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Seri Iskandar Campus, Perak, MALAYSIA



**PROCEEDINGS OF THE 16TH REGIONAL
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SIMPORA XVI: 2025**

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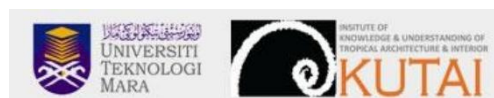
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THE CULTURE OF “PEUMULIA JAMEE” IN ACEH SOCIETY

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Abstract: The Peumulia Jamee tradition, or honoring guests, is a local wisdom of the Acehnese community rooted in Islamic values and the philosophy of *hukom ngon adat lagee zat ngon sifeut* (customary laws and inherent nature). This tradition is not only a symbol of hospitality but also a social and cultural identity of the Acehnese people, passed down through generations. Its manifestations can be seen in various cultural expressions, such as the Ranup Lampuan dance, the offering of betel leaves in the *cerana* (Ranup Lampuan), Saleum poetry, and the traditional Timphan cake served to guests as a form of respect. Peumulia Jamee functions to strengthen solidarity, harmony, and brotherhood, while also serving as a medium for character education based on local culture. However, modernization and globalization have caused shifts in practice, such as the transition from hosting guests at home to public venues. Therefore, preserving the values of Peumulia Jamee through education, art studios, and cultural festivals is essential to maintain the spiritual, social, and historical heritage of the Acehnese community in the modern era.

Keywords: Peumulia Jamee; Ranup Lampuan; Acehnese customs and cultural traditions

1. INTRODUCTION

Aceh is a province located on the island of Sumatra, Indonesia, with its capital city being Banda Aceh. This province is situated at the northern tip of Sumatra Island, where the community is renowned for its rich customs deeply rooted in Islamic values, earning it the nickname "Serambi Mekkah" (The Veranda of Mecca). The entire customary and cultural life of the Acehnese people is dominated by Islamic values formed through the integration of law and custom (*hukom ngon adat lagee zat ngon sifeut*). The primary hadith regarding *peumulia jamee* (honoring guests) is the saying of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him honor his guest" (Narrated by Bukhari). This hadith emphasizes that honoring guests is part of a person's faith in Allah and the Last Day, and it is a deeply ingrained teaching in Acehnese society.

The Acehnese community has various unique traditions that remain preserved to this day, reflecting cultural values and containing profound life philosophies, although they are beginning to degrade due to external cultural influences (Ghifary et al., 2024; Jadidah et al., 2023). From the era of the Aceh Sultanate to the modern age, honoring guests has been a distinctive cultural and social characteristic of the Acehnese people (Essi Hermaliza, 2011). For example, historically, a guest of honor who refused to ride an elephant during a formal ceremony was considered to have insulted the custom, resulting in serious consequences (Syukran Jazila, 2021). The proverb "*Peumulia Jamee, adat geutanyoe*" (honoring guests is our

culture) is well-known among the Acehnese. This proverb is not merely a phrase but a foundation of social and religious ethics passed down through generations (Hermaliza, Essi, 2011).

In practice, *Peumulia Jamee* appears in various forms: the offering of betel leaves, coffee hospitality, and performing arts such as the *Ranup Lampuan* dance, which visually expresses respect and hospitality towards guests (Chaerol Riezal, 2020). *Peumulia Jamee* is an important tradition in Acehnese culture that serves as a form of respect and honor towards guests or esteemed individuals within the community. This tradition reflects social values such as respect, solidarity, and harmony in social interactions, while also strengthening kinship bonds and togetherness within Acehnese society. *Peumulia Jamee* is not merely a social practice but a value system that demonstrates the characteristics of the Acehnese people who regard guests as an integral part of civilized life (Hermaliza, 2011).

