

The Symbolic Essence of “Seserahan”: Exploring the Communication Message in The Marriage Procession of the Clan

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Abstract

This study aims to decode the symbolic communication conveyed through offerings during the Besagh arrival procession in the wedding customs of the Mesuji Lampung clan residing in Banjar Margo, Tulang Bawang District, Lampung Province. Although numerous studies have highlighted the role of offerings in Indonesian wedding cultures, there is a notable research gap regarding the symbolism within the Besagh procession of the Mesuji Lampung clan. This research is important as it reveals the traditional values and local wisdom embodied in the offerings, strengthening the community's social and familial bonds. The theoretical framework of symbolic communication is employed to analyze the meanings embedded in the offerings. Conducted qualitatively in Banjar Margo District, the study uses Snowball Sampling to select informants. Data gathered from these informants were analyzed through an interpretive approach to derive deep insights into the symbolic meanings of each offering. Offerings, integral to wedding processions across Indonesian cultures, symbolize the commitment and involvement of both parties. Families express values, aspirations, and social relations between clans through these offerings. For instance, kemingan (mat) symbolizes simplicity and blessings in the household, while lemang (glutinous rice) signifies unity and the strength of marital bonds. Using traditional materials honors tradition and reinforces familial and communal ties. Thus, this study reveals how traditional materials in the Besagh procession convey respect, prayers, and blessings from extended families to the prospective couple, reflecting unity, loyalty, prosperity, and respect within marriage.

Keywords

symbolic; seserahan; marriage procession

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Mesuji Clan community in Lampung is renowned for its vibrant arts and culture, which is notably evident in various traditional ceremonies, with a significant focus on the traditional marriage ceremony. This tradition is a cornerstone of pride for the Mesuji people, reflecting their profound reverence for the ceremony and steadfast commitment to collaborative spirit in every phase. Lampung culture weddings, particularly within the Mesuji clan, are pivotal occasions adorned with many customs and traditions. From the initial application procession to the exchange of gifts and the wedding itself, each juncture brims with traditional ethos and indigenous sagacity. Spanning across these stages, the traditional Lampung Marga Mesuji wedding ceremony embodies a social affair and a poignant



emblem of unity, cohesion, and collective identity between two families, fostering a sense of communal belonging and solidarity.

According to the perspective of C. Ember and M. Ember (1985), culture emerges from a blend of learned attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, and shared traditions within a community. Barnlund and Araki (1985) adopt a behaviorist stance, defining culture as observable in people's actions. C. Boesch (1991) views culture as a dynamic "field of action" shaped by human-made objects, institutions, and ideas. This multifaceted understanding suggests that culture encompasses tangible and intangible aspects of society. Furthermore, as articulated by Shweder (1990), culture is not static; rather, it is subject to the influence of individuals who actively reshape it according to their interests and values. Thus, culture is not merely imposed upon individuals; it plays an active role in shaping and evolving it, underscoring the dynamic interplay between individuals and their cultural environment (Bâlc, S., 2018).

In the traditional wedding ceremony of the Mesuji clan, offerings, commonly referred to as wedding gifts, play a significant role. These gifts, presented by the groom during the traditional wedding procession, constitute the second stage of communication, involving disseminating information through media tools or means following the utilization of symbols as the initial medium (Grumper, 2016). Each object presented by the groom-to-be serves as a symbol of communication, carrying meaning and prayers for the couple's marital life and reflecting the intricate dynamics of extended family relationships (Gagah, 2014). These gifts, categorized as traditional materials within the Mesuji clan's wedding customs, hold profound significance and are imbued with various meanings. The assortment of traditional materials used in these marriage customs reflects the cultural richness and heritage of the Mesuji clan, highlighting the depth of tradition and the importance placed on conveying messages of unity, blessings, and familial harmony through these symbolic offerings.

Maghfiroh (2020) discusses the three traditional wedding ceremony processions observed in Mesuji culture, emphasizing the groom's responsibility to bring blessings. These processions include *Sie Kanye* (coming to the spark), coming beach, and the wedding day. However, researchers predominantly concentrate on deciphering the symbolic significance of the messages conveyed during the coming besagh procession. This particular procession is deemed more sacred than others, as the offerings presented carry profound meanings and prayers to the extent that they are irreplaceable or removable. Moreover, the objects utilized in this procession are diverse, with some becoming increasingly scarce to procure. Consequently, researchers are increasingly motivated to unveil the meanings embedded within the offerings of the besagh procession. This endeavor is driven by the desire to preserve the cultural significance of these traditional materials, ensuring that even if they become exceedingly rare, they continue to be honored and bestowed due to their profound symbolic value.

