

Pancasila Ideology in Practice: Ethnographic Study of Integration in Amaq Abir Theater West Nusa Tenggara

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the integration of Pancasila values in the traditional theater performance of Amaq Abir, a cultural heritage preserved by Sanggar Pustaka Budaya in Central Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. The urgency of this research arises from the impact of globalization, which often generates cultural dislocation, identity crises, and moral shifts. These conditions emphasize the importance of developing character education models grounded in local wisdom while reinforcing Pancasila as the nation's ideological foundation. Using a qualitative design with an ethnographic approach, data were obtained through systematic observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The findings show that Amaq Abir performances embody the five principles of Pancasila through dialogic narratives, symbolic costumes, traditional music, and social interaction. Values of religiosity, humanity, unity, deliberation, and social justice are not only represented artistically but also lived communally by performers and audiences. The study positions Amaq Abir as more than folk entertainment; it serves as a medium for contextualized character education and ideological transmission. Its novelty lies in mapping how Pancasila values are integrated into traditional performance arts, framing them as cultural strategies and pedagogical tools. Broader implications highlight the revitalization of traditional arts, the strengthening of cultural identity, and the collaboration of local governments, educational institutions, and art communities to embed these practices into national character education agendas.

KEYWORDS

Integrating Values
Amaq Abir Traditional
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Pancasila Ideology

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INTRODUCTION

Theater, as a form of performing art, has a long history rooted in conventional stage settings with scripts as the main reference.

Character education holds a strategic position in nation-building. In the context of globalization characterized by the rapid flow of information, advances in digital technology, and increasingly intensive cross-cultural interactions, character formation has become an indispensable necessity. In West Nusa Tenggara, particularly in Marong Village, the increasing exposure to global cultural flows has begun to reshape local value systems, as reflected in changing community perceptions toward traditional performative practices such as Amaq Abir and a gradual weakening of their role in fostering collective identity and social cohesion. Therefore, character education functions not only to shape individual personality

but also as a moral safeguard for society in navigating socio-cultural changes (Endayani, 2023; Hasibua et al., 2021).

In Indonesia, the urgency of character education is even more pronounced, as the nation stands on the foundation of the Pancasila ideology. Pancasila serves not merely as a state symbol but as a philosophy of life and a moral compass that underpins all aspects of societal life. The values of Pancasila encompass the principles of divinity, humanity, unity, democracy, and social justice, which, when consistently internalized, can strengthen social cohesion amid ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity. However, reality shows that the understanding and practice of Pancasila remain far from ideal. The prevalence of intolerance, identity polarization, and weakening national solidarity indicate that strengthening the Pancasila ideology is an urgent agenda (Bappenas, 2025; Siburian et al., 2021).

In the regional context, the Province of West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) faces a dual challenge. On one hand, the region is developing as an international tourism destination, requiring its communities to be open to global values. On the other hand, such openness may generate cultural identity tensions and erode the traditional values that have long served as a social adhesive. The people of NTB, particularly the younger generation, are expected to remain competitive in the global era while remaining rooted in local cultural values and the ideology of Pancasila (Simanjuntak & Fitriana, 2020; Suryadmaja, 2025). This situation underscores the urgency of adopting creative and context-sensitive strategies to instill Pancasila values through media that are closely connected to the community's everyday life.

One of the most effective media for internalizing values is traditional performing arts. For generations, performing arts have served as a vehicle of cultural expression that not only provides entertainment but also conveys moral messages, social values, and the collective identity of society. Its aesthetic appeal is capable of evoking emotions while influencing audience perspectives. Consequently, traditional performing arts hold significant potential as a medium for character education that is contextually relevant to local culture. In this regard, the traditional theater *Amaq Abir* in Central Lombok, NTB, represents a highly promising example (Renda, 2024).

Amaq Abir is a cultural expression of the Sasak community rich with symbolic meaning and local wisdom more than merely a form of folk entertainment. This performance reflects life wisdom, social ethics, and moral values that have been passed down through generations (Renda, 2024). These values are aligned with the fundamental principles of Pancasila; therefore, when utilized appropriately, *Amaq Abir* can serve as an effective means of strengthening the internalization of Pancasila ideology within society. However, the potential of *Amaq Abir* has not been fully explored as an integrated educational tool for character building and Pancasila reinforcement. Previous research on *Amaq Abir* theatre has primarily addressed its aesthetic forms and cultural symbolism (Zuhri et al., 2018; Rapi Renda et al., 2024), with a particular focus on performance structures, mask semiotics, and idiomatic aesthetic elements. However, there remains a lack of explicit inquiry into how *Amaq Abir* functions pedagogically or how it strategically contributes to the transmission of ideological values within the community. Such a pedagogical and ideological perspective has been examined in studies of other Indonesian traditional performing arts, such as Randai (Miftahurrahmi & Nurhabibah, 2022), but has not yet been systematically explored in the context of *Amaq Abir*.