Peumulia Jamee is also associated with cultural expressions through the arts, such as the *Ranup Lampuan* dance, which depicts beauty and elegance in welcoming guests, illustrating how Acehnese culture combines social values and aesthetics in everyday life (Chaerol Riezal, 2021). In recent decades, modernization, urbanization, and the influence of social media have caused shifts in the values and practices of *Peumulia Jamee* within Acehnese society. For example, the tradition of hosting guests at home has gradually been replaced by receiving guests in cafes or public places. This research is important to examine the extent of this transformation and how preservation efforts can be strategically designed. Therefore, strengthening these local values is essential. A study conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Darul Makmur showed that integrating *Peumulia Jamee* values into history lessons can enhance students' understanding of culture and religion (Chaerol Riezal, 2018). However, modernization has shifted some aspects of this tradition, with home hospitality increasingly replaced by coffee shops or restaurants.

Peumulia Jamee is a vital part of the local wisdom of the Acehnese community that must be preserved. This value is not only a symbol of hospitality but also part of the social ethics that govern relations between local people and newcomers. Research on this tradition plays an important role in documenting, understanding, and preserving Aceh's cultural heritage amid globalization, which tends to erode local values. Studying *Peumulia Jamee* is not merely an academic effort to understand Acehnese culture but also an intellectual responsibility to preserve a cultural heritage that holds spiritual, social, and historical significance. In the context of Aceh, which is rich in traditions and customs, *Peumulia Jamee* deserves in-depth study to ensure its values remain alive and relevant in a continuously changing society

2. METHODOLOGY

The method used in this study is a qualitative literature review with a descriptive approach. This method was chosen because it is suitable for gaining an in-depth understanding of the meaning and cultural practices of *Peumulia Jamee* in Acehnese society. According to Sugiyono (2017:9), qualitative research is based on post-positivist or

interpretative philosophy and is used to study natural conditions where the researcher acts as the key instrument. Data collection techniques were conducted through triangulation, combining interviews, observations, and document studies to assess the same phenomenon.

The research location was focused on Bireuen Regency in Aceh Province, selected because its community relatively still maintains the tradition of *Peumulia Jamee*. The research subjects focused on the *Peumulia Jamee* procession as expressed through the *Ranup Lampuan* dance performed at various formal and informal events, as well as other forms of poetry commonly found in Acehese customs and culture. Data collection techniques in this study included direct observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation from scientific sources, books, government reports, and relevant online articles. The selected sources included: (1) descriptions of Acehese cuisine from local government, (2) food technology research on the processing of *Timphan*, and (3) cultural articles explaining the symbolic value of traditional Acehese cakes.

Data were analyzed using a descriptive approach, which involves providing the most accurate depiction possible of a condition, phenomenon, group, or event (Wahyuni, 2017). Each piece of data was examined conceptually or contextually within *Peumulia Jamee*, typically involving data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions as well as verification (Sutopo, 2006). Data validity was strengthened through source and method triangulation

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Aceh is known as the "Serambi Mekkah" (Veranda of Mecca) because the majority of its population is Muslim, although there are also small non-Muslim communities. Generally, the Acehese people do not discriminate based on religion or ethnicity. The core values upheld are equality and respect, which are reflected in the tradition of *Peumulia Jamee* or honoring guests (Kompas, 2020). Due to the extensive cultural acculturation in Aceh, the ways of practicing *Peumulia Jamee* vary from region to region.

In the Bireuen community, the practice of *Peumulia Jamee* is very elaborate, such as during the *preh linto baroe* ceremony (groom's procession), where at the bride's house (*dara baro*), various food offerings, the bridal dais (*pelaminan dara baroe/linto baroe*), traditional Acehese attire, and *zikir* (prayers) are prepared to welcome the bridegroom. The opening ceremony is marked by the *Ranup Lampuan* dance, which is a distinctive cultural feature of Aceh (Tarmizi Hamid, 2017).

