

ANALYSIS OF RITUAL COMMUNICATION IN THE TIMBUNG PEJANGGIK WAR TRADITION: A SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT:

This study examines the symbolic meaning and cultural communication practices in the Timbung war ritual tradition in Pejanggiik, Central Lombok. This tradition, rooted in historical values and ancestral heritage, is an important part of social identity, religious values, and community harmony. This study aims to analyze the symbolic interaction, function, and meaning contained in each element of the ritual through a symbolic interactionism approach. The method used is qualitative with data collection through semi-structured interviews with traditional leaders, religious leaders, the community, and cultural actors. The results of the study show that the Timbung War functions as a communication ritual that strengthens social cohesion, preserves ancestral values, and integrates Islamic teachings through prayer and togetherness. Each symbol in the ritual, such as bamboo, water, offerings, and coordinated movements, contains meanings of purity, unity, protection, and respect for ancestors. The study concludes that the Timbung War is a cultural tradition that remains alive and preserved through regeneration and the active role of the community amid the tide of modernization. The findings of this study contribute to efforts to preserve local culture, strengthen community identity, and can be used as a reference in the development of cultural education programs and tradition preservation policies based on community participation.

Key word: *Timbung War, Symbolic Interactionism, Cultural Tradition, Ritual Communication, Sasak Community.*

A. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is known as a country with a rich diversity of cultures, with various local traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation and have become an integral part of the cultural identity of the

local community.¹ One of these unique traditions is the Timbung Pejanggik War in Central Lombok. The Timbung War tradition involves a ritual of mass throwing of timbung. This practice has been an important part of the local community's life for many years and is still preserved today. Despite the rapid development of modern entertainment and social changes, the Timbung War continues to play an important role in the community's life. This shows that the cultural, symbolic, and social values contained in this ritual are still relevant and believed to be able to strengthen the unity and cultural identity of the people of Central Lombok.²

Ritual communication is a process of conveying messages that emphasize the values of togetherness and respect for tradition, as well as the strengthening of culture that is still preserved within the community.³ The process of ritual communication does not only take place through speech but is also manifested through symbols and processions that demonstrate social and spiritual values. In practice, ritual communication plays an important role in maintaining social harmony, strengthening shared identity, and preserving traditions so that they are preserved amid the changing times.⁴

The Perang Timbung tradition is an annual ritual performed by the Pejanggik community in Central Lombok. This tradition embodies a spirit of togetherness and respect for ancestors and is considered a form of gratitude for the abundance of the earth's fruits and also an effort to ward off disasters or dangers.⁵ In the Perang Timbung tradition, the community throws bamboo sticks (timbang) at each other as a symbol of struggle, courage, and social solidarity. In addition, this tradition also contains many Islamic values, such as deliberation, prayer, zikir, and the use of halal ingredients such as sticky rice and coconut milk in the making of Timbung snacks.⁶ The ritual process also involves collecting holy water from seven wells, which is then prayed over together, signifying a religious element that demonstrates the harmonious integration of local culture and Islamic teachings that are deeply rooted in the Lombok region. Therefore, this

¹ Ervina Anatasya, "The Role of Cultural Literacy and Citizenship in Preserving Local Indonesian Culture in the Era of the Industrial Revolution40"2(1),(2024).253-264.

² Wahyu Trisno Aji, "From Melody to Values: Gendang Beleg Music Art in Building the Values of the Lombok Island Community," *Ethnography: Journal of Design, Social Sciences and Humanistic Studies*, 1, no. 2 (2024): 76–94. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54373/ethno.v1i2.41>

³ Shulbi Muthi, Sabila Salayan, and Universitas Widya Mataram, "The Meaning of Ritual Communication in the Sea Offering at Parangkusumo Beach in Preserving Cultural Values" 4, no. 2 (2021)162-175.. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24042/komunika.v4i2.9324>

⁴ Sheila Mustira and Detya Wiryan, "Identity and Cultural Image of the Acehnese People" 9 (2025): 48–63. <https://doi.org/10.51544/jlmk.v9i1.5921>

⁵ Fikri Khairul Anam, "Symbols of Islamic Values in the Traditional War Ritual of Pejanggik Village, Central Lombok," *Jurnal Global Ilmiah*, 13 (2).2024,1-9

⁶ Erwin Padli et al., "Discourse Tradition and Religious Education: Islamic Educational Values in the Perang Timbung Cultural Practice," *Tafkir: Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Education* 6, no. 2 (2025): 420–35, <https://doi.org/10.31538/tijie.v6i2.1807>.

tradition serves as a symbolic medium of communication that brings together social, cultural, and spiritual elements in an integrated manner in the lives of the community.⁷

Symbolic interactionism theory, which is an important approach in sociology and communication science as developed by George Herbert Mead and Herbert Blumer, emphasizes that social meaning arises through interaction and continuous interpretive processes. Carter and Fuller explain that symbolic interactionism views meaning as the result of social construction that continues to change along with human interaction in a symbolic context.⁸ Furthermore, Silva states that this theory is relevant for explaining how symbols and ritual practices become a means of forming collective identities that are negotiated through social and cultural interactions.⁹ Thus, this theory becomes a relevant framework for understanding how symbols, actions, and interpretations in rituals such as the Perang Timbung Pejanggik represent the process of forming social meaning, solidarity, and cultural identity.

This study uses a symbolic interactionist perspective, which shows that traditions and cultures can be interpreted through symbols exchanged in social interactions. Through symbols, gestures, and collective actions that have been passed down from generation to generation, ritual communication becomes a means of transmitting values and social solidarity.¹⁰ The tradition of the Pejanggik Timbung War can be understood through the perspective of symbolic interactionism, which highlights that social meaning arises from the process of symbolic interaction and communication. Ritual elements such as the throwing of timbung, the shouts of participants, and unwritten rules function as social symbols that reflect the values of solidarity and togetherness of the Pejanggik community. Through these interactions, participants negotiate roles and strengthen the social cohesion of the community.¹¹ As with various traditional rituals in Indonesia, this practice becomes a medium of communication that conveys social and spiritual values and reinforces the

⁷ Henny Puspita Sari and Yanti Haryanti, "The Symbolic Meaning in the Sedekah Bumi Traditional Ceremony of Pelem Village, Gabus District, Grobogan Regency," *Jurnal Indonesia: Informatics and Communication Management* 5, no. 1 (2024): 974–82, <https://doi.org/10.35870/jimik.v5i1.617>.