In light of this gap, this study aims to analyze the symbolic values embedded in *Amaq Abir* and explore its potential as a medium for reinforcing Pancasila ideology, particularly among younger audiences in NTB. By positioning *Amaq Abir* not merely as folk

entertainment but as a vehicle for cultural transmission and civic education, this research contributes to performance studies, cultural policy, and character education discourse.

Strengthening the Pancasila ideology through traditional performing arts also carries strategic implications for regional development. First, it reinforces local cultural identity, which simultaneously enhances the appeal of culture-based tourism. Second, performing arts that integrate Pancasila values can function as an inclusive public education platform by engaging participants from diverse backgrounds. Third, this strategy aligns with national development policies that prioritize the strengthening of Pancasila ideology in the 2025-2029 National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) (Bappenas, 2025) and supports NTB's regional policy as stipulated in Regional Regulation No. 7 of 2013 on the Regional Tourism Development Master Plan (Pemerintah Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Barat, 2013).

Theoretically, this approach also contributes to the broader discourse on character education. Most previous studies have emphasized the implementation of character education through formal channels (Arliani et al., 2021; Dewi, 2022; Kulsum & Muhid, 2022; Nurjatisari et al., 2023). However, character education grounded in local culture through performing arts remains underexplored, particularly in relation to the reinforcement of Pancasila ideology. Consequently, research on the integration of Pancasila values within the traditional performance of *Amaq Abir* in NTB is not only practically relevant but also offers a significant theoretical contribution.

Based on this discussion, the urgency of this research lies in the need to identify a contextually grounded model for the internalization of Pancasila values one that is rooted in local culture and oriented toward character formation. Traditional theater *Amaq Abir* is considered a strategic vehicle for this purpose because of its deep cultural roots, its close connection with the community, and its alignment with the values embodied in Pancasila. This study is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of how traditional performing arts can be utilized to strengthen the Pancasila ideology while simultaneously supporting inclusive, value-based, and equitable regional development.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative method with an ethnographic approach to address the research problems within the material object context (Sugiyono, 2010; Creswell, 2018). The primary objective of this method was to present and elucidate field data and facts through narrative strength while simultaneously interpreting cultural meanings from the perspective of the actors, namely, the community of Central Lombok, NTB (Siddiq & Salama, 2019).

The research process was conducted in three main stages: data collection, data analysis, and presentation of findings. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation techniques (Mack et al., 2005). Observations were carried out at Sanggar Pustaka Budaya, located in Dusun Nyampe, Marong Village, Praya Timur District, Central Lombok, where the *Amaq Abir* traditional theater is nurtured and performed. This study employed semi-structured interviews with selected performers and community members (audience participants) to obtain in-depth insights into their interpretations of the symbols, narratives, and values embedded in *Amaq Abir* performances. Data collection was complemented by systematic documentation through audio, visual, and audiovisual recordings to ensure data comprehensiveness and support analytical triangulation. Key informants included the founder of the *Amaq Abir* theatre group, Lalu Sahudirman; the scriptwriter, Lalu Mahir; as well as actors and local cultural practitioners actively involved in the development of *Amaq Abir* traditional theatre. Additional perspectives were gathered from community members who attended the performances as audience informants. All

participants were selected using purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in and sustained engagement with Amaq Abir practices. Fieldwork was conducted over a five-month period, enabling repeated observations, in-depth interviews, and systematic documentation to capture both performative dynamics and community interpretations.

The collected data were analyzed using an ethnographic approach to interpret the socio-cultural context of the Amaq Abir performance (King-White, 2017; Whitehead, 2005; Krisnawati, 2023). The analysis emphasized the interpretation of meaning from the perspective of the Sasak community as the cultural holders. This approach enabled the uncovering of symbolic dynamics, moral values, and cultural messages within Amaq Abir that might not be readily identified using other methods. The results were synthesized into a narrative account that illustrates the relationship between the traditional performance and the internalization of Pancasila values. Furthermore, a literature review was conducted to enrich the analytical process (Maxwell, 2013).

The literature review served to situate the field findings within a broader theoretical framework, identify knowledge gaps, and compare the results with prior studies. Consequently, the empirical data obtained were analyzed in depth, yielding valid and well-substantiated conclusions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Amaq Abir traditional theater is a distinctive cultural performance of the Sasak community in Central Lombok, integrating ritual, entertainment, and value-based educational functions. As a cultural artifact, Amaq Abir is understood through an ethnographic approach that highlights the everyday practices through which the community maintains its cultural identity (Siddiq & Salama, 2019; Whitehead, 2005).

Amaq Abir is not confined to a specific group or troupe but functions as a shared cultural identity of the Marong Village community. From a performativity perspective, the repeated enactment of Amaq Abir across communal and ceremonial contexts constitutes a performative process through which collective identity and ideological meanings are continuously produced and reinforced. The villagers' perception of Amaq Abir as a form of collective heritage rather than the property of a single troupe reflects an underlying mechanism of value transmission, whereby cultural values related to solidarity, belonging, and communal responsibility are reproduced through performance. Moreover, the frequent invitation of the Marong Village Amaq Abir troupe to perform at major district and provincial events positions the performance as a symbolic representation of regional identity, reinforcing social cohesion and affirming Marong's ideological and cultural positioning within the broader landscape of West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) (Informant A, personal communication, 2025).

