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CONSTRUCTION OF RAIN-CALLING RITUALS: A CASE STUDY OF THE OJHUNG TRADITION IN BATUPUTIH DAYA, MADURA

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Abstract

The Ojhung tradition is a fighting art performed by two men in Batuputih using a whip in an open arena. In practice, this fighting art then transformed into a rain-calling ritual. This study aims to reveal the transformation of Ojhung from a fighting art into a rain-calling ritual, along with the meaning contain in it. This study employs a qualitative approach. The data will be analyzed using Clifford Geertz's interpretive theory. The results of the study indicate that Ojhung is a fighting art for Sumenep soldier training in the 12th century, led by the Singasari kingdom's dignitaries who were in Sumenep. When the Singasari dignitaries left Sumenep, Ojhung continued and developed into a rain-summoning ritual by the local people. In the process of interpretation of meaning, several elements are used, such as whips, music, offerings, time and place that represent their own symbolic meanings.

Keywords: *Traditions, Ojhung, and Rain-Summoning Rituals*

INTRODUCTION

Ojhung is a local tradition in the Batuputih Daya Sumenep region that combines elements of art, spirituality, and physical strength. In practice, this tradition is performed by two men using whips made of rattan (or locally known as manjalin) in an open arena. To this day, ojhung is still preserved by the local community, especially as part of a traditional ritual believed to summon rain.

This study aims to reveal the transformation process of Ojhung, from a traditional martial art to a sacred ritual used as a means of summoning rain, as well as how the community in the Batuputih Daya region symbolically interprets the meaning of this tradition. This study will show the process of Ojhung's transformation from a martial art into a rain-calling ritual as seen from various aspects such as historical, geographical, cultural, and socio-economic. In addition, the meaning of this tradition is influenced by the interaction of local cultural values, history, and the process of intergenerational socialization that shapes the community's collective belief in the symbolic power of the Ojhung tradition as a rain-calling ritual.

Rain-making rituals in Indonesia are not only found in the Batuputih Daya region. Similar rituals are found in several other areas, with varying forms and procedures, reflecting the rich culture and local wisdom of the communities. For example, the Ujungan ritual is performed in Banjarnegara as part of spiritual efforts to pray for rain,¹ as well as the Cowongan ritual in Banyumas, which also has a similar purpose involving traditional art performances and the use of certain media.² The existence of these rain-calling rituals indicates the breadth and depth of religious practices and beliefs in Indonesian society. The preservation of these rituals not only reflects respect for ancestral heritage, but also shows how local spirituality remains relevant in addressing ecological and social issues.

In general, rain-making rituals in Indonesia are performed as a form of spiritual supplication to God to bring rain, especially during prolonged droughts. In this context, rain is not only viewed as a natural phenomenon, but is also symbolically interpreted as a representation of blessings, fertility, and the basic needs of the community, so that its presence is considered to bring hope and sustainability of life.³ Nevertheless, the practice of rain-making rituals is not only rooted in spiritual or religious dimensions, but also has connections to the socio-economic and ecological aspects of local communities. Thus, ritual practices have a dual function: as a religious expression and a form of obedience to supernatural forces, and as a practical strategy for maintaining environmental balance and supporting the community's livelihood.

In his writing, Bouvier reveals that Ojhung is a ritual of offering or atonement to nature by conducting one-on-one fights between men, sacrificing wounds or blood as a result of blows from opponents.⁴ In addition to being a prayer for rain, Ojhung has a symbolic meaning for male identity, namely as proof of masculinity through duels in a predetermined arena.⁵ Therefore, it is not surprising that the Ojhung tradition is known of containing elements of violence and extremism, because it combines art, ritual, and martial arts. In practice, fighters often sustain injuries that cause bleeding, but the blood is not only interpreted as a form of sacrifice, but also as a symbol of male physical strength. The fewer injuries sustained, or even no injuries at all, indicate the level of

¹ Annisa Indah Setiyani and Eko Sri Israhayu, 'Wujud Dan Unsur Kebudayaan Upacara Penurun Hujan Dalam Naskah Drama Ujungan Karya Widiyono', *Suara Bahasa: Journal of Language and Literature Studies*, 1.01 (2023), 25–36.