⁸ Michael J. Carter and Celene Fuller, "Symbols, Meaning, and Action: The Past, Present, and Future of Symbolic Interactionism," *Current Sociology*, 2016, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392116638396>.

⁹ Eusabius Separera Niron, "Politics of Urban Spatial Planning in Kupang Based on Physical and Socio-Cultural Identity," *Jurnal Caraka Prabhu* 7, no. 1 (2023): 39–64, <https://doi.org/10.36859/jcp.v7i1.1503>.

¹⁰ Bali Dwipa, "Exploring Ritual Communication in Fostering Participation and Harmony in the Traditional Village of Penglipuran Agnesia Hervina Tiaraningrum," *innovative: Journal of Social Science Research* 5 (2025): 1742–52. <https://doi.org/10.31004/innovative.v5i2.18176>

¹¹ Nurmalinda Nurmalinda, "Symbolic Interactionism in Ceremonies of Ritual Medicine in Malay Society in Riau Province," *Journal of Urban Society's Arts* 8, no. 2 (2022): 98–110, <https://doi.org/10.24821/jousa.v8i2.5719>.

cultural identity of the community.¹² The symbolic interactionism approach thus helps explain that the Pejanggik Timbung War is not merely a local tradition, but rather an arena of symbolic communication in which social meaning and communal identity are continuously formed and reinterpreted.¹³

Previous studies have emphasized the importance of communication in cultural rituals as a means of meaning formation and social cohesion reinforcement. Ritual communication also plays a role in strengthening social structures and fostering a sense of togetherness through collectively performed symbols.¹⁴ In Indonesia, a number of studies have highlighted the role of communication in local traditions in strengthening cultural identity and maintaining social continuity. However, research that specifically examines the Perang Timbung Pejanggik tradition from the perspective of ritual communication and symbolic interactionism is still very limited. This tradition is unique because it combines social symbols, such as the throwing of timbung, collective gestures, and unwritten rules, with religious practices, including prayers, zikir, and the collection of holy water from seven wells. The harmonious integration of local culture and Islamic values woven into this ritual offers a new contribution to the study of ritual communication.¹⁵ Thus, this study has the potential to fill the gap in the literature on how symbols, social interactions, and religious practices in local rituals shape collective meaning, strengthen social solidarity, and represent the cultural identity of the people of Central Lombok holistically.

Based on this gap, this study aims to analyze ritual communication in the Perang Timbung Pejanggik tradition using a qualitative approach and a symbolic interactionism perspective. The focus of the study includes understanding how symbols, actions, and interactions of participants shape social meaning, strengthen community cohesion, and affirm the cultural identity of the Pejanggik community. This study is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of ritual communication studies and practically to the preservation of local culture and understanding of social, cultural, and spiritual integration in ritual practices. In addition, this study can serve as a reference for the community and policymakers in preserving local traditions that are rich in social and religious values.

¹² Sulaeman Sulaeman et al., "The Symbolic Communication of the Ukuwala Mahiate Ritual of the Indigenous Peoples of Mamala, Moluccas, Indonesia," *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 22, no. 2 (2021): 385–403, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-019-00753-1>.

¹³ Rusma Noortyani, Fatchul Mu'in, and Rizky Amelia, "Symbolic Communications in the Traditional Wedding Rituals of the Banjar Ethnic Community, Indonesia," *ISVS E-Journal* 10, no. 10 (2023): 154–78, <https://doi.org/10.61275/isvsej-2023-10-10-11>.

¹⁴ Rohan Bastin, "Sacrifice, Sovereignty and the," 1969.

¹⁵ Anam, "Symbols of Islamic Values in the Traditional Timbung War Ritual in Pejanggik Village, . 1(5). (2024). 326-330. DOI:10.55324/jgi.v1i5.51

B. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach based on the Miles and Huberman framework, which emphasizes in-depth analysis of social phenomena through rich and detailed data collection. This approach was chosen because it aims to understand ritual communication in the Perang Timbung Pejanggik tradition contextually, as well as to examine the symbolic meanings, social interactions, and cultural practices that take place in the community. The research was conducted in Pejanggik Village, Praya Tengah Subdistrict, Central Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara, which is the center of the Perang Timbung tradition as well as an arena for social, cultural, and spiritual interaction among the local community. Research informants were selected using purposive sampling, considering their level of involvement, knowledge, and experience with the Perang Timbung tradition. The informants consisted of one Village Head (KD) who provided information about policies, village government support, and views on the implementation of the tradition as a local cultural asset; two Cultural Figures (TB) who understood the history, rules, and symbolic meaning of each stage of the ritual; one Religious Figure (TA) who explained the relationship between the implementation of the tradition and religious values as well as the harmonization of the community's spiritual teachings; two Community Leaders (CL) who play a role in organizing activities, supervising, and preserving socio-cultural values, and two Village Youth (VY) as active participants in the ritual as well as drivers of tradition preservation through social and cultural activities.

This study used semi-structured interview guidelines to explore the informants' understanding, experiences, and views on the symbols, stages of the ritual, and the social and religious values inherent in the Perang Timbung tradition. The questions asked were open-ended so that the informants could explain their experiences freely, broadly, and in depth. To strengthen and complement the interview data, the researcher also utilized village archives, historical records, and other supporting documents related to the implementation of rituals and the development of traditions. All of these data collection tools were used in an integrated manner so that the information obtained remained accurate, contextually rich, and in line with the nature of qualitative research.

Data was collected through in-depth interviews to explore the experiences and perceptions of informants, participatory observation to directly observe social interactions and ritual symbols, and documentation in the form of photographs, audio recordings, field notes, and supporting documents, which were then processed into narratives. This chart is presented to facilitate the reader's understanding of the data analysis process. The chart is included in Figure 1.

