

**SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF SUMANG CULTURE
IN GAYO COMMUNITY**

SKRIPSI

*Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirement
for the degree of Sarjana Pendidikan (S.Pd.)
English Education Program*

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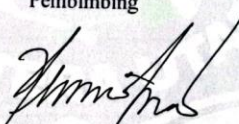
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Dengan ini saya menyatakan bahwa skripsi saya yang berjudul "Semiotic Analysis of Sumang Culture in Gayo Community" adalah bersifat asli (Original), bukan hasil menyadur mutlak dari karya orang lain.

Bilamana dikemudian hari ditemukan ketidaksesuaian dengan pernyataan ini maka saya bersedia dituntut dan diproses sesuai dengan ketentuan yang berlaku di Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara.

Demikian pernyataan ini dengan sesungguhnya dan dengan yang sebenarnya.

Medan, 2024
Hormat Saya
Yang membuat pernyataan,



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ABSTRACT

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The objective of this study is to identify and analyze semiotic elements in sumang culture, to explore the cultural meanings and values conveyed by semiotic elements, to examine the influence of sumang culture on character development and to investigate challenges and adaptations in cultural preservation. This research uses a descriptive qualitative method to direct research on the research object to obtain the necessary data. This research investigates the conditions of a particular place or region in detail without manipulating or controlling the variables involved to find, identify, and analyze the semiotic of the types of signs and the meanings contained in these signs in the Sumang of Gayo people. The findings show that in Gayo culture, the 'tangke' house symbolizes unity and ancestral heritage, while ritual dances and cultural textiles express identity and values. The community also maintains 'adat' and oral traditions to pass down knowledge and uphold cultural pride. These practices reflect their deep connection to heritage and community amidst modern challenges.

Keywords: Sumang Culture, Gayo Community

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Semiotics is the science of signs and involves the exchange between two or more speakers through coded language and convention. It is the scientific study of communication, meaning, and interpretation (Tiefenbrun, 2010). Semiotics analyzes and understands the importance of signs and symbols in various contexts, including language, art, and culture. It is a field that explores how meaning is created and communicated through signs and symbols. Semiotics is relevant to various disciplines, including psychology, anthropology, and linguistics. In psychology, the semiotic perspective is considered suitable for dealing with critical issues, and it can help define the semiotic mind (Picione, 2020). In anthropology, semiotics is used to explore the role of translation at the conflict-ridden crossroads of different semiotic ideologies. In linguistics, semiotics is used to define discourse as a set of related representations and to suggest a basis for a typology of discourses (Boholm, 2016).

Semiotics is the study of signs and symbols and their use or interpretation. In the context of ethnic groups, semiotics can be used to analyze the meanings of ethnic signs and symbols that are important to a particular group and how they are used to represent and reinforce the group's identity. For example, Greimasian semiotics has been used to capture the symbolic and dynamic dimensions of ethnicity in the context of ethnic consumer research (Silhouette, 2016). Semiotic

analysis has been used to analyze the semiotics of cultural identity in the context of British imperialism in Fiji (Gaines, 2012). Semiotics has also been used to examine the link between clothes and cultural identities in postcolonial literature, such as Jhumpa Lahiri's "Hema and Kaushik" (Sharify et al., 2020). Semiotic has also been used to explore the relationship between landscape, belonging, and identity in ethnic groups, such as the BaTonga and Shangwe in North-west Zimbabwe (Matanzima, 2020).

Semiotic analysis can be used to examine the representation of race, social class, and gender in various forms of media. A study of the film *Parasite* used semiotic analysis to explore the model of social class. The research found that the film depicted social class differences through various signs, including ease of life, fashion, boundaries, body odor, and color (Daniya, 2020). A paper on social entrepreneurship used semiotic analysis to examine the intersection of race, class, gender, and social entrepreneurship. The research found that women from various backgrounds developed new organizations to serve traditionally marginalized populations in the Progressive era but faced obstacles based on class or race (Schachter, 2022). It can also be used to understand the role of architecture as a medium of cultural communication in ethnic enclaves and to identify ethnic enclaves by their use of architectural signs (Michaels, 2018). Overall, semiotics can be a valuable tool for understanding the symbols and characters that are important to ethnic culture, confessional views, peculiarities of mentality, and philosophical aspects of the problems of the world and human beings.

Local traditions in Indonesia have been practiced by indigenous people for a long time, even before the formation of the state. These traditions emphasize the development of people's morality by implementing local wisdom, which serves as the foundation for behavior among individuals, groups, and communities to maintain unity and peace (Fitrah, 2020). The values contained in these traditions shape individuals to possess qualities such as being loved, needed, helpful, and considered as an object for specific interests. These values give meaning to life and can be transformed in the educational process for students' character development (Umar, 2019). For example, the Megoak-goakan Tradition is held by the people of Panji village, Sukasada District, Buleleng Regency, Bali. The cultural tradition is still developing now in the form of traditional games that were held on the day of Ngembak Geni, the day after Nyepi. There are cultural values in the tradition of mutuality, namely religious values, the value of unity, socio-cultural values, and the value of cooperation. This tradition instills character in the community, namely religious character, mutual collaboration, nationalism, integrity, and independence (Dewi, 2020).

Education is truly imparted to cultivate a person's physical, mental, and moral faculties, aiming to mold them into well-rounded individuals capable of fulfilling their roles as members of society. Humans are perfect creatures, and leader in this world should be a meaningful and beneficial person for their country. However, many news show negative attitudes from humans, like tribes clashing and social destruction in the name of religion. These attitudes are often driven by xenophobia, nationalism, and a desire to create a "safe" environment for

one's own group (Simut, 2015). Moreover, many people live with inappropriate manners, such as rude speaking, the relationship between non-Mahram men and women, seeing someone with a sharp gaze, and even pornography, which some people have seen as everyday things (Rosenbaum, 2018).

The use of verbal symbols of Islamic communication ethics in Gayo ethnic speech is placed in the context of the kinship system and social structure, and it is unethical to call someone by name directly. Speech in Gayo culture is used as a greeting or call between individuals, between groups, or individuals with groups. The verbal symbols of Islamic communication ethics in Gayo ethnic speech in Central Aceh Regency are seen in the use of speech in everyday life based on kinship system or kinship and position or function. The denotative meaning in this speech can be understood from the purpose described in Gayo, while the connotative meaning is understood based on Gayo's cultural values. Understanding the connotative meaning of this speech becomes a reference in using speech following the context that gave rise to the myth in Gayo culture called kemali, jis, moth, and sumang (Marhamah, 2018).

Different generations or individuals may have varying interpretations of the same symbols in Gayo culture. The connotative meaning of verbal symbols in Gayo ethnic speech is understood based on Gayo cultural values (Marhamah, 2018). As culture is a sign system, it is studied with semiotics, and the concepts of signs in language can be explained. Culture can be said to be a concept expressed in symbolic form through which humans communicate using language (Auni, 2023). The continuity of Gayo culture may depend on the ability of the

community to maintain a shared understanding of the connotative meaning of verbal symbols, which is based on their cultural values.

Sumang is a norm in the Gayo community that serves as a foundation of life covering social relations, kinship systems, customs activities, and cultural systems. It contains knowledge, beliefs, values, rules, and laws that become the guidelines for community life, especially for the younger generation since they are relatively emotionally unstable. Sumang is one way to maintain the social environment of the community to be a well-mannered society with high Islamic values. The norms of the Gayo community cannot be separated from the rules and laws that become the guidelines for behaving among Gayo people. Sumang is also a form and system of education rooted in the culture of the Gayo people, and it is an essential foundation of life that covers social relations, kinship systems, customs activities, and cultural systems. The norms of Sumang are used as a foundation of life to avoid violating actions, and it consists of Sumang Kenunulen (sitting), Sumang perceraken (talking), Sumang pelangkahan (journey), and Sumang penengonen (seeing), (Zulkarnain, 2019). Therefore, it can be inferred that changes in society, technology, or external influences may affect the interpretation of Sumang's semiotic elements by the Gayo people.

Symbols such as Sumang contribute significantly to the identity of the Gayo community. Sumang is a myth that explains the origin of the Gayo people and their culture. It is a symbol of the Gayo people's identity, and it is used to describe their customs, beliefs, and practices. The study on the representation of Islamic communication ethics in Gayo ethnic speech in Central Aceh District

suggests that the connotative meaning of verbal symbols in Gayo ethnic speech is understood based on Gayo cultural values. Therefore, it can be inferred that the symbols used in Gayo ethnic speech, including Sumang, contribute to the community's identity by reflecting their cultural values.

However, there may be challenges in maintaining this identity in Sumang. One of the challenges is the influence of external factors such as modernization and globalization. There are educational and transmission challenges in ensuring that cultural and semiotic knowledge is preserved and effectively transferred to younger members of the Gayo community. The younger generation's understanding of Gayo ethnic speech is not as strong as the older generation's, which may lead to a loss of cultural identity (Monova, 2020). The study on Didong art in Gayo society suggests that the art form plays a significant role in unifying the Gayo ethnicity, who have a wide range of opinions regarding the moral and aesthetic values of the existing culture. Didong art has functions that contribute to the continuity and stability of the culture, such as emotional expression, representational symbolism, and contribution to cultural integration (Erwenta, 2018). Therefore, it can be inferred that the challenges in maintaining the identity of the Gayo community in Sumang can be addressed by promoting cultural practices such as Didong art that contribute to the continuity and stability of the culture.

This research is very important to carry out because it can provide scientific contributions and input for all parties who have an interest in communication science, especially in the field of Sumang semiotics, and it is

hoped that it can be used as a source of knowledge that can be studied by writers and readers, by providing information to readers about This research can be used as a reference for other researchers and it is hoped that it can provide input and contribution of thought to researchers of communication science problems, especially in their respective fields.

B. The Identification of the Problem

As explained in the background above, the author identifies problems that:

1. Gayo has symbols, but the specific verbal signs employed within the Gayo community still little understood how these symbols convey cultural meanings and values.
2. Involves examining how changes in society, technology, and external influences have affected the semiotic elements of Sumang, a traditional cultural practice in the Gayo community.
3. Revolving around understanding how these symbols contribute to the community's identity.
4. Pertains to the educational and transmission challenges the Gayo community faces in preserving and effectively transferring cultural and semiotic knowledge to younger members.

C. The Scope and Limitation

This study is scoped on semiotic study and limited on analyzing a symbolic elements of Sumang culture in the Gayo community.

D. Formulation of Problem

Based on the background and limitations of the problems described above, the authors formulated the problem formulation in this study as follows:

1. What are the vital symbolic elements within Sumang culture as perceived by the Gayo community?
2. How do the symbolic elements convey cultural meanings and values within the Gayo community?
3. Why to they convey cultural meanings and value in the ways they are?

E. Research Objectives

The research objectives on this research were given as follows:

1. To identify and analyze semiotic elements in sumang culture.
2. To explore the cultural meanings and values conveyed by semiotic elements.
3. To examine the influence of sumang culture on character development.