² Yofan Dwi Irawan, Anon Suneko, and I Ketut Ardana, 'Mantra Musicalization: Cowongan Rituals Ideas for Creating Instruction Karawitan Compositions | Musikalisasi Mantra: Ritual Cowongan Sebagai Ide Penciptaan Komposisi Karawitan', *GHURNITA: Jurnal Seni Karawitan*, 2.3 (2022), 180–91 <<https://doi.org/10.59997/jurnalsenikarawitan.v2i3.1457>>.

³ I Nyoman Wardi, 'Mitosis Dan Ritual Mohon Air Hujan Di Kawasan Pura Batukaru Kabupaten Tabanan-Bali: Perspektif Ekologi Budaya', *Bumi Lestari Journal of Environment*, 23.2 (2023), 102 <<https://doi.org/10.24843/blje.2023.v23.i02.p11>>.

⁴ Bouvier, Helene. *Lèbur: seni musik dan pertunjukan dalam masyarakat Madura*. Vol. 14. Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2002.

⁵ Ardhie Raditya, 'Ojhung Di Atas Bukit: Budaya Magis Orang Madura Utara', *GHANCARAN: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia*, 4.1 (2022), 1–20 <<https://doi.org/10.19105/ghancaran.v4i1.6099>>.

masculinity of Madurese men in the ritual.⁶

Research conducted by Pradana et al. (2020) shows that Ojhung can be developed into a sports tourism destination in Sumenep Regency, as it has more appeal to tourists, such as the art of tarun.⁷ In addition, Abrori (2019) also found that Ojhung is a rain-making ritual that is indirectly used by the community as a means of obtaining financial gain.⁸ Meanwhile, Raditya's (2022) findings show that the Ojhung ritual also serves as a medium of education, namely in maintaining two aspects of material and non-material physical strength that help shape the true identity of Madurese men.⁹

Previous studies mentioned above have shown that the Ojhung tradition can be identified through its potential as a sports tourism attraction; Ojhung as a means of financial gain; and as a channel for material and non-material education on male physical strength. However, none of these studies have specifically discussed the transformation of the meaning of the Ojhung tradition from a martial art to a rain-calling ritual, viewed from the various aspects that underlie it. In addition, previous studies have not discussed much about the symbolic meaning behind this tradition, so this study attempts to fill that gap.

The transformation of meaning and function in the Ojhung tradition is interesting to be studied further, namely by looking at the historical aspects and the background behind it. Through Clifford Geertz's interpretive approach, this study will reveal the symbols of community beliefs that not only function as cultural elements but also as guidelines for how the community views the world and faces the challenges of daily life. This study can also serve as a further reference for religious rituals in Indonesia and provide insight into the importance of preserving traditions in the face of changing times.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach. The data sources used consist of two types, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained from direct observation in the field and interviews with three people, including community leaders and Ojhung actors. Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained from various relevant literature, including scientific books, journal articles, and other documents. The village of Batuputih Daya in the Batuputih District of Sumenep Regency was chosen as the object of this study because the Ojhung tradition still exists there. Its geographical location is on the highland coastal area, most of it consists of dry land. These conditions make it difficult for the community to find water sources. Most of the residents work as farmers.

The data analysis technique used in this study employs an interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman, which describes the analysis process in three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.¹⁰ The first stage, data reduction, is carried out by

⁶ Raditya, Ardhie, 'Ojhung Di Atas Bukit: Budaya Magis Orang Madura Utara', *GHANCARAN: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia*, 4.1 (2022), 1–20 <<https://doi.org/10.19105/ghancaran.v4i1.6099>>

⁷ Febryansah Gilang Aris Pradana and others, 'Strategi Pengembangan Wisata Tradisi Ojhung Berbasis Sport Tourism Di Kabupaten Sumenep', *JOSSAE: Journal of Sport Science and Education*, 5.2 (2020), 83 <<https://doi.org/10.26740/jossae.v5n2.p83-93>>.

⁸ Abrori, Achmad Faiz. *Mengungkap Makna Akuntansi Budaya Ojhung Di Kabupaten Sumenep*. Diss. Universitas Wiraraja, 2019.

