



The Ceremonial Procession and Meaning of *Makan Patita* in Negeri Oma - Maluku

Jenny Koce Matitaputty ^{1,*}  and Ida Masinay ² 

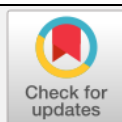
¹ Department of History Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Pattimura University, 97233, Ambon, Maluku Province, Indonesia

² Public Senior High School 20, 97566, West Seram, Maluku Province, Indonesia

* Corresponding Author: jenny.matitaputty@fkip.unpatti.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

Makan Patita is a tradition of communal feasting or eating together among Maluku communities that practiced in festivity the Panas Pela, Panas Gandong, King coronation, building Baileo house, the celebration of city's anniversary day, and other events in Ambon city. However, for the people of Negeri Oma in Haruku Island, the tradition of *Makan Patita* differs from others. The differences are attracted to be discussed about the ceremonial procession and its meaning of the tradition of *Makan Patita* in Negeri Oma. This research aims to describe the ceremonial process and its meaning of the *Makan Patita* Soa practiced in Negeri Oma, Haruku Island District, Central Maluku Regency, Maluku Province, Indonesia. This is a qualitative research where the data source obtained purposively and the data collection techniques by using observation, interview, and documentation. The results showed that: 1) *Makan Patita* in Negeri Oma is divided into two types; first, the uncle feeds his nephew/child (Mara/Marei), and also the nephew/child feeds his uncle (ana kas makang om). There are three stages in the practice of *Makan Patita* tradition; the initial stage, a time-set meeting, and preparation of various things, both food and a long white table and the prayers of struggle in Baileo Kotayasa by the Bapa Lima-Lima. In the second stage, the *Makan Patita* begins with Cakelele dances and the ceremonial procession takes children to the Patita dining table, then the uncles feed their nephews. In the final stage, each remaining food must be brought back and eaten by all children at home, then covered with a Eucharistic prayer for the Soa and Maradansa. 2) The meaning of *Makan Patita* tradition for the people in Negeri Oma is kinship ties, respect,

and appreciation for elders (uncles) and it contains the symbolic meaning of hope to the children in the Soa will become a good generation and remain in the fellowship of siblings.

Keywords: Ceremonial; Makan Patita; Maluku; Negeri Oma; Tradition

1. Introduction

Eating is not only important for nutrition and health; but also part of daily social interactions (Yiengprugsawan et al., 2015) such as celebrating with family and friends as a way to establish connections, strengthen ties, and maintain brotherhood in many cultures (Fischler, 2011; Sobal & Nelson, 2003; Young et al., 2009; Yiengprugsawan et al., 2015).

The tradition of eating together in a certain culture, the tradition of eating together or communal feasting, can function as a public education way to better understand various rules, respect various social structures and preserve the tradition from modernization (Nanuru, 2019). Furthermore, the meaning of eating together tradition becomes the responsibility of various elements in society to maintain the values contained in it relating to the social attachment.

Social attachment on food arises when it is served at various events experienced by individuals or the community, which is always present and marked by various rituals that are complemented by a variety of foods and eating together with both family members and friends. Collectivism becomes the core of community attachment when eating together at the ritual (Meliono-Budianto, 2004). As stated by Yiengprugsawan et al. (2015) eating together with family brings happiness since it has significance in special annual celebrations. When people eat together the psychological shared values will be stronger. Feelings of belonging will feel tighter (Rianawati, 2019).

The tradition of eating together is considered as one of the prominent cultural expressions, which is defined as communal consumption (Feasting) or communal meal (Hayden, 2014; Souisa, 2017). In the tradition of eating together, the first aspect encountered is the value of sharing among people. On the other hand, people share food with their closest relatives or who have a direct relationship with him who is usually associated with altruistic behavior in humans (Hay, 2009; Souisa, 2017). Also, some anthropologists stated that food sharing can occur among people who are not directly related (Nanuru, 2019).

Indonesia has a variety of eating together tradition including *Basamo* in Padang, *Megibung* in Bali, *Bancakan* in Bandung, and *Orom Sasadu* in Sahu, West Halmahera, and *Makan Patita* in Ambon (Nanuru, 2019). Souisa (2019) also reported that In Indonesia, every local society has a certain name for their meal traditions; let say, *Makan Patita* in Maluku, *Megibung* in Bali and Lombok, *Makan Basamo* in West Sumatra, etc. In general, *Makan Patita* in Maluku means eating together which is always practiced for traditional ceremonies such as the coronation of the King, *Panas Pela*, besides national day ceremonies, city anniversary, new year events, and other celebrations that do not contain elements of custom and everyone can join the events.