F. The Significance of Study

The significance of the study from this research are:

1. Theoretically

1. This research contributes to the theoretical domain by advancing our understanding of semiotics, particularly in the context of Sumang culture within the Gayo community.

2. The research offers a valuable case study for cultural semiotics, demonstrating how semiotic analysis can unravel the rich tapestry of meanings, values, and identity within a specific cultural context.
3. The research bridges semiotics with character development theory, enriching our theoretical knowledge of how cultural practices, infused with semiotic elements, influence individual and collective character development. It contributes to character development theories by illustrating the role of cultural symbols and rituals.
4. By examining the challenges and adaptations in preserving Sumang culture, the research adds to the theoretical discourse on cultural continuity and transformation in the face of external influences. It offers theoretical insights into how cultural traditions can evolve while retaining their core semiotic elements.

2. Practically

1. The findings of this research can inform practical efforts aimed at preserving and revitalizing Sumang culture within the Gayo community. By understanding the semiotic aspects that underpin Sumang, cultural preservation initiatives can be designed with greater precision and effectiveness.
2. Educational practitioners can benefit from insights into how Sumang culture influences character development. Practical applications may include integrating Sumang-based character education programs in schools

and community initiatives to instill moral values and a sense of identity among young individuals.

3. **Community Engagement:** The research fosters community engagement by involving Gayo community members in the research process. This participatory approach empowers the community to contribute to preserving and adapting their cultural heritage actively.
4. As Sumang culture interfaces with modernization and globalization, the study's practical implications extend to intercultural communication and understanding. It can aid in facilitating constructive dialogues between traditional cultures and external influences.
5. The research demonstrates the practical application of semiotic analysis in cultural studies. Researchers and practitioners in various fields can draw from this research to apply semiotics to analyze other cultural practices and traditions, fostering a deeper appreciation of cultural diversity.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Theoretical Framework

1. Semiotics

Semiotics is the study of signs and their interpretation, while semiotics is the study of sign creation and performance, known as semiosis. Semiotics explores the relationship between semiotics and semiosis, as well as the “subject” defining problem of semiosis and semiotics. The distinction and the correlated relation between semiotics and semiotics are, therefore, concluded semiosis includes the three aspects of semiotic and semiotic properties, semiotic activities and their products, and semiotic products. Pilgrimage can be better understood as a particular kind of semiotic activity, that is, as a process of production, transmission, and reception of meaning through languages, texts, and discourses. It is a broad field encompassing various disciplines, including linguistics, philosophy, anthropology, and communication studies. Semiotics is concerned with how meaning is created and communicated through signs, which can be anything from words and images to sounds and gestures (Niu, 2020).

For Charles Sanders Peirce, semiotics is closely related to logic and can be considered a formal doctrine of signs. Peirce’s understanding of semiotics, also known as “sign theory,” is rooted in his broader

philosophical framework, which encompasses logic, epistemology, and the study of meaning (Nesher, 2018). According to Peirce, signs are the basic units of semiotic analysis and can be classified into three main categories: icons, indexes, and symbols.

1. Icons: Icons are signs resembling or similar to their objects. They represent their objects by some shared quality or characteristic. For example, a photograph is an iconic sign because it visually resembles the object it represents.
2. Indexes: Indexes are signs that have a direct, causal connection with their objects. They represent their objects by pointing to or indicating them. For example, smoke is an indexical sign of fire because the presence of fire causes it.
3. Symbols: Symbols are signs that have an arbitrary or conventional relationship with their objects. They represent their objects through learned associations or agreements. For example, words are symbolic signs because social conventions and cultural contexts determine their meanings.

Peirce's understanding of signs is based on triadic relations, where a sign (representamen) relates to an object and is interpreted by an interpretant. This triadic structure is essential for understanding how meaning is created and analyzed. Peirce also introduced the concept of "semiosis," which refers to the process of signification or the action of signs in generating meaning (Dawkins, 2020). In addition to classifying

signs, Peirce also developed a system of logical relations between signs, which he called “diagrammatic reasoning”. This system allows for the representation and analysis of complex processes of thought and meaning. Peirce’s semiotics is closely connected to logic, particularly in understanding how signs are used in reasoning and inference (Ma et al., 2022). Overall, Peirce’s semiotics provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how meaning is created and interpreted through various sign systems. His classification of signs into icons, indexes, and symbols, along with his triadic model of sign relations, has significantly influenced the development of semiotics and the study of meaning.

Semiotics allows one to investigate a wide range of domains, including psychology, anthropology, neuroscience, zoology, olfactory signs, tactile communication, paralinguistics, medicine, kinesics, proxemics, musical codes, formalized languages, written languages, natural languages, visual communication, systems of objects, plot structures, text theory, cultural codes, aesthetic texts, mass communication, and rhetoric. Semiotics is used to study the role of signs in language and analyze various media forms, such as advertisements (Pencak, 2000).

2. Semiotics Branches

General semiotics: this branch analyzes signs and symbols in various contexts, such as language, communication, and culture. It aims to understand how meaning is created and interpreted through signs and symbols. General semiotics encompasses various sub-branches, including ;Semiotics of Communication: this sub-branch examines the role of signs and symbols in communication, including verbal and non-verbal communication, Semiotics of Semantics: this sub-branch explores the meaning of signs and symbols, including their denotative and connotative aspects., Semiotics of Title: this sub-branch studies the role of titles in conveying meaning and attracting attention (Abdullah, 2021).

Biosemiotics: this branch studies signs and symbols in living organisms and their environmental interactions. It seeks to understand the role of signs and symbols in biological processes, such as communication, adaptation, and evolution (Bennett, 2022).

In addition to these two main branches, there are other branches and interdisciplinary relationships within semiotics, such as multimodal semiotics, social semiotics, and digital semiotics (Berlanga-Fernández et al., 2022). These branches explore applying semiotic principles in various fields, including landscape architecture, linguistics, and digital culture.

Multimodal semiotics studies the intersection and interdependence of various communication modalities in a particular context. It involves the analysis of texts that incorporate two or more semiotic systems, such

as letters, pictures, colors, gestures, and sounds. These semiotic systems work together to create meaning and convey messages. In cosmetic advertisements, multimodal semiotics can be observed through verbal, visual, gestural, and audio elements to get a sense of beauty. Vocal features may include declarative sentences, while visual elements may refer to female figures and specific colors. Gesture elements include smiling facial expressions, sparkling eyes, and touching skin, while audio components may come from sound effects or music (Yanti et al., 2022). Multimodal semiotics can also be seen in the analysis of video games, where various semiotic systems, such as visuals, sounds, and texts, work together to create a cohesive and meaningful gaming experience. In the context of mathematics education, multimodal semiotics play a crucial role. The practice of mathematics incorporates not only talk and embodied action but also technical notation and diagrams, brought into discourse through verbal and gestural reference (Ginsberg, 2015). Multimodal semiotics can be applied to the analysis of literature visualization, which has characteristics such as multimodality in production, multimodality in the means of distribution, and visualization of language forms. In this context, the interactions between image and language contribute equally to meaning, with each mode offering its unique potential for conveying messages.

Social semiotics is a branch of semiotics that focuses on studying signs and symbols in social contexts, such as culture, society, and

communication. It examines how meaning is created and interpreted through various semiotic resources, including language, images, gestures, and objects. Social semiotics seeks to understand how these resources are used to construct social identities, relationships, and power structures. In advertising, social semiotics can be observed through signs and symbols to build and reinforce social identities and values (Adami, 2022). Advertisements often use images, language, and other semiotic resources to appeal to specific social groups and to convey messages about social norms and values. Social semiotics can also be seen in the analysis of educational practices, where various semiotic resources, such as language, images, and objects, are used to construct and convey knowledge and meaning (Eriksson et al., 2020). For example, in science education, physical objects are used as a semiotic mode to make meaning that involves embodied actions and manipulation of tools. Social semiotics can be applied to analyzing museum exhibits, where various semiotic resources, such as images, objects, and texts, are used to construct and convey knowledge and meaning (Tang, 2022). In this context, social semiotics can help to understand how museums create and communicate social identities, values, and power relations. Overall, social semiotics provides a framework for understanding how meaning is constructed and interpreted in social contexts and how semiotic resources are used to construct and reinforce social identities, relationships, and power structures.

Digital semiotics is a branch that focuses on studying signs and symbols in digital contexts, such as online communication, media, and technology. It examines how meaning is created and interpreted through various digital semiotic resources, including language, images, sounds, and interactive elements (Adami, 2022). In social media platforms like TikTok, digital semiotics can be observed through visual and audio elements to create new interactive modes of understanding and communication. For example, TikTok's short videos incorporate semiotic resources to convey messages and engage users in interactive storytelling (Wagener, 2022). Digital semiotics can also be seen in the analysis of crime series adaptations, where various semiotic resources, such as images, sounds, and texts, are used to create a multimodal storytelling experience (Digeon, 2020). This approach combines the principles of multimodal semiotics with the digital context to understand how meaning is constructed and interpreted in these adaptations. Digital semiotics can be integrated into second-language teaching to enhance the learning experience for students (Mdledle, 2020). By incorporating various digital semiotic resources, such as online texts, images, and interactive elements, teachers can create a more engaging and effective learning environment for students. Overall, digital semiotics provides a framework for understanding how meaning is constructed and interpreted in digital contexts and how digital semiotic resources create and convey messages in various domains, including communication, media, and technology.

3. Semiotics of the Roland Barthes Myth System

Barthes developed a semiotic system of myths to study cultural phenomena. The characteristics of myth and its function to understand the natural environment and human beings are what Roland Barthes tries to theorize using semiotics (Sunardi, 2004). Myth is an ideological critique of mass culture as well as a semiotic analysis of how Barthes writes the working mechanism of the language of mass culture in his book entitled *Mythologies* (Sunardi, 2004). The myth that Roland Barthes meant was not a myth like a long story like in Greek mythology such as the Hero of Hercules, Theseus or the Trojan War, Mythos Barthes was not a story about Deities that are considered to have existed and are acknowledged to be accurate by those who support them and are stories with narratives—the long one. The myth of Roland Barthes is a type of speech, a speech act presented with discourse (Barthes, 2013).

The discourse raised produces myths; when myths are accepted, people's behavior follows the mythical lesson. For this reason, the Roland Barthes myth is often declared a tale because the form of the legend is different, but the nature of the myth permeates through what is being discussed. Myth hides and shows nothing: it only distorts; it is only a diversion (Barthes, 2013). Changes in the secondary meaning system will reveal the distortion due to the myth system that works in the supporting community.

Discourse understood by Foucault as an explanation, definition, classification, and thoughts about humans, knowledge, and abstract systems of human thought, according to Foucault, cannot be separated from power relations. Discourse always comes from those with power and from those with creative minds. It allows them to produce energy and knowledge relations within a social system. Then, based on these relations, they can make discourses whose truth can be recognized and survive within a specific historical range (Kali, 2013).