The *Ranup Lampuan* dance is a ceremonial dance performed to welcome guests (*Peumulia Jamee*). The term "Ranup" means betel leaf, while "Lampuan" means tray (a platter used for serving). This dance is usually performed by female dancers as a form of greeting for honored guests or state visitors. It was created by the late Bang Yus (Yusrizal) around 1959. In other regions, the *Ranup Lampuan* dance is known by different names: in Aceh Besar it is called the "Gelombang" dance, in Central Aceh it is called the "Guel" dance, in the southeastern coastal area of Aceh Singkil it is called the "Dampeng" dance, and in Kluet, South

Aceh, it is known as the “*Landoq Sampot*” dance. Despite the different names, the purpose remains the same: to welcome guests.

Other elements of *Peumulia Jamee* include the *peusijuk* ceremony (sprinkling of blessed water), performed for both Muslim and non-Muslim guests, and the offering of betel leaves, which symbolizes the Acehnese community’s respect for their guests (Nazila, 2021). This dance symbolizes the highest form of respect the Acehnese people show to their guests. The gentle and graceful movements of the dancers reflect values of politeness, refinement, and appreciation for others as symbols of hospitality and honor. Betel leaves serve as a symbol of brotherhood and unity; the betel leaves presented on the tray are not merely decorations or traditional food but represent openness, acceptance, and harmonious relations between host and guest. In Malay and Acehnese cultures, betel leaves are commonly used in wedding customs, negotiations, and welcoming ceremonies.

The dance is usually performed by a group of women, not in a subordinate context but as a representation of women’s active role in preserving cultural values and traditions. Thus, the movements of the *Ranup Lampuan* dance represent gender and social harmony within Acehnese society. The colors and costumes worn by the dancers symbolize grandeur. The dancers typically wear bright colors such as red, green, or golden yellow, reflecting the spirit of nobility and honor in welcoming guests. Head accessories (crowns) and sashes signify elegance and traditional status (Riezal, C., Joebagio, H., & Susanto, S., 2017). The poetry recited during the *Ranup Lampuan* dance is known as “*Saleum*.”



Figure 1. *Ranup Lampuan Dance*, Traditional Dance of Aceh

This dance is not only performed for entertainment but also serves as a means to strengthen social bonds between individuals and groups. It demonstrates that the Acehnese people uphold the principle of openness toward outsiders while simultaneously preserving their cultural identity. Through this dance, the younger generation is taught the importance

of etiquette, politeness, and respect for others. The dance is often taught in schools or art studios as a medium for character education based on local culture, rich with ethical and moral values.

Ranup Lampuan has become a cultural symbol of Aceh frequently showcased at national and international events, as well as during state guest receptions. This makes the dance an instrument of cultural identity and tourism promotion. Amid external cultural influences and modernization, Ranup Lampuan plays a vital role as a bastion of cultural identity. Its preservation through festivals, art studios, and school curricula represents a form of resistance against cultural homogenization and the forces of modernization. The dance also reinforces the position of Acehnese women as guardians of customs and traditional values. It reflects that women are not merely passive subjects but active cultural agents who shape and maintain the noble values of society.

One of the life philosophies in Acehnese society is the custom of Peumulia Jamee, expressed as “Peumulia jamee adat geutanyoe, hukom ngon adat lagee zat ngon sifeut” (Honoring guests is our custom; law and custom are like inseparable substances and traits). In Acehnese cultural tradition, this life philosophy is a highly esteemed noble value, one manifestation of which is found in the poetry or song called “Saleum”. Lyrics of the Saleum Poem/Song Accompanying the Ranup Lampuan Dance as a Manifestation of Peumulia Jamee in Acehnese Custom as follows

(copied from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xk_tZoQQOJM;
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ykixTjDh6YA>)