The historical emergence of Amaq Abir is closely intertwined with its social functions as a medium of critique, a mechanism for reinforcing communal solidarity, and a space for collective expression (Zuhri et al., 2018). Within the context of globalization, this performing art operates as a vehicle of cultural transmission that both affirms local identity and embodies the cultural resilience of the Sasak people (Hasibua et al., 2021; Siburian et al., 2021). In this sense, Amaq Abir is not merely preserved as a form of traditional heritage but is also interpreted as a mode of cultural resistance to global homogenization. From a performance semiotics perspective, each performative element of Amaq Abir conveys specific social and ideological meanings (Renda et al., 2024). For instance, traditional Sasak costumes dominated by dark tones symbolize simplicity and moral steadfastness, while the use of masks accentuates the symbolic construction of characters and their social roles.



Figure 1. The Masks of Amaq Abir and Amaq Tempenges in the Traditional Amaq Abir Theater Performance

Historically, Amaq Abir performances were delivered in Kawi, which functioned as the primary narrative language. However, given that Kawi was not understood by all societal groups, a collective decision was made to replace it with Sasak, a more widely spoken and accessible language. This linguistic transition aimed to ensure that the moral messages and narrative content embedded in Amaq Abir were more comprehensible to the wider public. In recent developments, several performances have even incorporated the Indonesian language to reach audiences beyond the local community (Informant B, personal communication, 2025).

Actor dialogues, often characterized by humor, satire, and social commentary, mirror the dynamics of rural life. This communicative style is consistent with the function of folk art as a subtle yet effective form of social critique (Jantro & Kiswanto, 2023). The actors' movements are theatrical and highly improvisational, while the musical accompaniment employs traditional instruments particularly the *gendang beleg* which imbues the performance with a rhythmic as well as sacred atmosphere (Suryadmaja, 2025).

The performance reflects core local values such as mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*), loyalty, reverence for ancestors, and social solidarity. These values illustrate that Amaq Abir functions not merely as entertainment but also as a vehicle for the internalization of social norms in an aesthetically engaging form (Arliani et al., 2021; Endayani, 2023). Consequently, the performance becomes a symbolic arena where aesthetics and ideology converge to reinforce cultural identity.

The Sanggar Pustaka Budaya in Marong Village plays a pivotal role in the preservation and revitalization of Amaq Abir. Through a community-based educational approach, the institution equips the younger generation of Sasak people to understand, master, and innovate upon this traditional performance (Zuhri et al., 2018). These preservation efforts align with government policies promoting culture-based regional tourism development (Pemerintah Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Barat, 2013; Bappenas, 2025). Importantly, the initiatives undertaken by Sanggar Pustaka Budaya demonstrate that sustaining traditional arts serves not only tourism purposes but also strengthens character education and collective identity within the local community.

Amaq Abir thus represents the cultural identity of the Sasak people by integrating artistic expression with social and spiritual values. Beyond its entertainment function, this performing art operates as a medium for character education, embedding Pancasila values through local wisdom (Nurjatisari et al., 2023; Putra et al., 2024; Wiratmaja et al., 2021).

From a multicultural education perspective, Amaq Abir also serves as an intergenerational dialogue platform that fosters social solidarity, nurtures tolerance, and fortifies national consciousness (Aryani et al., 2022; Kuncoro et al., 2024). Through these functions, Amaq Abir not only articulates local identity but also contributes to the global discourse on performing arts as an ideological instrument that strengthens cultural and national resilience.

In sum, Amaq Abir offers a significant contribution by presenting a character education model grounded in traditional performing arts. This model is highly relevant for the Sasak community and holds potential as a global best practice for integrating art, education, and national ideology.

Pancasila Values in the Amaq Abir Performance

The traditional Amaq Abir theatre, preserved by Sanggar Pustaka Budaya in Marong Village, Central Lombok, functions not merely as a form of entertainment but as a cultural medium through which Pancasila values are negotiated, embodied, and transmitted within community life. In line with Aryani et al. (2022), who argue that Pancasila may be enacted through diverse forms of character education, including the performing arts, this study approaches Pancasila not as a set of discrete and mechanically represented principles, but as a constellation of interrelated values that emerge dynamically through performance. Rather than assigning each scene to a single principle, the following analysis highlights how multiple Pancasila values often overlap within narratives, symbolic elements, and social interactions, reflecting the contextual and interpretive nature of meaning-making in Amaq Abir performances.

1. *The First Principle: Belief in One Almighty God*

The value of religiosity in *Amaq Abir* is reflected through the opening prayer, ritual symbols, and narratives connected to the beliefs of the Sasak community (Zuhri et al., 2018).