The relationship between knowledge products that regulate and regulate society and power is not easily visible, but it is necessary to study the analysis of events and statements that arise, followed by a critical analysis of the causes and effects of why such statements are raised.

4. Symbolic Elements

Symbols are the intentions of all basic tasks, meaning the subject feels attracted to an object or vice versa; subjects respond spontaneously (Lonerga, 1952).

According (Piece, 2003) the use of this symbol conveys different meanings of communication, although it is not uncommon for the use of symbols to produce the same meaning according to the expectations of the person communicating, which refers to the theoretical element of the triangle of meaning; the symbol itself, one reference or the same as the object and reference.

(Greetz, 1992) explained that various phenomena in people's social life can be expressed in cultural meaning. Where ideas spill over into understanding, culture is patterns of meaning that are realized and transmitted continuously in symbolic form. Through this process, humans can communicate and preserve and develop certain knowledge and attitudes towards knowledge. People everywhere in the world organize their lives in relation to the meaning of various symbols around it.

Furthermore, (Sperber, 1994) explained that symbolic interaction is not just a code or sign, but rather an implicit improvisation (in nature) and following unconscious rules. This means that symbols are not only an instrument (tool) of social communication, but are a completeness that is born in the mind which makes human experience meaningful.

Symbolic elements are integral parts of human communication, often carrying deeper meanings beyond their literal representations. They come in various forms and serve diverse purposes across different contexts. Here are some kinds of symbolic elements:

- a. **Visual Symbols:** These are symbols that rely on visual representation, such as icons, logos, and images. They often convey complex ideas or concepts in a simplified form, like national flags or religious symbols.
- b. **Cultural Symbols:** These symbols are deeply ingrained in a specific culture and hold significant meaning within that cultural context. Examples include national anthems, traditional attire, and cultural rituals.

- c. Language Symbols: Words and phrases can also carry symbolic meanings beyond their literal definitions. For instance, “the American Dream” symbolizes the pursuit of success and prosperity in the United States.
- d. Religious Symbols: Symbols play a crucial role in religious practices and beliefs, representing spiritual concepts, deities, or sacred rituals. Examples include the Christian cross, the Islamic crescent moon and star, and the Hindu Om symbol.
- e. Political Symbols: These symbols are used to represent political ideologies, movements, or parties. Flags, emblems, and political slogans are common examples.
- f. Literary Symbols: In literature, symbols are often used to convey deeper themes or ideas. For example, the “green light” in F. Scott Fitzgerald’s “The Great Gatsby” symbolizes hope and the future.
- g. Numerical Symbols: Numbers can also hold symbolic meanings, such as “7” representing luck or perfection in many cultures, or “666” symbolizing the devil in Christian tradition.
- h. Color Symbols: Different colors are often imbued with symbolic meanings. For instance, red can symbolize love or passion, while white may symbolize purity or innocence.
- i. Natural Symbols: Elements of nature, such as animals, plants, and natural phenomena, can carry symbolic significance. For example, the lion is often used as a symbol of strength and courage.

- j. Archetypal Symbols: These symbols are universal across cultures and are deeply ingrained in the human psyche. Examples include the hero, the wise old man, and the mother figure, as described by Carl Jung in his theory of archetypes.

These kinds of symbolic elements enrich communication, allowing individuals and societies to convey complex ideas and emotions in a concise and meaningful way.

Gayo community maintains their traditional aesthetics by using symbols, both visual and non-visual, in accordance with Islamic religious teachings. They found these symbols from observing the signs written in the holy book Al-Quran and Hadith as well as the signs that exist around the Gayo community. As an aesthetic movement, the Islamic religion adhered to by the Gayo tribe has a symbolic synonymization with other religions as recorded in cultural anthropology. That the cosmological character of each religion can radiate a spiritual state that is possible to be understood universally.

Symbolism helps create meaning and emotion in a story. Metaphors elements that help writers create symbolism in their literary pieces. Colors, objects, people. Situations and words are all types of symbolism that might be used in literary work. Below are the symbols of the Gayo Lues tribe.



Figure 1
The Symbols of the Gayo Lues Tribe

1. Five-pointed star. Symbolizes the principles of the Almighty God in Pancasila.
2. 17 cotton flowers, 8 lines of writing in the holy book and 45 grains of rice.
3. The grains of rice and cotton are circular in shape.
4. The sentence “Sincere Charity”.
5. The sides of the shield are in the shape of an equal pentagon.
6. Completeness of the meaning and symbol of the ministry of religion.

5. Sumang

The word “Sumang” is derived from the Gayo language, which is spoken by the Gayo people in the central highlands of Aceh (Iswanto et al., 2022). The Gayo language is a part of the Austronesian or Polynesian Malay language family, including the Acehnese and Minangkabau languages (Narhan, 2022). The meaning of sumang is a term that comes from the native language of the Tanah Gayo area. The Gayo community’s local wisdom is summarized in the edet or customary concepts, which include practices, norms, and demands of social life that Islamization has

influenced. The manifestations of this local wisdom can be seen in various aspects of the Gayo culture, such as the Gayo language, the governance system (saraopat), social norms (sumang), and aesthetic expressions (didong) (Husaini, 2019).

Sumang Aceh is a cultural concept and set of values that govern the behavior and social arrangements of the people in Aceh, Indonesia. It is rooted in Islamic Shari'a principles and is considered a form of local wisdom. Sumang is a set of principles, norms, and rules that guide social interactions and are based on religious values derived from the Quran and Hadith (Susanti, 2019). The philosophy of Sumang is seen in the morals that govern people's lives, and it guides people's attitudes and behavior. It is considered a "fence" and protector of society, helping to positively influence the people's lives in Aceh (Ningsih, 2022). However, over time, there have been changes in the culture, and some younger generations may not practice the values contained in Sumang as much as before.

The Sumang culture is a significant cultural model encompassing various aspects of life, including the mind, heart, spiritual and physical well-being, morals, attitudes, character, skills, and expertise. It aims to prepare individuals to live in a safe, peaceful, happy, and prosperous world, both in the present and the hereafter. Sumang culture tries to avoid actions that deviate from the conventions of etiquette that apply in society; apart from being contrary to custom and from a moral point of view, those actions or actions are highly disgraceful. The Sumang value is also related

to Islamic values, as it encompasses spiritual values and emphasizes *ahlakkulkarimah* (good moral character), self-maintenance, and the dignity of the family and society. Islamic counseling and guidance incorporating Sumang's indigenous cultural wisdom can help minimize violations of Islamic Shari'a and promote a harmonious and virtuous community (Ningsih, 2022).

Sumang is also associated with the concept of private and public space in the implementation of *QanunJinayah*, which is a set of Islamic criminal laws in Aceh. The *QanunJinayah* does not differentiate between private and public spaces, and individuals can be punished for committing criminal acts in both spaces. This has led to discussions about the potential violation of human rights in enforcing these laws (Fadlia et al., 2019). In education, Sumang values have been integrated into character education programs in schools in Aceh. For example, SMA Negeri 15 Takengon has incorporated Sumang values into its character education programs based on religious values derived from the Quran and Hadith (Susanti et al., 2019). This integration helps to promote the restoration of character in the Aceh Gayo society, which is considered spiritually valuable and oriented towards *akhlâq al-Karima* (noble character) (Syukri, 2018).

The Gayo people are one of the oldest ethnic groups in Aceh and have their own distinct language, customs, arts, and traditional houses (Iswanto, 2022). The Gayo people refer to themselves as "urangGayo," which means Gayo people and their traditional territory includes the

districts of BenerMeriah, Aceh Tengah, and GayoLues, as well as parts of Southeast Aceh, Aceh Tamiang, and East Aceh. They are known for their devoutness in Islam and the use of the Gayo language in their daily conversations (Rahman, 2021). The culture of the Gayo people is a way of life developed and shared by the Gayo people and passed down from generation to generation. Gayo culture is also called tradition, customary law, habits, and customs. In practice, the term tradition has a broad meaning, encompassing all things in which a society or a person has become accustomed to being able to do so. Therefore, Gayo customs are rules based on Islamic law, commonly obeyed, respected, and glorified since ancient times and used as the foundation of life.

In Gayo society, sumang culture is an educational model, namely as an archetype of the foundation of life in society. Therefore, if someone acts outside the educational pattern that is normative, it will be rejected and prohibited, as in the GayoNge custom, complete edeturumukum, nge complete sarakopatsagipendari (customs and laws are whole, complete with all tools, from top to bottom) (Jamaluddin, 2021). The emergence of sumang culture has its starting point from the attitude of educating and fostering human beings to become complete human beings, namely the accumulation of all intellectual, spiritual, and physical potential that exists in humans. Chronologically, there are four sumangs in the Gayo custom, which are called sumangopat. The description of this four sumang gave birth to other sumangs:

6. Kinds of Sumang

a. Sumang Pengengonen (blissful vision)

Sumang Penengonen (blissful vision) is also called Sumang Penerahen, that is, looking at women with bad intentions. It means feeling embarrassed if a man looks at a woman with lustful eyes. On the other hand, it is embarrassing when a woman looks at a man who is not her mahram with a sharp look, causing her lust. Ibn Qayyim-al-Jauziyah said, "Whoever indulges in his views will reap the consequences. Whoever looks at it for a long time, the solution will continue, time will be lost, and the suffering will be prolonged. So, SumangPenengonen controls the eyes and heart from reprehensible views because it is taboo or taboo. To refrain from opinions that lead to sexual lust, it is necessary to instill monotheism and tazkiyah al-anfus.

b. Sumang Pelangkahan (Sumang Pestepen)

Sumang Pestepen is when men and women go for a walk without a mahram. seen as SumangPestepen. If an older sister and younger brother walk alone together in the middle of the road, or a brother and younger sister hold hands on the street, it is SumangPestepen because of other people's suspicions that the older brother and younger brother are husband and wife, even though they are siblings, because it is prohibited according to Gayo custom.

c. Sumang Kenunulen (Sumang Position)

Sumang Kenunulen (position) is sitting in a place that is suspected to be wrong and raises suspicion. According to Mahmud Ibrahim, Sumang Kenunulen is using a site that does not fulfill its function and does not respect other people sitting there, which can be seen as Sumang Kenunulen. Meanwhile, A.R. Judge AmanPinan said that “it is considered inappropriate to sit (Sumang Kenunulen) if, for example, in one room, a father or mother-in-law and a child or son-in-law sit knee to each other, so that there is no longer any feeling of embarrassment towards the parents. In the Gayo tradition, this is considered Sumang Kenunulen.

d. Sumang Perupuhén (Contribute to Dress)

Sumang Perupuhén implies that if someone wears clothes that are tight, narrow, thin, and you can see (you can be seen), then it is considered impolite and inappropriate to be seen. People who see it cause embarrassment and lust, or women who are dressed but, in essence, are naked, swinging, and transparent. This is called Sumang Perupuhén. According to Mr. Julia, men and women who dress immodestly, thinly, tightly, and transparently are strictly prohibited. Because it is considered as Sumang Perupuhén, namely dressing carelessly, in the Gayo language, it is called berupuhkunenak; it must be abandoned.