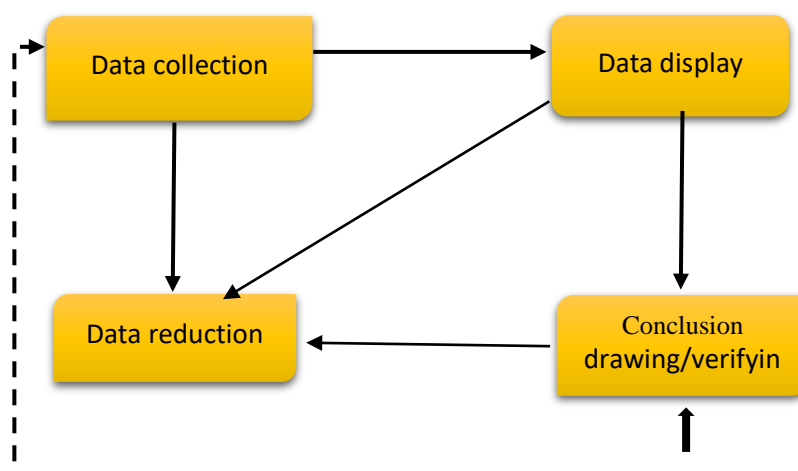


Figure 1. Miles & Huberman data analysis model

Figure 1 shows the data analysis conducted by following the stages outlined by Miles and Huberman, namely data reduction, presentation of data in the form of narratives, tables, or diagrams, and inductive conclusion drawing by verifying the symbolic meanings and social interactions that emerged during the ritual. This study ensures data validity by using triangulation of sources, methods, and theories, including comparing information from various informants, combining data collection techniques, and linking findings to symbolic interactionism theory. This study also pays attention to research ethics by requesting informant consent, maintaining confidentiality, and respecting customs, norms, and religious practices during the research process.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Origins of the Timbung War

The tradition of the Pejanggik Timbung War has deep historical roots in the life of the Pejanggik Village community, Central Lombok Regency, NTB Province. The tradition of the Timbung War stems from the story of a king or datu from the Kingdom of Pejanggik named Raja Omban Mas Meraji Kusume. The birth of this tradition began with an important event, namely the deep disappointment experienced by the King of Pejanggik towards his descendants or his people. From this disappointment came the expression "Serewe," which means "*I am* disappointed" (I am already disappointed), which later developed into the name of the area known as *Timbu* or *Telang*.

This result of interview shows that this tradition is rooted in the disappointment of Datu Omban Mas Meraji Kusume towards the disobedience of his descendants at a time when the Pejanggik area was still a forest and not yet densely populated. The expression "Serewe," which

means "I am disappointed," became an emotional marker that later prompted Datu to establish customary rules through the *Ngerebes Entun* process as a form of reaffirming the values and obligations of descendants. This process became the foundation for the birth of the Perang Timbung tradition, a customary ritual that serves not only as a competition of agility, but also as a means of maintaining unity, honor, and discipline among descendants, as well as a social mechanism to prevent disputes within the community.

In Sasak culture, titles for nobles such as Raden or Datu play an important role in social relations. A person with the title Raden must not be treated disrespectfully or defeated by descendants who are not Raden. Therefore, the Perang Timbung tradition also serves to maintain the social structure, honor of descendants, and unity of the community. Perang Timbung is a medium for preserving the honor of ancestors, a means of strengthening communal solidarity, and a mechanism for maintaining social harmony.¹⁶ This tradition is not only seen as a ceremonial activity, but also as a marker of the cultural identity of the Pejanggik community. This ritual is a historical symbol that connects the current generation with the values inherited from their ancestors. Anam's research shows that Perang Timbung contains elements of acculturation between the local Sasak culture and Islamic values through prayers, dzikir, and rituals before the symbolic war takes place. Social changes have not eliminated the essence of the tradition, as the community continues to preserve the ritual structure as inherited from previous generations. In fact, cultural documentation by regional institutions shows that lemang ketan santan in bamboo is not only a symbolic weapon, but also part of a ritual of gratitude, prayers for safety, and a means of strengthening social relations.

2. Meaning and Stages of the Timbung War Ritual Procession

a. Meaning of the Timbung War Tradition Ritual

A ritual is a series of activities that are carried out repeatedly, regularly, and have certain rules that are passed down from generation to generation.¹⁷ Rituals always have symbolic meanings, not just physical activities. They contain values related to beliefs, group identity, gratitude, respect for ancestors, and strengthening social relationships. Rituals also serve to unite communities, maintain social order, and reaffirm the cultural values upheld by a region or community.

From a ritual communication perspective, ritual practices not only convey instrumental messages but also reproduce shared social realities:

¹⁶ Tomy Wijaya, Siska Amelia, and Farida Ratu Wargadalem, "Local Wisdom: The Role of Kebagh Dance in Shaping the Cultural Identity of the Besemah Tribe," *Jawi* 8, no. 1 (2025): 61–76, <https://doi.org/10.24042/00202582720900>.

¹⁷ Rini Fitria and Rohmad Fadli, "Bugis Tribe Rituals in Bengkulu City," *Jurnal Iain Pontianak*, 2017, 103–18, <https://jurnaliainpontianak.or.id/index.php/alhikmah/article/view/825#:~:text=Fitria%2C>

through symbolic repetition, rituals reinforce norms, legitimacy, and relational structures within the community. In the context of local traditions such as the Timbung War, symbolic elements such as offerings, traditional attributes, and collective gestures function as means of cultural communication that express gratitude, requests for protection from ancestors, and affirmation of the identity of local ethnic groups,

The result of interview can be interpreted to mean that the ritual of throwing objects at each other in the Timbung War is not meant as an act of violence, but rather as a symbol of unity. A well-aimed throw symbolizes that the community is able to maintain the direction, goals, and togetherness as inherited from their ancestors. Moreover, this ritual also serves as a means to remember our predecessors and remind us that unity is a precious legacy that must be preserved from one generation to the next. Thus, the meaning of the Timbung War Ritual lies not only in the act of throwing, but more in the philosophical values it embodies: unity, solidarity, respect for ancestors, and the strengthening of social bonds within the Pejanggik community.

b. Preparation Procession for the Timbung War Ritual

The Timbung War tradition is a customary ritual of the Sasak people, carried out as a form of respect for ancestors, fulfillment of customary promises, and an effort to pray for safety, health, and blessings for all descendants of the Datu or King. The Timbung War ritual process in the village of Pejanggik is shown in Figure 1.