During development, many residents of Mesuji have relocated in search of employment opportunities, with Banjar Margo District, Tulang Bawang Regency, Lampung, situated approximately three hours away by road from the original village in Mesuji district, emerging as a common destination. Often, these relocations are conducted collectively, with relatives joining in, resulting in the clustering of residences in one area. This trend has fostered a sense of brotherhood among members of the Mesuji clan residing in the Banjar Margo sub-district, as those from Mesuji living there regard individuals with Mesuji lineage as brothers, irrespective of direct familial ties. Despite residing away from their ancestral homeland, Mesuji residents in Banjar Margo continue to uphold traditional marriage ceremonies through collaborative efforts, strengthening their bonds even though their residences may not be in the same vicinity.

Furthermore, the Mesuji community residing in this region diligently preserves their cultural heritage, particularly evident in the coming besagh procession of traditional marriage ceremonies despite being a minority population. Whether adhering to traditional or national procedures, Mesuji residents in Banjar Margo are expected to uphold the tradition of bringing blessings during the wedding procession. However, there is a notable lack of research on how these traditions are maintained or altered within relocated Mesuji communities. This gap in the literature warrants investigation into whether there have been shifts or modifications in the meaning or utilization of traditional materials during the besagh procession to accommodate the new environment. Given that Mesuji residents in Banjar Margo constitute minority and immigrant communities, the focus lies on unraveling the significance of traditional messages and materials within Wiralaga Village, the oldest village in Mesuji Regency and the heartland of the Mesuji Clan Indigenous community. The researchers selected Wiralaga Village as a comparative location due to its historical significance and deep-rooted Mesuji Clan customs. This choice provides a basis for assessing any changes or adaptations in traditional practices within the broader cultural preservation and adaptation context.

In today's modern era, there is a growing disconnect among young people regarding the significance of communication within various customs and cultures (López Gómez, 2014). Globalization exacerbates this issue by fostering individualism, distancing family members, and eroding compassion, ultimately reshaping worldviews and weakening traditional forms of nationalism (Wani HA, 2011). Similarly, the younger generation of the Mesuji community grapples with this phenomenon. Many descendants of the Mesuji clan lack an understanding of the meanings and messages inherent in their cultural practices, merely engaging in rituals without comprehending their significance. This ignorance threatens the preservation of Mesuji clan marriage customs, as the younger generation may perceive them as irrelevant due to their lack of awareness regarding the sacredness and symbolic meanings

associated with these traditions. Consequently, there's a risk of losing this cultural heritage if steps are not taken to educate and instill a sense of appreciation for these customs among the youth.

Thus, this research aims to investigate the symbolic communication messages conveyed through offerings during the Besagh arrival procession in the wedding customs of the Mesuji Lampung clan residing in Banjar Margo, Tulang Bawang District, Lampung. By examining these traditions, the study aims to shed light on their significance and relevance in contemporary times, particularly within the relocated Mesuji community.

2. METHODS

The research methodology employed is descriptive, aiming to elucidate the meaning of message symbols within the traditional marriage customs of the Mesuji clan through systematic analysis. As Miles and Saldana (2014) described, descriptive research endeavors to depict specific conditions, making it suitable for capturing a comprehensive understanding of cultural practices. This study utilizes a qualitative approach to investigate the observed behavioral events associated with the Mesuji clan's wedding customs. As outlined by Hancock et al. (2009), qualitative research seeks to elucidate social phenomena and provide insights into the social world. Bogdan and Taylor (in Miles & Saldana, 2014) highlight qualitative research methods as effective means of gathering detailed data through written or spoken words from observed individuals.

Data collection methods will primarily include in-depth interviews with participants in traditional marriage ceremonies, supplemented by observations of the Besagh arrival procession. These interviews will be conducted systematically to gather insights into the meaning and significance of message symbols within the procession.