Informant C (personal communication, 2025) emphasizes that at the beginning of the performance, a traditional chant is recited as follows:

*Tembang Pembukaq
Tabe-tabe pamiarse sereng sami
Ting niki ngaturang kekesahan
Cerite biki saq teparan Amaq Abir
Datu Agung muter jagat
Cerite niki tilaran lek jaman kuni
Moge gamaq bau keturunan
Lamun arak taokne sisip
Nunas agung pengampure*

Opening Performance Song
We respectfully seek permission from the audience
This performance will present the story of *Amaq Abir* and the King, renowned throughout the universe.
This story is a legacy from ancient times.
May it serve as guidance for all.
Should there be any errors in the story, performance, narrative, or speech,
the theatre group extends its sincere apologies.

In the context of prayer, the Amaq Abir traditional theatre performance represents this value through the chant of Amaq Tempenges, one of the central characters in the play. In Sasak tradition, a chant (*tembang*) serves as a symbolic prayer. Prayer is understood as the awareness that all human actions must be accompanied by supplication and complete submission to Allah.

This chant is performed when Amaq Tempenges is falsely accused by Datu Ide of committing an act he never did. Unable to refute the accusation, Amaq Tempenges accepts the king's decision with sincerity and entrusts his entire situation to Allah. He expresses this inner feeling through the chant, which is essentially not merely a song, but a prayer articulated in the poetic language of Sasak, imbued with deep spiritual meaning. This

practice reflects the value of Belief in One Almighty God, namely the acknowledgment of God's existence, the act of surrender, and obedience in submitting to Him when facing life's trials (Informant C, personal communication, 2025).

This practice demonstrates that traditional performances are not merely artistic expressions but also a medium for strengthening communal spirituality. This aligns with the findings of Putra et al. (2024), who affirm that performing arts function as a medium for instilling religious character, as well as with Kulsum and Muhid (2022), who emphasize the importance of religious education in reinforcing spiritual values in the modern era.

2. Second Principle: Just and Civilized Humanity

The representation of humanitarian values is evident in the dialogues between characters, which emphasize mutual respect, empathy, and social concern, particularly when portraying family or community conflicts. This is exemplified in the narrative of Princess Ayu's abduction, a central episode in the Amaq Abir traditional theater. Within this context, the abduction is framed as a societal problem that prompts the King, Amaq Tempenges, and the villagers (*kaule*) to seek a collective solution. Such actions reflect empathy and communal responsibility in addressing individual suffering.

Significantly, the abduction incident serves as a turning point in the King's moral awareness. Realizing his own limitations, the King assigns Amaq Tempenges to find a wise elder capable of resolving the crisis, thereby acknowledging the necessity of cooperation and shared effort to attain justice. Amaq Tempenges' perseverance in defending the truth ultimately mediates the conflict among characters and leads to resolution.

According to informants, the suffering endured by Amaq Tempenges in pursuit of justice is regarded as a moral victory. This narrative highlights Amaq Tempenges' role as a mediator who unites the characters and ensures the triumph of justice. Such representation aligns closely with the principle of Just and Civilized Humanity, as it promotes respect for human dignity, emphasizes the importance of cooperation, and advocates for conflict resolution through just and civilized means (Informant C, personal communication, 2025).

Solidarity is further illustrated in scenes where characters support one another in times of hardship, reflecting universal humanitarian values. This finding is consistent with Dewi (2022), who stresses the importance of character education rooted in empathy, and with Arliani et al. (2021), who argue that Sasak folklore is deeply embedded with values of civilized humanity. Moreover, the significance of religious education is emphasized as a means to reinforce spiritual values in the modern era (Kulsum & Muhid, 2022).

3. Third Principle: The Unity of Indonesia

The Amaq Abir performance articulates the value of unity through collective participation, both among characters and within the supporting community. This unity is reflected in the cooperative process of preparing the performance ranging from costume production to venue arrangements, demonstrating a strong sense of collective solidarity. The narrative of Princess Ayu's abduction functions not only as dramatic tension but also as a cultural allegory.

According to Informant C (personal communication, 2025), King Datu Ide and his guard, Amaq Tempenges, announce a royal proclamation offering a reward to anyone who rescues the princess. This call mobilizes Amaq Abir, his disciples, and Amaq Tempenges to collaborate, ultimately succeeding in saving Princess Ayu from captivity.

This story embodies *jiwè seli*, the Sasak principle of mutual cooperation, emphasizing the prioritization of collective over individual interests. When interpreted through the lens

of Pancasila's third principle, the Unity of Indonesia, it highlights the role of communal synergy in resolving shared challenges. Such values can inform character education, strengthen social cohesion, and nurture nationalism among younger generations, ensuring their relevance for contemporary civic life (Renda, 2024).

Ultimately, this narrative illustrates how traditional theater functions as a cultural arena for reinforcing social solidarity. The message aligns with Nurjatisari et al. (2023), who position performing arts as a medium for developing the Pelajar Pancasila profile through collective participation, and with Mintargo (2021), who underscores the arts' capacity to strengthen national identity through the symbol of unity.

4. Fourth Principle: Democracy Guided by the Inner Wisdom of Deliberation

The values of democracy and deliberation are articulated through scenes that depict consensus-based decision-making processes. The wise character, typically represented as a traditional leader, functions as a mediator, facilitating conflict resolution and proposing solutions through dialogical and reflective engagement.