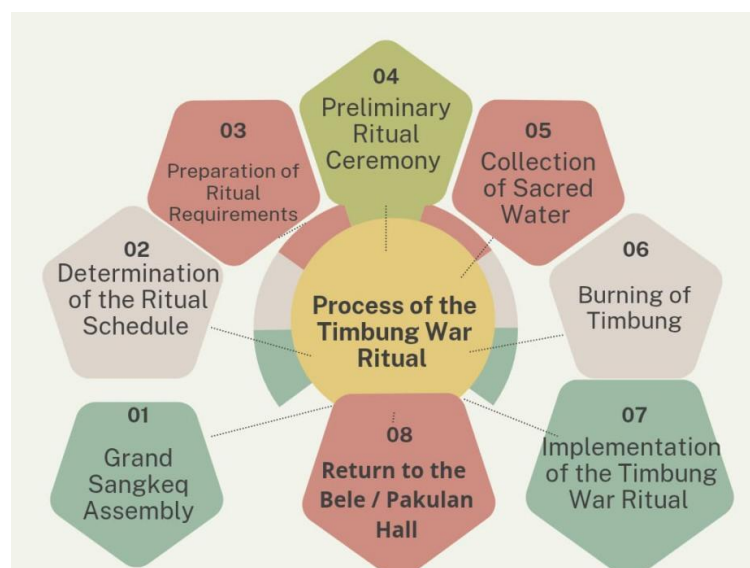


Figure 1. Diagram of the Timbung War Ritual Process

Based on the flow chart above, the implementation process of the Timbung War ritual consists of several stages that are arranged systematically. The stages begin with the Sangkep Agung Deliberation as a forum for determining customary decisions, which is then followed by determining the time of the ritual based on the customary calendar. Once the time has been determined, the community prepares all the necessary ritual requirements. Next, a preliminary ritual is held to open the procession, followed by the collection of holy water and the burning of the timbung at night. This series of events culminates in the Perang Timbung ritual itself. After the procession is complete, all participants return to the Balai Bele/Pakulan to conclude the entire traditional activity. The Perang Timbung ritual consists of several stages, namely:

Sangkep Agung

The stage begins with Sangkep Agung, which is the initial preparation stage in the Timbung War series. The timing of the ritual does not depend on the village government, but is determined through *Sangkep Agung* deliberations involving traditional leaders, religious leaders, guardians, and descendants of ancestors. The results of interviews

that the timing of the ritual is based on the Sasak calendar and natural signs. This timing is determined by traditional leaders with reference to the traditional Sasak calendar (*Rowot*), which is used as a reference in determining sacred moments and auspicious days for the implementation of traditions.¹⁸ Traditional leaders usually determine the implementation in the fourth month of the Sasak calendar (Rabiul Akhir), which coincides with August, specifically on Fridays and sacred dates such as the 4th, 14th, and 17th. The traditional leaders ensure that the implementation does not fall on the last Friday of the fourth Sasak month, in accordance with the ancestors' prohibition. Other natural signs, such as the blooming and falling of the *Dangah* tree flowers in the *serewe* cemetery, are used as a reference for the start of preparations, in line with the traditional practices of the Sasak people, which combine the local calendar system with observations of natural signs. After that, permission is sought from the Pejanggik Village Head to obtain social legitimacy.

Roah Lowong and Water Collection

In the same phase, a number of preliminary rituals are also carried out, including *Ruah Lowong*, which is a prayer to ward off evil and an expression of gratitude carried out before the rice harvest season, and

¹⁸ Muhammad Awaludin, "The Rowot Sasak Calendar (Traditional Calendar of the Sasak People)," *AL-AFAQ Journal of Astronomy and Astrology, Faculty of Sharia, State Islamic University (UIN) Mataram* 1, no. 1 (2019): 89–101, <http://dx.doi.org/10.20884/1.jdh.2010.12.3.117>.

Paosan, which is the recitation of traditional poetry as a request for the blessings of the ancestors. This entire series of events is centered at the Mu'jizat Well, a sacred location that is the source of holy water and soil for the implementation of Ruah Lowong. This tradition is carried out after the rice planting season and before the harvest as an effort to pray for the safety and blessings of the Pejanggik community's agricultural products. The stages of taking holy water from the Miracle Well are shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Sumur Mu'jizat as the center of the Ruah Lowong ritual

In the main procession of *ruah lowong*, the community comes to Sumur Mu'jizat carrying water from their homes. The water is mixed with soil or water from the sacred well, then taken home and sprinkled on the rice fields. The result of interview explains that This ritual is centered at a location called the Miracle Well. The community brings water from their homes, then mixes it with soil or water from the Miracle Well. The mixture is then sprinkled on the rice fields. The meaning of this is to ward off evil.

During this stage, the community also prepares all the other ritual materials needed for the peak of the *timbang war*, including bamboo, banana leaves, *timbang* (bamboo filled with sticky rice and coconut), *sangkal* wood (old bamboo roots), *ketujur* trees, *simbe'*, *cement* (ceret), *bokor* (water container), *rukuk lekas* (cigarettes and betel leaf rolls), *Jai'* (coconut stalks), *Puntik Raja* (plantain), and *dulang pesajik* (food serving tray), which must be complete.

Making Jaje Timbung

Next is the stage of making *Jaje Timbung*, which is the core of the social and spiritual aspects of the *Timbung War* Tradition. This process not only requires technical skills, but also contains symbolic values that reflect the cultural identity of the Pejanggik community. From a spiritual perspective, the making of *timbang* has a strong sacred

meaning. Everyone involved is required to be in a state of purity by performing wudu before starting the manufacturing process.

