



NGUSABA MELAMPUAN AS A REPRESENTATION OF REALITY IN THE SACREDNESS OF BALI AGA TRADITION IN BAYUNG GEDE TRADITIONAL VILLAGE

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ABSTRAK

This study aims to examine the Ngusaba Melampuan ritual as a cultural heritage of the Bali Aga community in Bayung Gede Traditional Village, Kintamani District, Bangli Regency, which has strong religious and social values and plays a role in maintaining cultural identity. The research used a descriptive qualitative approach through document studies obtained from scientific journals, articles, research reports, and relevant literature. Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model, including data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results showed that Ngusaba Melampuan has a symbolic meaning that is closely related to Bali Aga Hindu beliefs, strengthens social solidarity, and becomes a means of inheriting ancestral values. The implementation of the ritual is carried out for generations with strict customary procedures, starting from the preparation stage, the implementation of the ceremony, to the closing, all of which reflect the community's attachment to tradition. In conclusion, Ngusaba Melampuan plays an important role in maintaining the cultural

heritage and identity of the Bayung Gede community amidst the challenges of modernization, as well as contributing to socio-humanities studies related to local traditions and cultural sustainability.

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1. Introduction

Indonesia is a multicultural country known for its cultural diversity and traditions that have been carried on from generation to generation. The diversity of Indonesia itself is not only diversity in terms of language, and ways of dressing, but also in the form of beliefs that are embraced and customary practices that exist in the midst of society. Multicultural society is a society that consists of diversity and different types of cultures, and its social life includes values, culture, and customs that promote mutual acceptance[1]. in the midst of increasingly rapid globalization, tradition which is a cultural heritage is one important aspect that needs to be maintained and preserved to maintain the nation's identity as a multicultural country. One of the customs that still maintains traditions and ancestral values strongly is the Bali Aga community, which is considered the original inhabitants of Bali Island who usually live in the Bali Mountains area and are famous for their strict rules so that sometimes Bali Aga are often equated with the Baduy Tribe [2].

Bali Aga communities generally have a different social structure and value system from Balinese society in general. Bali Aga people live based on strict customs, full of rules, and are very

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attached to traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation. In this research, we will examine one of the Bali Aga villages in Bali, namely the Bayung Gede traditional village located in Kintamani District, Bangli Regency. Traditional villages in Bali have the status of a legal subject in the provincial government structure, as stipulated in Articles 4 and 5 of Bali Regional Regulation No. 4 of 2019 [3]. In Bayunggede Village, customary traditions are still carried out sacredly, one of which is the Ngusaba Melampuan tradition which is one of the ceremonies that has a very deep meaning. In addition to meaning, this tradition also has a function as a regulator of reality, spirituality, and culture of the village community.

According to the community, Ngusaba Melampuan is not just a tradition or ritual that is carried out as a form of cultural heritage, but is part of the reality of community life. The implementation is very strictly regulated and has various kinds of patangan and customary obligations. This reflects a living belief system that strongly influences social patterns. So in this context, sacredness is not just a concept, but really reflects the manifestation of "sacred" in the structure and behavior of society.

However, amidst the strong influence of social change due to the progress of the times, challenges arise in maintaining the original form of the tradition. Some values and rules may be bargained for, abandoned, or even forgotten, along with changing mindsets and the needs of the times. This is where the importance of documenting and re-examining the meaning and function of traditional rituals, so that the sacred values and social realities they form are not lost. Based on this background, this research aims to explore how Ngusaba Melampuan represents reality in the sacred tradition of the Bali Aga community, by looking at the form of its implementation, the symbolic meaning contained, and the socio-cultural functions it supports.

Although a number of studies have discussed the traditions of the Bali Aga community, especially in Bayunggede Village, most studies still focus on historical aspects, and how the ceremony procession in general. Studies that specifically explore the relationship between sacred meaning and the representation of social reality in the Ngusaba Melampuan tradition, especially in Bayung Gede Traditional Village, are still very limited. Basically, an understanding of this relationship is important to see how traditional values can survive or adapt in the midst of social change. This research analyzes the symbolic meaning and socio-cultural function of the ritual holistically, so as to illustrate the position of Ngusaba Melampuan not only as a religious ceremony, but also as a medium for forming identity and regulating social relations of the Bali Aga community in the modern era.

Based on the above background, the author formulates several problems that will be studied in depth. First, the author wants to know what is meant by Ngusaba Melampuan and how the ritual is carried out in the Bayung Gede Traditional Village, as one of the areas that still maintains Bali Aga customs. Secondly, this paper aims to explore the meaning of sacredness contained in the Ngusaba Melampuan tradition, both in terms of religious beliefs and values upheld by the indigenous community. Third, the author also wants to examine how the Ngusaba Melampuan tradition represents the socio-cultural reality of the Bali Aga community, including how ancestral values, social structures, and the relationship between humans and nature are expressed through the practice of this tradition.