The tradition of *Makan Patita* in Negeri Oma is different from other areas in Maluku, *Makan Patita*, or *Makan Patita Soa* which is held at certain times, it can be once a year, once every five years, or even it can be twelve years. *Makan Patita* in Negeri Oma is held by four generations of descendants and the public known as *Soa*. Besides, the differences of *Makan Patita* tradition in Negeri Oma are not only practiced by the *Soa*, but also the ceremony is processed through a

series of traditional ceremonies that make it more sacred. Patty (2018) stated that higher intensity and detailed regulation, it could be observed in the *Makan Patita* in Oma, Haruku Island. In this area, *Makan Patita* is carried out either on a particular basis or together. These differences are interested in investigating about *Makan Patita* in Negeri Oma, Pulau Haruku District, Central Maluku Regency, Maluku Province, Indonesia.

2. Literature Review

2.1. *Makan Patita* Soa as Cultural Product and Identity

Makan Patita consists of two words “*makan*” (eat) and “*patita*”. The meaning of *Makan Patita* according to Souisa (2017) described as follows:

Etymologically, the word “patita” means eating together. Of the various meanings, the word “patita” seems to be more closely related to several terms, namely, the term pa'atita, which is communal eating which is related to certain events in the community including the coronation of the king, giving custom names for children, etc. Pa'atita, has the basic word “tita” which means “mandate/instruction/command”. So, Pa'atita means “walking towards, walking towards education” (p. 93-94).

The word “*makan* (eating)” in Maluku means the actions of humans to enjoy God’s blessings in the form of foods such as fruits, vegetables, and other foods that have been processed/cooked. So *Makan Patita* is a tradition of eating together among Maluku communities (that contains the philosophical terms of Maluku; *ale rasa, beta rasa* (You and I feel the same ways) to educate each community to tie the bond of brotherhood, live in peace, love, and share (the philosophy of *sago salempeng pata dua*). This is also stated by Hartomo et al, (2015) that “*Makan Patita* as local wisdom of people in Ambon that could be related with brotherhood value ‘hidup orang basudara, sago salempang pata dua, ale rasa beta rasa’ (meaning: the life of siblings is always shared; a piece of sago breaks into two pieces, I feel what you feel)”.

Food is an expression of culture, as well as producing culture. In daily life, food is often associated with certain cultural events. As an expression of culture, for example, cereal becomes a dish in the morning so it can be said that during the day is not the right time to eat cereal, while food as a cultural expression such as rhombus is eaten at Eid, eggs become Easter symbols, chocolate is a sign of affection (Setiawan, 2016). Besides, food is also a form of ethnic identity that can be identified from the type of special taste, such as *rendang* which is a type of Minangkabau (Nurti, 2017). Thus various types of food in the tradition of communal eating such as *Makan Basamo* in Padang, *Megibung* in Bali, *Bancakan* in Bandung, and *Orom Sasadu* in Sahu, West Halmahera, and also *Makan Patita* in Maluku show the identity of each community.

Regarding culture, Koenjaraningrat (2005) stated the four elements of culture that are symbolically described as four concentric circles from the outside to inside: (1) physical culture, (2) social systems, (3) cultural systems, and (4) cultural values. Based on the elements, *Makan Patita* is a cultural product (physical culture), which occurs due to the existence of a social system that builds people's lives (social systems), in the form of activities that shape patterns of community behavior and systems of ideas, ideas or values that inspire people’s lives (cultural value systems) and of course contain values that they consider to be valuable, valuable and important in life so that they can function as a guide that gives direction and orientation to the lives of citizens. Thus, *Makan Patita* as a concrete result in culture cannot be separated from eating activities and philosophical values among the life of people in Maluku.

For them, *Makan Patita* becomes an adhesive tool to strengthen their kinship rope so that wherever they are, the kinship relation is always maintained. Solissa (2014) said that the relationship of brotherhood is increasingly tight when it is held "*Makan Patita*" (eating together) which is one of the traditions of the people in Maluku to realize their togetherness. This tradition needs to be preserved and developed so that it can be a role model for the Indonesian people in general who are currently experiencing a crisis of concern for their brothers in this nation due to the diversity among us.