Observational Methods

The observational methods will focus on several key aspects of the Besagh procession, including:

1. Preparation and Presentation of Offerings: Observing the materials used, their preparation, and their arrangement.
2. Roles and Interactions: Noting participants' roles and interactions during the procession.
3. Ritual Actions and Symbolic Gestures: Document specific actions, gestures, and rituals performed during the procession.
4. Verbal and Non-verbal Communication: Capturing the spoken words, chants, and non-verbal cues accompanying the offering process.

A standardized observation checklist will be employed to ensure consistency and comprehensiveness. The checklist will include:

1. Types and descriptions of offerings.

2. The sequence of events and actions.
3. Roles of individuals involved.
4. Specific gestures and their symbolic meanings.
5. Verbal communications and their context.
6. Observations on the atmosphere and participant reactions.

The collected data, such as interview transcripts and observational notes, will undergo thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes related to the symbolic messages conveyed through traditional materials.

Sampling Method

Snowball sampling will be utilized to select informants within the Banjar Margo District and Wiralaga Village. Initially, key community members familiar with Mesuji clan customs will be identified as starting points for sampling. These individuals will then recommend additional participants who possess relevant knowledge and experiences. The expected sample size for each location will be determined based on data saturation, ensuring comprehensive coverage of perspectives.

Data collection from Wiralaga Village will involve interviews with traditional elders who possess deep knowledge of Mesuji clan customs and cultural practices. These elders will provide valuable insights into the historical significance and traditional meanings associated with the Besagh arrival procession, facilitating a comparative analysis between Banjar Margo District and Wiralaga Village.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This refers to the importance of understanding the symbolic meaning behind the tradition of offerings in wedding processions in the Mesuji Clan and Lampung society in general. Gifts are a series of items or gifts the prospective groom brings to the prospective bride as a sign of a marriage agreement. However, behind these items, there are deep and complex communication messages.

3.1. Traditional Wedding Ceremony of the Mesuji Clan of Lampung

In traditional clan marriage ceremonies, Mesuji is an offering carried by the groom at several traditional wedding processions, including the procession of coming "siraman," coming beach, and the wedding day, where each procession has different traditional ingredients. The traditional goods or ingredients served vary from agricultural produce, food, or typical Mesuji jodha (cake), bridal clothing, and others. The researcher obtained relevant data based on the results of interviews with several sources, and the researcher also had the opportunity to attend the traditional beach wedding procession of Mesuji, who lives in Banjar Margo directly. In the wedding customs of the Mesuji clan, there are several changes in traditional processions between ancient times and those used today, namely merging and reducing traditional processions due to changing times, so it is necessary to shorten processions

that have similarities. The essence of traditional speech and material, changes to which have been agreed upon by all Mesuji traditional leaders in Mesuji Regency and those outside Mesuji Regency. Previously, there were seven traditional Mesuji wedding processions, namely Nyelondop, Sie Hanyot, Sie Tanye, coming to the siraman, the besagh, the wedding, and long prostration. The change in question is merging the Sie Tanye and Coming Siraman processions into one procession, eliminating the Sie Hanyot procession and combining the Coming procession. Besagh and coming to marriage were originally the coming to besagh procession, carried out before the wedding day, but now the coming to besagh procession has been combined with the wedding day procession. In the prostration away procession, that is, after the wedding day, the bride and groom visit the families of both parties to introduce their husband/wife to each other. The families visited will usually assist, but this procession is rarely done nowadays because no one has done this procession. After experiencing these changes, the traditional wedding procession of the Mesuji clan became nyelondop, sie Kanye/came to siraman, and came to the beach.

Sneaking this procession is when the parents or male representatives come to the female's house to have a private conversation with the parents or representatives with the intention of the male wanting to ask the female. One-on-one discussions aim to avoid embarrassment if the procession cannot be carried out or a man's offer of his wishes is rejected. If the wish is granted, the next procession is sie Kanye / come to check. Namely, the men return to the women by inviting the family group, traditional leaders, and offerings, which Mesuji usually calls traditional materials. Community and women who have gathered with their families and are accompanied by traditional leaders. The essence of the discussion in this procession is to determine the major duet, dowry, and wedding date. Next, the procession comes to the beach (wedding day); namely, the men's party returns to hold the ceremony accompanied by family and traditional leaders and the women's side. Before carrying out the marriage contract, according to Islam, a traditional forum will be held where the male spokesperson/traditional figure will open the proposal as a sign of respect for the female before starting further discussions with the spokesperson. The men will hand over the traditional items that have been brought, and the women will accept the men by conveying several requests so that they can be directed and educated to run a good household as well as the women. They also offered to request that men accept and educate their son. Next, the marriage contract is carried out in the Islamic religion.

