

## Sekala Brak Kingdom: The Forerunner of Lampung Civilisation 4 Kepaksian Skala Berak

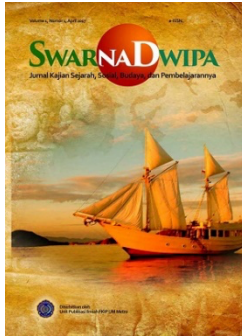
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### Abstract

This research discusses the role of Sekala Brak Kingdom in shaping the cultural identity of Lampung people through the Four Kepaksian system (Pernong, Belunguh, Nyerupa, and Bejalan Di Way). Using a qualitative approach, data was obtained through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. The results showed that customary values such as Pii Pesenggiri (self-esteem), Nemu Nyimah (hospitality), Sakai Sambayan (mutual cooperation), and Bejuluk Beadek (respect for identity) remain relevant in people's lives. However, the challenges of modernisation and the lack of regeneration of traditional leaders threaten the sustainability of these traditions. Preservation strategies such as multicultural education and the development of culture-based tourism are proposed to maintain the heritage values of the Sekala Brak Kingdom. This research confirms the importance of maintaining social harmony and local culture in the midst of globalisation.

### Keywords:

Sekala Brak Kingdom,  
Four Principalities,  
Lampung culture,  
traditional values,  
cultural preservation

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## INTRODUCTION

History is one of the fields of science that systematically investigates the overall development of society and humanity in the past (Tamburaka, 1999). History is taken in Arabic from the word 'syajarah' which means tree. The meaning of the tree here is intended as a family tree or genealogy and the origin of something, and the development of events that are continuous. History is one of the elements of national culture that needs to be fostered and maintained, including efforts to explore and fertilise regional culture, as well as regional traditions and history.

Lampung is the southernmost province on the island of Sumatra, Indonesia, with the capital or administrative centre in Bandar Lampung. The province has two cities, Bandar Lampung and Metro, and 13 regencies. Lampung Province has a main port called Panjang Port and Bakauheni Port, a main airport called Raden Intan II located 28 km from the provincial capital, and Tanjung Karang Station in the centre of the capital city (Saputra, 2022).

The Sekala Brak Kingdom is one of the ancient kingdoms at the root of Lampung's history and culture. Located in the highlands of West Lampung, the kingdom is believed to have been established in the 3rd century AD and became the forerunner of the civilisation of Lampung's indigenous people. The existence of the Sekala Brak Kingdom not only influenced the formation of the community's social structure, but also the traditions and customs that continue to be preserved to this day (Suryadinata, 2020).

The kingdom is famous for its custom-based leadership system known as the Four Chiefdoms of Skala Brak, namely the Chiefdom of Pernong, the Chiefdom of Belunguh, the Chiefdom of Nyerupa, and the Chiefdom of Bejalan Di Way. This article aims to reveal the history of the Sekala Brak Kingdom, the role of the Four Principalities in shaping Lampung's identity, and their influence on the culture and traditions of the people today (Zakaria, 2022).

The Sekala Brak Kingdom began as a Hindu-Buddhist community that established a government in the West Lampung area. The kingdom then underwent Islamisation in the 15th century, influenced by the spread of Islam by religious propagators such as Sunan Gunung Jati. The process of Islamisation was marked by the influx of scholars and traders from Java and Sumatra (Yusra & Mahendra, 2021).

In the oral history of Lampung people, Sekala Brak is the starting point for the formation of indigenous communities with noble values inherited by the ancestors. The kingdom became the centre of civilisation, connecting the hinterland with the coast through the spice trade route.

The Sekala Brak Kingdom is one of the oldest kingdoms in the archipelago and the origin of the civilisation of Lampung's indigenous people. Its existence has not only left a rich historical footprint, but also a unique social system through the Four Principalities of Skala Brak. However, over time, the traditional values inherited by the kingdom have faced challenges from modernisation and globalisation. The younger generation tends to have less understanding of the importance of these traditions, while the influence of outside cultures is getting stronger. Therefore, this research is designed to answer the question: What is the role of Sekala Brak Kingdom in shaping the cultural identity of Lampung people? How does the Empat Kepaksian system preserve the heritage of customs? And, what are the challenges and strategies that can be done to maintain the sustainability of these cultural values in the midst of changing times?

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research uses a qualitative approach to deeply explore the history, social structure, and cultural values of the Sekala Brak Kingdom and the role of the Four Principalities of Skala Brak in shaping Lampung civilisation. This approach was chosen because it is able to reveal the meaning, experience, and interpretation of the community towards the traditions and customs inherited by this kingdom (Suryadinata, 2020).

The research was conducted in West Lampung, particularly in the Batu Brak area, believed to be the centre of the Sekala Brak Kingdom. Focus was also given to indigenous communities that still maintain the traditions of the Four Kepaksian, namely the Kepaksian Pernong, Kepaksian Belunguh, Kepaksian Nyerupa, and Kepaksian Bejalan Di Way.

Data collection techniques in this research were conducted through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews were

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conducted with traditional leaders, community leaders, and direct descendants of the Four Principalities to gather information on the history, customary leadership system, and cultural traditions inherited from the Sekala Brak Kingdom. In addition, participatory observation was conducted by attending various traditional events and rituals that are still carried out by the indigenous communities of West Lampung. This observation aims to directly understand the cultural practices and values maintained by the community. Documentation is also an important technique in this research, with the collection of archives, photographs, historical records, and traditional literary works related to the Sekala Brak Kingdom and the Four Principalities. The data collected from these three techniques is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the influence of the Sekala Brak Kingdom on the identity and culture of Lampung people.