e. Sumang Penosahén (Giving Contribution)

Sumang Penosahén is a man giving something to a woman who is not his mahram for specific purposes and purposes without any

calculations, while he is stingy to other people. In Gayo terms, it is called *Kujema dele tikik, kusarajeme dele*. This means gifts to many people are few while giving to one person is many. To one person, it is intended that there is a special relationship between the giver and the recipient with a specific purpose, or when a man gives something to a woman to have sex. Gifts with such intent are seen as *SumangPenosahen*. But if the gift is without malicious intent but with sincerity, it is not *SumangPenosahen*, but *alms jariyah*, namely giving sincerely as a form of charity to earn the pleasure of Allah SWT.

f. *Sumang Perupuhén* (Sumang Dressed)

Sumang Perupuhén implies that if someone wears clothes that are tight, narrow, thin, and you can see (you can be seen), then it is considered impolite and inappropriate to be seen. People who see it cause embarrassment and lust, or women who are dressed but, in essence, are naked, swinging, and transparent. This is called *Sumang Perupuhén*. According to Mr. Julia, men and women who dress immodestly, thinly, tightly, and transparently are strictly prohibited. Because it is considered as *Sumang Perupuhén*, namely dressing carelessly, in the Gayo language, it is called *berupuhkunekenak*; it must be abandoned.

g. *Sumang Perceraken* (Sumang Words)

Sumang Perceraken is words expressed by someone to another that is not under Islamic teachings and customary manners. Such words are called *cerakentasesanah* (nonsense words). In terms of Islamic teachings, it

is called qaul al-zur (vile comments). Sumang Perceraken is a conversation between men and women about things that are inappropriate and inappropriate to talk about. Sumang Perceraken is not only seen in terms of words but also in terms of adjustments to time, place, circumstances, and how to express these words. Maybe the content or substance, purpose, and intent of the words spoken are good. Still, because the time, place, and circumstances of the utterance are not appropriate, such utterances are seen as Sumang Perceraken.

h. Sumang Pergaulen (Association Contribution)

Sumang Pergaulen is a prohibition to mingle, live with friends, or live in friendship freely. So, Sumang Pergaulen is a taboo or prohibition of associating freely between men and women who are not their mahram. In terms of social language, it means the process of getting along, while free means being free from ties. Therefore, promiscuity is considered as Sumang Pergaulen.

i. Sumang Perbueten (Contribution of Actions)

Sumang Perbueten is when someone commits an act, such as touching, let alone holding, a woman who is not his mahram on purpose. A new person can be deemed to have committed Sumang Perbueten if there are several proof requirements. First, Jirim-jisim's condition is that the perpetrator is apparent, not an assumption. Second, JirimJohar's condition is that other people know the actions of Sumang. Third, Jirim is

required for one of the perpetrators of sumang acts to separate himself secretly from the ordinary association.

Guarding Sumang Perbueten needs to do amar makruf nahi mungkar and the principle of responsibility must be implemented. First, ukumnianakiamaye (the father is obligated and entirely responsible for managing his child's life. On the other hand, children must obey and respect their father or parents). Second, ukumnirayatirejeye (government leaders are responsible for the behavior of their people). Third, ukumniharartimpuye (the legitimate owner of the property is responsible for maintaining and utilizing his property).

B. Previous of the Study

The followings will be described several works that are relevant to this research as follows:

1. Thesis by Fachry Purnama entitled The Concept of Dakwah in the SumangGayo Tradition in Central Aceh Districts in 2019 is to find out how the concept of da'wah in the Sumang Gayo custom, as well as the content of the values of da'wah and find out how the Gayo Traditional Council as an autonomous institution and partner of the Regional Government is working. Who plays a role in carrying out and organizing traditional life so that it is always maintained and maintained and practiced in community life. The research results show that the Sumang custom at this time should be an essential concern for both the government or government partner institutions

as well as traditional leaders and the community to help each other preserve and protect this Sumang custom so that foreign cultural influences do not erode it. Currently, the Sumang custom is only carried out by a portion of the community, and many of the current generations do not even know about the Sumang custom. The sumang tradition has excellent potential in forming noble character as taught in the Islamic religion. Apart from that, the sumang practice is a form of da'wah that combines Islamic values with the traditional values of the local community.

2. Thesis by Ida Susana with the title the Impact of Sumang Social-Cultural Changes among the Gayo Communitys in 2022 aims to find out the impact of Sumang socio-cultural changes in Janarata village from the results of researchers' observations. The effects resulting from the weakening of Sumang include the occurrence of inter-generational conflict, its prevalence of promiscuity takes various forms in the form of (the number of early marriages, the rise of dating culture, which is considered contemporary, rampant perverts and no longer knowing what is good and bad), the loss of identity among young people in Janarata village and the reduction in the number of sumang in public. The results of this research show the situation of sumang among the Gayo community is starting to disappear; the decrease in the number of sumangs in the Gayo community indicates this.

Previous research studied Sumang culture and customs in the Gayo community. In a thesis written by FachryPurnama, this thesis focuses on the religious and cultural aspects of Sumang among the Gayo people. It explores the

role of Sumang in promoting Islamic teachings and how it is integrated into the local Gayo culture, the emphasis on religious and traditional practices related to Dakwah, and how they are expressed through Sumang. The thesis by Ida Susana concentrates on the social and cultural changes within the Gayo community that are influenced by or related to Sumang. It analyzes how Sumang practices have evolved and how these changes have affected the social and cultural dynamics within the Gayo community, and the study also explores how external factors or influences have impacted the practices of Sumang.

Meanwhile, in this thesis, “Semiotic Analysis on Sumang of Gayo People,” will be more about being centered on a semiotic analysis, which involves the study of signs and symbols. It delves into the symbolism and meanings associated with Sumang in the Gayo culture, both in traditional and contemporary contexts, and focuses on understanding how various signs and symbols within Sumang contribute to cultural communication and identity.

C. Conceptual Framework

This research is descriptive. This will explain the Sumang semiotic culture. The researcher will collect data through in-depth interviews with people who know the cultural history of Sumang and continue with a literature study related to manjapuikmarapulai.

Researchers make a semiotic analysis of in-depth interviews that try to define sumang culture. After obtaining the data, the researcher will describe sumang culture from a semiotic perspective and as a type of human symbolic

activity, creating signs and ways of giving meaning to everything around it from connotation and denotation systems. Researchers will collect data to observe sumang activities from various sources considered to have the capacity and capability to explain sumang events. After finding the suitable sources, the researcher will conduct in-depth interviews with these sources and record their explanations.

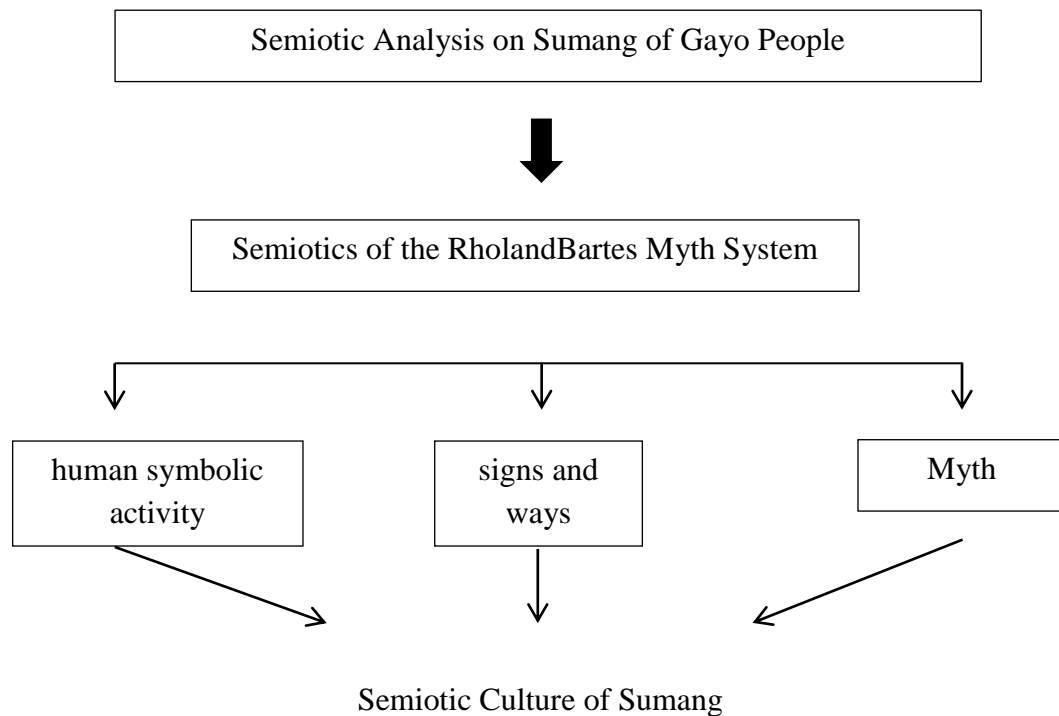


Figure 2.3 Conceptual Framework

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

A. Research Design

This research uses a descriptive qualitative method to direct research on the research object to obtain the necessary data. This research investigates the conditions of a particular place or region in detail without manipulating or controlling the variables involved to find, identify, and analyze the semiotic of the types of signs and the meanings contained in these signs in the Sumang of Gayo people (Togatorop, 2023). The researcher collects data through observation, interviews, or document analysis and then analyzes the collected data and is classified or grouped according to type, nature, or condition, after the data is complete, conclusions are drawn (Suharsim, 2010).

This research employed descriptive qualitative using field research method. Moleong, as quoted by Kirk and Miller, explains that qualitative research is a particular tradition in social science that depends on what is seen. The field research with deep social goals is to reveal the educational values of Gayo community norms. This study also used literature studies by reviewing several studies related to the concept of Gayo community norm within the framework of Islamic law. This research was conducted in Gayo community in Central Aceh, Indonesia. The participants were determined by purposive sampling technique. They were the traditional figures among Gayo community. The data collection was observation and semi-structured, and in-depth interviews and documentation.

The data analysis used the model from Miles and Huberman. The data reduction was summarizing the interview results and categorizing its significance related to the research purposes. After that, the data were presented in charts and its relationships among the categories. The next step was making conclusions on Gayo community norms in case of its educational concept within the framework of Islamic laws.

B. Data and Source of Data

Data sources are anything that can provide information about data. Based on the source, data is divided into two, namely primary data and secondary data.

1. Primary data is created by researchers with the specific aim of solving the problem they are dealing with. Data is collected by the researcher himself directly from the first source or place where the research object is carried out.
2. Secondary data is data collected for purposes other than solving the problem being faced. This data can be found quickly. In this research, secondary data sources are literature, articles, journals, and sites on the internet relating to the study conducted (Sugiyono, 2009).