3.2. Submission and its meaning in the Coming Besagh Procession in Banjar Margo Subdistrict

The procession of coming to besagh or getting married has several offerings, which are traditional materials the men must carry. These traditional materials are objects full of meaning and sacred; therefore, if traditional materials are not completed/reduced/replaced, then a procession is carried out.

This cannot be continued until the men complete the material lacking in custom, but this goes back to the agreement between the women and the traditional leaders. Who accompanied him whether it was understandable or not. If the woman does not mind these shortcomings, the procession can continue, but usually, a warning is given to the man so that the same thing does not happen again. The traditional materials or offerings that the men bring when they come to the beach in Banjar Margo include:

a. Congeniality

Congeniality is a container or place containing betel leaves, areca nut, betel lime, a cup of tobacco, and betel sap used to inundate or scrape. The interest of the Mesuji community is a symbol of respect for the host because they have received guests with open arms, and this desire also contains the meaning of an offer for the host. Difficulty and unity because when applying/touching, the taste will be the same on each tongue. It is hoped that the similarity of taste will make it easy to solve the problem. In the wish, betel lime/betel leaf symbolizes a clean heart; the loin symbolizes good thoughts; lime symbolizes an honest heart; betel sap symbolizes an honest heart. There is also good essence; a tobacco stick means an intention. In my heart, who wants to start a family? However, the current habit of the Mesuji people only wants to contain betel leaves, which does not reduce the meaning and meaning of the wish itself. Keminangan is a traditional ingredient that must be carried in every traditional Mesuji wedding procession.

Figure 1. Keminangan belongs to the traditional leaders of Wiralaga Village



Source: Documentation, 2022

Congeniality has deep meaning and symbolism in the Mesuji culture of Lampung. Every element, such as betel leaves, areca nut, whiting, tobacco cup, and betel sap, has a symbolic meaning that symbolizes various values and qualities desired in a marriage relationship. For example, betel leaves symbolize purity of heart, whiting symbolizes honesty, and a tobacco stick symbolizes good intentions. Even though keminangan is an important part of the traditional Mesuji Lampung wedding procession, its practice has changed. Although initially, keminangan contained various symbolic elements,

nowadays, most people only want to fill their keminangan with betel leaves. However, this does not reduce the meaning and significance of the desire to maintain the tradition of Kembangan as a symbol of respect and unity in marriage.

b. Lemang

Lemang is a food made from processed sticky rice cooked with bamboo shavings, approximately 25-30 cm long, consisting of 9 sticks tied into three pieces, each tied into three bunches. Each glue bundle sticks are wrapped in red, white, and yellow oil paper. The white color must be placed in the middle, and then the three ties are put together or wrapped around the songket cloth, which is not mandatory. According to history, the customs of the Mesuji clan were contested by Palembang (Sriwijaya) and Lampung. However, the Mesuji stated they were independent without being tied to Palembang and Lampung and still maintained these customs. The customs themselves, so that from the results of consensus deliberation, a color was created, namely red, symbolizing Palembang (Sriwijaya), Lampung, which is symbolized by yellow, and Mesuji, which is white. According to history, Prince Mad symbolizes a white torch umbrella; therefore, white must be placed in the middle because Mesuji is a pillar of the main customs. The sum lemang of 9 sticks also has a meaning which symbolizes the sum of the old villages of the Mesuji clan and also symbolizes that the Mesuji river is one of the river's tributaries. The Musi River has nine tributaries or nine tributaries. Lemang is also a symbol of honesty because if the bamboo is empty, it is considered to teach lies.

Figure 2. There are 9 Lemang stems, which are tied into three bundles, each with three stems, and each bundle is wrapped in yellow, white, and red.