- a. *Assalamualaikum warahmatullah* (May the safety and blessings of Allah be upon you)
- b. *Jaroe dua blah ateuh jeumala* (Both of my hands I raise to my chest)
- c. *Jaroe lon siploh diateuh ulee* (The ten fingers of my hands I raise above my head)
- d. *Meu'ah lon lake bak kaom dum na* (I ask forgiveness from all of you)
- e. *Jaroe lon siploh diateuh ubon* (The ten fingers of my hands I raise above my head)
- f. *Salamualaikum lon tegur sapa* (I ask forgiveness from all of you)
- g. *Jaroë lôn siplôh beuôt sikureuëng* (From the ten fingers, I raise nine)
- h. *Syarat ulôn kheun tanda mulia* (As a noble sign of respect)
- i. *Jaroë sikureuëng lôn beuôt lapan* (From the nine fingers, I raise eight)
- j. *Geulantoë **timphan** ngön asoë kaya* (As a substitute for timphan filled with srikaya (sweet coconut jam))
- k. *Jaroë lôn lapan lôn beuôt tujôh* (From the eight fingers, I raise seven)
- l. *Ranub **lam bungkôh** lôn jôk keu gata* (Betel leaves wrapped I offer to all of you)

The creator of the "Saleum" song from Aceh is not definitively known. Although the song is popular and often associated with the Nyawöung Aceh music group, especially through performances by Mukhlis, no clear source identifies its composer. The "Saleum" song itself means a greeting or prayer for safety in the Acehnese language and is believed to have been created during the Samudera Pasai Sultanate era as a tool for Islamic preaching. The song gained popularity thanks to Nyawöung, a collaborative music group from Aceh led by Jauhari Samalanga, with Mukhlis as the lead vocalist.

Aceh is known as the "Serambi Mekkah" (Veranda of Mecca) because the majority of its population is Muslim, although there are also small non-Muslim communities. Generally, the Acehnese people do not discriminate based on religion or ethnicity. The core values upheld are equality and respect, which are reflected in the tradition of Peumulia Jamee or honoring guests (Kompas, 2020). In Acehnese cultural customs, honoring guests (Peumulia Jamee) is a highly esteemed noble value, which includes:

- (a) Welcoming guests with a smile, greetings, and words of respect;
- (b) Serving the best food available at home, such as Timphan, even if simple;
- (c) Offering betel leaves in the carana (ceremonial tray) as a symbol of respect

a. Saleum (Greeting)

Assalamualaikum warahmatullah in the Acehnese language is called "Saleum." Saleum (greeting) or Saleuëm originates from the Arabic word "سلام" (Salam), which literally means peace or safety. The common greeting phrase is "Assalamualaikum" (الْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ), meaning "May peace/safety be upon you." The standard response to this greeting is "Wa'alaikumussalam" (وَعَلَيْكُمْ السَّلَامُ), which means "And may peace/safety be upon you as well." The full phrase is Assalamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh (الْسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ), which has a broader meaning: "May the peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be upon you."

In Acehnese cultural customs, this greeting is commonly exchanged when two individuals or groups meet. The initiative to give the greeting is taken by the one who arrives first, and the one who is waiting responds to the greeting. This refers to the Islamic etiquette related to giving and responding to greetings, where the person who meets or arrives first offers the greeting, and the recipient politely responds. This principle also includes the rule that the younger person greets the elder, and the one walking greets the one sitting, as a form of respect and humility. The person who arrives earlier, holds a higher status (such as the elder), or is in a more active position (such as walking or driving) is recommended (sunnah) to initiate the greeting.

This greeting is not merely a salutation but a prayer and a promise to create a safe environment free from harm and imperfection for the greeted person. In Islamic law (sharia), responding to a greeting is obligatory (wajib) for every Muslim who receives it, as mentioned in the words of Allah and the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The

response to a greeting should be equal or better, in accordance with the recommendation to return a courtesy with something better. Initiating a greeting is more virtuous and beloved by Allah SWT than merely responding, as it demonstrates humility and spreads love among people.