2.2. A Symbolic Meaning of *Makan Patita*

In daily life, humans cannot be separated from signs, symbols, and symbols. The signs, symbols can be found in various traditional ceremonies such as in the life of the Maluku people. The word symbol comes from Greek, *symbolos*, which means a sign or characteristic which tells something to someone (Herusatoto, 2001; Wumu, 2019).

Berger (2005) stated that symbols are everything that has significance and resonance with culture. The symbol can influence but also has a deep meaning. Symbols are special meanings that contain messages for the next generation. The special meaning is in the form of a special unit in the context of ritual. As stated by Turner (1982), the symbol is the smallest unit of ritual which still retains the specific properties of ritual behavior. It is the ultimate unit of a specific structure in a ritual context.

Thus, the symbol is the smallest part of the ritual that holds something of the behavioral meaning or activities in a unique ritual (Arifuddin, 2019). Food as a certain symbol will have certain meanings in many social activities, for example in traditional or marriage ceremonies. Food is not only something to eat, or something that is served to guests or relatives who are attending the celebration, but food, type of food and the manner of serving it becomes certain cultural symbols (Nurti, 2017), therefore parts the smallest tradition of *Makan Patita* in Negeri Oma should also get the attention, such as the type of food served at the ritual, *Mara/Marei* (uncle feeds nieces/nephews) and *Makan Patita "ana kas makang om"* (nieces/nephews feed uncle). In analyzing the symbolic meaning in the ritual, using the interpretation theory proposed by Turner (1967) as cited in Endaswara, (2017); Arifuddin, (2019), are as follows:

1) Exegetical Meaning

The meaning obtained from the local people as informants about the cultural ritual behaviorism of the *Patita Soa*.

2) Operational Meaning

The meaning obtained is not limited to information from the informants, but also the actions are taken in the ritual culture of *Makan Patita Soa* and the life of the people in Negeri Oma.

3) Positional Meaning

The meaning obtained through the interpretation of symbols related to other symbols.

Thus the dimensions of interpretation of meanings complement each other in the process of interpreting symbolic rituals for *Makan Patita*.

3. Research Methodology

This research used qualitative research methods. Creswell (1998) stated that qualitative research design is research that produces descriptive data, data analysis, and interpretation in the form of written or oral words from the observed people and behavior. Thus, this research described the object of research; the process and meaning of *Makan Patita* in Negeri Oma

community, Haruku Island. In this research, the researcher became the key instrument and the source of data was taken purposively; the informant is the person who is considered to know best what is being investigated (key informant) (Sugiyono, 2015). In this research, the informants were the head of *Soa* Latu Ey (Mr. Alex Uneputty), the head of *Soa* Pari (Mr. Korneles Kaihattu and Mr. Daniel Kaihattu), the head of *Soa* Tuni (Mr. Tertius Hukom), head and also the descendant of *Soa* Raja (Mr. Adolop Pattinama), therefore the determination of informants or research subjects based on ownership of data information related to the research problem; the process and meaning of *Makan Patita* in Negeri Oma. This research took place in December 2019 - January 2020.

The data collection is conducted by observation, interview, and documentation. The collected data then analyzed interactively to the point of saturation. The data analysis technique used was based on the analysis technique proposed by Miles & Huberman (1992) that stated that the activities in data analysis in qualitative research are carried out interactively and continue continuously until completion so that the data were already saturated. The data analysis activities as revealed include three elements: first, continuous data reduction during data collection. Data reduction was part of the analysis of sharpening, classifying, directing, removing unnecessary and organizing data in such a way that conclusions can be drawn and verified data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Secondly, the data presentation was conducted by designing the entire data obtained in the form of field notes in the form of narrative text at each point that has been reduced in a matrix to facilitate describing the process of *Makan Patita* from the beginning to the end of the ceremonial procession and then analyzing the meaning of the implementation of *Makan Patita*. Third, concluding the results of the presentation and analysis of *Makan Patita* in Negeri Oma.

4. Results and Discussion

Following Koentjaraningrat (2005) on the four elements of culture which are symbolically described as four concentric circles of *Makan Patita* tradition:

1) Physical Culture

Makan Patita Soa or eating together in a *Soa* is a physical form of this culture. As stated earlier the tradition of *Makan Patita* in Negeri Oma is different from other areas in Maluku even though it has the same concept of eating together. Generally, the concept of *Makan Patita* in Maluku related to the certain events in the community such as coronation of the king, giving "custom names" to children, *Panas Pela*, *Panas Gandong*, harvest preparation, harvest celebrations, *Buka Sasi*, a new garden, construction of *Baileo*, the commemoration of certain feast days, the inauguration of a public facility (roads, other buildings), marriages and others (Souissa, 2017). However, the community in Negeri Oma practices *Makan Patita* tend to the form of family kinship in a *Soa*.