⁹ Ardhie Raditya, 'Ojhung Di Atas Bukit: Budaya Magis Orang Madura Utara', *GHANCARAN: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia*, 4.1 (2022), 1–20 <<https://doi.org/10.19105/ghancaran.v4i1.6099>>.

¹⁰ Ahmad Rijali, 'Analisis Data Kualitatif', *Alhadharah: Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah*, 17.33 (2018), 81–95
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selecting, simplifying, and focusing the data obtained. Data that is not relevant to the research focus is eliminated, while data that is considered important is organized systematically. The second stage is data presentation, which aims to organize information in a structured manner to make it easier for researchers to understand the patterns that emerge. The third stage is drawing conclusions, which are compiled in descriptive and analytical forms by describing the social phenomena being studied. These conclusions are the result of a continuous reflection process on the analyzed data, and form the basis for answering the research questions and contributing to the theoretical and practical understanding of the issues being studied.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Transformation of Ojhung as a Ritual

Historically, Ojhung originated from the visits of Singosari royal officials to the Batuputih region in Sumenep Regency. During these visits, there was a figure famous for his invulnerability, namely Ronggolawe. He made Ojhung a medium for training the martial arts skills of the Sumenep royal soldiers.¹¹ In another version, Bouvier (2002) in his book “Lebur” explains that Ojhung originated from three men who were former soldiers of the Sumenep kingdom, two of whom fought and the other acted as referee.¹² These two versions are thought to be related, as the soldiers mentioned in the second version likely originated from the reign of Arya Wiraraja. Regarding the time period, there is no definitive source that mentions when Ojhung began to be used as a ritual. The official website of the Sumenep Regency government states that this ritual has been practiced since the reign of Arya Wiraraja around the 12th century.¹³

Over time, Ojhung transformed into a rain-calling ritual. It is believed that this transformation began when eastern Madura was hit by a long dry season that affected agriculture. To overcome the drought, they turned Ojhung into a ritual for asking for rain and atoning for sins.¹⁴ This shift in function is marked by the involvement of spiritual elements in its implementation, such as the determination of specific times that are considered sacred and the use of offerings as a form of sacrifice. In this case, Ojhung is no longer seen as a mere physical expression, but also as a means of symbolic communication between humans and nature, which is believed to be able to bring rain during long droughts.¹⁵ This tradition is proof of how local art has transformed into a religious-cultural instrument that represents the harmonious relationship between humans, nature, and supernatural forces.

The above explanation shows that the transformation of Ojhung from a martial art into a rain-calling ritual was a response by the community to environmental conditions and economic needs, particularly during long dry seasons that threatened the livelihoods of those whose main occupation was farming. In this context, Ojhung became a symbol of hope and a spiritual intermediary for requesting rain, as well as a collective expression of the community's response to

<<https://doi.org/10.18592/alhadharah.v17i33.2374>>.

¹¹ Afandi, Dika. “Tradisi Ojung dalam Tinjauan Filsafat Nilai (Studi Kasus di Desa Aeng Merah Batuputih Sumenep Jawa Timur).” Skripsi UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. 2018.

¹² Bouvier, Helene. *Lèbur: seni musik dan pertunjukan dalam masyarakat Madura*. Vol. 14. Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2002.

¹³ Pemerintahan Kabupaten Sumenep. 2025. “Mengintip Kegiatan Ritual Ojhung di Batuputih.” <https://www.sumenepkab.go.id/berita/baca/mengintip-kegiatan-ritual-ojung-di-kecamatan-batuputih> diakses pada 26 Mei 2025.

¹⁴ Afandi, Dika. “Tradisi Ojung dalam Tinjauan Filsafat Nilai (Studi Kasus di Desa Aeng Merah Batuputih Sumenep Jawa Timur).” Skripsi UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. 2018.