Therefore, the tradition or culture of Peumulia Jamee that begins with “Saleum” is part of the ethical and moral guidance in Islam aimed at strengthening brotherhood and spreading peace among fellow Muslims.

b. Timphan (Aceh’s Traditional Cake)

Traditional cakes are an important part of the cultural heritage of the Indonesian archipelago. In Aceh, one cake that is strongly associated with the cultural identity of the community is Timphan (Figure 1). This traditional wet cake from Aceh is primarily made from glutinous rice flour, banana (usually pisang raja or ulee), and coconut milk; the dough is filled with serikaya (a mixture of coconut milk, sugar, and eggs) or sweet coconut filling, then wrapped in young banana leaves and steamed until cooked. This traditional Acehnese cake is very popular and closely linked to important moments in Acehnese society. It is usually made one or two days before use because it can last for about a week (Elwina et al., 2022).

This traditional cake is widely known both within Aceh and beyond. The uniqueness of Timphan lies not only in its taste but also in its symbolic and social values. Timphan is almost always present during Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, as well as at customary events such as kenduri (communal feasts), weddings, and peusijuek traditions. Serving Timphan symbolizes respect for guests (Peumulia Jamee), which is a noble cultural value in Aceh.

For many people, Timphan is a mandatory dish when welcoming Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. The cake tastes rich and sweet with serikaya or coconut filling, wrapped in banana leaf tips. This special Acehnese delicacy has inspired a proverb associated with Timphan, namely:

“Uroe goet buluen goet Timphan ma peugoet beumeuteme rasa”

“Good day, good month, Timphan made by mother must be tasted”



Figure 2. Kue Timphan Aso Kaya (*Timphan* with *Srikaya* Filling)

Timphan is not merely food, but it embodies philosophy and is rich in cultural values. The process of making *timphan* is usually carried out through communal work (gotong royong), especially during Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, or wedding celebrations, thus symbolizing togetherness. *Timphan* is regarded as a special delicacy served to honored guests. Receiving or serving *timphan* represents respect, intimacy, and brotherhood, thereby symbolizing hospitality. *Timphan* has become a culinary icon of Aceh, even referred to as the “mandatory festive cake” because almost every household prepares it during religious holidays, making it one of the cultural identities of Aceh.

This philosophy and cultural value are deeply embedded within Acehnese society, passed down from generation to generation through both formal and informal means. *Timphan* is often incorporated into Aceh-based cultural education (from early childhood to school level) to introduce culinary heritage, the tradition of collective cake-making, and the values of togetherness (Kurnita et al., 2022). One form of informal inheritance of *timphan* in Acehnese society appears in training children to walk, expressed in the local saying: “*tak teh sinyak jak trok u Aceh, Bhe on bhe timphan, bhe badan ureung Aceh*” (step by step the child walks to the provincial capital (Banda Aceh), with the scent of leaves and *timphan*, the fragrance of the child of Aceh).

Beyond its cultural value, *timphan* also has economic potential. It is a product with both social and economic significance, serving as a household/SME economic commodity that thrives during festive seasons and traditional ceremonies, forming part of Aceh’s souvenir ecosystem while simultaneously preserving the identity of its culinary traditions (Rizkina, 2019). Studies on the development of Acehnese souvenirs highlight *timphan* as a commodity that has expanded from ritual consumption to the daily market (Rizkina, 2018). Several studies also emphasize Acehnese traditional cuisine, including *timphan*, as a medium of culture-based

learning in early childhood and school education (Mulyani, 2024). This is crucial to safeguard the transmission of culinary heritage from being lost amid modernization.

c. *Ranup Lampuan* (Betel Leaf in a Cerana)

Ranup Lampuan is one of the most important symbols in Acehese customs and culture. *Ranup* means betel leaf, while *Lampuan* refers to a serving or offering. Thus, *Ranup Lampuan* can be understood as a neatly arranged serving of betel leaves presented in a special container. *Ranup Lampuan* is not merely a refreshment but carries deep philosophical meanings, including: (a) A symbol of respect and welcoming of guests—every guest is offered *Ranup* as a sign of hospitality, appreciation, and honor; (b) A symbol of brotherhood and intimacy-chewing betel together in the past was believed to strengthen social bonds; (c) Religious and customary values-*Ranup* is considered to purify the soul and symbolizes sincerity in social interactions.

