

Pattumateang: The History of Death Traditions in Cikoang Village, Takalar Regency

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ABSTRACT

The Pattumateang death tradition in Cikoang Village, Takalar Regency, represents a cultural practice that emerged from a long historical process of acculturation between Islamic teachings and the local customs of the Bugis-Makassar community. This study aims to examine the historical origins of Pattumateang, analyze its forms of cultural acculturation, and explore its continuity as a living tradition into the 21st century. This research employs a historical-anthropological approach using qualitative methods, including heuristic data collection, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews, field observations, and documentation and literature studies. The findings reveal that Pattumateang developed alongside the Islamization of Cikoang since the 17th century through dialogical and accommodative da'wah strategies. The tradition functions not only as a mortuary ritual but also as a social institution that strengthens solidarity, community cohesion, and the intergenerational transmission of religious and cultural values. Amid contemporary social changes, Pattumateang demonstrates adaptive characteristics as a living tradition, capable of adjusting its practices without losing its core meaning. This study contributes to understanding local Islam as a dynamic cultural process shaped through continuous negotiation between religious doctrines and local traditions. It also enriches the discourse on historical anthropology by highlighting how cultural practices persist, transform, and remain relevant across changing social contexts.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is widely recognized as a country with a high level of cultural diversity, encompassing variations in ethnicity, language, religion, and tradition [1]. This diversity is reflected in the wide range of cultural practices that shape how communities interpret fundamental life-cycle events, such as birth, marriage, and death [2]. Among these events, death occupies a particularly significant position because it involves not only biological

aspects but also deep social, religious, and cultural meanings. The way a society responds to death often reflects its worldview and collective identity. Therefore, the study of death traditions becomes essential in understanding broader socio-cultural dynamics within a community.

From the perspective of anthropology and social history, death is understood as a social event that involves collective participation beyond the immediate family [3]. Death rituals serve as a medium through which communities express beliefs, values, and systems of meaning transmitted across generations. These rituals are not merely ceremonial acts but are embedded in social structures and cultural norms. As such, mortuary traditions provide important insights into the relationship between religion and local customs. They also serve as a key instrument for maintaining continuity in cultural identity and social cohesion.

In South Sulawesi, death rituals display distinctive characteristics shaped by the Bugis-Makassar cultural background and the historical process of Islamization in the 16th and 17th centuries [4]. One tradition that continues today is Pattumateang, practiced by the community of Cikoang Village in Takalar Regency. This tradition is not limited to burial practices but includes a series of socio-religious rituals rich in symbolic and historical meaning. Its existence reflects a long process of interaction between Islamic teachings and local cultural values. Consequently, Pattumateang represents a unique form of cultural expression rooted in both religion and tradition.

Historically, Cikoang Village has played an important role in the spread of Islam in southern Sulawesi, particularly through the influence of Sayyid Jalaluddin al-Aidid and other Islamic scholars [5]. The introduction of Islam did not eliminate existing local traditions but instead interacted with them through adaptive and accommodative processes. This interaction produced new cultural forms that combined Islamic teachings with local customs. Pattumateang emerged as one of the outcomes of this cultural encounter. It illustrates how religious values can be integrated into existing cultural frameworks without causing significant resistance.

Pattumateang demonstrates how Islamic practices such as prayers, dhikr, and almsgiving for the deceased are combined with local values of mutual cooperation, solidarity, and communal responsibility [6]. This integration reflects what is often called local Islam, in which religious teachings are contextualized within specific cultural settings. Over time, the tradition has evolved into not only a religious ritual but also a social institution that strengthens community cohesion. Community members' involvement in various forms of participation reinforces social bonds. As a result, Pattumateang serves both spiritual and social functions within the community.