¹⁵ Sulthan Ahmad, ‘Totem, Ritual Dan Kesadaran Kolektif: Kajian Teoritik Terhadap Pemikiran Keagamaan Emile Durkheim’, *Al-Adyan: Journal of Religious Studies*, 2.2 (2021), 153–61 <<https://doi.org/10.15548/al-adyan.v2i2.3384>>.

the environmental crisis. In addition, Ojhung also functions as a manifestation of the community's collective prayers by uniting their inner strength and beliefs in the form of martial arts. This transformation not only reflects the cultural flexibility of the community in responding to the challenges of the times, but also shows that traditional arts such as Ojhung have the potential as a medium of spiritual and ecological expression that unites the cultural, religious, and practical needs of the community into a single meaning.¹⁶

Based on the historical description above, the shift in the function of Ojhung from martial arts to rainmaking can be seen from several factors such as geography, culture, and socio-economics. Geographically, the Batuputih region is one of the regions in Sumenep Regency located on the northern coast of Madura Island. This region has a dry tropical climate, with rainfall that tends to be uneven and dependent on the season. Based on data from the East Java Regional Audit Agency, the rainy season in Sumenep starts in October and lasts until March, while the dry season occurs from April to September. The average rainfall in Sumenep is 1,479 mm. Data from 2011 shows that the highest air temperature in Sumenep occurs from September to November (31.7 °C), and the air temperature is relatively consistent throughout the year with an average temperature of 30 °C.¹⁷ The local community is highly dependent on rainwater for agricultural purposes. When there is no rain for a long time, there is stagnation in the community's agricultural cycle, which has a direct impact on the household economy of the residents.

Geographical conditions prone to drought or dependence on seasonal cycles have encouraged the emergence of various forms of cultural adaptation, one of which is through ritual practices aimed at praying for rain. Thus, Ojhung has undergone a shift in function from a martial art to a collective rain-calling ritual, which is also interpreted as a form of collective negotiation that is not only symbolic but also reflects the relationship between humans and transcendent forces.¹⁸ This shift in function cannot be separated from the community's need to respond to the ecological challenges they face, by making Ojhung a rain-calling ritual. The community creates a spiritual and social space that allows them to channel their hopes and prayers communally. This practice is essentially a form of the community's struggle for survival, where local spirituality is articulated as a means of fulfilling shared expectations in facing these natural conditions.

Culturally, Madurese men are known for being tough, temperamental, and argumentative, especially when it comes to resolving issues such as carok.¹⁹ In addition, Madurese people are also known to be expressive, spontaneous, and open when responding to everything they encounter, while maintaining their self-respect.²⁰ The high self-esteem upheld by the Madurese people, especially when resolving problems through carok, is a form of social symbolism for men in promoting the principle of masculinity. In the context of Madurese society, men are closely associated with roles that carry greater responsibility than women. Men are seen as leaders who are responsible for themselves and also for others, such as their families.²¹

¹⁶ Yacobus Ari Respati and Jennifer Jennifer, 'Seni Sebagai Media Penyaluran Emosi Bagi Remaja Yang Mengalami Burnout', *Focus*, 5.1 (2024), 79–88 <<https://doi.org/10.26593/focus.v5i1.8044>>.

¹⁷ Badan Perwakilan Provinsi Jawa Timur. 2025. "Kabupaten Sumenep". <https://jatim.bpk.go.id/kabupaten-sumenep/> diakses pada 28 Mei 2025.

¹⁸ Abrori, Achmad Faiz. *Mengungkap Makna Akuntansi Budaya Ojhung Di Kabupaten Sumenep*. Diss. Universitas Wiraraja, 2019.

¹⁹ Ach Shodiqil Hafil and Fahrul Rozi, 'Konstruksi Makna Malo Dalam Kehidupan Sosial Dan Beragama Di Madura', *Empirisma*, Vol. 30 No (2021), 105–20.

²⁰ Sedy Pratama Firdaus, Muhammad Ghifari Fardhana Bahar, and Basri Muhammad Ridwan Sangadji, 'Menilik Budaya Carok Pada Masyarakat Madura Dalam Sistem Hukum Adat Di Indonesia', *Jurnal Hukum Lex Generalis*, 2.3 (2021), 236–48.