Ranup Lampuan appears in various activities, playing a role in Acehese customs and social life, such as: (a) Traditional Acehese weddings—used in guest receptions, during proposals, and when welcoming envoys; (b) Official ceremonies-both governmental and customary, where honored guests are welcomed with *Ranup Lampuan*; and (c) Traditional and cultural rituals-such as communal feasts (*kenduri*) or *peusijuek* (blessing rituals).

Ranup Lampuan is presented in a distinctive container called *cerana* (a betel container) decorated with traditional Acehese carvings. Its components usually consist of betel leaves, areca nut, slaked lime, gambier, tobacco, cloves, and sometimes flowers as complements. The arrangement follows an aesthetic order full of meaning, symbolizing beauty, politeness, and local wisdom. Although the habit of chewing betel has diminished in the modern era, *Ranup Lampuan* still endures in Acehese ceremonial traditions and official events. Today, its function is more as a cultural symbol, a medium of hospitality, and a means of preserving the identity of the Acehese people.

4. DISCUSSION

The principle of *Peumulia Jamee* (honoring guests) is in line with Islamic teachings, which emphasize the importance of respecting and hosting guests as part of one's faith. Thus, research on *Peumulia Jamee* is not only important from a cultural perspective but also from the standpoint of character education and the development of religious-based social ethics. The Hadith of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) states: "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him honor his guest." (Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim).

In recent decades, modernization, urbanization, and the influence of social media have led to shifts in the values and practices of *Peumulia Jamee* within Acehese society. For instance, traditional home banquets have gradually been replaced by the culture of receiving guests in cafés or public spaces. Therefore, this research is essential to examine the extent of these transformations and to design strategic efforts for its preservation.

This study is also significant for the development of knowledge, particularly in the fields of anthropology, sociology, and cultural studies. Through qualitative and participatory approaches, research on *Peumulia Jamee* can provide deeper insights into social dynamics, intercultural relations, and the processes of collective identity formation in Acehese society. The study of *Peumulia Jamee* is not merely an academic endeavor to understand Acehese culture but also an intellectual responsibility to preserve a cultural heritage that carries spiritual, social, and historical values. In the context of Aceh, which is rich in traditions and customs, *Peumulia Jamee* deserves in-depth study so that its values remain alive and relevant in an ever-changing society.

5. CONCLUSION

1. The tradition of honoring guests (*Peumulia Jamee*) is a noble value deeply rooted in Islamic teachings and Acehese customary philosophy, *hukom ngon adat lagee zat ngon sifeut* (religion and custom are inseparable), which has characterized society since the Sultanate era up to the present day, making *Peumulia Jamee* a cultural identity of Aceh.
2. *Peumulia Jamee* is manifested in the arts, culinary traditions, and customary symbols, where its values are reflected in various forms such as the *Ranup Lampuan* dance, the serving of betel leaves in a *cerana* (*Ranup Lampuan*), the Saleum verses, and the traditional cake *Timphan*-all of which function as symbols of respect, brotherhood, and Acehese hospitality.
3. *Peumulia Jamee* holds social, spiritual, and educational roles. This tradition strengthens solidarity, harmony, and kinship within society, while also serving as a medium of character education that instills politeness, social ethics, and respect for guests from an early age.
4. Today, *Peumulia Jamee* faces the challenges of modernization and globalization. Social changes brought by urbanization, media, and modern lifestyles have begun to shift its practices, such as the transition from home banquets to gatherings in cafés or public spaces. Nevertheless, its essence is preserved through cultural symbols.
5. The tradition of *Peumulia Jamee* is of great urgency in terms of cultural preservation and inheritance. It is a spiritual, social, and historical heritage that must continue to be studied, documented, and taught through both formal and informal education so that it remains alive and relevant in Acehese society in the modern era.

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