The interview revealed that purity is a form of respect for ancestors and spiritual readiness to participate in rituals. From a social perspective, *timbang* is made through a spirit of *mutual cooperation*. The community usually forms small groups, for example consisting of ten households, to work together from the preparation of ingredients, the cooking process, to the burning. This solidarity is reflected in the material sacrifices made by each group. In one preparation cycle, a group can produce between 100 and 200 *timbang* at a cost of millions of rupiah. The stages of making *timbang* are shown in Figure 4.



Figure 4. Making *timbang*

Figure 4 shows the process of making *timbang*, which begins with preparing cleaned bamboo, then inserting sticky rice wrapped in banana leaves into the bamboo, and adding coconut water as a mixture before the burning process is carried out.

Taking holy water in the Pituq area

The stages of collecting holy water at Lingku Gaong (Gaong Well). The holy water is collected at *lingkuk pituq*, which means nine springs located in Gaong Hamlet, by the custodians accompanied by young people. After being collected, the water is stored in the palace so that it can be used as a medium for healing or antidote on the day of the ritual. The source states that this holy water is collected from seven springs in Gaong Hamlet, where the Batu Pejanggal site in Gaoq is located. The holy water is collected two days before the day of the ritual, then stored and sprinkled on the day of the ritual as an effort to ensure health and fulfill certain wishes.

Gaong Hamlet, also known as Gaoq, is an area in Pejanggal Village that plays an important role in the Perang *timbang* ritual series.

Although it is not the main location of the procession, this area is the source of the sacred spring water used in the ritual. In addition, Gaong is home to the historic site of Batu Pejaggi in Gaoq, which reinforces the sacred value of the location. The process of collecting holy water at the lengkuk pituq is shown in Figure 5



Figure 4. Lengkuq pituq (Seven wells)

Figure 5 shows the process of collecting holy water in Gaong, which is generally carried out two days before the peak of the event. The collection of this water is an important part of the ritual preparations, as the holy water will be sprinkled on the day of the ceremony as a symbol of prayers for health and the fulfillment of the community's various wishes.

Burning of the Timbung

The final stage of preparation, the burning of Timbung, is a stage that has high symbolic value in the Timbung War Tradition. The burning does not use ordinary firewood, but uses old bamboo roots called *sangkal* and supports made of *lulun ketujur*. The use of *sangkal* and *ketujur*. Interview results state that Sangkal is a bamboo root that must be sought two weeks in advance. It is a symbol of connecting relationships in tradition, while the ketujur tree signifies the value of honesty in community life.

The use of these two materials has become a customary requirement because they are understood as symbols of kinship and community unity. Furthermore, this burning stage requires a considerable amount of time, from Isha until dawn, because it must be done carefully to ensure that the Timbung is perfectly cooked. Thus, the entire burning process not only serves a technical function, but also contains spiritual and social values that strengthen community cohesion through traditional symbols that have been passed down from generation to generation. It also symbolizes the unification of the

elements of nature (earth, water, fire, wind) and the four elements of life (sustenance, blood, soul, and body).¹⁹ The process of burning the *timbang* is shown in Figure 6.



Figure 6: Burning of the *timbang*

Figure 6 shows the burning process of *Tembong*, which is a crucial stage in the *Tembong War* ritual. This burning process not only serves to cook the contents of *Tembong*, but also has symbolic and philosophical meanings. Symbolically, the burning uses a special fuel called *sangkal* (bamboo roots), which represents efforts to establish friendship and maintain community unity. Moral values are also reflected through the use of *ketujur* trees as supports for the *Tembong*, which symbolize honesty. Overall, after the *Tembong* is cooked, a throwing ceremony is held as a form of gratitude for a successful harvest and as a fulfillment of vows or wishes that have been made to the ancestors.

The Process of Carrying Out the *Timbung War*

1) Gathering of Participants and Friday Night Ritual

The implementation of the *Timbung War* tradition in Pejanggik Village is a customary ritual that takes place every Friday as a form of respect for the ancestors and confirmation of the cultural identity of the Sasak people. This series of processions demonstrates the integration of traditional, religious, and communal values that have been passed down from generation to generation. Each stage reflects the community's efforts to preserve traditions as part of a collective identity that continues to be upheld to this day.

¹⁹ Papuk Not, Interview with source, Pejanggik, (2025)

The ritual begins on Friday evening with religious activities led by priests and clerics at *Balek Belek*, the former center of the Pejanggik Kingdom. On that evening, Al-Barzanji, selakaran, zikir, and prayers are recited as a form of spiritual preparation for the main procession. On the day of the ritual, after the community performs Friday prayers, the *timbang* that has been burned together with holy water is then paraded from the palace to the Serewe Tomb.

2) The Procession of the *timbang* and Holy Water

After Friday prayers, the *timbang* that had been burned together with holy water was then paraded from the palace to the Serewe Tomb. The community wore traditional Sasak clothing and prepared the ritual equipment beforehand. The group was led by traditional leaders, priests, and young men and women who moved to the main location at the Serewe Ancestral Tomb to enter the main event of the *timbang* War. The interview results stated *that* In the past, the procession used drums, but now they use *gendang beleq*. Although the instruments are different, the values and prayers remain the same from the past until now.

The above statement shows the cultural dynamics in the implementation of rituals, where changes in the form of the procession do not alter the values, meanings, or spiritual essence of the *Perang Timbung* tradition. The procession of the *Perang Timbung* is shown in Figure 7.



Figure 7: The procession of the *timbang* and holy water

Figure 7 shows the procession of *timbang* and holy water from the palace to the Serewe Tomb, which is carried out after Friday prayers. In this procession, the community wears traditional Sasak clothing and carries ritual equipment as a form of respect for their

ancestors and readiness to enter the main series of events.²⁰ The procession is led by traditional leaders, priests, and young men and women who walk together to the ceremony location, accompanied by the sound of gendang beleq drums as a substitute for the drums used in the past.

3) Prayer and Communal Meal at the Serewe Cemetery

Upon arrival at the tomb area, all ritual participants first perform a communal prayer led by the priest as a form of supplication for protection, smoothness, and the blessing of the ancestors for the entire series of Perang Timbung events. After the prayer procession is complete, the community then eats together as part of a meaningful tradition of togetherness.