²¹ Ahmad Rifai, Anas Ahmadi, and Ririe Rengganis, 'Laki-Laki Madura Dalam Kumpulan Esai Madura Niskala Karya Royyan Julian Studi: Maskulinitas', *Jurnal Ilmiah Mandala Education*, 8.3 (2022), *Khazanah Vol. 16 No. 1 Januari - Juni 2026* | 18

The character of Madurese men described above is the main factor that has allowed carok to continue to exist to this day. It seems that this masculine side also plays an important role in the transformation of Ojhung into a rain-calling ritual. In the context of masculinity, the existence of men can be seen from their behavior and decision-making, then showing their identity by fighting as a form of men who think about the needs of others. Therefore, masculine men are men who have the ability to demonstrate their responsibility, even if it is in the form of violence. Responsibility includes caring for oneself and others, contributing to society, alleviating the suffering of others, and creating a better world.²²

Socio-economically, the majority of the Batuputih Daya community works as farmers and rain-fed rice field cultivators. When the dry season lasts too long, agricultural activities come to a halt. This causes social and economic unrest, which is then mediated through cultural and spiritual channels. These economic problems certainly have an impact on the lives of the community. Rainwater is very important in the community's agriculture, and then there are the geographical and cultural factors described earlier. Ojhung then becomes the answer to these problems. Thus, these socio-economic factors encourage the community to perform Ojhung as a rain-calling ritual that is believed to connect human hopes with the will of nature or God.

Ojhung, as a ritual to summon rain, indirectly reflects a form of symbolic negotiation between humans and forces that are considered greater than themselves. In the context of local beliefs, these forces may originate from ancestors, supernatural powers, or God. Thus, Ojhung is not only a spiritual act, but also a form of symbolic communication between humans and supernatural forces.²³ As Geertz argues, symbols in cultural practices serve as bridges between individuals' internal meaning systems and broader social structures.²⁴ In this context, Ojhung serves as a collective means of strengthening social bonds while explaining the position of humans in a life full of various meanings.

Meanwhile, Ojhung as a ritual can be seen through several important elements such as time, space, procession, actors, objects, and prayers. According to one informant, ST (53), the Ojhung ritual is generally performed on Fridays after Friday prayers, during the period from September to October, which is considered a transition period from the dry season to the rainy season. If it has not rained, this ritual is carried out continuously every Friday until the desired results are achieved. This ritual is carried out in places believed to be sacred, such as sacred tombs or what is known locally as Bujhu'. The choice of space shows the belief that certain places have spiritual powers that can mediate the community's requests to God or natural forces. The choice of sacred places is a symbol that affirms the presence of spiritual powers and becomes a location believed to be effective for performing rituals.²⁵

The ritual begins with a meeting of community leaders to determine the time and place. The main procession consists of a fight between two men using rattan whips (manjalin), accompanied by traditional okol or tongtong music. In this procession, the fighters engage in physical combat based on certain rules led by a babutto (referee). The tools used during the ritual

1894–1910 <<https://doi.org/10.58258/jime.v8i3.3542>>.

²² Rifai, Ahmad, Anas Ahmadi, and Ririe Rengganis, 'Laki-Laki Madura Dalam Kumpulan Esai Madura Niskala Karya Royyan Juliani Studi: Maskulinitas', *Jurnal Ilmiah Mandala Education*, 8.3 (2022), 1894–1910 <<https://doi.org/10.58258/jime.v8i3.3542>>

²³ Putri, Emilia Amanda, and Arie Yuanita, 'Kepercayaan Dan Makna Simbolik Dalam Novel Kisah Tanah Jawa: Pocong Gundul (Kajian Interpretatif Clifford Geertz)', 1, 2024

²⁴ Palanta, Harlina, Irene Ludji, and Izak Y.M Lattu, 'Ukiran 'Passura' Toraja Sebagai Simbol Identitas Komunitas Kristen Di Buntao Kabupaten Toraja Utara: Perspektif Clifford Geertz', *Jurnal Basataka (JBT)*, 6.2 (2023), 296–309

²⁵ Putri, Emilia Amanda, and Arie Yuanita, 'Kepercayaan Dan Makna Simbolik Dalam Novel Kisah Tanah Jawa: Pocong Gundul (Kajian Interpretatif Clifford Geertz)', 1, 2024

consist of rattan whips (manjalin), head protectors made of palm leaves and cloth, okol musical instruments, komkoman, incense, and dhemar kambeng. The use of these tools in the ritual has its own meaning. Then, prayers in this ritual are performed by reciting Surah Yasin and Tahlil, led by community leaders. These prayers are intended to ask God to send rain for the survival and agriculture of the community.