2. Method

This research is located in Bayung Gede Village, a Bali Aga village in Bangli Regency known for its strong traditional customs and its important role in preserving ancestral cultural heritage. The village is the site of the Ngusaba Melampuan tradition, a sacred ceremony that is not only religious in nature but also reflects the identity and unity of the community. Although the community's way of life remains closely tied to traditional customs, changes are beginning to emerge, particularly due to interaction with outsiders and the development of the tourism sector in the surrounding area. These conditions have prompted adjustments in the practice of traditions without compromising their core values. The research location was selected at points in the village that serve as the center of the ceremony procession and the settlements of residents directly involved, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between living space, community, and the sustainability of the Ngusaba Melampuan tradition.

The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative method. The qualitative approach was chosen because it is able to describe in depth various cultural and social phenomena related to the traditions of indigenous peoples, especially the Ngusaba Melampuan ritual in the Bayung Gede Traditional Village. In this case, the descriptive approach aims to explain and describe in detail the various aspects of implementation, symbolic meaning, and social reality that are realized through the implementation of the ritual in the life of the Bali Aga community. This research was conducted using a document study technique, which collected secondary data from various relevant written sources, such as scientific journals, articles, previous research reports, and other literature that examines Bali Aga culture, the customary system, and the Ngusaba Melampuan ritual. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore various perspectives and existing findings, then analyze them in depth in the context of the research being conducted. According to Bogdan and Taylor (in Nugrahani, 2008 in [4]), qualitative research is a procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from observed objects, as well as their behavior in a particular social context. In the context of this study, data collected through documents are not only treated as raw information, but also analyzed to capture the meaning contained behind the symbols, customary practices, and social structures that make up the Ngusaba Melampuan ritual.

The data analysis technique in this study uses a qualitative analysis model from Miles and Huberman, which includes three main stages, namely data reduction (the process of sorting and simplifying relevant information), data presentation (organizing data so that it is easy to read and analyze further) and drawing conclusions. By arranging the data systematically and clearly, researchers can more easily recognize certain patterns, see relationships between elements, and find themes that arise from raw data. A good presentation will facilitate the process of interpreting the data as well as support the drawing of more accurate and meaningful conclusions in the research. With this technique, it is hoped that the research can provide a complete and in-depth picture of how the Ngusaba Melampuan tradition represents reality in the cultural sacredness of the Bali Aga community [5]. This research fully utilizes secondary data sourced from written publications, in its collection, the author does not take data directly from individuals or groups of the Bayunggede Village community. Thus, this research does not involve human subjects and does not pose ethical risks, but still pays attention to the principle of caution in quoting and interpreting sources in accordance with academic rules.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Bayung Gede Village as a *Bali Aga* Village

On the island of Bali, villages are divided into 3 types, namely Bali Aga villages (villages that are residents who maintain Balinese traditions), Apanage villages (villages that have been influenced by Majapahit traditions), and Anyar villages (formed due to transmigration) [6]. Quoted from the official website of Bayung Gede Village, before the island of Bali was controlled by the Majapahit Kingdom and before the civilization of the early Balinese developed, Bayunggede Village already existed and lived as an independent community. For this reason, it is known as one of the oldest or ancient villages in Bali. In the past, before it was officially called Bayunggede, it was just a small settlement in the middle of the forest, known locally as padukuhan. There were very few inhabitants, although no exact number was mentioned. But from the very beginning, the padukuhan has been managed by a customary governance system called Ulu Apad that adopts the concept of Rwa Bhineda, a balance between two poles: Ulu (upstream) and Teben (downstream). In the Ulu Apad leadership pattern, each leader is placed in the Kiwa (left) or Tengen (right) position according to their respective duties and roles. This placement reflects harmony and a balanced division of roles based on the concept of duality that is the basis of Balinese society [7].

In Bayung Gede Village, the customary leadership system is also known as Paduluan Saih Nem Belas. In this system, there are 16 customary administrators who have specific roles and responsibilities. The four senior families are considered to be the most important in this structure, with the designations Jero Kubayan Mucuk (family number one), Jero Kubayan Nyoman (family number two), Jero Bahu Mucuk (family number three), and Jero Bahu Nyoman (family number

four). Jero Kubayan's main task is to lead the traditional and religious ceremonies, while Jero Bahu serves as Jero Kubayan's companion. These four families are exempt from any fines from the village. Under Jero Kubayan and Jero Bahu, there is Jero Tanding, which consists of four pairs of families. Their job is to organize the ceremonial facilities. These families are numbered from five to eight. In addition, there are also eight pairs of families who occupy the position of Pelancang.