Source: Documentation, 2023

The use of colors in lemang, namely red, yellow, and white, has a deep symbolic meaning. Red represents Palembang (Sriwijaya), yellow represents Lampung, and white represents Mesuji. This reflects the history of the Mesuji clan's customs, which Palembang and Lampung contested, but the Mesuji chose to stand alone and maintain their customs. Sumlemang, which consists of 9 sticks, symbolizes the sum of the old villages of the Mesuji clan and also depicts the Mesuji River as one of the tributaries. This symbolism strengthens the relationship between the Mesuji clan community and their

natural environment, especially the Mesuji river, which has played an important role in their lives and history. Lemang is also considered a symbol of honesty because if the bamboo is empty, it is considered a teaching of lies. This emphasizes the importance of honesty in the culture and customs of the Mesuji Lampung community, which is the moral foundation of relationships between community members. This statement reveals how lemang is a traditional food and an important cultural and historical symbol for the Mesuji Clan people of Lampung. Its relationship with the history of the customs and customs of the Mesuji Lampung community shows how strong the relationship between tradition, culture and local identity shapes the worldview and behavior of the community.

c. Tiger coconut string

Tiger coconut string is a coconut in one frame. There are three coconuts. Each fruit is wrapped in yellow, symbolizing Lampung; white, symbolizing Mesuji; and red, symbolizing Palembang. Tiga serangkai coconut symbolizes agreement and a round puzzle for marrying the bride and groom, three coconuts each symbolize the traditional authority, the man's family and the woman's family. Apart from that, keeping tige Shanghai also means the arrival of a soul mate that no one knows about, so when someone has met their soul mate, they rush to get married. Because of the age at which you meet your soul mate, no one knows not to postpone marriage for reasons of age or not having their turn; in other words, still waiting for an older brother or sister in the family to get married first, like a coconut that falls regardless of age. Coconuts can fall at any time; young coconuts fall first, coconuts or old coconuts.

Figure 3. Wiralaga 1 coconut bunch in a series of 3 colors



Source: Documentation, 2023

The use of yellow, white, and red in the tiger coconut tree has a deep symbolic meaning. Yellow represents Lampung, white represents Mesuji, and red represents Palembang. This reflects the history and relationship between the three regions in the context of the Mesuji Lampung culture and wedding customs. The coconut tree, which consists of 3 coconuts, symbolizes an agreement and a complete puzzle for marrying a couple. Each coconut represents a traditional leader, a man's family, and a woman's family. This shows the importance of agreement and the role of each party in the marriage

process. Tige string coconuts also symbolize the arrival of a soul mate that no one knows about. This reflects the belief that someone must immediately prepare for marriage when they have met their soul mate. This emphasizes the importance of not delaying marriage for reasons of age or waiting for your turn in the family, because a soul mate can come at any time, like a coconut, which can fall regardless of age or time. The parable of a coconut falling, regardless of age or time, depicts an unexpected natural event, such as the arrival of a soul mate. This teaches the importance of being ready to accept and take advantage of the opportunities that come in life without procrastinating or waiting for "ideal" conditions. The practice of coconut palms in Lampung's Mesuji culture is not just a wedding ritual. However, it is also a cultural symbol rich in meaning and philosophy about agreement, preparation, and acceptance of destiny.

d. Betel Signature

The areca nut sign is a group of areca nuts, usually decorated in red, white, and yellow, but this is not a requirement. Pinang itself means a large family agreement from the bride and groom's fathers, consisting of grandfathers, grandmothers, aunts, brothers and sisters, nieces and nephews, and others, both small, young and old. Because in one bunch of betel nuts, there are small, large, green, greenish, yellow, and yellow fruits.

Figure 4. Areca nut bunches



Source: Documentation, 2023

The betel nut sign is not just decoration or decoration but has a deep meaning in the context of a wedding. Through the areca nut sign, a symbol of the extended family agreement of the bride and groom is created. This shows that marriage involves the two individuals getting married and the two families and communities involved. Although areca palm trees are often decorated with red, white and yellow, no standard rules require the use of these colors. This shows flexibility in implementing wedding traditions, where the essence of the betel nut sign is emphasized rather than its aesthetic

aspects or physical appearance. The meaning of the areca nut sign emphasizes the importance of family unity in the marriage process. By involving all extended family members, marriage is not only a relationship between two individuals, but also a union and agreement involving the entire community.

e. Sie carangan

Sie carangan is a series of betel leaves usually decorated in red, white, and yellow, but they are still unnecessary. Similarly, sie carangang areca nut bunches also contain the meaning of a large family agreement, but sie slaughter symbolizes the good maternal side of the groom. And women from small to old. Because there are small, young, old, and large leaves in one betel leaf frame.