Ojhung, as part of the local belief system of the Batuputih Daya community, can be analyzed through three ritual phases according to Victor Turner, namely preparation, separation (separation from the profane world), and reaggregation (recombination).²⁶ The description of these three phases is as follows:

1. Preparation Phase

This phase is the initial stage of ritual preparation. In the context of Ojhung, this phase includes deliberations among community leaders to determine the time and location of the ritual. The community begins to enter into spiritual awareness by cleansing their hearts through reciting prayers such as Yasin Tahlil. This phase reflects the collective intention to face the ecological crisis (prolonged drought) through spiritual means.

2. Separation Phase

This phase marks the separation from everyday life to the sacred space. The fighters enter the designated arena, symbolizing the transition from the profane to the sacred world. The two men who fight symbolically represent the community in atonement, sacrifice, and communication with supernatural powers.

3. Reaggregation Phase

This phase marks the return of the fighters to normal life. The fighters usually embrace each other as a symbol of reconciliation and social recovery. In the context of Ojhung, this phase carries hopes for rain and blessings, as well as easing collective anxiety caused by the long dry season.



Figure 1. Ojhung Tradition

Source: personal documentation

Over time, Ojhung has become an art festival organized by the Regent of Sumenep. This strategy is aimed at preserving ancestral heritage while introducing the unique traditions of Madura. The venue for the festival is Badur Beach. According to the Deputy Regent of Sumenep, Imam Hasyim, Badur was chosen as the venue for the festival as a way to promote tourism in Sumenep. The difference between Ojhung as a ritual and as a festival lies in the timing and purpose of its implementation. In a ritual context, Ojhung is usually only performed from September to October, on Fridays, and is related to sacred moments or the community's spiritual needs, such as a praying

²⁶ Ullul Azmi, 'Fase Dan Makna Simbol Ritual Badudus Dalam Novel "Lalu Tenggelam Di Ujung Matamu": Kajian Antropologi Simbolik Victor Turner', *SeBaSa*, 6.1 (2023), 135–46 <<https://doi.org/10.29408/sbs.v6i1.13508>>.

for rain. Meanwhile, Ojhung as a festival can be held flexibly once a week, with the orientation being a tourist and cultural attraction.

The Symbolic Meaning of Ojhung

Although Ojhung is visibly a physical fight between two men using rattan whips, it has a deep symbolic meaning. This tradition serves as a religious expression, a means of communication with supernatural forces, and an arena for the social construction of Madurese masculinity. According to Clifford Geertz, culture is a system of meaning that is transmitted symbolically.²⁷ Traditions such as Ojhung, with all their accompanying symbols, actions, and processes, reflect the collective meaning structure of the communities that support them. Therefore, to understand Ojhung, it is necessary to interpret the symbols used and how the community interprets these symbols in their daily lives.

Meanwhile, the symbolic elements in the Ojhung tradition can be seen in several parts. First, the rattan whip as a symbol of natural power. Symbolically, this whip represents natural power that is controlled by humans, so that the whip is not only a weapon. It also becomes a medium for rituals to ask for rain through symbolic actions in the form of blood that comes out as a result of enemy blows.²⁸ In addition, according to one informant, ST (53), the equipment used by Ojhung fighters is made by special people. This is not only to maintain trust between fighters when using the equipment, but also because the manufacturing process involves sacred elements or certain recitations that only they know.

Second, the fighter's clothing and attributes, consisting of shorts and a bare chest, as well as a cloth protector on the left hand, symbolize sincerity and courage. The nakedness of the body shows openness and honesty in the ritual process. Meanwhile, the hand protector symbolizes the balance between strength and control. The attributes used in this context are not just practical equipment, but symbols that express values such as sincerity, courage, and control.²⁹

Third, the *okol* music played also has its own symbolic meaning. First, it serves as accompaniment to energize and set the mood for the fighters in the arena. Second, it is a form of supplication through music, so that the ritual runs smoothly. Based on these two functions, the rhythm and melody can create a more solemn atmosphere and deepen the spiritual experience of individuals when fighting. In addition, music is also used as a link between the human world and supernatural powers (Faris, et al., 2025).