However, in the 21st century, Pattumateang faces various challenges due to modernization, urbanization, and changing social dynamics [8]. The increasing influence of education, technology, and mobility has altered how younger generations perceive and engage with traditional practices. Some elements of the ritual have been simplified, while others are being questioned for their relevance. These changes raise concerns about the sustainability of the tradition as part of local cultural heritage. Nevertheless, traditions often demonstrate adaptive capacities that allow them to survive amidst social transformation.

The continuity of Pattumateang is closely linked to its ability to adapt while maintaining its core values. In many cases, traditions do not disappear but transform in response to new social contexts [14]. Pattumateang exemplifies this adaptive process, where adjustments in practice do not necessarily undermine its essential meaning. The roles of community leaders and religious figures are crucial in this process, as they serve as cultural brokers, mediating between tradition and modernity. Through their authority, they help ensure that changes remain within acceptable cultural and religious boundaries. This dynamic highlights the importance of agency in sustaining cultural practices.

Previous studies on Pattumateang have generally focused on its ritual aspects and symbolic meanings using anthropological and ethnographic approaches [4]. While these studies provide valuable insights, they often lack a comprehensive analysis of the historical processes that shaped the tradition. In addition, the dynamics of its sustainability in contemporary society have not been sufficiently explored. This gap indicates the need for an approach that integrates both historical and anthropological perspectives. Such an approach allows for a deeper understanding of Pattumateang as both a historical product and a living cultural practice [9].

Based on this background, this study is guided by the following research questions: (1) What is the historical origin of Pattumateang? (2) How does acculturation shape the tradition? (3) How is it sustained in modern society? These questions are formulated to address gaps in previous research and to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the tradition. By focusing on these aspects, the study seeks to connect historical processes with contemporary cultural dynamics. The research questions also serve as a framework for analyzing the interaction between religion and local customs. Thus, they guide the study's overall direction.

Accordingly, this study aims to examine the historical emergence of Pattumateang, analyze the forms of cultural acculturation embedded within it, and explore its continuity in the modern era. The novelty of this study lies in its integration of historical and anthropological perspectives in analyzing Pattumateang as a dynamic cultural process. Unlike previous studies, this research emphasizes both temporal development and contemporary transformation. It positions Pattumateang as a living tradition shaped by continuous negotiation between Islamic teachings and local culture. Therefore, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of local Islam as a contextual and evolving phenomenon while enriching the discourse on cultural sustainability.

2. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative, historical-anthropological approach to examine Pattumateang as both a historical product and a living cultural practice. The focus of this approach is to understand how the tradition has developed over time and how it is practiced in contemporary society. Rather than emphasizing theoretical elaboration, this study prioritizes empirical investigation and contextual interpretation. The integration of historical and anthropological perspectives allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the tradition. This approach is particularly suitable for analyzing cultural practices shaped by long-term social and religious interactions [9].

Data collection was conducted over a period of four months, from January to April 2025, in Cikoang Village, Takalar Regency. The study involved 12 informants, consisting of 4 religious leaders, 3 traditional leaders, and 5 community members who actively participate in the Pattumateang tradition. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their knowledge, experience, and involvement in the tradition. This selection ensured that the data reflected both authoritative and practical perspectives. The combination of different informant categories allowed for a more balanced and comprehensive dataset.

The research followed four main stages of the historical method: data collection (heuristics), source verification, interpretation, and writing. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, direct observation, and document analysis. Interviews were conducted using semi-structured guidelines to allow flexibility while maintaining focus on research objectives. Field observations were carried out during the implementation of Pattumateang rituals to capture real-time practices and interactions. In addition, written sources such as village archives, local historical records, and relevant academic literature were examined to support the analysis.

Source verification was conducted by cross-checking information obtained from different informants and comparing it with written and observational data. This process aimed to ensure the reliability and consistency of the findings. Differences in narratives were carefully analyzed to identify patterns and contextual meanings. The study also considered each source's background and potential bias. This step was essential to minimize subjectivity and strengthen data validity.