Figure 5. Sie carangan



Source: Documentation, 2023

Sie carangan, like the areca nut sign, is not just a mere decoration, but has a deep symbolic meaning in the wedding procession. Sie carangan consists of betel leaves decorated with certain colors, not always red, white and yellow. This confirms that the essence of sie carangan focuses more on the message and symbolism rather than the visual aspect. sie carangan is not just a decoration in a wedding. However, it is also a symbol of agreement, the unity of the extended family, and respect for the role of the mother in the marriage process. The meaning and symbolism of sie carangan provide a deeper understanding of wedding traditions' cultural complexity and values.

f. Wajik, Dodol, and Sagon

Wajik, dodol, and sagon are traditional foods often served at Mesuji community events. In the procession, there are besagh ketupat, dodol, and sagon, which are placed in one container in three jars or bowls of different sizes according to or preferably only.

Figure 6. Wajik, dodol and sagon



Source: Documentation, 2023

Wajik is made from sticky rice, grated coconut, and brown sugar, cooked by stirring until cooked. Wajik is a food usually served at large events for the Mesuji clan because the raw materials for this food include foods often found or grown by the community. Mesuji. Diamonds with a sticky texture have meaning and contain the hope that the bride and groom will be sticky or have a close relationship like diamonds. Like the areca nut, the diamond is also symbolized as the father of the bride and groom. The texture of the Mesuji diamond is hard, and the chunks of rice are still visible, symbolizing the tough nature of a man. and strong. In addition, diamonds symbolize family, togetherness and cooperation because making diamonds requires cooperation and collaboration.

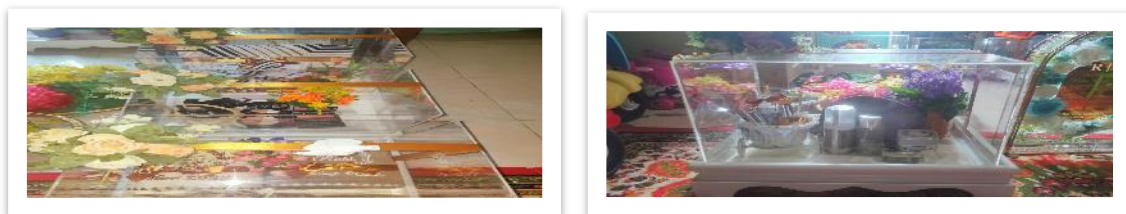
Dodol is made from rice flour mixed with coconut milk and brown sugar. It is cooked by stirring until thickened or solid. Likewise, Tajik dodol is also meaningful and contains the hope that the bride and groom and both families will be attached and close, and symbolizes an attitude of mutual assistance, kinship, and cooperation because the implementation of dodol also requires cooperation and cooperation. However, unlike the ketupat, which symbolizes the father's side of the dodol, and the mother's side of the bride and groom, the texture of the Mesuji dodol is soft. symbolizes the gentle nature of a mother.

Sagon is a snack made from shredded tissue, rice flour, and granulated sugar baked until dry. In the Mesuji community, sagon has meaning and significance. If there is a family problem or disgrace, don't discuss it with outsiders or be proud of it; just talk to the family. It is depicted when eating Sagon, and the texture of mesuji Sagon is in powder form. Then, when eating sagon, you must close your mouth so as not to vomit. Apart from that, sagon also symbolizes the hope that the lives of both parties can be harmonious and not easily damaged even if there is an argument/conflict. This is because sagon is a food with strong durability, sagon does not easily spoil or go stale even if it is stored in poor storage.

g. Fun Clothing

The fun Clothes are clothes given by the bride and groom to the bride and groom in the form of clothing from head to toe starting from sandals/shoes, pants/skirts/songket, shirt, veil, and underwear in one set (complete), but on this day and the age of the joyer is not only clothing, various additional items in the form of make-up, skincare, toiletries, etc. are also not prohibited in Mesuji customs without eliminating or reducing the meaning of the joyer. In ancient times, before the traditional marriage procession of the Mesuji clan was simplified or combined the procession of coming to besagh with coming to get married, the clothes of the simenyan were brought during the procession of coming to besagh to be worn during the procession of coming to marriage/marriage contract. However, after that the two processions were combined. Then the clothes of the sipenenang were used for the prostration away procession. Swimwear means appreciating the feminine side and symbolizing that the groom can provide decent clothing or life for the woman. the bride and also as proof for the groom that he loves him and is sure that he will marry his bride. The sipenenang's clothes are considered more sacred than other offerings because the swimmer is considered equivalent to the dowry; therefore, at the time of the wedding ceremony, the principal or clothing will be paired with the dowry, or at the time of the marriage ceremony, the sipenenang is placed side by side with the dowry and the major duet.