This communal meal not only serves as a break before entering the main event, but also symbolically represents the values of unity, equality, and social solidarity. All participants sit together without distinction of social status, age, or lineage, creating a space of togetherness that strengthens social bonds and reinforces cultural cohesion within the Pejanggik community. Thus, this stage plays an important role in preparing a harmonious atmosphere before entering the main ritual procession.

4) Core Ritual Process by the Custodian

Upon arrival at the location, the priest begins the main ritual procession by taking holy water from seven wells that have been carried together with the community. The holy water is then raised to the mesan satu (grave marker) as a symbol of the union between the sacred elements, the ancestral space, and the implementation of traditional customs. This stage is understood as a moment of connection between the living community and the spiritual heritage of their respected ancestors.

After the holy water is poured, the priest continues the procession with reciting prayers, delivering pledges, and asking for ancestral blessings. This series of events becomes a form of spiritual legitimacy that signifies that all stages of the Perang Timbung ritual are carried out with the permission, blessing, and symbolic supervision of the ancestors of the Pejanggik community. The procession also affirms that every traditional practice is not only ceremonial in nature, but also has a spiritual foundation that must be upheld.

²⁰ Ahmad Naufal Akbar et al., "The Ngorek Tradition in the Nyongkolan Ceremony Among the Sasak People of Tanak Awu Village, Pujut District, Central Lombok Regency," *Entita: Journal of Social Sciences Education and Social Sciences* 6, no. 2 (2024): 7–11, <https://doi.org/10.19105/ejpis.v6i2.15823>.

The Implementation of Perang Timbug

The Timbug War begins with participants throwing timbug snacks at each other, which are small balls of sticky rice. This activity not only serves as part of tradition, but also carries deep symbolism, especially as a form of strengthening social bonds, releasing negative energy, and affirming the values of togetherness and unity among the community. The process of the Timbug War is shown in Figure 8.



Figure 8: Timbug War

Figure 8 shows how the Timbug War is carried out, where throwing timbug is a ritual element that has important symbolic meaning in this tradition. Throwing timbug, which is cooked sticky rice that has been formed into balls, has two main meanings, namely as a medium for matchmaking and as a form of competition to test agility. Based on the results of interviews, the informants explained that the throwing of timbug can be a sign of a soulmate; if it hits the body of a potential partner, it means they are compatible or destined to be together, and the throwing contest is not meant to hurt, but to test agility and as a requirement for seeking safety in the tradition.

This meaning shows that the timbug throwing procession is not only related to spiritual and symbolic aspects, but also plays a role in bringing together young men and women who are considered compatible in character and lineage, while also testing their agility as part of traditional values. Thus, this tradition represents a combination of socio-cultural functions, spirituality, and the strengthening of the collective identity of the Pejanggik community.

Closing Stage at Balek Belek

The closing stage is held at Balai Belek, the former palace of the Pejanggik Kingdom, which serves as the center of traditional activities and a gathering place for all descendants. At the end of the procession, the participants perform tawaf or circle *Balek* twice. This practice symbolizes the concept of balance rooted in the philosophy of the

number two, which includes the two paths of human origins, the balance between reason and heart, and the two sentences of the shahada as the core of the teachings of monotheism. After that, the priest leads a closing prayer containing requests for worldly and spiritual salvation, health, prosperity, and peace for all descendants. This stage symbolizes the completion of the ritual series and reaffirms the spiritual connection between the community, their ancestors, and traditional values.

Arrangement of Offerings and Cleaning of the Location

After the closing prayers, all offerings, especially the three dulang, are rearranged to mark the end of the ritual. The procession then ends with the cleansing of the location by the priest and the community as a form of respect for nature, sacred spaces, and ancestors. Thus, the Perang Timbung tradition not only functions as a spiritual ritual, but also as a means of strengthening unity, preserving cultural identity, and passing on moral and social values to the younger generation. Thus, the Perang Timbung tradition not only functions as a spiritual ritual, but also as a means of strengthening unity, cultural identity, and passing on moral values to the younger generation.

3. The Meaning of Symbolic Interaction and Religious Values in the Timbung War Tradition

The Meaning of Symbolic Interaction

The Timbung War Tradition in Pejanggik contains symbolism that reflects ritual values, cultural identity, and religious dimensions. Through the perspective of symbolic interactionism, this ritual is understood as a series of actions whose meaning is not attached to objects or activities, but is formed through a process of social interpretation that is passed down from generation to generation.²¹ Each stage, from the preparation of offerings to the procession of throwing timbung at each other, is a form of symbolic interaction that strengthens the sense of togetherness, communal identity, and collective consciousness of the community.

At the peak of the timbung war procession, the act of throwing timbung is not interpreted as attacking, invading, or committing violence against others, either physically or verbally, but rather as a symbol of self-purification and renewal of social relations. The interactions that occur during the ritual show that the community is an active agent in maintaining and renewing traditions in accordance with the ever-changing social context. Thus, the Timbung War is not only a traditional ceremony, but also an arena for symbolic communication that strengthens social solidarity,

²¹ Elham Saputera, "Analysis of the Symbolic Meaning of the Cahapan Tradition in the Ogan Community of Muara Saeh Village, Muara Jaya District, Ogan Komering Ulu Regency" 2 (2021): 15–28, <http://journal.unbara.ac.id/index.php/JM/article/view/1574/1039>.

builds collective identity, and ensures the cultural continuity of the Pejanggik community.