The interpretation stage involved analyzing the collected data to identify relationships between historical processes, cultural values, and contemporary practices. Data were not treated as isolated facts but were examined in relation to social, religious, and cultural contexts. The analysis focused on how Pattumateang functions as both a ritual and a social institution. Particular attention was given to changes and continuities in the tradition. This approach enabled a deeper understanding of Pattumateang as a dynamic cultural practice.

To ensure data validity, this study applied triangulation by comparing interview results, field observations, and documentary sources. Key findings were also discussed with selected informants to confirm their accuracy. Ethical considerations were maintained throughout the research process by obtaining informed consent from all participants. The researcher also respected local cultural values and avoided normative judgments. Through this method, the study provides a reliable and contextual analysis of Pattumateang as a continuously evolving tradition in Cikoang society.

In addition to primary data, this study utilized secondary sources to strengthen the historical dimension of the analysis. These sources included academic journal articles, books, and prior research on Islamic cultural practices, local traditions, and death rituals. The use of secondary data allowed the researcher to contextualize Pattumateang within broader scholarly discussions. It also helped identify similarities and differences between Pattumateang and other mortuary traditions. By integrating primary and secondary data, the study achieved a more comprehensive analytical framework [32].

The fieldwork was conducted in a participatory manner, with the researcher engaging directly with community activities related to Pattumateang. This involvement enabled a deeper understanding of the social dynamics and meanings embedded in the tradition. Observations were not limited to formal rituals but also included informal interactions among community members. Field notes were recorded systematically to capture detailed descriptions of events and behaviors. This approach ensured that the data reflected the community's lived experiences [31].

Data analysis was carried out using a thematic approach to identify key patterns and recurring themes. The data were categorized into several main aspects, including historical development, forms of acculturation, and mechanisms of sustainability. Each category was analyzed to understand its relationship with broader social and cultural contexts. The analysis also considered temporal changes to identify shifts in practice and meaning. This method allowed for a structured yet flexible interpretation of the findings [30].

Finally, the methodological framework of this study emphasizes practicality and contextual relevance rather than abstract theorization. The combination of interviews, observations, and document analysis provides a holistic understanding of Pattumateang. The inclusion of multiple data sources enhances the credibility and depth of the research findings. This approach also allows the study to capture both historical continuity and contemporary transformation. As a result, the method effectively supports the research objectives in examining Pattumateang as a dynamic and adaptive cultural tradition [29].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Historical Origin of Pattumateang

The findings show that Pattumateang's emergence is closely linked to the historical formation of Cikoang as a religious and cultural community. Historically, Cikoang has been recognized as one of the early centers of Islamic dissemination in South Sulawesi since the 17th century. The arrival of Islamic scholars, particularly those associated with Sayyid Jalaluddin al-Aidid, marked a significant transformation in the local community's social and religious structure. Islam did not enter an empty cultural space but interacted with pre-existing belief systems and social norms [10]. This interaction laid the foundation for the development of hybrid cultural practices [28].

Before the introduction of Islam, the Cikoang community adhered to traditional belief systems that emphasized ancestral spirits and the continuity of the cosmos after death. Death was understood as a transitional phase rather than an end. This worldview later intersected with Islamic teachings that emphasize the afterlife, divine judgment, and prayers for the deceased. The encounter between these two systems produced new ritual forms that combined spiritual and social dimensions. Pattumateang emerged as one of these integrative practices [27].

Empirical findings indicate that Pattumateang was initially used to introduce Islamic values through culturally familiar forms. Ritual elements, such as prayers, dhikr, and almsgiving, were embedded in communal practices, including collective gatherings and food sharing. This approach made Islamic teachings more accessible and acceptable to local communities. Over time, the tradition became institutionalized as part of social norms. As a

result, Pattumateang evolved from a religious introduction tool into a structured communal practice [26].