Amaq Abir is positioned as an embodiment of truth, persistently articulating, defending, and safeguarding moral principles. His role in eradicating wrongdoing and upholding justice reflects a form of leadership grounded in prudence and ethical reasoning. This representation resonates with the fourth principle of Pancasila, namely democracy guided by the inner wisdom of deliberation among representatives. The presence of *anak baris yang enam* (students or disciples) as Amaq Abir's loyal followers signifies collective civic participation, reinforcing the idea that just and wise leadership is sustained by the community's active involvement. Hence, the narrative of Amaq Abir not only conveys moral imperatives but also operates as a vehicle for civic and character education, stressing the primacy of truth, dialogue, and the common good in decision-making (Informant C, personal communication, 2025).

These findings affirm that traditional performance art functions as more than mere entertainment; it serves as a form of political education and leadership training rooted in local wisdom. Such insights correspond with scholarly work that underscores the role of local wisdom as a normative framework for strengthening national consciousness and civic values (Wiratmaja et al., 2021).

5. Fifth Principle: Social Justice for All the People of Indonesia

Social justice is manifested through the equitable distribution of roles between protagonists and supporting characters, as well as through moral messages emphasizing collective welfare and inclusivity.

Argues that Amaq Abir traditional theater embodies a constellation of values aligned with the fifth principle of Pancasila, namely social justice for all Indonesians. The value of *tabah* teaches perseverance in confronting adversity, while the prohibition against arrogance (*adigang-adigung*) reinforces the principles of equality and humility. The belief that truth will ultimately prevail over evil, and that neither will completely disappear (*item-putek*), conveys a moral ontology that serves as the basis for fair conflict resolution. The value of *jiwe seli* highlights solidarity and cooperation as foundations for harmonious social life. The triumph of truth over wrongdoing is symbolized through the narrative of rescuing the kidnapped princess by Sekti's supernatural power, which is interpreted as a metaphor for knowledge and clarity of thought.

This power, termed *sakti mandraguna* derived from *adi guna*, signifies omnipotence, moral endurance, honesty, gratitude, and extraordinary benefit, reflecting wisdom and

discernment. Furthermore, the value of *manut* (obedience to social norms) reinforces the significance of maintaining social order. When internalized within the fabric of community life, these values contribute to the realization of a just, equitable, and harmonious society, aligning with the vision of social justice for all Indonesians as articulated in Pancasila (Informant C, personal communication, 2025).

This representation reaffirms the function of performing arts as a locus of socio-political reflection. Such findings converge with scholarship highlighting education as a catalyst for cultural transformation toward justice (Hasibua et al., 2021) and with studies demonstrating that theatrical performances cultivate social awareness through aesthetic representation (Zebua et al., 2022).

Integration of Amaq Abir Performance Values with Pancasila Principles

The local wisdom of the Sasak community encapsulates fundamental socio-cultural norms that structure its social order, including courage, assertiveness, etiquette, and mutual assistance. Courage and assertiveness are enacted in the Amaq Abir tradition, which portrays a resolute figure confronting injustice (Zuhri et al., 2018). Meanwhile, etiquette and mutual assistance reflect collective solidarity and respect for social hierarchy (Arliani et al., 2021).

Endayani (2023) underscores that character education grounded in local wisdom functions not only as a mechanism for cultural continuity but also as a driver of socio-cultural resilience in the face of globalization. Accordingly, Sasak values should be positioned not merely as cultural artifacts but as strategic instruments of ideological formation. The incorporation of Sasak values into the normative framework of Pancasila generates a dialectical interplay between local cultural logics and national ideology rather than a seamless alignment. While values such as courage and assertiveness may resonate with the Third Principle of Pancasila, the Unity of Indonesia, their articulation within Amaq Abir performances often reflects locally grounded interpretations of solidarity that do not always conform to state-centered narratives of unity. Similarly, etiquette and moral conduct may be associated with the Second Principle, just and civilized humanity, yet their performative enactment is shaped by Sasak ethical norms that occasionally reinterpret or subtly contest formal ideological prescriptions. Practices of mutual assistance, commonly linked to the Fifth Principle of social justice, further illustrate how local values are negotiated in practice, functioning both as an affirmation of national ideals and as a site of cultural autonomy. This dynamic underscores that the transmission of Pancasila values through Amaq Abir involves ongoing processes of negotiation, reinterpretation, and, at times, implicit resistance rather than unproblematic ideological internalization (Aryani et al., 2022).

This value integration is consistent with national policy trajectories. The 2025-2029 National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) explicitly prioritizes character development and the strengthening of Pancasila ideology as a response to global and domestic challenges (Bappenas, 2025). At the provincial level, West Nusa Tenggara Regional Regulation No. 7 of 2013 affirms local arts and culture as a cornerstone of sustainable tourism development (Pemerintah Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Barat, 2013). Thus, integrating Sasak values with Pancasila has implications beyond cultural preservation, contributing to political cohesion and economic sustainability.