Symbolism in the Timbung War Ritual

The Timbung War ritual is one of the Sasak community's traditional customs that is rich in symbolic meaning. Each element in the ritual procession is not only physical but also reflects spiritual, social, and moral values that have been passed down from generation to generation. These symbols serve as a means of communication between humans, ancestors, and nature, while also emphasizing the importance of continuity between generations. The results of interviews in the discussion of equipment and offerings can be seen that each symbol has its own function and meaning, but they are still interrelated to maintain order, consistency, and harmony in the procession, while also emphasizing the importance of human relationships with ancestors and cultural values. In the ritual stages (TB) emphasizes that the symbols in the ritual stages are not only physical but also rich in spiritual, social, and moral values. These elements connect humans, nature, and ancestors as an integral part of the procession. Additionally, regarding traditional clothing and symbolic numbers, explains that the symbols in clothing and numbers not only strengthen cultural and spiritual identity but also affirm the harmony between humans, nature, and supernatural forces. Thus, it can be concluded that the symbols in the Perang Timbung ritual include equipment and offerings, ritual stages, as well as clothing and numbers. Each element has a deep meaning that is interrelated, strengthening cultural identity, connecting humans with their ancestors, and maintaining balance between humans, nature, and the spiritual world. The integration of these symbols emphasizes that the ritual must be performed with full attention and respect for customs, while ensuring the continuity of traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation.

Religious Values in the Perang Timbung Tradition

Perang Timbung in Pejanggik Village, Central Lombok, is a traditional custom that integrates local values with Islamic teachings.²² This ritual not only serves as a cultural heritage but also as a means of strengthening religious values through the practice of prayer, zikir, and the recitation of Al-Barzanji, while also strengthening social solidarity within the community. The results of interviews stated that in the Perang Timbung procession, zikir, communal prayer, and the recitation of Al-Barzanji form the spiritual core. This tradition does not contradict Islamic teachings; rather, it serves as a medium for seeking safety, health, and protection from Allah SWT

²² Wijaya, Amelia, and Wargadalem, "Local Wisdom: The Role of Kebagh Dance in Shaping the Cultural of the Besemah ." *Jawi*" 8(1), (2025).61-76. <http://journal.unbara.ac.id/index.php/JM/article/view/1574/1039>

This interview shows that the Timbung War serves a dual purpose as both a cultural heritage and a religious practice. Ritual symbolism, such as throwing timbung, communal prayers, zikir, and reciting Al-Barzanji, emphasizes the integration between local culture and Islamic teachings. This tradition strengthens social solidarity, deepens relationships between residents, and reinforces the religious awareness of the Pejanggik community. Religious leaders, community leaders, and traditional leaders play a vital role in preserving religious values and ensuring that each stage of the ritual is carried out according to inherited customs. Thus, the Timbung War serves as a means of social and spiritual harmony as well as a medium for informal religious outreach to the community.

4. Government Involvement, Generational Participation, and Preservation Efforts

The Perang Timbung tradition in Pejanggik Village is seen as a strategic cultural asset that strengthens the community's identity as well as the village's position as a cultural space.²³ The village government supports its implementation by providing facilities, coordinating with traditional and religious leaders, and managing the cultural budget to preserve the historical and spiritual values of the tradition. The result of interview shows that this tradition is strategically positioned between cultural preservation and tourism development. The village government acts as the main facilitator to ensure that the ritual remains in line with customs, while the Culture and Tourism Office provides support through legitimization, facilities, and development opportunities such as the submission of Intangible Cultural Heritage, integration into the tourism event calendar, cultural community development, and assistance for tourism villages. Collaboration between local actors and government institutions allows the Timbung War to maintain its traditional values while adapting to the needs of sustainable tourism.

The younger generation of Pejanggik Village plays an important role in the implementation of the Timbung War Tradition.²⁴ Their involvement is not only seen from their participation during the procession, but also from their active contribution in maintaining the continuity of the ritual, introducing the tradition to the wider community, and becoming agents of cultural preservation. The role of young people covers all stages of the ritual, from collecting holy water, the procession to the sacred site, to the main ceremony at the Serewa Tomb, as well as supporting activities such as

²³ Nuruddin Nuruddin and Nur Nahar, "The Acculturation of Islamic Religious Practices in the Timbung War Tradition in Pejanggik Village, Central Lombok," *JISIP (Journal of Social Sciences and Education)* 6, no. 2 (2022): 3757–67, <https://doi.org/10.58258/jisip.v6i2.2964>.

²⁴ Mufidin Nafis, Jeremia Steven Tambunan, and Sahru Azkiya Putra Ramadhan, "Youth in Preserving Local Culture Facing the Role of Globalization and Modernization," 2(5), (2025). 9454-9460 <https://jicnusantara.com/index.php/jicn/article/view/5395>

documentation, cleaning historical sites, and using social media to disseminate information about the tradition. An interview emphasizes that the younger generation views the Timbung War not only as a ritual, but also as a means of strengthening cultural identity amid modernization. Their involvement in all stages of the procession and their innovation of symbolic attributes demonstrate their ability to adapt traditions without diminishing their philosophical value. Despite facing challenges in participation, young people remain key actors in maintaining the legitimacy of rituals and encouraging the development of community-based cultural tourism. Overall, the role of young people shows the importance of collaboration between various parties to maintain the sanctity of tradition while optimizing the potential of the Timbung War as a sustainable cultural asset.

The preservation of the Perang Timbung tradition in Pejanggik Village focuses on three main pillars: maintaining the integrity of the ritual, strengthening social solidarity, and ensuring generational continuity. Community leaders and traditional institutions are committed to ensuring that all stages of the ritual, from the collection of holy water, the recitation of Al-Barzanji, selakaran, to zikir, are carried out in accordance with ancestral heritage without any changes that shift the core meaning of the tradition. This activity shows that the preservation of local culture is effective when the community firmly upholds the authenticity of ancestral values and practices amid the pressures of social change and modernization. state that:we are committed to ensuring that all stages of the ritual remain in accordance with ancestral heritage, from the collection of holy water to zikir, without any changes that shift the meaning of the tradition.

The result of interview confirms the role of the community as guardians of the core values of tradition as well as the main actors in cultural preservation. Efforts to preserve the Timbung War Tradition also include social aspects, reflected in the practice of mutual cooperation, the collective making of timbung snacks, and the involvement of the younger generation in the preparation and development of creative performances.²⁵ This pattern of working together strengthens social solidarity and builds kinship, including with expatriates.