2) Social System

The social system that builds in *Makan Patita* of Negeri Oma can be found in the collaboration between members in a *Soa*. In the community of Negeri Oma, there are four *Soa*; Pari, Latu Ey, Tuni, and Raja. Each *Soa* has several clans as shown in Table 1. In Negeri Oma, *Makan Patita* is practiced through a series of traditional rituals that are followed only by the generation of the *Soa*. Thus, the social system between people in a *Soa* that is increasingly tightly integrated into a single identity of the *Soa* community. *Makan Patita/Soa* is carried out by the people can be once a year, once every two years or even five years, depending on each *Soa*. *Soa* is a combination of several households or family names and from several *Soas* then merge into

one *hena/aman/negeri/village*. *Soa* is related to lineage. Cooley (1985) described that *Soa* is a collection of unilateral hereditary groups, namely the springs formed during certain periods and enlarged when there are additional newcomers' houses and shrinks if there are extinct springs. Thus *Soa* has a very important role in the development of a *negeri (village)*. In this case, related to the celebration of *Makan Patita Soa* in Negeri Oma that has a meaning and value as a sense of kinship between the clans that exist in a *Soa*. To see the social system that built in the life of Negeri Oma people can be seen at the stage of implementing *Makan Patita*.

3) Cultural System or Cultural as an Idea

The local wisdom of the ancestors certainly contains a good purpose for the life of their generation. Likewise, the inheritance of the ancestors in terms of uniting each generation in a table tie (*lesa*) such as *Makan Patita Soa*. Ancestors' thoughts or ideas to unite the continuity of the life of their children and grandchildren in *Soa* have given birth to the tradition of *Makan Patita Soa* in Negeri Oma. *Makan Patita Soa* is divided into two parts; First, *Makan Patita Mara/Marei* where the uncle feeds his nephews/nieces. Second, *Makan Patita* from nieces/nephews to an uncle or in local terms often called as *ana kas makang om (nephews/nieces feed uncles)*. In the tradition of *Mara/Marei Makan Patita*, all the food and the event is funded by the older men (uncle). Also, the nephews/nieces funded the events and the food of *Makan Patita* when they feed their older men (uncle). This shows an attitude of mutual respect, mutual love between older men (uncle) to children (nephews/nieces), and vice versa.

4) Cultural Values

Cultural values are the concepts of core principles and ideals upon which an entire community exists. People in Negeri Oma, they consider being valuable, worth, and important in their life, so that it can function as a guide that gives direction and orientation to the lives of the community members. *Makan Patita Soa* in Negeri Oma holds noble values that must be maintained and preserved for a harmonious survival in the bond of brotherhood. At *Makan Patita Mara/Marei* uncle (*om*) feed his nephews/nieces by using a long dining table (*lesa*) covered with a white cloth which is also called a long white table and bench/chair to be occupied by his nephew certainly contains the value of sincere love from older people to their children and also a hope that someday their generation will continue to maintain the kinship. Conversely, when a nieces/nephews feed their older people or uncle (*om*) the table even though only on coconut leaves and tarpaulins on it but the value is great respect even if only simple in the eyes of parents, but it is valuable for them to reciprocate their parents' love for them. The difference between *Makan Patita* parents (uncles) and children (nephews/nieces) is certainly understandable due to many of their children (nephews) are still kids and unemployed.

Table 1. Names of Soa and Family Names in Each Soa

Names of Soa	Family Names in Each Soa
Soa Latu Ey	Uneputty Patiata Tohatta Lesirollo Manusiwa

Names of Soa	Family Names in Each Soa
Soa Pari	Kaihattu Sekewael Ririasa
Soa Tuni	Haumahu Hukom Wattimena Hetharia
Soa Raja	Patinama Suripatty Patty Pattikawa

Source: Primary Data (2019)

4.1. The Ceremonial Process of Makan Patita Soa in Negeri Oma

Makan Patita Soa divided into three stages, consisting of:

4.1.1. Initial Stage of *Makan Patita Soa*

At this stage, a joint meeting was held in the *Soa* to determine the time of implementation at the old house or *Soa* house. After the time has been determined, the preparation stage for the custom of *Makan Patita* is carried out including the *Cakalele* dance that will be performed at the beginning, and each older man (uncle) in *Soa* to prepare ingredients for the *Makan Patita* event. Each person donates voluntarily following their financial means. The forms of donation can be money (to buy rice, flour, and spices) and goods. The same thing also applies at the time of *Makan Patita* from their nephews to their uncle (*om*). The time of *Makan Patita* is not at the same time, it depends on the readiness of each *Soa*. Usually, *Makan Patita* from children (nephews/nieces) to parents/older men (uncle) will be held after *Makan Patita* from their parents has been conducted, as a form of respect for their gratitude to parents.

Before the core event of *Makan Patita*, there is a customary procession conducted by *Soa* at *Baileo Kotayasa*. *Baileo Kotayasa* is the traditional house of the people in Negeri Oma. For them, *Baileo* is not only a traditional house but also their identity. *Baileo* is also believed to be a gathering place for Ancestral Spirits who will look after and protect the village (*negeri*). So that every traditional ceremony either coronation of the King, *Panas Pela-Gandong* Ceremony, and various traditional ceremonies are always referred to *Baileo*. On the night before the implementation of *Makan Patita*, the series of preparatory events were carried out as the obligation of the five people appointed by *Soa*, commonly called the Fathers of the Five (*Bapa Lima-Lima*). They do a struggle prayer for the implementation of the *Makan Patita* tomorrow. In the preparatory procession, some symbols included such as betel places as a symbol of family relations and a bottle of *sopi* drink (local alcohol drink) as a symbol of fellowship.

4.1.2. The Implementation Stage

On the day of *Makan Patita*, all the men (uncle) and the woman (*tanta*/aunt) have been very busy since the morning to prepare a variety of foods, long white tables, and benches to be occupied by each nephew of *Soa*. It also happens for *Makan Patita* from nephews/nieces to uncle (*om*) as they prepare food, coconut leaves, and tarpaulin as a table cloth. The kinds of food from each *Soa* are listed in **Table 2**.

Table 2. Kinds of Food from Each Soa

No	Name of Soa	Menu/Kind of Foods	The Difference with Other Soa
1	Soa Latu Ey	Yellow rice, white rice, fish served with sauce, baked fish, bacon, <i>Pali-Pali</i> , and vegetables	The different menu of <i>Soa Latu Ey</i> from other <i>Soa</i> is in bacon availability on the menu. The bacon must be eaten by all nieces/nephews
2	Soa Pari	Yellow rice, white rice, fish served with sauce, Baked fish, <i>Pali-Pali</i> , and vegetables	Of all <i>Soa</i> in Negeri Oma, <i>Soa Pari</i> is the only <i>Soa</i> that must prepare a lot of <i>Pali-Pali</i> in the <i>Makan Patita</i> event
3	Soa Tuni	Yellow rice, white rice , fish served with sauce, baked fish, <i>Pali-Pali</i> , and vegetables	<i>Soa Tuni</i> does not have a special menu for the nephews/nieces
4	Soa Raja	Yellow rice, white rice fish served with sauce, beef, <i>Pali-Pali</i> , and vegetables	The difference menu in <i>Soa Raja</i> with other <i>Soa</i> is in beef availability on the menu

Source: Primary Data (2019)

Meanwhile, the type of food from nieces to uncles (*om*) is more simple such as boiled cassava, sweet potato (*petatas*) stew, boiled taro, *ketupat*, and fish considering these children are still kids and most of them are unemployed. While the parents provide expensive food with hope that someday their generation will become great people and not break the family ties that are built.

Various types of food show the identity of each *Soa*. From the different types of food of the three *Soa*, *Soa Pari* is the only *Soa* that required a lot of *Pali* food types. However, it is unknown why *Soa Pari* is obliged to provide more *Pali-Pali* as *Pali-Pali* is the food of the Sultanate Ternate which is usually served on special occasion celebrations and made by special people. For this reason, a separate study needs to be conducted since *Pali-Pali* is also not a common food for the people in the Ambon and Lease islands. *Soa Latu Ey* provided pork to the nieces/nephews to entertain them. It is different from *Soa Raja* who provides beef to their nephews since the King/village leader in Negeri Oma is from this *Soa*. According to the oral history of the King/village leader who was appointed by the Dutch at that time was required to provide European food; meat and bread. This makes the *Soa Raja* in every *Makan Patita* always provide beef as a mandatory menu that is still served on a long white table as a prestige of the *Soa*.