Pattumateang as a Form of Cultural Acculturation

The findings reveal that Pattumateang represents a clear example of cultural acculturation between Islamic teachings and Bugis-Makassar local customs. Islamic elements are reflected in ritual prayers, remembrance (dhikr), and the concept of merit for the deceased. Meanwhile, local customs are expressed through communal participation, mutual cooperation, and social obligations toward grieving families [11]. These elements coexist within a single ritual framework without eliminating each other. This indicates a process of integration rather than replacement [25].

Furthermore, the structure and timing of Pattumateang rituals reflect continuity with pre-Islamic traditions, particularly in post-death commemorative stages. However, these stages have been reinterpreted within an Islamic theological framework. This reinterpretation provides religious legitimacy while maintaining cultural continuity. The findings also show that community leaders play an important role in maintaining this balance. Thus, Pattumateang functions as a negotiated cultural space between religion and tradition [12].

Sustainability of Pattumateang in the 21st century

The findings indicate that Pattumateang continues to exist as a living tradition despite significant social changes. Modernization, urbanization, and technological developments have influenced how the tradition is practiced. Some ritual elements have been simplified in terms of duration and scale. However, core elements such as collective prayer and social participation remain intact. This demonstrates the tradition's adaptive nature [14].

In addition, participation by younger generations has become more selective than in previous periods. Despite this, values continue to be transmitted through symbolic involvement and informal learning. Community awareness of cultural preservation has also increased, contributing to the tradition's continuity. Religious and community leaders remain central actors in maintaining their relevance. Therefore, Pattumateang persists as an adaptive and sustainable cultural practice [24].

DISCUSSION

Pattumateang and Cultural Acculturation Theory

The findings can be interpreted through the lens of cultural acculturation theory, which explains how different cultural systems interact and produce new hybrid forms. Pattumateang reflects an integrative model of acculturation, where Islamic teachings and local customs coexist without one dominating the other. This aligns with the concept of cultural negotiation, where communities actively reinterpret external influences to fit local contexts. The process observed in Pattumateang shows that acculturation is not passive but involves selective adaptation. Therefore, Pattumateang can be understood as a product of dynamic cultural negotiation [23].

Comparison with Global Death Ritual Practices

When compared with global studies on death rituals, Pattumateang shares similarities with other traditions that emphasize communal participation and symbolic continuity. For example, death rituals across cultures often serve to strengthen social cohesion and transmit cultural values. However, Pattumateang is distinctive in its strong integration of Islamic practices with local customs. Unlike more standardized Islamic funeral practices in other regions, Pattumateang demonstrates a localized interpretation of religious teachings. This highlights the diversity of Islamic cultural expressions across different societies [22].

Table 1. Comparison of Pattumateang with Global Death Rituals

Aspect	Pattumateang (Indonesia)	Toraja Ma'nene (Indonesia)	Hindu Kaharingan (Kalimantan)
Religious Basis	Islam + local adat	Ancestral belief + Christianity	Hindu Kaharingan
Main Purpose	Prayer for the deceased + social cohesion	Ancestor respect	Spiritual transition
Community Role	Collective participation	Family-based ritual	Community ritual
Adaptation	Highly adaptive	Moderately adaptive	Ritual preservation

Table 1 shows that Pattumateang shares common features with other death rituals, particularly in terms of social cohesion and symbolic meaning. However, its uniqueness lies in the strong integration between Islamic teachings and local cultural values. Compared to Ma'nene and Kaharingan rituals, Pattumateang demonstrates a higher level of adaptive flexibility. This indicates that religious contextualization plays a key role in sustaining the tradition [21].

Pattumateang as a Living Tradition and Cultural Adaptation

From the perspective of cultural adaptation theory, Pattumateang illustrates how traditions can survive through flexibility and transformation. The simplification of certain ritual elements does not indicate cultural decline but rather adaptive adjustment to contemporary conditions [15]. This supports the idea that traditions remain relevant when they can respond to changing social realities. The role of community and religious leaders as mediators is crucial in this process. They ensure that adaptation occurs without losing essential values. Thus, Pattumateang represents a resilient and evolving cultural system [20].