Figures 7 & 8. Sipengenang/Sepenjenang clothing, and additional accessories



Source: Documentation, 2023

3.3. Submission and its meaning in the Coming Besagh Procession in Wiralaga Village

Wiralaga Village is a traditional Mesuji village and the oldest village in Mesuji. The customs of the Mesuji clan community in Wiralaga are not much different from those in Banjar Margo. Because Wiralaga is the mother of Mesuji customs, especially the Mesuji clan community who live in Banjar Margo, whatever is agreed upon in Wiralaga regarding customs, the Mesuji community in Banjar Margo must follow it, of course based on mutual agreement between traditional leaders. Likewise with the offerings in the besagh coming procession, the two traditional materials consist of keminangan clothing, leman, kelape tige serangkai, betel marks, sie carangan, wajik, dodol, sagon, and sipenenang/sefun and the meaning and significance contained in each traditional materials. These traditional ingredients are the same as those presented previously.

Researchers found that in Wiralaga, there are 2 versions of the use of lemang; the first is that the indigenous people who live downstream of the river (wang ilew) use several lemang of 12 stems which symbolizes the length of time. to be asked by the groom and time for the two to get to know each other, as well as know each party's seeds, bebets, and weight for 12 months, while the second is for the Wiralaga community who live upstream of the river. (wang ulu) the number of lemang used is nine sticks, which symbolizes the nine old villages and the nine-day sticks. However, according to Ilyas, one of the informants in Wiralaga, using 12 or 9 lemang stems is legal and equally good.

Based on the research results found by the author through sources and observations as a source of data and information about the meaning of the message symbols contained in a traditional wedding procession, *Datang Besagh*. Mesuji clan in Banjar Margo District and also in Wiralaga Village. Overall, the offerings or traditional materials in the coming-to-beach procession symbolize respect and an expression of prayer and blessing from the extended families of both parties to the prospective bride and groom, which is difficult to express directly. This can be seen from the meaning attached to the traditional materials, starting from *kemingan*, *lemang*, *betel sign*, *sie carangan*, *ketupat*, *dodol*, *sgon*, and *sipenenang*.

The meaning of these traditional materials has existed since Prince Mad came to Wiralaga, usually called the Pak Kabong river. In ancient times, the first person to live in Wiralaga was Pak Kabong. At that time, there were only three houses. in Wiralaga. This is a form of cultural communication through symbols to become a consistent message channel and intermediary for expression that is difficult to express directly. According to JA Hostetler, the function of symbols is to mediate all beliefs and attitudes that are passed down from generation to generation (Bourdon, 2018).

The offerings in the coming besagh procession are symbols that contain meaning and prayer. As explained in the research results, each traditional material has its meaning and meaning. The meaning in Banjar Margo District and Wiralaga Village is the same because Wiralaga is the mother of Mesuji customs, especially the Mesuji Clan community who live in Banjar Margo, so whatever is agreed upon in Wiralaga regarding customs, the Mesuji community in Banjar Margo must follow them. Of course, this is based on mutual agreement between traditional leaders. A wish that symbolizes respect for the host (Alakali, Sambe, & Tondo, 2014) has gained its presence and contains meaning as an antidote to difficulties and unity when inundations/crossings occur. The taste will be the same on every tongue. *Kelapae tige serangkai* which means an agreement to carry out a marriage is symbolized by three coconuts tied in one frame, it means tied in a rope of agreement, each coconut represents the woman, man, and traditional leader.

Areca nut bunches which means that the extended families of the fathers of the bride and groom have agreed and approved their marriage, depicted with one bunch of betel nuts whose fruit starts

small/greenish which symbolizes the family with children, medium/green yellow symbolizes bachelors and women, old/yellow symbolizes parents in the family. Likewise, sie carangan symbolizes a large family of mothers depicted with one stalk starting from small, young and old leaves. Intan, dodol, and sagon are snacks at Mesuji clan events. They contain prayers and advice to the bride and groom so that they will always last and be close. It is likened to the sticky texture of ketupat, dodol, and sagon, which teaches advice not to indulge in family disgrace. It is likened to eating a Sagon, where the mouth must be closed so that the Sagon does not squirt.