The Amaq Abir performance serves as a performative medium that synthesizes Sasak cultural symbols with the universal values of Pancasila. The Amaq Abir mask operates as a semiotic device that communicates moral imperatives of courage and honesty, thereby cultivating national character (Renda et al., 2024). The inclusion of traditional music such as *gendang beleg* reinforces the ethos of collectivity and *gotong royong* (Suryadmaja, 2025).

The aesthetic dimension embedded in Amaq Abir's dramaturgy further enriches the pedagogical potential of character education (Renda, 2018).

These findings corroborate Nurjatisari et al. (2023), who argue that performing arts represent a strategic pedagogical platform for advancing the Pancasila Student Profile through contextually grounded approaches. Similarly, Putra et al. (2024), in their study of *debus* performance in Banten, demonstrate that traditional arts can integrate religious, moral, and social justice values into character education. Consequently, Amaq Abir may be conceptualized as a model for the integration of local wisdom with the ideological framework of Pancasila through performative praxis.

The representation of Sasak–Pancasila value integration is evident in scenes highlighting Amaq Abir's firm commitment to truth while maintaining ethical propriety and respect (Zuhri et al., 2018). Dialogues emphasizing solidarity and kinship embody the Second and Third Principles. Within the traditional Amaq Abir theater, the assertiveness in defending truth is personified by the character Amaq Tempenges.

The character of Amaq Tempenges embodies a symbol of truth and steadfast wisdom in confronting tyranny.

The term *tempenges* literally means “to remain upright,” reflecting unwavering adherence to principles despite pressure, criticism, or threats. The philosophical value embedded in this concept signifies that no matter how powerful tyranny may appear, it will ultimately be defeated by truth. Amaq Tempenges is portrayed as a figure who consistently upholds principles without resorting to violence, relying instead on calm reasoning and wisdom to find solutions to challenges. The narrative of the chicken complaint and the garden episode with Princess Ayu serve as allegories of resistance to royal arbitrariness, reinforcing the idea that truth must be upheld through civilized means. At the climax, when Amaq Tempenges is on the verge of execution, he delivers a message through a traditional chant that moves the king to revoke the sentence. This representation reflects the Second Principle of Pancasila, humanity that upholds justice and civility, and the Third Principle, promoting unity through peaceful means without causing division. Consequently, Amaq Tempenges stands as a moral exemplar of resolutely upholding truth in a dignified, consistent, and non-violent manner (Informant C, personal communication, 2025).

This evidence demonstrates that Amaq Tempenges serves not only as a dramatic character in traditional theater but also as a medium for moral education. His steadfastness under pressure represents the internalization of Pancasila values, particularly the Second and Third Principles. From an ethnographic perspective, Amaq Tempenges can be understood as a collective representation of society's emphasis on preserving truth with dignity. His rejection of violence embodies a form of non-violent resistance consistent with the principle of just and civilized humanity. Moreover, his ability to remain calm and focused on the ultimate goal reflects the value of unity, as he seeks to transform the king's behavior without creating horizontal conflict that could destabilize the social order. Hence, the narrative of Amaq Tempenges may serve as an inspiration for character education, especially in instilling firmness in defending truth and prioritizing peace.

In addition, the interaction patterns among performers, such as during stage preparation, represent the value of mutual assistance aligned with the Fifth Principle of Pancasila. Collective scenes depicting resistance against injustice can be interpreted as the actualization of courage and social justice (Putra et al., 2024). Within the traditional Amaq Abir theater performance, the value of mutual assistance is consistent with the concept of *jiwe seli*.

The concept of *seli jiwe* in Amaq Abir traditional theater represents the values of togetherness and cooperation, which form the foundation of social harmony within the

community. This value underscores that every individual bears a collective responsibility to support one another in facing challenges, whether within the family, community, or society at large. In practice, *seli jiwe* is manifested through *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation), reciprocal assistance, and equitable sharing of burdens to achieve common goals. This is aligned with the Fifth Principle of Pancasila, which demands social justice for all Indonesians. By emphasizing inclusive collaboration and respecting each individual's role, *seli jiwe* ensures a proportional distribution of responsibilities and benefits, preventing marginalization. In the context of performing arts, this value is evident in the collective participation of all stakeholders actors, directors, and audiences in creating a meaningful aesthetic experience. Thus, *seli jiwe* is not merely a cultural principle but also a reflection of social justice in practice, fostering a harmonious and equitable society (Informant C, personal communication, 2025).

Comparatively, this representational pattern shares similarities with *Sigeh Pengunten* art in Lampung, which functions as a medium for the internalization of unity values (Krisnawati, 2023), as well as *Ebeg Banyumasan* in Java, which undergoes symbolic adaptation within diaspora contexts (Jantro & Kiswanto, 2023). These comparisons underscore that traditional performing arts across regions possess a similar capacity to serve as a medium for integrating local values with the framework of national ideology. Therefore, the Amaq Abir performance can be interpreted as part of a broader cultural mechanism that sustains social cohesion while simultaneously transmitting ethical and civic values, making it highly relevant to contemporary discourses on cultural resilience and character education.