C. Data Collection Techniques

Data collection techniques are systematic and standard procedures for obtaining the required data. Using data collection techniques makes it possible to

be more objective in data collection. Concerning data collection techniques, the researcher uses several methods:

1. Documentation

During the documentation process, the researcher will create notes containing the data collected from the data source. The data documentation collected in this research the data that describes the Sumang cultures in Gayo community.

2. Interview

Interviews serve as a method for acquiring more precise information to address a particular issue. This involves directly engaging with sources through structured question and answer sessions as part of the search or data gathering process. Some of the sources that will be interviewed are traditional leaders and elders in the Takengon area include Mr Rahim (traditional leader), Mr Erdan (elder person), spiritual mother S.Pd (history teacher at SMAN 7 Takengon), Yusradi Usman al-Gayoni (author of a book *Tutur Gayo*), as well as an interview with Gayo traditional council in Central Aceh District.

D. Data Analysis Techniques

Data were analyzed through qualitative analysis. Qualitative analysis activities consist of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. Based on the theory, the researcher implemented several steps, including:

1. Data Reduction

The first step in analyzing data is reducing the data. Data reduction is a qualitative data analysis process that aims to sharpen, classify, direct, clarify, and create focus, by eliminating less important things and organizing the data in such a way that the narrative presentation of the data can be understood well and produce conclusions, which is reliable. In this data reduction stage, the researcher carried out several steps, namely selecting, focusing attention, abstracting the process on symbols and their meaning in Sumang culture, and interviewing Gayo traditional council). Data reduction is done during the collection by making short notes, observations, and documentation.

2. Data Display

The second stage in qualitative data analysis is data presentation. Data display is a collection of information that allows researchers to make conclusions and take action on research. The data is presented based on organizational findings in a presentation format in the form of descriptions and complete narratives and compiled based on results obtained in the data reduction process. The language used in presenting data must use logistical and systematic research language to make it easy to understand. By understanding the appearance of the data, it will be easier for researchers to analyze the data in formulating research findings and drawing conclusions regarding the meaning analysis of the types of

semiotic signs contained in the documentation of symbols and their meanings in Sumang culture and interviews with Gayo traditional council.

3. Drawing Conclusions

The final step in analyzing data in research is concluding. The conclusion process is an activity in interpreting the results of analysis and interpreting data. In the conclusion process, proof needs to be carried out during the research process so that the analysis results can be accounted for. Every meaning found in symbols in the Sumang culture needs to be tested for truth and completeness to ensure its validity. Verification of conclusions is carried out by tracing each step of the research, starting from initial data reduction to the findings that have been formulated. The decisions of this research are made to discover the meaning of the types of signs contained in the Sumang documentation and interviews with Gayo traditional council).

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Findings

1. Vital Symbolic Elements Within Sumang Culture As Perceived By The Gayo Community

Vital symbolic elements are fundamental components within a narrative, artwork, or cultural context that carry significant meaning beyond their literal representation. They often serve as carriers of deeper themes, values, or emotions, bridging the gap between the surface and the underlying message. These elements can include symbols, metaphors, and motifs that resonate with universal human experiences or cultural archetypes, thereby enriching the interpretation and emotional impact of the work. By evoking specific associations or connotations, vital symbolic elements help to convey complex ideas and foster a deeper connection with the audience.

The Gayo community of Sumatra, Indonesia, treasures a rich cultural heritage expressed through various symbolic elements that encapsulate their beliefs, traditions, and way of life. At the heart of Gayo culture lies the ‘tangke’, a traditional house that serves not only as a dwelling but as a symbol of ancestral lineage and communal unity. Constructed from locally sourced materials like wood and bamboo, the tangke’s architecture embodies harmony with nature, reflecting the Gayo people’s deep respect for the environment and their belief in the interconnectedness of all living beings. It serves as a spiritual center where

rituals, ceremonies, and community gatherings take place, reinforcing social bonds and maintaining cultural continuity across generations. (Abdussalam, 2014)

‘Rengginang’, a crispy rice snack, holds significant symbolism in Gayo culture, particularly during festive occasions and communal celebrations. Prepared with meticulous care and passed down through familial recipes, rengginang symbolizes prosperity, abundance, and hospitality. Its preparation and sharing among kin and guests underscore the importance of generosity and communal sharing in Gayo society, highlighting culinary traditions as a means of cultural expression and solidarity. (Abdussalam, 2014)

‘Ritual dances’ play a crucial role in Gayo cultural expression, with dances like the ‘Seudati’ holding deep symbolic meaning. These dances are performed by both men and women adorned in elaborate costumes, accompanied by rhythmic music that tells stories of bravery, love, and ancestral wisdom. The Seudati dance, in particular, serves as a form of storytelling that reinforces community values, unity, and collective identity. Through dance, the Gayo people express their pride in their cultural heritage and strengthen their bonds with each other and their land. (Erwenta, 2018)

The ‘adat’ or customary law system is fundamental to Gayo governance and social order. Rooted in ancient traditions and communal consensus, adat regulates various aspects of daily life including marriage, land ownership, and dispute resolution. It serves not only as a legal framework but also as a moral guide, emphasizing respect, reciprocity, and collective responsibility among community members. Adat ceremonies and councils provide platforms for elders

to impart wisdom and guidance to younger generations, ensuring the preservation of cultural practices and the continuity of Gayo identity amidst changing times. (Erwenta, 2018)

‘Cultural textiles’ such as the ‘sarung’ and ‘songket’ represent intricate craftsmanship and artistic expression within Gayo culture. These textiles are adorned with symbolic patterns and motifs that convey stories of lineage, spirituality, and local wisdom. Woven by skilled artisans, cultural textiles are often used in ceremonies, rituals, and everyday life, symbolizing cultural pride, social status, and the interconnectedness of the Gayo community with their heritage. (Erwenta, 2018)

‘Traditional music’ forms an integral part of Gayo cultural identity, with instruments like the ‘gendang’ (drum) and ‘rebana’ (frame drum) playing central roles in ceremonies, rituals, and social gatherings. The rhythmic beats and melodies of traditional music accompany dances and storytelling, evoking emotions, memories, and spiritual connections to the land and ancestors. Through music, the Gayo people celebrate their cultural heritage and transmit values and traditions to future generations, ensuring the continuity of their musical legacy.

‘Ceremonial rituals’ such as ‘Meugang’ (livestock sacrifice) and ‘Inong Bale’ (coming-of-age ceremony for girls) hold deep spiritual significance in Gayo culture. These rituals mark important life transitions and communal events, symbolizing purification, blessings, and the continuity of ancestral practices. Meugang, in particular, underscores the interconnectedness between humans,

animals, and the natural world, reinforcing the spiritual bond between the Gayo people and their environment.

‘Traditional architecture’ reflects the ingenuity and cultural values of the Gayo community, with structures like ‘rumoh aceh’ (traditional Gayo house) and ‘berung’ (communal meeting hall) embodying local craftsmanship and communal living. Built using sustainable materials and techniques, these architectural marvels symbolize harmony with nature and the principles of communal solidarity and mutual aid. They serve as physical embodiments of Gayo cultural identity, providing spaces for social interaction, ceremonies, and the transmission of cultural knowledge across generations.

‘Sacred sites’ such as ‘Gunung Burni Telong’ (Burni Telong Mountain) and ‘Danau Laut Tawar’ (Lake Laut Tawar) hold spiritual significance for the Gayo people, serving as places of pilgrimage, worship, and cultural memory. These sites are believed to be imbued with spiritual energy and ancestral presence, providing solace, guidance, and blessings to those who visit. They represent the deep-rooted connection between the Gayo community and their land, reinforcing beliefs in spiritual interconnectedness and the enduring legacy of their ancestors.

‘Oral traditions and storytelling’ are integral to preserving Gayo cultural heritage and transmitting knowledge across generations. Elders pass down myths, legends, and historical narratives through oral storytelling, imparting wisdom, moral teachings, and cultural values to younger members of the community. These stories often feature heroic figures, moral dilemmas, and lessons from

nature, reflecting the Gayo people's reverence for tradition, resilience, and their deep connection to the land and its resources.

'Traditional medicine and healing practices' reflect the Gayo community's holistic approach to health and well-being, integrating natural remedies, herbs, and spiritual rituals. Practiced by traditional healers known as 'dukun', these healing traditions emphasize the balance between physical, mental, and spiritual health, drawing on ancestral knowledge and local biodiversity. They symbolize resilience, self-reliance, and the community's deep-rooted respect for nature's healing powers and the interconnectedness of all living things.

'Culinary traditions' such as 'Kawa' (traditional Gayo coffee) and 'Sambal Lado' (spicy chili paste) showcase the diversity and flavors of Gayo cuisine. These dishes are prepared with locally sourced ingredients and traditional cooking techniques, reflecting the region's agricultural bounty and culinary heritage. Shared during social gatherings and festive occasions, Gayo cuisine symbolizes hospitality, community sharing, and the preservation of cultural identity through food. (Marhamah, 2018)

'Spiritual beliefs and cosmology' shape the worldview of the Gayo people, emphasizing harmony with nature, ancestral reverence, and spiritual interconnectedness. Beliefs in animism and ancestor worship underscore the spiritual bond between humans, animals, plants, and the supernatural realm, guiding daily practices, rituals, and community interactions. Spiritual ceremonies and offerings honor ancestral spirits and seek their blessings for health, prosperity, and harmony within the community. (Marhamah, 2018)

In conclusion, these symbolic elements — from traditional houses and ceremonial rituals to cultural textiles, music, and spiritual beliefs — collectively embody the essence of Gayo culture. They serve as pillars of identity, resilience, and community cohesion, preserving centuries-old traditions and reinforcing the unique cultural heritage of the Gayo people amidst modern influences and societal changes. Through these symbolic expressions, the Gayo community continues to celebrate their heritage, transmit ancestral wisdom, and nurture a deep sense of belonging and pride in their cultural legacy.

2. Symbolic elements that Convey Cultural Meanings and Values within the Gayo Community

Semiotic elements within Sumang culture convey a multitude of cultural meanings and values that underpin the social fabric and collective identity of the community. Through symbols, rituals, and artifacts, Sumang people communicate their worldview, beliefs, and aspirations, fostering a sense of connection and belonging across generations.

Sumang textiles serve as intricate canvases that encode cultural meanings and values through patterns, colors, and motifs. Each design reflects a narrative of heritage, resilience, and spiritual connection, conveying messages of cultural pride and identity. The intricate craftsmanship of these textiles embodies values of creativity, patience, and craftsmanship, while the vibrant colors symbolize vitality, joy, and abundance. (Iswanto, 2022)

Traditional dances and music in Sumang culture convey cultural meanings and values through movement, rhythm, and melody. These artistic expressions serve as embodiments of community spirit, resilience, and unity, fostering a sense of belonging and shared identity. Through dance and music, Sumang people celebrate their cultural heritage, honor their ancestors, and express their relationship with the natural world, conveying values of harmony, respect, and interconnectedness. (Iswanto, 2022)

Rituals and ceremonies play a central role in Sumang culture, conveying cultural meanings and values through symbolic gestures and sacred rites. Whether in weddings, funerals, or harvest festivals, these rituals embody beliefs about life, death, and the cyclical nature of existence. Through these ceremonies, Sumang people reaffirm their connections to tradition, community, and the divine, conveying values of reverence, solidarity, and continuity.