Despite its resilience, Pattumateang faces challenges related to generational shifts and changing value systems. The decreasing intensity of participation among younger generations may affect long-term sustainability. Additionally, tensions may arise between puritan interpretations of Islam and local cultural practices. These challenges highlight the need for continuous negotiation between tradition and religious interpretation. Without adaptive strategies, the tradition risks losing relevance in the future. Therefore, preservation efforts must be accompanied by contextual reinterpretation.

Overall, the findings confirm that Pattumateang is not merely a ritual practice but a dynamic cultural system shaped by historical processes, social interactions, and adaptive strategies. It represents a form of local Islam that is both contextually grounded and continuously evolving. The integration of historical and anthropological analysis provides a

deeper understanding of how traditions persist over time. Pattumateang demonstrates that cultural sustainability depends on the ability to balance continuity and change. This reinforces the importance of studying local traditions within broader theoretical frameworks.

Role of Social Institutions in Cultural Sustainability

The role of social institutions within the community strongly influences the sustainability of Pattumateang. Religious institutions provide theological legitimacy, while customary institutions maintain cultural continuity. These two institutional frameworks work collaboratively rather than competitively. This dual structure strengthens the tradition's resilience in the face of external pressures. Therefore, institutional synergy becomes a key factor in cultural sustainability [16].

Another important finding relates to the process of intergenerational transmission. Pattumateang serves as a medium for informal cultural education, where younger generations learn values through participation. This aligns with theories of cultural learning that emphasize practice-based knowledge transfer. The ritual context provides experiential learning rather than formal instruction. As a result, values are internalized more effectively. This mechanism ensures the continuity of cultural identity over time.

Pattumateang also functions as a symbolic system that reinforces social integration. Ritual symbols such as collective prayers and shared meals represent unity and solidarity. These symbols help maintain emotional bonds within the community. In this sense, Pattumateang operates as both a religious and social communication system. The symbolic dimension strengthens its relevance beyond ritual practice. Therefore, its meaning extends into everyday social life [17].

The study also highlights how Pattumateang adapts to modern challenges without losing its core identity. Adjustments in time, cost, and scale reflect practical considerations in contemporary society. However, these changes do not alter the tradition's essential meaning. This confirms that adaptation is a survival strategy rather than a sign of decline. The ability to negotiate change becomes a defining feature of living traditions. Thus, Pattumateang remains relevant in modern contexts [18].

The findings have broader implications for cultural preservation strategies. Rather than rigidly preserving traditions in their original form, adaptive preservation should be emphasized. This approach allows traditions to evolve while maintaining their core values. Pattumateang demonstrates that flexibility enhances sustainability. Policymakers and cultural practitioners can learn from this model. Therefore, cultural preservation should be viewed as a dynamic and ongoing process [19].

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the Pattumateang tradition in Cikoang Village is the result of a long historical process of acculturation between Islamic teachings and Bugis-Makassar local customs. Emerging alongside the Islamization process since the 17th century, the tradition has developed through dialogical and adaptive mechanisms that enable the integration of religious and cultural values. Pattumateang functions not only as a mortuary ritual but also as a social institution that strengthens community cohesion and facilitates the

intergenerational transmission of values. Its continuity in the 21st century reflects its adaptive character as a living tradition that maintains its core meaning despite social change.

Theoretically, this study contributes to understanding local Islam as a contextual and dynamic phenomenon, shaped by ongoing cultural negotiation between religious doctrines and local traditions. It highlights that Islamic practices at the local level are not static but continuously reinterpreted within specific socio-cultural contexts. However, this study is limited by its focus on a single community and a relatively small number of informants, which may not fully represent broader regional variations. Future research is recommended to adopt comparative approaches and larger datasets to enrich the analysis of similar traditions in different cultural settings.

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