The event of eating together in a community has transformed the egoistic aspects of humans into solidarity and brotherhood. Food plays a major role in forming social ties with a communal dimension, during eating together; constantly it creates an emotional bond between people who eat the same food (Simmel, 1998). In the event of eating together, brotherhood, solidarity, sense of unity as fellow members of the community goes beyond self-egoism, so food unites people in a shared identity (Setiawan, 2016). It is felt in the celebration of *Makan Patita* in

Negeri Oma. All generations unite with joy and feel the beauty of harmonious and harmonious life, sharing, loving one another as a unity of community.

After all the food is ready on the *Patita's* dining table, the ritual of *Makan Patita* begins immediately at 3:00 p.m. WIT (Eastern Indonesian Time) where all the older men (uncles) have gathered at *Baileo Kotayasa* and in front of *Baileo* some young people in *Soa* start doing a *Cakalele* dance. This dance has a philosophy of warfare that is seen from the movement that displays the might in the motion of cutting, stabbing, spearing against his enemy. Although now the atmosphere of war no longer exists in Maluku, this dance is still performed in traditional ceremonies in Negeri Oma as well as other traditional areas in Maluku. As a form of respected manifestation for the ancestors and the love of their traditions.

Baju Cele is the cloth worn by parents and children in *Makan Patita* event. *Baju Cele* is usually patterned and red. The red color of *Cele's* clothes shows a sense of joy from the lives of parents and nieces in celebration of eating this traditional *Patita*. This view is in line with that expressed by [Pattiheilohy \(2013\)](#). In general, this dress has a cheerful/bold color pattern (mostly red), because it has a value of cheerfulness and dexterity.



Figure 1. Uncles are singing and dancing to lead their nieces/nephews out of the old house/Rumah Soa to Patita table

When *Cakalele* dance ends, the parents (uncles) walked to *Soa's* house to pick up the children (nieces/nephews) by being paraded using the *Kapata* (song) accompanied by the strains of *Tifa* to the dining table. The song contains the love and affection of siblings who must continue to be fostered by each generation as a message from the ancestors. Arriving at the dinner table the nephews are welcome to sit around the table on a bench that has been prepared. A priest leads the prayers of *Makan Patita* after that the leader of the *Soa* delivers a speech or advice that contains the lives of siblings must be maintained and *Patita* food heritage must be preserved as their cultural identity to keep the kinship. After that, each uncle will stand on the side of the bench to give their first bribe to his nephews then the food is continued by

each child himself. The first bribe given by uncles to his nephew showed great love for all the nephews in the *Soa* without seeing the difference. The first bribe is also a strong bond between parents and children so that wherever children are located they remain in the attention, observation, and feel the love of parents. The first bribe is also a hope that someday these children will become successful people and not forget the lives of brotherhood.



Figure 2. Food on *Lesa* (a traditional plate made from woven bamboo to put food), now it has been replaced with porcelain plates



Figure 3. Food on white long table that has been prepared by uncles to nephews/nieces

4.1.3. The Final Stage of *Makan Patita*

After the process ends, leftover food must be taken home by each niece/nephew. These foods should not be eaten by anyone except themselves (nephew/nieces) due to the provided food is devoted to them with a myriad of great hopes that these children will succeed in the future and they will not lack food (blessings) in the future.

The final stage of *Makan Patita* for the four *Soa* is different: *Makan Patita* in *Soa Pari* that all the children and grandchildren return to their respective homes and pray for gratitude in the final stage. Meanwhile, in *Soa Latu Ey*, after *Makan Patita* eating ceremony was done, all of *Soa Latu Ey*'s children and grandchildren returned to *Soa*'s house to pray as part of thanksgiving to God for the blessing of joy they had enjoyed together between uncle and nephew. For *Soa Tuni*, after the *Makan Patita* ceremony was done, all the children and grandchildren went to *Soa*'s house to pray and as a form of gratitude they held a dance party together in the *Matriot Soa* or the local language called as "*Maradansa*". The same thing was done by *Soa Raja* after the *Patita* eating ceremony was finished, all the children and grandchildren returned to *Soa*'s house and continued with the dance party in front of their families (*Maradansa*).