The Role of Amaq Abir Performance in Character Education

The Amaq Abir performance serves as a non-formal educational medium that conveys moral values and virtues through both spectacle and aesthetic experience. Values such as courage, loyalty, and respect for others are transmitted to the audience through symbols, narrative structures, and artistic expressions embedded within the performance (Renda, 2024; Zuhri et al., 2018).

These findings align with prior research (Arliani et al., 2021), which emphasizes that folklore and traditional performances can serve as effective instruments for character education. Compared to other traditional art forms such as *Ebeg Banyumasan* (Jantro & Kiswanto, 2023) and *Debus Banten* (Putra et al., 2024), the educational function of Amaq Abir is more prominent in cultivating social and moral values rather than merely strengthening physical endurance or emphasizing spiritual dimensions.

Consequently, Amaq Abir occupies a distinctive position as a medium for character education grounded in Sasak local wisdom. The performance also nurtures patriotism, tolerance, and democratic attitudes among younger generations. The symbolism of the Amaq Abir mask, for instance, represents the struggle between good and evil, serving as a reflective medium that fosters moral development and character formation (Renda, 2024).

Informant D (personal communication, 2025) asserts that the Amaq Abir performance serves not only as entertainment but also as an educational medium. For instance, through the character of Amaq Tempenges, who consistently demonstrates honesty and courage in resisting injustice, children are exposed to and can internalize values such as truthfulness and bravery as fundamental principles in life. Additionally, many parents in the village reinforce these lessons by guiding their children with references to Amaq Abir stories, which are readily understood due to their cultural proximity.



Figure 2. Character Masks in the Traditional Amaq Abir Theatre Performance

The value of patriotism is expressed through themes of struggle and solidarity in the performance, aligning with the role of patriotic songs in reinforcing national identity (Mintargo, 2021). In the Amaq Abir traditional theater, patriotism is personified by Amaq Tempenges. According to Renda (2018), Nationalism encompasses ways of thinking, behaving, and acting that demonstrate love and responsibility toward the social and national community. The performance also conveys the aesthetic value of *manut* (obedience) through Amaq Tempenges, depicted as the loyal guardian of Datu Ide who remains steadfast in truth despite humiliation and devotes himself entirely to the Kedatuan as an expression of love and loyalty. His sincerity and obedience embody *manut*, reinforcing nationalism-based character education grounded in truth and devotion to the Kedatuan and governance (Informant E, personal communication, 2025).

Informant F (personal communication, 2025) emphasized that Amaq Abir instills self-confidence and a sense of pride in cultural identity among younger generations. His participation as a supporting actor offered formative experiences in discipline, teamwork, and appreciation of others' contributions. These values have been carried into daily life, particularly in youth community initiatives and local organizations. Consequently, the performance serves not only as a medium for cultural preservation but also as a means of fostering resilience and strong character development.

Democratic values are likewise manifested through active community participation in the creative process (Siburian et al., 2021). Putra et al. (2024) affirm that traditional arts function as a medium for cultivating religious and national character, making them relevant for younger generations in the era of globalization. Compared to character education through *Sigeh Pengunten* dance in Lampung (Krisnawati, 2023), Amaq Abir highlights deliberation (*musyawarah*) and collective engagement, emphasizing the centrality of democratic values in culture-based character education.

The traditional Amaq Abir theater plays a significant role as a medium of character education rooted in Sasak local wisdom. Beyond providing entertainment, Amaq Abir transmits moral, social, and national values through symbols, narratives, and aesthetic experiences that resonate with audiences across generations. The character of Amaq

Tempenges, for instance, embodies honesty, courage, loyalty, and obedience qualities that remain highly relevant in shaping individual character within both family and community contexts. Field findings derived from interviews indicate that local communities perceive the performance as a more tangible and accessible medium of learning, while youth gain direct experience in discipline, cooperation, and pride in local culture. Compared to other traditions such as *Ebeg Banyumasan*, *Debus Banten*, or *Sigeh Pengunten*, *Amaq Abir* emphasizes values of patriotism, tolerance, and democratic attitudes through the collective involvement of communities in the creative process. Accordingly, *Amaq Abir* occupies a distinctive position as a medium for strengthening national character, serving as a bridge between traditional heritage and contemporary educational needs.

Strategies for Strengthening Pancasila Ideology through *Amaq Abir* Theatre

The revitalization of *Amaq Abir*, a traditional theatre of the Sasak community, represents a vital strategy for reinforcing Pancasila values in the modern era. Innovations in performance such as the use of lighting, variations in accompanying music, and adjustments in duration can enhance its appeal to younger generations without compromising the philosophical essence embedded in the *Amaq Abir* mask symbols (Renda, 2024; Zuhri et al., 2018). This approach aligns with Jantro and Kiswanto (2023), who observed that *Ebeg* art can adapt within diaspora communities without losing local identity. Nevertheless, the main challenge of revitalization lies in balancing traditional authenticity with the need for innovation, as excessive modification may dilute moral messages rooted in local wisdom. Consequently, revitalization strategies should follow the principle of cultural sustainability, preserving traditional values while adapting performances to remain relevant in contemporary contexts (Endayani, 2023).