Architecture in Sumang culture reflects cultural meanings and values through its design, layout, and symbolism. From sacred spaces to everyday dwellings, architectural elements convey beliefs about the relationship between humans, nature, and the spiritual realm. The use of natural materials, sacred geometry, and ornamentation communicates values of harmony, sustainability, and reverence for the land. (Iswanto, 2022)

Language in Sumang culture serves as a repository of cultural meanings and values, encoding stories, myths, and oral traditions passed down through generations. The names of places, the titles of elders, and the phrases used in everyday speech carry layers of meaning that reflect beliefs, values, and social

norms. Through language, Sumang people convey respect for tradition, honor for ancestors, and appreciation for the natural world.

Artifacts in Sumang culture serve as tangible manifestations of the community's collective identity, carrying profound cultural meanings and values through their craftsmanship, symbolism, and purposeful use. Whether it's pottery, carvings, jewelry, or ceremonial objects, each artifact narrates a story of cultural identity, heritage, and spirituality within Sumang society.

Craftsmanship plays a pivotal role in the creation of Sumang artifacts, as skilled artisans meticulously craft each piece using traditional techniques passed down through generations. The intricate designs, meticulous detailing, and expert craftsmanship reflect not only the technical prowess of the artisans but also the cultural significance attached to the artifacts. Through their craftsmanship, Sumang artisans express values of dedication, precision, and pride in their cultural heritage.

Symbolism infuses Sumang artifacts with layers of meaning, imbuing them with spiritual, social, and historical significance. From intricate patterns to symbolic motifs, each element carries symbolic weight, representing aspects of Sumang cosmology, mythology, and everyday life. For example, carvings may depict mythological creatures or ancestral spirits, while jewelry may feature symbols of protection or prosperity. Through these symbols, Sumang artifacts convey narratives of cultural identity, resilience, and reverence for tradition.

The purposeful use of artifacts within Sumang culture further reinforces their cultural meanings and values. Pottery, for example, may be used in daily

rituals, such as food preparation or storage, symbolizing the importance of sustenance and communal sharing. Carvings and sculptures may adorn sacred spaces or ceremonial sites, serving as conduits for spiritual connection and reverence. Jewelry may be worn during significant life events, such as weddings or initiations, signifying status, belonging, or protection. Through their use, Sumang artifacts become integral components of cultural practices, reinforcing social bonds, and transmitting cultural values across generations.

Sumang artifacts not only reflect a deep connection to cultural heritage but also serve as tangible links to ancestral wisdom and knowledge. Through their craftsmanship, symbolism, and purposeful use, these artifacts embody values of creativity, craftsmanship, and reverence for tradition within Sumang society. They serve as repositories of cultural identity, preserving the stories, beliefs, and values of Sumang culture for future generations to cherish and uphold.

Social customs and norms in Sumang culture convey cultural meanings and values through gestures, rituals, and codes of conduct. Modes of greeting, codes of hospitality, and rules of social interaction embody beliefs about respect, reciprocity, and community harmony. Through these customs, Sumang people reinforce values of respect for elders, hospitality to strangers, and cooperation within the community. (Narhan, 2022)

Food and cuisine in Sumang culture carry cultural meanings and values through ingredients, flavors, and culinary traditions. From traditional dishes to festive feasts, food serves as a vehicle for expressing cultural identity, heritage, and values. Through shared meals and communal gatherings, Sumang people

celebrate their connections to the land, the seasons, and each other, conveying values of generosity, hospitality, and gratitude.

Cosmology and worldview in Sumang culture convey cultural meanings and values through myths, legends, and spiritual beliefs. Symbols such as the sun, the moon, and the stars represent cosmic forces and divine energies that shape human destiny. Through their cosmology, Sumang people express beliefs about the interconnectedness of all life, the cycles of nature, and the mysteries of the universe, conveying values of reverence for the natural world and humility before the divine. (Narhan, 2022)

Education and transmission of knowledge in Sumang culture convey cultural meanings and values through oral traditions, storytelling, and experiential learning. From elders passing down wisdom to the younger generation to formalized rituals of initiation and apprenticeship, education is steeped in cultural values and beliefs. Through these practices, Sumang people convey values of respect for tradition, reverence for knowledge, and a commitment to lifelong learning.

Healing and medicine in Sumang culture convey cultural meanings and values through rituals, herbal remedies, and spiritual practices. Symbols such as plants, animals, and sacred objects represent healing energies and spiritual forces that restore balance and harmony. Through their healing practices, Sumang people convey values of holistic well-being, interconnectedness of mind, body, and spirit, and a deep respect for the healing powers of nature.

Economic systems and trade in Sumang culture convey cultural meanings and values through principles of reciprocity, mutual obligation, and communal ownership. From bartering and gift exchange to market transactions, economic activities are embedded in social relationships and cultural values. Through these economic systems, Sumang people convey values of cooperation, mutual support, and a shared responsibility for the well-being of the community. (Narhan, 2022)

Conflict resolution and justice in Sumang culture convey cultural meanings and values through rituals, councils, and customary laws that emphasize reconciliation and restoration of harmony. Symbols such as peace pipes, sacred objects, and symbolic gestures represent principles of forgiveness, restitution, and community cohesion. Through these mechanisms, Sumang people convey values of respect for diversity, empathy for others, and a commitment to resolving disputes peacefully. (Ramaidani, 2022)

Environmental stewardship and sustainability in Sumang culture convey cultural meanings and values through rituals, ceremonies, and customary laws that honor and protect the natural world. Symbols such as sacred trees, totems, and animal spirits represent the interconnectedness of all life and the responsibility of humans to care for the Earth. Through their environmental practices, Sumang people convey values of reverence for nature, stewardship of the land, and a commitment to preserving the planet for future generations.

3. Gayo People convey cultural meanings and Value in the Ways They Are

The Gayo people of Sumatra express their cultural meanings and values through various facets of daily life, reflecting a deep-rooted connection to their heritage and environment. One prominent aspect is their traditional practices, where rituals and ceremonies such as ‘Meugang’ (livestock sacrifice) and ‘Inong Bale’ (coming-of-age ceremony for girls) play pivotal roles. These rituals are not merely formalities but are imbued with spiritual significance, symbolizing community unity, respect for nature, and the continuity of ancestral traditions. Meugang, for instance, underscores the Gayo people’s belief in the interconnectedness between humans, animals, and the natural world, fostering a sense of responsibility and stewardship towards the environment. (Rahman, 2021)

Another profound way the Gayo people convey cultural meanings and values is through their craftsmanship and artistic traditions, particularly seen in ‘cultural textiles’ such as ‘sarung’ and ‘songket’. These textiles are intricately woven with symbolic motifs that convey stories of lineage, spirituality, and local wisdom. Handcrafted by skilled artisans, these textiles serve as tangible expressions of identity and social status within the community, preserving centuries-old weaving techniques and reinforcing cultural pride. (Ramaidani, 2022)

Furthermore, the Gayo community upholds cultural meanings and values through their ‘adat’ or customary law system. Rooted in communal consensus and ancestral wisdom, adat regulates various aspects of daily life including marriage, inheritance, and conflict resolution. It embodies principles of justice, equity, and

mutual respect among community members, providing a framework for social cohesion and collective responsibility. Adat ceremonies and councils serve as platforms for elders to transmit cultural teachings and uphold traditions, ensuring the continuity of Gayo cultural heritage amidst changing societal dynamics. (Rahman, 2021)

The influence of Sumang culture on character development is profound, shaping individuals' values, beliefs, and identities from an early age. Through the transmission of cultural practices, rituals, and social norms, Sumang culture instills in its members a strong sense of community, resilience, and reverence for tradition.

Sumang culture emphasizes the importance of interconnectedness and mutual support, fostering empathy, compassion, and cooperation among its members. From childhood, individuals are taught the value of helping others, sharing resources, and working together for the common good. This emphasis on collective well-being encourages the development of altruistic traits and a sense of responsibility towards the community. (Rahman, 2021)

Rituals and ceremonies in Sumang culture play a crucial role in character development, providing individuals with opportunities for introspection, self-discovery, and spiritual growth. Through participation in rituals such as coming-of-age ceremonies or vision quests, individuals gain a deeper understanding of themselves, their place in the world, and their connection to the larger community. These experiences help cultivate qualities such as resilience, courage, and a sense of purpose.

Traditional dances and music in Sumang culture offer avenues for self-expression, creativity, and emotional release, fostering the development of confidence, self-esteem, and cultural pride. Through participation in dance troupes or musical ensembles, individuals learn to communicate their emotions, thoughts, and experiences through artistic expression, honing their communication skills and cultivating a sense of identity rooted in their cultural heritage. (Rahman, 2021)

The emphasis on storytelling and oral tradition in Sumang culture serves as a vehicle for transmitting values, wisdom, and knowledge from one generation to the next. Through listening to the stories of their elders and sharing their own experiences, individuals learn important lessons about morality, ethics, and the complexities of human nature. These narrative traditions help shape individuals' understanding of right and wrong, shaping their moral compass and guiding their behavior.

The close-knit nature of Sumang communities forms the bedrock of their social fabric, nurturing deep interpersonal bonds and a profound sense of belonging among its members. From childhood, individuals are immersed in a network of familial, friendship, and community ties that serve as pillars of support for their emotional well-being and personal development. (Roslim, 2021)

Within Sumang communities, the importance of family is paramount, with strong ties of kinship binding relatives together in a web of mutual care and support. From an early age, children learn the value of familial bonds, experiencing firsthand the love, guidance, and protection offered by parents,

siblings, and extended family members. These familial relationships cultivate qualities such as loyalty, respect, and interdependence, instilling in individuals a sense of belonging and security that forms the foundation of their emotional well-being. (Roslim, 2021)

Friendship also holds great significance within Sumang culture, with close friendships serving as sources of companionship, encouragement, and understanding. From childhood playmates to lifelong confidants, friends provide individuals with emotional support, shared experiences, and a sense of camaraderie that enriches their lives. Through friendships, individuals learn the importance of empathy, kindness, and reciprocity, cultivating qualities that enhance their interpersonal relationships and contribute to their overall happiness and fulfillment.