4.2. The Meaning of *Makan Patita* Soa for Negeri Oma Community

4.2.1. *Makan Patita* Soa as Identity and the Bond of Brotherhood

In Maluku tradition, when a woman decides to get married, she is immediately taken by her husband into husband's family life and brings the husband's family, so that all children who are born from this marriage are obliged to follow the husband's surname. It means the presence of children will be fully accepted as part of one of the household items in a *Soa*.

Commonly it also happens in the life of the people in Negeri Oma where every child (nephews) as part of the family heirs in a particular *Soa* should be received with joy because they are the successor to the generation from their families (local people say that as the eye of the house or *mata rumah*) in their *Soa*. It also introduces the identity of children as part of the *Soa*.

The ancestors truly realized that they would keep the brotherhood between family members in a *Soa*, so the long table (*lesa*) was the bond of brotherhood through a banquet to all the children in the *Soa*. Thus the children (nephews) will know who part of their family is. The Dining table for people in Maluku is not only a place to eat but more than that it has the most basic meaning because at the dining table parents and children will sit in gratitude and enjoy God's blessings. At the dinner table, parents also give advice and reprimand to their children to continue and maintain the bond of kinship, to help, and to share each other. Children are also taught to respect each other regardless of one's social and economic status and respect parents/older men so that these children will become good children for *Soa*, also the nation and the state.

The tradition of *Makan Patita* cannot be limited to eat together (traditional feast celebrations) but more than that it is a form of re-understanding the life values of brothers who have been outlined by the ancestors to each generation. This can be seen from the bribe given by the parents (uncle) to his nephew who can describe the concept of the people of Maluku in the frame of life of the siblings or brotherhood in the expression of *ale rasa beta rasa* (I feel what you feel) means when someone feels and experiences something, both happy and difficult, I will also feel the same way (Matitaputty, 2019); You feel and I also feel it because we are brothers (Lestari, 2017), or some other the people of Maluku philosophy that *sago salempeng pata dua* (in the life of siblings, all food must be shared, do not leave his younger brother or other siblings behind). The same opinion was expressed by Hartomo et al, (2015) "Local wisdom of *Makan Patita* is very relevant with brotherhood values". The point is, *Makan Patita* Soa in Negeri Oma strengthens the life of brotherhood and fellowship in harmony and peace with the hope that someday even though the parents are gone but family togetherness is maintained.

Besides that, several important things are the food from *Patita Mara*, which is a dining table (*lesa*) covered by a long white cloth which means the purity and sincerity of an uncle (uncle) receiving his children (nieces) in *Soa*. Likewise with the Welcoming Dance which means that the presence of a niece is welcomed with joy.

4.2.2. *Makan Patita* Soa as a Respectful to Older Men in a *Soa* (Uncles)

The tradition of *Makan Patita* is a traditional feast to express a thankful for God's blessing on the bond of kinship that must continue to be fostered between families in the community specifically the kinship ties between older men, in this case, uncle (*om*) with their children (nieces/nephews). It has deep meaning for the continuation of the lives of siblings or grandchildren as a cultural heritage that contains good values for each generation. This certainly strengthens the sense of togetherness as a part of *Soa*. As stated by Meliono-Budiyanto

(2004), togetherness becomes the core of community attachment when eating together into the ritual.

Although the food from the niece's *Patita* to Uncle (*om*) they served are simple foods and served using coconut leaves. In this case, it is not the food and drinks, but the *Makan Patita* is a form of reciprocity of the love and affection they have received from uncle or gratitude from children to parents who always support them.

All preparations are made by themselves as a form of ownership, respect, and appreciation and thanks to uncles in this case as their children have been accepted, served, and given encouragement and motivation to move forward into a superior generation, to learn to share life in difficult or happy times. This opinion is strengthened by the views of Souisa (2019) which stated on that ritual, one can acknowledge the power relations by identifying positions of "us" and "them", the role of parents, the role of children, practice for preparing kinds of stuff, implementation and reflection in the ritual. It reflects the management of society based on the pattern in it.

4.2.3. Symbolic Meaning of *Makan Patita*

Makan Patita emphasizes the variety of food and drinks carried by each person that symbolizes the variety of stories and life experiences (Hattu, 2016). Also, *Makan Patita* in Negeri Oma gained significance beyond eating not to survive and to influence the perception of whether something could be eaten. That is why food served at the *Patita* dining table is food that is used as a symbolic tradition. The symbolic tradition is the momentum to remind one another and advise parents (uncles) to their nephews/nieces to build the kinship that has been inherited by ancestors.