Amaq Abir performances serve not only as entertainment but also as a medium for internalizing Pancasila values. Characters and mask symbols convey messages of justice, solidarity, and moral courage. These values can be integrated into educational activities, cultural festivals, and religious events (Nurjatisari et al., 2023; Putra et al., 2024; Zebua et al., 2022). Similar to how *Debus* art is employed for religious character education in primary schools (Putra et al., 2024), *Amaq Abir* holds potential for instilling cooperation and unity within school and community contexts. Such implementation supports the Pancasila Student Profile vision under the *Merdeka Curriculum*, which emphasizes arts- and culture-based education (Nurjatisari et al., 2023). The effectiveness of *Amaq Abir* as a medium for Pancasila socialization depends on its systematic integration into curricula and community programs. Without institutional support, *Amaq Abir* risks remaining a transient cultural expression.

Strengthening Pancasila ideology through *Amaq Abir* also requires structural support from local governments. West Nusa Tenggara Provincial Regulation No. 7 of 2013 (Pemerintah Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Barat, 2013) highlights the importance of cultural arts preservation as a foundation for tourism development. Similarly, the 2025–2029 National Medium-Term Development Plan (*RPJMN*) identifies culture as a strategic instrument for enhancing social cohesion (Bappenas, 2025; Pemerintah Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Barat, 2013).

However, policy implementation faces challenges such as limited funding, low arts management capacity, and insufficient integration of cultural education programs in schools (Hasibua et al., 2021). Intensive collaboration among local governments, schools, and arts communities is crucial to ensure that *Amaq Abir* serves not merely as a tourist attraction but also as an effective medium for character education (Wiratmaja et al., 2021).

Globalization presents additional challenges, including declining interest among younger generations in traditional arts due to the influence of global popular culture (Siburian et al., 2021). This raises concerns about the relevance of *Amaq Abir* in the digital era. Research by Simanjuntak and Fitriana (2020) suggests that digital cultural adaptation can reduce culture shock while expanding audience reach. Digitalizing *Amaq Abir* through social media, short films, or virtual performances offers significant opportunities to revive youth interest. In this way, globalization challenges can become opportunities to broaden *Amaq Abir*'s role as an instrument for Pancasila values education (Endayani, 2023; Suryadma, 2025).

This study confirms that *Amaq Abir* is not only a heritage of local performing arts (Zuhri et al., 2018) but also a cultural strategy for strengthening Pancasila ideology. This distinguishes it from previous studies, which focused primarily on performance forms, artistic functions, or general character education (Nurjatisari et al., 2023; Renda et al., 2024). The contribution of this research lies in mapping concrete revitalization strategies, its utilization as a socialization medium, policy support, and adaptation to globalization, positioning *Amaq Abir* as a relevant ideological instrument today. It provides both theoretical and practical foundations for developing traditional arts as a vehicle for Pancasila values education, while simultaneously reinforcing social cohesion at local and national levels.

CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates that the traditional *Amaq Abir* theatre functions not only as a cultural heritage of the Sasak community but also as a strategic medium for character education and the reinforcement of Pancasila ideology. *Amaq Abir* performances integrate local values such as courage, solidarity, and ethical conduct with Pancasila principles through symbols, narratives, and social practices enacted on stage. These values are creatively mediated to remain relevant for younger generations, enabling effective value transfer via social interaction and non-formal educational approaches. Sanggar Pustaka Budaya plays a crucial role in sustaining this process, both in artistic practice and in fostering character and ideological awareness among youth.

The novelty of this research lies in positioning *Amaq Abir* as a site of dialogue between local tradition and state ideology. The findings reveal that traditional performances are not solely aesthetic or entertaining but also serve pedagogical and ideological functions aligned with national character-building agendas. The integration of local values with Pancasila principles demonstrates that traditional performing arts can act as contextual and adaptive educational media responsive to contemporary social dynamics. *Amaq Abir* thus preserves local culture while strengthening national identity and cultural resilience through intergenerational practices. Furthermore, it has potential as a best practice replicable in other cultural contexts, nationally and internationally.

This underscores the relevance of traditional performing arts as instruments for reinforcing social and ideological values, as well as character education. Implementing Pancasila values through performing arts enables the integration of local wisdom and universal principles, creating a holistic, participatory, and immersive learning experience. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of *Amaq Abir* as a medium for Pancasila reinforcement requires further empirical support. Additional research through performance observation, artist interviews, and documentation of cultural practices in contemporary society is needed to strengthen academic legitimacy and validate findings. Ethnographic and comparative studies are recommended to examine community reception, identify barriers and

opportunities for value transfer, and develop pedagogical models adaptive to the needs of youth in a globalized context.

Overall, Amaq Abir exemplifies how traditional performing arts can simultaneously serve as a medium for character education, ideological reinforcement, and cultural preservation. This study enriches performing arts scholarship by highlighting the relationship between local values and national ideology while providing directions for sustainable, socially relevant, and culturally adaptable practices.

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