Community ties further reinforce the sense of belonging within Sumang culture, as individuals come together to share resources, celebrate traditions, and support one another in times of need. Whether through communal gatherings, religious ceremonies, or cooperative work projects, community members foster a sense of solidarity and mutual assistance that strengthens their bonds and fosters a sense of collective identity. Through participation in community life, individuals learn the value of cooperation, generosity, and inclusivity, contributing to the cohesion and resilience of their community as a whole. (Roslim, 2021)

From an early age, Sumang individuals are immersed in a social environment that prioritizes the well-being of the collective over individual interests. Through their interactions with family, friends, and community

members, individuals learn the importance of empathy, compassion, and cooperation in fostering harmonious relationships and building a thriving community. These interpersonal bonds serve as sources of emotional support, personal growth, and belonging, nurturing the qualities of loyalty, empathy, and trustworthiness that are essential for individual and collective flourishing within Sumang culture.

The reverence for nature and the environment in Sumang culture encourages individuals to develop a deep connection to the natural world, fostering qualities such as mindfulness, gratitude, and stewardship. Through rituals that honor the land, the waters, and the cycles of nature, individuals learn to appreciate the beauty and abundance of the natural world, cultivating a sense of responsibility towards its preservation and protection. (Roslim, 2021)

The emphasis on traditional crafts and skills in Sumang culture encourages individuals to develop patience, perseverance, and a strong work ethic. Whether through weaving, pottery, or woodworking, individuals learn to master their craft through years of practice and dedication, cultivating qualities such as discipline, attention to detail, and pride in their work.

The emphasis on spirituality and the divine in Sumang culture encourages individuals to cultivate a sense of inner peace, resilience, and transcendence. Through meditation, prayer, or participation in religious ceremonies, individuals learn to connect with something greater than themselves, finding solace and strength in times of hardship and adversity.

The emphasis on respect for elders and ancestors in Sumang culture instills in individuals a sense of reverence, gratitude, and humility. From an early age, individuals learn to honor the wisdom and experience of their elders, cultivating qualities such as humility, patience, and a willingness to learn from others. (Shaumiwaty, 2020)

The emphasis on hospitality and generosity in Sumang culture encourages individuals to cultivate a spirit of kindness, generosity, and openness towards others. Whether through offering food to guests, providing shelter to travelers, or welcoming strangers into their homes, individuals learn the importance of extending hospitality to others, cultivating qualities such as generosity, compassion, and empathy.

The emphasis on resilience and adaptability in Sumang culture encourages individuals to develop the resilience, adaptability, and perseverance needed to overcome challenges and adversity. Whether through facing natural disasters, economic hardships, or social upheaval, individuals learn to adapt to changing circumstances, cultivate qualities such as resilience, flexibility, and resourcefulness.

The emphasis on creativity and innovation in Sumang culture encourages individuals to develop their creative potential, explore new ideas, and find innovative solutions to problems. Whether through artistic expression, technological innovation, or entrepreneurial ventures, individuals learn to harness their creative energy, cultivate qualities such as curiosity, imagination, and a willingness to take risks. (Shaumiwaty, 2020)

The emphasis on cultural pride and identity in Sumang culture encourages individuals to develop a strong sense of pride, confidence, and self-respect rooted in their cultural heritage. Through participation in cultural festivals, language revitalization efforts, or community celebrations, individuals learn to embrace their identity as members of the Sumang community, cultivating qualities such as cultural pride, confidence, and a sense of belonging. (Syukri, 2018)

Overall, Sumang culture plays a central role in shaping the character development of its members, instilling in them a strong sense of community, resilience, and reverence for tradition. Through its emphasis on interconnectedness, spirituality, and cultural pride, Sumang culture fosters the development of individuals who are compassionate, resilient, and deeply connected to their communities and the natural world.

Preserving Sumang culture faces numerous challenges in the modern world, requiring innovative adaptations and strategies to safeguard its rich heritage for future generations. From globalization and urbanization to environmental degradation and social change, Sumang culture must navigate a complex landscape of threats while finding ways to adapt and thrive in the face of adversity. (Shaumiwaty, 2020)

Globalization poses one of the most significant challenges to cultural preservation, as it brings with it the homogenizing forces of mass media, consumerism, and Westernization. As Sumang communities are exposed to external influences, traditional practices, languages, and belief systems risk erosion or assimilation into dominant cultural norms. To address this challenge,

Sumang communities must find ways to balance the benefits of globalization with the need to protect and promote their unique cultural identity. (Syukri, 2018)

B. Discussion

1. Vital Symbolic Elements Within Sumang Culture As Perceived By The Gayo Community

Sumang culture among the Gayo Community is a tapestry woven with semiotic elements that deeply influence traditions, beliefs, and daily life, creating a complex web of significance. Through symbols, rituals, and artifacts, the Sumang people express their values and history, nurturing a shared identity and fostering a profound sense of belonging. Traditional textiles, dances, and music serve as symbolic expressions conveying cultural stories and beliefs, while rituals and ceremonies provide essential avenues for sharing collective experiences and spiritual connections. Artifacts like pottery, carvings, and jewelry transmit cultural legacy across generations, reinforcing community bonds and cultural identity.

In Sumang textiles, intricate patterns and vibrant colors transcend mere decoration; they carry profound symbolism rooted in myth, legend, and ancestral wisdom. Motifs drawn from the natural world—plants, animals, and celestial bodies—symbolize specific deities, spiritual beliefs, and cultural practices, emphasizing the interconnectedness between humans and their environment. The intentional use of colors such as vibrant red, symbolizing vitality and courage, and earthy tones like brown and green, representing stability and harmony with nature, enriches Sumang culture, evoking deep emotional and ancestral connections.

Beyond their symbolic roles, Sumang textiles play practical roles in community life, prominently featuring in ceremonies and celebrations that uphold cultural identity and values. These textiles are cherished as gifts and heirlooms, ensuring the transmission of stories and traditions across generations—a vital aspect of cultural preservation amidst changing times. Traditional dances and music further embody Sumang culture, transcending artistic expression to serve as living rituals that reinforce collective memory and a shared sense of identity. Similarly, rituals and ceremonies form the heart of Sumang community life, bonding individuals through symbolic gestures and rites that honor ancestors and spiritual realms, fostering continuity and a profound sense of belonging across generations.

Sumang architecture also reflects cultural values, serving not just as functional spaces but as reflections of their worldview and social organization. Every architectural element, from village layouts to sacred spaces, is imbued with symbolic meaning using natural materials, sacred geometry, and ornamentation to honor land, ancestors, and spiritual beliefs. Language in Sumang culture serves as a repository of cultural knowledge, encoding stories and oral traditions that connect individuals to their history and community, reinforcing cultural identity across generations.

Artifacts in Sumang culture, ranging from pottery to jewelry, serve as tangible links to the past, preserving cultural memory and tradition. These artifacts carry stories of craftsmanship and belief, enriching Sumang identity across temporal and spatial boundaries. Social customs and norms within Sumang

culture are deeply rooted in symbolism, reflecting values and relationships through subtle cues and gestures that communicate respect, status, and belonging. Food and cuisine embody cultural values and rituals, celebrating connections to land, ancestors, and community through shared meals that foster kinship and solidarity.

Sumang cosmology interprets the universe through myths and spiritual beliefs where symbols like the sun, moon, and stars hold profound significance, representing cosmic forces shaping human destiny. Education in Sumang culture revolves around oral traditions and experiential learning, passing wisdom from elders to youth through storytelling, song, and ritual, preserving heritage and nurturing future leaders. Healing and medicine integrate physical, emotional, and spiritual dimensions through rituals and herbal remedies, connecting individuals to nature's healing powers and divine energies.

Economic systems and trade in Sumang culture emphasize reciprocity and mutual obligation, reflecting interconnectedness with neighboring societies through symbols like currency and trade routes. Conflict resolution and justice focus on reconciliation and restoration through rituals and customary laws that uphold community cohesion and values. Environmental stewardship and sustainability are central, guided by reverence for land and nature, underscored by rituals and laws preserving sacred sites and biodiversity.

In essence, Sumang culture embodies a rich tapestry of semiotic elements that weave together traditions, beliefs, and values into everyday life. Through textiles, rituals, music, architecture, language, and artifacts, the Sumang people

preserve their heritage, strengthen community bonds, and cultivate a profound sense of identity that transcends generations.

2. Symbolic elements that Convey Cultural Meanings and Values within the Gayo Community

Semiotic elements form the heart of Sumang culture, intricately weaving together a tapestry of meanings and values that define their social fabric and collective identity. Through symbols, rituals, and artifacts, the Sumang people communicate profound insights into their worldview, beliefs, and aspirations, fostering a deep sense of connection and belonging across generations.

Sumang textiles are not merely fabrics but intricate canvases that encode cultural narratives through patterns, colors, and motifs. Each textile design tells a story of heritage, resilience, and spiritual connection, conveying messages of cultural pride and identity. The craftsmanship involved reflects values of creativity, patience, and meticulous attention to detail, with vibrant colors symbolizing vitality and joy, and earthy tones embodying a harmonious relationship with nature.

Traditional dances and music are vibrant expressions within Sumang culture, conveying meanings through movement, rhythm, and melody. These artistic forms serve as embodiments of community spirit, resilience, and unity, celebrating cultural heritage and honoring ancestors. Through dance and music, the Sumang people express their profound relationship with the natural world, emphasizing values of harmony, respect, and interconnectedness.

Rituals and ceremonies hold significant cultural weight in Sumang society, conveying meanings and values through symbolic gestures and sacred rites. Whether marking life milestones or seasonal transitions, these rituals embody beliefs about the cyclical nature of existence and reaffirm connections to tradition, community, and the divine. They underscore values of reverence, solidarity, and continuity across generations.

Architecture in Sumang culture is not merely functional but laden with cultural symbolism. From everyday dwellings to sacred spaces, architectural designs reflect beliefs about the relationship between humans, nature, and the spiritual realm. The use of natural materials and sacred geometries communicates values of sustainability, harmony, and reverence for ancestral lands, shaping communal spaces that embody cultural identity and values.

Language serves as a living repository of Sumang culture, encoding stories, myths, and social norms passed down through generations. The nuances in language, from place names to everyday expressions, reflect beliefs and values deeply rooted in respect for tradition, honor for ancestors, and an intimate connection with the natural world.

Artifacts in Sumang culture are tangible reflections of collective identity, carrying profound cultural meanings through craftsmanship and symbolism. Whether pottery, carvings, jewelry, or ceremonial objects, each artifact narrates stories of heritage and spirituality. The intricate craftsmanship and symbolic motifs express values of dedication, precision, and pride in cultural heritage,

serving as vital links to ancestral wisdom and preserving Sumang culture for future generations.

3. Gayo People convey cultural meanings and Value in the Ways They Are

The Gayo people of Sumatra exemplify a culture deeply intertwined with communal values and traditions that shape individual character development from a young age. Central to Gayo cultural identity are rituals and ceremonies that serve as pivotal moments for both personal and communal growth. These ceremonies, such as 'Meugang' and 'Inong Bale', instill values of respect, responsibility, and interconnectedness among community members. Meugang, for instance, underscores the Gayo people's reverence for nature and the importance of sustainable living practices, fostering a sense of stewardship towards the environment and promoting harmony with the natural world.