To respond the view of Berger (2005) which stated that symbols are everything that has significance and resonance with culture, then the dining table (*lesa*) is a form of culture that has significance with symbols as one of the most central places that must exist in every family (eyes home) in addition to the prayer table (*meja sombayang*) and the offering plate (*natsar* plates). For the people of Maluku, the dining table is a gathering place for families (mother, father, and children) to give thanks for God's blessing through the food to be eaten, as well as a means for parents to give advice and reprimand to children. In each family, in this case in Negeri Oma, each family has a dining table on which a small plate (tea plate) containing chili and salt. Chili symbolizes that life is hard that to get food on the table everyone has to struggle while salt gives flavor to every food which means that if there is a family or relatives who are deficient (no food) that must be helped.

Thus the dining table (*lesa*) contains a myriad of symbolic meanings that have deep meaning for the people to live as a generation that does not to do nothing, always remember the family's life (*orang basudara*) *laeng lia laeng, satu pung susah samua iko susah, satu pung sanang samua iko sanang* (life must help each other, the trouble or something difficult in a family/ *Soa*, all feel the same if one is happy all the families/ *Soa* are happy).

The view of Turner (1982) about symbols is the smallest unit of ritual that still maintains the specific nature of ritual. from a variety of foods provided by uncles to the nephews/nieces such as white rice, yellow rice, *Pali-Pali* (*Soa Pari*), pork (for *Soa Latu Ey*), and Beef (*Soa Raja*). Food as one of the main parts of the implementation of the *Makan Patita* ritual has a specific symbolic meaning found in every food at the dinner table (*lesa*), among others, 1) white rice means holy, clean and sincere, with the hope that these children will be good, do not do things that will embarrass the children (nephews/nieces) in *Soa*, 2) the *Pali* symbolizes the binding unity as the basic material of the palm leaves which bind together and hope for each generation in *Soa* to

stay united, 3) yellow rice means a better life, shining like gold and giving birth to a great generation in *Soa*, 4) pork, in Latu Ey opinion, is an expression of the heart's desire to entertain the children (nephews), 5) Beef, interpreted as a part of *Soa* Raja's social status, 6) cassava, taro and sweet potato products are a form of gratitude to God for having bestowed mercy and thanks to, 7) fish shows abundant natural wealth in Oma Village so that wherever the children of Negeri Oma are, they never forget to rebuild their home, Negeri Oma.

These types of food are symbols that have meaning and high values. Thus food has a symbolic meaning (the concept of eating is social) means that in food there are symbols (Foster 1986; Mufidah, 2012). The same thing was also stated by Nurti (2017) who stated that food as certain symbols would have a certain meaning in many social activities, such as food used in traditional ceremonies. Thus, the food in *Makan Patita Soa* is not just something to eat or something that is served to relatives' members (children/parents) who are attending the celebration, but the food and the procedure for its presentation become symbols of the tradition in Negeri Oma.

5. Conclusion

Makan Patita Soa in Negeri Oma is one of the traditions and cultural heritage contains values and meanings. *Makan Patita Soa* means a form of identity of children in a *Soa* and ties of brotherhood. *Makan Patita Soa* also means a form of respect and appreciation for parents that fully symbolic meaning. *Makan Patita Soa* is not just eating to fulfill or also eating for fun but more than that the long white table implies sincere love built by parents to their generation, being a role model for them to live loving each other in the bond of kinship to feel the same ways. *Makan Patita Soa* is also a part of thanksgiving for God's care for children in Negeri Oma. Besides, it also teaches young men how to live respecting and appreciating parents. Also, *Makan Patita Soa* contained a myriad of hopes for a better tomorrow for every child in *Soa*. Thus, it emphasizes the values of social relations among families, as an arena for moral values education for the community to maintain family relations and reinforces the values and patterns of kinship relations, especially for the people of Negeri Oma, Haruku Island, Maluku that spread around the world.

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The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest concerning the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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About the Authors

1. **Jenny Koce Matitaputty**, obtained her Doctoral degree from Indonesian Education University, Bandung, Indonesia, in 2018. The author is an Assistant Professor at the Department of History Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Pattimura University, Indonesia.
E-Mail: jenny.matitaputty@fkip.unpatti.ac.id
2. **Ida Masinay**, an honorary teacher at Public Senior High School 20, West Seram, Maluku Province, Indonesia.
E-Mail: masinayida05@gmail.com