The fun Symbolizes that men can give life or livelihood to women and as proof for men that they want to edit the woman. Then there are nine leman stems, symbolizing that the Mesuji clan people come from 9 old villages, and the Wiralaga community uses the 9-day stems. It lives upstream and is also used by the Mesuji Clan people who live in Banjar Margo or Lemang. The number of 12 stems symbolizes the 12 months a man takes to ask questions and get to know each other to find out the woman he will marry, which is used by that person. Wiralaga community downstream of the river. Based on the researcher's observations, the reason Banjar Margo District uses nine leman stems is that the people and traditional leaders of the Mesuji clan who live in Banjar Margo mostly come from Wiralaga village, which is upstream of the river or wang. ulu. This is related to communication behavior created and structured because of the same background, namely originating from the upstream area of the river so that it can produce unique characteristics in a society which will create communication habits/culture for the community over time. public.

According to Dillard (Dillard & (eds), 2012) Culture is formed because of communication. A person's cultural identity can be presented using communication models according to their cultural background and values. However, according to Arifin, one of the traditional leaders of the Mesuji clan in Banjar Margo said that using leman with a quantity of 9 or 12 sticks is also good, so if someone wants to use leman with a quantity of 12 sticks in Banjar Margo then it will be better. not a prohibition. The meanings contained in these objects are referred to as symbolic meanings or messages represented by symbols. Symbols are human conceptualizations of something, symbols exist for something(Dillard & (eds), 2012). Langer assumes that meaning has a complex relationship between symbols, objects, and humans, which involves denotation and connotation.(Worden & Tiouririne, 2018). This study proves that the human process of understanding things tends to be abstract, which is shown by the connotative meanings attached to objects that are considered to have similarities; for example diamonds and sticky rice in the come besagh procession are considered capable of strengthening, familiarizing and strengthening relationships because of their sticky texture or nature. In other words, it results from general ideas formed based on the appearance and appearance of signs.

It ignores details in understanding an event, object, or general situation. This combination of symbolic communication arises because of certain contexts or situations experienced by communication participants externally and internally (Ng, Wang, & Kwan, 2016). In the context of this research, the symbolic meaning contained in the traditional marriage of the Mesuji clan is a conceptualization of meanings mutually agreed upon downwards. The generation of symbols is contained in the offerings.

4. CONCLUSION

This research explores the symbolic communication messages conveyed through offerings during the Besagh arrival procession in the wedding customs of the Mesuji Lampung tribe in Banjar Margo District, Tulang Bawang Regency, Lampung Province. This study successfully uncovered the profound meanings embedded in local traditions and traditional ceremonies through a qualitative approach and Snowball Sampling techniques in selecting informants.

Seserahan, as the main component in wedding processions in various Indonesian cultures, functions as a symbol of commitment and involvement of both parties. Families express values, aspirations, and social relations between clans through these offerings. The traditional materials presented during the Besagh procession—such as kemingan (mat), which symbolizes a prosperous and blessed household; leman (glutinous rice), signifying unity and the strength of marital bonds; betel pinang for hospitality and mutual respect; and wajik, dodol, and sagon, representing sweetness and sustenance in married life—not only reflect unity, loyalty, abundance, and respect in marriage but also strengthen familial and communal bonds.

The use of these traditional materials in the Besagh procession highlights the importance of maintaining the honor of tradition while reinforcing the ties of brotherhood and communal values. This confirms that in Lampung culture, especially among the Mesuji tribe, a wedding ceremony is more than just a celebration of the union of two individuals; it manifests cultural values, local wisdom, and deep social solidarity.

However, this study has certain limitations. The scope was confined to the Mesuji community in Banjar Margo District, which may not fully represent variations in traditions across different Mesuji communities. Additionally, the reliance on snowball sampling might have led to a sample that does not capture the entire spectrum of perspectives within the community.

This research shows that in the context of the Mesuji tribe in Banjar Margo, the traditional wedding procession, with all its symbolism, is a crucial cultural preservation effort. It is about preserving ancestral heritage and maintaining a richness of communal meaning and purpose in the face of modernity and social change. Understanding these symbolic messages contributes significantly to preserving Mesuji culture by fostering a deeper appreciation and awareness among younger

generations and ensuring that these traditions continue to be valued and practiced in contemporary society.

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