The data collected was analysed through data reduction, theme classification, and in-depth interpretation. The researcher sought to find patterns that explain the role and influence of the Sekala Brak Kingdom on Lampung's cultural identity. Data validity was maintained through source triangulation, comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation (Alif, 2019).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research reveals important findings on the role of the Sekala Brak Kingdom as the forerunner of Lampung civilisation and its influence on community culture through the Four Kepaksian system. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews, participatory observation and documentation, providing a comprehensive picture of the history, social structure and cultural practices inherited by the kingdom.

The results of this study reveal that Kampung Baru is a real reflection of the diversity of cultures and languages that live. Multiculturalism formed from the interaction of local people and migrants creates unique social dynamics, with language diversity being one of the important elements in daily life. The following discussion will outline some of the main points, namely as follows:

1. Historical existence of Sekala Brak Kingdom

Interviews with traditional leaders and historians revealed that the Sekala Brak Kingdom was established in the 3rd century AD and became the centre of civilisation in the highlands of West Lampung. The process of Islamisation in the 15th century gave new colour to the belief system and traditions that were previously influenced by Hindu-Buddhist culture. Documentation in the form of local archives and traditional literary works also show that the kingdom played an important role in the spice trade route that connected the interior with the coast of Lampung.

2. Customary Leadership System: 4 Kepaksian Skala Brak

The four Kepaksian (Pernong, Belunguh, Nyerupa and Bejalan Di Way) function not only as traditional political structures, but also as mechanisms to maintain social and cultural harmony.

- a. Kepaksian Pernong:

Observations show that Pernong is a centre of customary activities that preserve cultural values, such as Piil Pesenggiri. Traditional ceremonies such as weddings and the appointment of traditional leaders are often performed in this

area, reflecting the position of the Pernong Principality as the guardian of Lampung traditions.

b. Kepaksian Belunguh:

Interviews with traditional leaders show that the Kepaksian Belunguh plays an important role in maintaining socio-political stability. The region serves as a place for inter-kepaksian mediation and bridges the relationship of indigenous communities with outsiders.

c. Kepaksian Nyerupa:

Based on observation data, the Nyerupa Presidency is a centre for the development of Lampung arts and literature, such as dance and oral literature. The younger generation is involved in art activities to preserve the traditions passed down by the ancestors.

d. Kepaksian Bejalan Di Way:

Observations in this area show an important role in natural resource management, especially around the Way Besai river. Traditional trading activities are still carried out as part of the economic heritage of the Sekala Brak Kingdom.

3. Living Customary Values

The Sekala Brak Kingdom left a legacy in the form of customary values that to this day guide the lives of Lampung's indigenous people. These values are not only the basis for social interaction but also reflect the identity and personality of Lampung people. The following is a breakdown of the surviving customary values and their implementation in daily life:

- a. Piil Pesenggiri (Self-Worth and Honour), this value emphasises the importance of maintaining personal, family and community honour.
- b. Nemu Nyimah (Friendliness and Openness, Lampung people are known for their friendly and open attitude towards newcomers.
- c. Sakai Sambayan (Gotong Royong), this principle emphasises the importance of cooperation to achieve a common goal.
- d. Bejuluk Beadek (Respect for Identity and Customary Titles), this value reflects respect for an individual's social status and customary titles.
- e. The Habit of Deliberation, the tradition of deliberation is the main way Lampung indigenous people resolve conflicts or make joint decisions.

4. Language as Cultural Identity

Lampung language remains an integral part of indigenous identity. Observations show that the language is used in traditional events, religious rituals and inter-generational communication. In addition, interviews show that the use of local languages is a means of strengthening the sense of community among communities.

5. The Challenge of Cultural Preservation

- a. While traditional values have been maintained, the research found a number of challenges:
- b. Modernisation: The younger generation tends to be more interested in popular culture, reducing interest in preserving customs.
- c. Lack of Regeneration of Customary Leaders: Interviews showed that the difficulty of recruiting the younger generation to become customary leaders threatens the sustainability of the Four Kepaksian system.

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d. Preservation Strategy:

- Multicultural Education: Schools and universities in Lampung could integrate material on the history and culture of the Sekala Brak Kingdom into the curriculum.
- Culture-based Tourism: The government and indigenous communities can develop tourism programmes that promote the traditional ceremonies and traditions of the Four Principalities as the main attraction.

## CONCLUSION

This research shows that the Sekala Brak Kingdom is an important root of Lampung's indigenous civilisation. The existence of the Four Kepaksian (Pernong, Belunguh, Nyerupa, and Bejalan Di Way) has played a significant role in maintaining social harmony, preserving traditions, and strengthening the community's cultural identity. Traditional values such as Piil Pesenggiri, Nemu Nyimah, Sakai Sambayan, Bejuluk Beadek, and the tradition of deliberation remain relevant guidelines for life today.

However, the challenges of modernisation and the lack of regeneration of traditional leaders threaten the continuity of this cultural system. Therefore, preservation efforts through multicultural education, integration of local history in the curriculum, and the development of culture-based tourism are needed to maintain the legacy of the Sekala Brak Kingdom amidst changing times.

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