The Timbung War Tradition serves as a symbolic communication medium that reproduces the communal identity of the Pejanggik community. The shift in meaning and continuity of rituals in the Timbung War Tradition shows that this ritual is not merely a technical activity, but a collective symbolic communication process that reproduces the communal identity and social legitimacy of the Pejanggik community. Interviews with traditional leaders, religious leaders, community leaders, and the younger

²⁵ Faris Yusuf Lubis, "The Roles of Youth in Preserving Local Cultures to Develop Tourism in Sabang City," *Journal of Environmental and Development Studies* 2, no. 1 (2021):19–27, <https://doi.org/10.32734/jeds.v2i1.6194>.

generation confirm that various elements of the ritual, such as the collection of holy water from the Mu'jizat Well, the making of jaje timbung, the burning using sangkal, the recitation of prayers and zikir/Al-Barzanji, and the timbung throwing procession, function as a medium for the negotiation of meaning that is continually renewed through shared practice. The meaning of the ritual is formed through repeated symbolic interactions, in line with symbolic interactionism theory, which places meaning as the result of collective interpretation, not merely an attribute of actions or objects.²⁶ In addition to reinforcing social cohesion, the dramaturgical structure of rituals, which includes aspects of liminality and *communitas*, also provides space for strengthening emotional relationships and cultural identity within the community, as explained in contemporary ritual studies. The integration of religious values through prayer and zikir demonstrates a harmonious acculturation process between Islam and local culture, thereby providing religious legitimacy that strengthens social acceptance of these traditional practices. Thus, the Timbung War functions not only as a sacred and symbolic rite, but also as a means of reproducing spiritual, moral, and communal identity values that are passed down across generations.

From an institutional and cultural heritage preservation perspective, the sustainability of the Timbung War is greatly influenced by the synergy between multiple actors, including traditional leaders, village governments, cultural agencies, and the younger generation as agents of regeneration. Customary leaders retain primary authority in maintaining the authenticity of the rite, while the village government and cultural office act as facilitators by providing facilities, institutional legitimacy, and support in developing the tradition as a cultural asset. At the same time, the involvement of the younger generation is a key factor in ensuring that this tradition is not only preserved ceremonially but also revitalized through documentation, digitization, social media publications, management of ceremony locations, and innovation without eliminating the philosophical value of the ritual. This interpretation is in line with the findings of Suhadah et al., which show that ritual practices such as the Topat War in Kemaliq Lingsar are not only a space for religious and cultural expression, but also strengthen social harmony and communal identity through the collective involvement of the community.²⁷ The role of the younger generation is in line with the *community-based heritage preservation* approach, which emphasizes that the success of cultural preservation must actively involve the community's

²⁶ Dadi Ahmadi, "Symbolic Interaction: An Introduction," *Mediator: Journal of Communication* 9, no. 2 (2008): 301–16. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.29313/mediator.v9i2.1115>

²⁷ Suhadah et al., "Pilgrimage Sites as Magnets of Interfaith Tolerance: The Case of Kemaliq Lingsar in Indonesia," *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage* 10, no. 3 (2022): 14–27, <https://arrow.tudublin.ie/ijrtp/vol10/iss3/3/>.

capacity.²⁸ Institutional support and collective community participation also open up opportunities for the development of Perang Timbung as a sustainable cultural tourism attraction, as long as its management maintains its sacred values, prioritizes the voices of traditional leaders, and ensures socio-economic benefits for the community. Thus, the Timbung War has a dual function: first, as a mechanism for preserving cultural-religious values that strengthen identity and social solidarity; second, as a cultural tourism-based economic potential that can be developed in a participatory and sustainable manner.

D. CONCLUSION

The tradition of the Pejanggik Timbung War is a customary ritual of the Sasak people that has very strong historical, social, cultural, and spiritual dimensions. This tradition is not merely a procession of throwing timbung at each other, but a ritual communication arena that combines ancestral values with Islamic teachings in a harmonious and sustainable form. Through the perspective of symbolic interactionism, it can be seen that all actions, symbols, and ritual equipment have social meanings that continue to be shaped, negotiated, and passed down from generation to generation. Historically, this tradition is rooted in the story of the Pejanggik Kingdom and has become a medium for maintaining honor, hereditary identity, and preventing social conflict. On a symbolic level, every element, from the offerings, holy water, and bamboo roots to the act of throwing sticky rice at each other, contains a philosophical message about unity, purity, balance in life, and respect for ancestors. The interaction between participants in each stage of the ritual also shows how social meaning is continually renewed through a process of shared communication. The integration of Islamic values is very apparent in the recitation of prayers, zikir, Al-Barzanji, and the interpretation of rituals as a means of gratitude, warding off evil, and asking for safety. This shows that the Timbung War is not a practice that contradicts religion, but rather a form of acculturation of local culture and spirituality that is accepted by the Pejanggik community.

In a social context, this tradition strengthens community cohesion, revives the spirit of mutual cooperation, and provides a space for consolidation between traditional leaders, religious leaders, village governments, and the younger generation. Village governments and cultural agencies also play a role in recognizing, facilitating, and encouraging this tradition towards a model of sustainable cultural preservation and tourism. However, there are challenges such as declining interest among some young people, scarcity of ritual materials, and the risk of shifting meanings due to

²⁸ Sari and Haryanti, "The Symbolic Meaning in the Sedekah Bumi Traditional Ceremony of Pelem Village, Gabus District, Grobogan Regency." 5(1), 974-982.10.35870/jimik.v5i1.617

modernization and politicization. Nevertheless, preservation efforts through youth regeneration, digitization, cultural site clean-ups, and strengthening of traditional structures show that this tradition still has a strong foundation to be maintained. Overall, the Timbung Pejanggik War is a rich intangible cultural heritage, serving as a symbolic medium of communication that reinforces the cultural identity of the Sasak people, strengthens social solidarity, and preserves the spiritual values of the Pejanggik community amid the changing times.

To maintain the sustainability of this tradition, it is necessary to strengthen cultural education for the younger generation, develop more systematic digital documentation, and ensure continuous collaboration between traditional leaders, the government, and cultural institutions. In addition, the development of cultural tourism must be carried out carefully, prioritizing sacred values and traditional authority so as not to cause excessive commercialization that could potentially shift the meaning of the ritual.

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