result of failed marriages also result in stress for parents because they have difficulty fulfilling their children's education to the highest level and with quality (Santika, 2023).

Responding to these socio-cultural conditions, the Sumba government finally decided to regulate the value of belis, but the government's efforts were unsuccessful. The problem is the lack of publications and outreach to disseminate it (Santika et al, 2019).

New regulations from the government are obstacles that are difficult to overcome. In implementing new regulations related to limits on the value and nominal value of belis, good cooperation is needed between the government, traditional leaders and the community who carry out the belis tradition.

Discussions

From the above, it can be seen that as a result of the changes in purchasing, influences emerged which

resulted in changes in social, cultural and economic aspects in West Sumba. The attitude of mutual cooperation, kinship systems and kinship between clans (kabisu) in society has changed its meaning and one of the reasons is because the demand for belis is not being met.

A very significant shift in the meaning of values and elements of local culture can have a wider impact, one of which is the emergence of conflict between families who are bought and those who are bought. Another impact is that the economic life of the lower middle class community is increasingly deteriorating, harmony in the home The family relationship is not well established between children, daughters-in-law and in-laws. Debts incurred as a result of failed marriages also result in stress for parents because they have difficulty fulfilling their children's education to the highest level and with quality (Bettinger, 2015).

Responding to these socio-cultural conditions, the Sumba government finally decided to regulate the value of belis, but the government's efforts were unsuccessful. The problem is the lack of publications and outreach to disseminate it (Kartika & Umbu, 2024).

New regulations from the government are obstacles that are difficult to overcome. In implementing new regulations related to limits on the value and nominal value of belis, good cooperation is needed between the government, traditional leaders and the community who carry out the belis tradition.

CONCLUSIONS

After the author has processed and analyzed the data from the research results, the author can conclude as follows. In East Nusa Tenggara, violence against women appears in various manifestations, and the most common is abuse against women in the family context. Here, women often experience forms

of violence from their husbands or life partners, because the influence of custom makes men have great authority in the family and tend to dominate in all family matters. The existence of Customs (Bells) should not be used as an excuse as a trigger for the high rate of violence against women in the East Sumba Regency area, considering that Belis is actually a concrete manifestation of raising the dignity of women. In its implementation, Belis actually moved an unknown woman from a clan and then the woman's position was included/moved into the men's clan. Here the woman is respected and respected as a queen and honorable person.

REFERENCES

- Anggraeni, S.A , dkk 2003, *Perempuan sumba dan belis* ,BAPPEDA kabupaten sumba timur, WaingapuAnna,
- Bettinger, K. A. (2015). The fight over the forest: The state, rural communities, and customary law in Indonesia. *Worldviews: Global Religions, Culture, and Ecology*, 19(2), 123-143.
- Buka, V., Santika, I. G. N., Kartika, I. M., & Sujana, I. G. (2022). Implementasi Nilai-Nilai Pancasila dalam Budaya Mana'o di Desa Manu Kuku Kabupaten Sumba Barat. *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Sosial*, 8(1), 109-117.
- Buxbaum, D. C. (1968). Customary law and modernization in Indonesia. In *Family Law and Customary Law in Asia: A Contemporary Legal Perspective* (pp. 3-16). Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands.
- Gauri, V. (2010). Customary law and economic outcomes in Indonesia. *Hague Journal on the Rule of Law*, 2, 75-94.
- Holleman, J. F. (1973). Trouble-cases and trouble-less cases in the study of customary law and legal reform. *Law & Society Review*, 7(4), 585-609.
- Kartika, I. M., & Umbu, M. L. (2024). Demoralisasi Pancasila Dalam Penegakan Hukum di Indonesia. *IJOLARES: Indonesian Journal of Law Research*, 2(1), 1-6.
- Santika, I. G. N., & Konda, A. A. (2023, March). The Theory Of Pancasila Elements As A Reorientation Of Character Education In Indonesia In Building The Spirit Of Nationalism. In *Proceedings of The International Conference on Multi-Disciplines*

- Approaches for The Sustainable Development* (pp. 79-85).
- Koentjaraningrat. 1979. *Antropologi Sosial*. P.T. dian rakyat.jakarta.
- Mutaqin, Z. Z. (2011). Indonesian customary law and European colonialism: A comparative analysis on adat law. *JE Asia & Int'l L.*, 4, 351.
- Putra, A. A. (2023). Konflik Dan Penyelesaian Sengketa Tanah Pelaba Di Desa Adat Kerobokan Kabupaten Badung Perspektif Hukum Adat Bali. *IJOLARES: Indonesian Journal of Law Research*, 1(1), 16-22.
- Santika, I. G. N., Kartika, I. M., Sujana, I. G., & Dwindayani, N. M. A. (2023b). The Dynamic History of the Journey of Pancasila as the Foundation of the Indonesian State. *Journal of Sustainable Development Science*, 5(1), 25-32.
- Santika, I. G. N. (2020). *Menggali dan Menemukan Roh Pancasila Secara Kontekstual*.
- Santika, I. G. N. (2021). *Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan: Studi Komparatif Konstitusi Dengan UUD 1945*.
- Santika, I. G. N. (2023). Kedudukan Pancasila dalam Peraturan Perundang-Undangan di Indonesia. *IJOLARES: Indonesian Journal of Law Research*, 1(2), 47-51.
- Santika, I. G. N., & Sunariyanti, I. A. P. S. M. (2024). Hubungan Antara Masifnya Fenomena Korupsi Dengan Kesadaran Pajak Warga Negara Indonesia. *JOCER: Journal of Civic Education Research*, 2(1), 15-21.
- c, G. N., Sujana, G., & Winaya, M. A. (2019). Membangun Kesadaran Integratif Bangsa Indonesia Melalui Refleksi Perjalanan Historis Pancasila Dalam Perspektif Konflik Ideologis. *JED (Jurnal Etika Demokrasi)*, 4(2).
- Soekanto, Soerjono, 2003. *Hukum adat Indonesia*, Jakarta : PT. Raja Grafiika Persada
- Soekanto, Soerjono, 2007, *Sosiologi Suatu pengantar*. Jakarta : PT. rajawali Pers
- Sujana, I. G., & Kandia, I. W. (2024). Indikator Lemahnya Penegakan Hukum di Indonesia. *IJOLARES: Indonesian Journal of Law Research*, 2(2), 56-62.
- Sulistiani, S. L., & Sy, M. E. (2021). *Hukum Adat di Indonesia*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.
- Utama, T. S. J. (2021). Between adat law and living law: an illusion of customary law incorporation into Indonesia penal system. *The Journal of legal Pluralism and unofficial law*, 53(2), 269-289.
- Wiryanawan, I. W., & Sujana, I. G. (2023). Tanggung Jawab Penerima Hibah Uang yang Bersumber dari APBD oleh Pemerintah Daerah. *IJOLARES: Indonesian Journal of Law Research*, 1(2), 41-46.