Moreover, Gayo cultural practices emphasize the importance of 'adat' or customary law in regulating community life. Adat embodies principles of justice, equity, and collective responsibility, guiding interpersonal relationships, resolving conflicts, and preserving social cohesion. Through adat ceremonies and councils, elders impart wisdom and uphold cultural traditions, ensuring continuity and reinforcing the values of respect and reciprocity within the community.

Artistic traditions such as 'cultural textiles' and 'traditional music' also play significant roles in conveying cultural meanings and values among the Gayo people. Cultural textiles like sarung and songket are intricately woven with symbolic motifs that reflect stories of lineage, spirituality, and local wisdom. These textiles not only serve as markers of identity and social status but also

uphold traditions of craftsmanship and artistic expression passed down through generations.

Additionally, the Gayo community values ‘oral traditions and storytelling’ as essential means of preserving cultural heritage and transmitting knowledge. Elders share myths, legends, and historical narratives through oral storytelling, imparting moral lessons, resilience, and a deep connection to the land and its resources. These stories reinforce cultural identity, nurture a sense of belonging, and teach younger generations about their heritage, fostering a shared understanding of community values and principles.

In conclusion, the Gayo people embody cultural meanings and values through their rich tapestry of traditions, ceremonies, artistic expressions, and oral histories. These elements not only shape individual character development but also reinforce the collective identity, resilience, and interconnectedness within the community. By honoring and perpetuating their cultural heritage, the Gayo people continue to uphold their values, strengthen community bonds, and navigate the complexities of modern life while preserving their unique cultural identity.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusions

1. In the Sumang culture of the Gayo community, the 'tangke', a traditional house built from local materials like wood and bamboo, serves as a crucial symbolic element deeply intertwined with their identity and values. It functions not just as a physical shelter but as a spiritual and communal hub, representing ancestral lineage, unity, and respect for nature. The tangke is central to rituals, ceremonies, and social events, playing a key role in preserving and passing down spiritual beliefs and cultural traditions. It embodies the Gayo people's connection to their environment and symbolizes their cultural continuity and resilience in the face of modern influences.
2. In the Gayo community, symbolic elements like ritual dances and cultural textiles play a crucial role in expressing cultural meanings and values. The Seudati dance, for instance, represents unity, collective identity, and a spiritual connection with their land and ancestors. Accompanied by rhythmic music and elaborate costumes, it tells stories of bravery, love, and ancestral wisdom, strengthening community bonds and imparting moral lessons. Similarly, cultural textiles such as sarung and songket are vital expressions of identity and social status. Adorned with symbolic motifs, these textiles reflect lineage, spirituality, and local wisdom, showcasing artistic craftsmanship and preserving core traditions of Gayo cultural heritage.

3. The Gayo people express their cultural meanings and values through daily practices rooted in their heritage and community. Central to this is 'adat', or customary law, which dictates social norms, relationships, and communal duties, emphasizing justice, equity, and mutual respect to maintain harmony. Oral traditions and storytelling also play a vital role, with elders passing down myths, legends, and historical narratives that teach moral lessons and reinforce cultural identity. These practices help the Gayo celebrate their heritage, uphold their values, and foster unity and cultural pride as they navigate modern changes.

B. Suggestions

Based on the semiotic analysis of Sumang culture in the Gayo community, here are the suggestions:

1. Initiate a comprehensive documentation project focused on identifying, recording, and preserving semiotic elements within Sumang culture. This includes symbols, rituals, traditional arts, and oral narratives. Establish digital archives and physical repositories within the community to safeguard this cultural heritage for future generations. Work closely with cultural experts, elders, and community members to ensure accuracy and completeness in the documentation process.
2. Develop educational programs and materials that delve into the cultural meanings and values conveyed by semiotic elements in Sumang culture. These initiatives should aim to educate both community members and outsiders about the significance of symbols, rituals, and traditional practices. Use

workshops, exhibitions, and cultural events to promote understanding and appreciation among different age groups, fostering a sense of pride and identity within the community.

3. Implement initiatives that leverage Sumang cultural values embedded in semiotic elements to foster positive character development among youth. This can include integrating teachings on resilience, community spirit, and respect for nature into educational curricula and youth programs. Encourage participation in cultural activities such as traditional dances, ceremonies, and storytelling sessions to instill these values from an early age. Collaborate with schools, community centers, and local leaders to embed cultural teachings in everyday life.
4. Recognize the challenges facing cultural preservation, such as urbanization, environmental degradation, and social change, and develop adaptive strategies. Engage with community members to identify ways to adapt traditional practices to modern contexts without compromising their integrity. Foster innovation in cultural preservation through initiatives like sustainable tourism that respect cultural protocols and provide economic opportunities. Advocate for policies that protect cultural heritage and support community-led efforts in maintaining Sumang traditions amidst evolving societal pressures.

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APPENDIX
RESEARCH DATA

Appendix 1

Term	Description	Analysis Process
1. Tangke	This traditional house was created to symbolize the lineage of ancestors and the unity of the Sumang people.	This term is included as one of vitall symbolic elements
2. Rengginang	A snack made from slightly crunchy rice, for the Sumang people, this food is believed to symbolize prosperity and friendliness.	This term is included as one of vitall symbolic elements
3. Ritual dance	The Seudati dance, with deep symbolic meaning, strengthens community values.	This term is included as one of vitall symbolic elements
4. Custom	A community's customary legal system is created to regulate daily life and social order.	This term is included as one of vitall symbolic elements
5. Cultural textiles	Sarongs and songkets with symbolic patterns depicting lineage and spirituality.	This term is included as one of vitall symbolic elements

6. Traditional music	Instruments such as drums and tambourines are integral to cultural identity.	This term is included as one of vitall symbolic elements
7. Ceremonial rituals	Meugang (meaning sacrifice of livestock) and Inong Bale (coming of age ceremony for women).	This term is included as one of vitall symbolic elements
8. Traditional architecture	Rumoh Aceh reflects local wisdom and the life of the local community.	This term is included as one of vitall symbolic elements
9. Holy place	Mount Burni Telong and Lake Laut Tawar as spiritually important places.	This term is included as one of vitall symbolic elements
10. Oral traditions and stories	Preserving myths, legends and historical narratives.	This term is included as one of vitall symbolic elements
11. Traditional medicine	A healing practice that integrates natural herbs and spiritual rituals.	This term is included as one of vitall symbolic elements
12. Culinary traditions	Kawa (traditional Gayo coffee) and Sambal Lado (spicy chili sauce).	This term is included as one of vitall symbolic elements
13. Spiritual beliefs and cosmology	Emphasizes harmony with nature and respect for ancestors.	This term is included as one of vitall symbolic elements

Appendix 2

Term	Description	Analysis Process
1. Textiles	Concerning cultural meaning through patterns, colors, and motifs, reflecting heritage and spiritual connections.	This is a result of Sumang culture
2. Traditional dance and music	Communicating a spirit of community, resilience, and unity through movement, rhythm, and melody.	This is a result of Sumang culture
3. Rituals and ceremonies	Symbolic gestures at weddings, funerals, and festivals represent beliefs about life, death, and continuity.	This is a result of Sumang culture
4. Architecture	Reflects beliefs about the human-nature spirit relationship using natural materials and sacred geometry.	This is a result of Sumang culture
5. Language	Concerning stories, myths and oral traditions that reflect beliefs, values and social norms.	This is a result of Sumang culture
6. Artifacts	A tangible manifestation of collective identity with expertise, symbolism,	This is a result of Sumang culture

	and cultural goals.	
7. Handicraft skills	The craftsmen's skills reflect cultural significance and the values of dedication and precision.	This is a result of Sumang culture
8. Symbolism	Incorporate artifacts with spiritual, social, and historical significance that reflect cosmology and mythology.	This is a result of Sumang culture
9. Meaningful use of artifacts	Integrate in daily rituals, ceremonies and practices that strengthen cultural values and social ties.	This is a result of Sumang culture
10. Social customs and norms	Gestures, codes of friendliness, and social rules reflect respect, reciprocity, and community harmony.	This is a result of Sumang culture
11. Food and culinary delights	Expressing cultural identity, heritage and values through ingredients, flavors and culinary traditions.	This is a result of Sumang culture
12. Cosmology and worldview	Myths and spiritual beliefs convey beliefs about connectedness and respect for nature.	This is a result of Sumang culture
13. Education and	Oral traditions and	This is a result of Sumang culture

distribution of knowledge	formal rituals convey traditional values and respect for knowledge.	
14. Healing and traditional medicine	Rituals, medicinal herbs, and symbols convey holistic well-being and reverence for the healing power of nature.	This is a result of Sumang culture
15. Economic and trade systems	The principles of reciprocity and common ownership embed economic activity in social relations.	This is a result of Sumang culture
16. Conflict resolution and justice	Rituals, councils, and laws emphasize reconciliation, forgiveness, and community cohesion.	This is a result of Sumang culture
17. Environmental leadership and sustainability	Rituals, ceremonies and laws respect and protect nature, conveying values of stewardship and respect.	This is a result of Sumang culture

Appendix 3

Term	Description	Analysis Process
1. Traditional practices and rituals	Including ceremonies such as ‘Meugang’ and ‘Inong Bale’ which symbolize community unity, respect for nature, and continuity of ancestors.	This term is included in cultural meaning and value
2. Craft skills and artistic traditions	Emphasized through ‘cultural textiles’ such as ‘sarong’ and ‘songket’, showcasing intricate weaving techniques and symbolic motifs.	This term is included in cultural meaning and value
3. Customs or Customary Legal System	Regulates daily life, marriage, inheritance, and conflict resolution, emphasizing justice, equality, and shared responsibility.	This term is included in cultural meaning and value
4. Character development	Sumang culture shapes community values, resilience, and traditions through rituals, social norms, and ancient stories.	This term is included in cultural meaning and value
5. Social structure and community ties	Strong emphasis on family, friendship, and community ties as pillars of support and identity.	This term is included in cultural meaning and value
6. Honor and Generosity	Cultural values that promote	This term is included in cultural meaning and value

	empathy, kindness, and cooperation among community members.	
7. Spirituality and Connection with Nature	Practices such as environmentally respectful rituals support awareness, stewardship and respect for natural cycles.	This term is included in cultural meaning and value
8. Craft Skills and Traditional Skills	Encourages patience, dedication, and a strong work ethic, contributing to cultural pride and identity.	This term is included in cultural meaning and value
9. Resilience and Adaptability	The culture emphasizes overcoming challenges, building the qualities of flexibility, adaptability and perseverance.	This term is included in cultural meaning and value
10. Creativity and Innovation	Encourages exploration, artistic expression, and problem-solving abilities among individuals.	This term is included in cultural meaning and value
11. Cultural Pride and Identity	Promote self-confidence, self-respect and a sense of belonging rooted in Sumang heritage and traditions.	This term is included in cultural meaning and value
12. Challenges to Cultural Preservation	Globalization, urbanization, environmental degradation and social change threaten to erode Sumang's cultural identity.	This term is included in cultural meaning and value