Fourth, offerings are symbolized as a form of supplication to God and respect for the spirits of ancestors. In addition, the use of offerings is nothing more than a form of hope that the ritual will run smoothly and ensure the safety of the fighters. Offerings usually contain several other complementary elements, such as *komkoman*, incense, and *dhemar kambheng*. *Komkoman* or flower water symbolizes the spiritual and physical cleanliness of the fighters. Thus, *komkoman* is a system of meaning developed by the community to express their spiritual values.³⁰ Incense is believed to be a form of symbolic respect for the spirits of ancestors. The aroma of incense is part of a symbolic system used by the community to invoke and honor supernatural powers. *Dhemar kambheng*³¹ is symbolized as a form of relationship with

²⁷ Putri, Emilia Amanda, and Arie Yuanita, 'Kepercayaan Dan Makna Simbolik Dalam Novel Kisah Tanah Jawa: Pocong Gundul (Kajian Interpretatif Clifford Geertz)', 1, 2024

²⁸ Ula, Syarifatul. *Makna Simbolik pada Pelaksanaan Tradisi Ojhung di Kecamatan Batuputih Sumenep Madura*. Diss. Institut Agama Islam Negeri Madura, 2023.

²⁹ Putri, Emilia Amanda, and Arie Yuanita, 'Kepercayaan Dan Makna Simbolik Dalam Novel Kisah Tanah Jawa: Pocong Gundul (Kajian Interpretatif Clifford Geertz)', 1, 2024

³⁰ Nurus Syarifah and Zidna Zuhdana Mushthoza, 'Antropologi Interpretatif Clifford Geertz: Stdui Kasus Keagamaan Masyarakat Bali Dan Maroko', *Humanis: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial Dan Humaniora*, 14.2 (2022), 65–74.

³¹ In its implementation, "Dhemar Kambheng" involves the use of candles or what is called "Dhemar"
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the divine (God), by allowing life to run its course until death.³²

Fifth, the blood that flows from the fighter's body has two symbolic meanings: as an offering and as a symbol of immunity. In spiritual terms, blood is seen as a form of sincere offering. The magical power of blood is believed to hasten the granting of prayers for rain. Blood is not only a symbol of courage, but also a powerful means of communication in rituals.³³ Meanwhile, in the context of Madurese culture, blood is also interpreted as a symbol of courage and physical immunity. According to one informant, BN (40), fighting with an enemy is a test of a man's mettle. This test can be seen from the wounds that are sustained. Men who are able to endure pain and bleeding without complaining demonstrate the qualities of a Madurese man.

Sixth, Ojhung also symbolizes solidarity among communities, because Ojhung does not cause hostility. After the fight is over, both participants are required to hug each other as a sign of mutual forgiveness. This shows that the violence in Ojhung is only symbolic, serving as a channel for emotional release and social solidarity. Thus, Ojhung helps strengthen community solidarity, especially through the act of mutual forgiveness and hugging.³⁴

CONCLUSION

The Ojhung tradition is a martial art performed by two men in a designated arena. Initially, Ojhung served as training for the Sumenep army, which was trained by several Singasari royal officials. After the Singasari officials had fulfilled their needs, Ojhung continued to be practiced and developed within the community, particularly in the Batuputih Daya area. Ojhung then transformed from a martial art into a rain-calling ritual. Several aspects that influenced Ojhung to become a ritual were the community's response to the long dry season. The long dry season caused the community to experience stagnation in their agriculture. Furthermore, the Madurese people are known for being tough and temperamental, so it is not surprising that Ojhung was used as a rain-calling ritual. In addition, although Ojhung is a physical fight, it has symbolic meaning, which is why it continues to be preserved. The symbolic meaning of Ojhung can be found in several elements used, such as the whip, music, offerings, and the time and place of the ritual.

The Ojhung tradition as a form of rain-calling ritual reflects the community's belief in supernatural powers that can influence natural conditions. In practice, Ojhung not only serves as a traditional performance with various cultural values but also as a spiritual medium to pray for rain, especially during long dry seasons. The symbolic meaning in the battle and the accompanying prayers show a combination of religious aspects and local wisdom in maintaining harmony between humans and nature. Thus, Ojhung is not only an expression of belief, but also a collective strategy to support the community's survival through nature conservation and the hope for rain.

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