Over time, the population grew to around 35 families. With a spirit of mutual cooperation, they began to expand the settlement area by clearing the surrounding forest, especially to the west, until they reached the location of the village we know today. After becoming a more established settlement, the area was then named Bayunggede, a name that has a special meaning. The word "Bayung" is defined as "bayu" or energy, while "gede" means big or strong.

The characteristics of the Bali Aga community are evident in the pattern of life, the pattern of society, and the pattern of ancestor worship. The pattern of life of the Bali Aga community emphasizes the communal style, namely togetherness in all aspects of life. This value is still reflected today in various forms of activities such as ngeepin (helping neighbors), sekaa memula (joint work group), death ceremonies, house construction, and various other religious ceremonies [8]. One of the unique traditions is pengutangan kau or setra ari-ari, a special place to hang the baby's placenta on a bukak tree wrapped in coconut shell, instead of being buried as usual. This tradition reflects the communal lifestyle of the Bali Aga people who uphold mutual cooperation and traditional values in various aspects of life, from daily activities to religious ceremonies [8].

3.2 Ngusaba Melampuan, and the Form of Ngusaba Melampuan Ritual in Bayung Gede Traditional Village

Ngusaba Melampuan or Ngusaba Lampuan is one of the traditions in Bayung Gede Village that is held at least once every 4 years, which usually depends on the duasa (good day) that has been determined. This ritual involves the youths of Bayung Gede Village or commonly referred to as Daha Truna, in which the youths are required to participate in the entire series of events by wearing traditional traditional clothing set in the village.

In the implementation, the men or what is referred to as Jro Lampuan Lanang, the clothes used consist of Kamen (Balinese cloth), saput meselibeh (blanket cloth that is slung over the hand), and a machete. The men also wear a destar (headband), and carry a woven bamboo compote containing betel nut, areca nut, tobacco, gambier, and lime that will be chewed during the ritual. There are also special rules such as the prohibition of wearing clothes and footwear during the ceremony. Meanwhile, female participants or Jro Lampuan Istri also wear Balinese kamen without jewelry, are not allowed to wear clothes or footwear, and use Balinese cloth instead of a top [9].

Unlike other yadda ceremonies, one of Ngusaba Lampuan's signature dishes is jajan biyu or jajan gong, which is made from grated raw banana mixed with brown rice flour and fried. These snacks are prepared by each participant in gotong royong, and are used to make up for minor offenses committed during the ceremony. In addition, there is also Penjor Lampuan, which is two penjor combined into one. One penjor is made from whole bamboo stalks without defects or scars, decorated with young enau leaves, while the second penjor is made from bamboo that has been cut at the ends and decorated with woven enau leaves at the top. The Penjor is assembled by each Jro Lampuan Lanang himself. Equally interesting is the Damarsuar or ceremonial lamp, which is made from a banana tree trunk as an oil container, with a wick made from grated bamboo skin and using coconut oil as fuel. This lamp is hung on a bamboo stick and is an important part of the ritual lighting.

According to [10], the procession of the Ngusaba Lampuan ritual in Bayung Gede Village is carried out in various stages. The implementation of the Ngusaba Melampuan ritual in Bayunggede Traditional Village goes through a number of sacred stages and is carried out from generation to generation according to ancestral traditions. Before the main ceremony takes place, the ceremony participants, both Jro Lampuan Lanang (male) and Jro Lampuan Istri (female), along with the village community, first perform a matur piuning ceremony at Penataran Bintak Temple.

This procession is led by Jro Kubayan Muncuk and other traditional leaders called peduluan as a form of requesting blessings to Ida Bhatara so that the entire series of ceremonies runs smoothly.

Next, a melasti ceremony is held at Penataran Pura Susut or Slunding, which takes place seven days before the peak of the ceremony. After all the pratima (sacred symbols of the gods) have been watered in the melasti ceremony, all of them return to the Puseh Temple, where respect is continued with the offering of banten dapetan - an offering that includes grilled chicken as a symbol of purification. Afterward, each pratima is returned to their respective temples. Meanwhile, Jro Kubayan begins to prepare various equipment for the Ngusaba Melampuan ceremony, starting with the purification of banten using tirta (holy water) [11].

The matur piuning ceremony is also held at Pura Puseh Pingit, where the Lampuan Lanang and their wives come with banten tamus, led by Jro Daha as a ceremonial companion. The ceremony then continues to the peak of the ceremony which is held at Pura Pelampuan, coinciding with the full moon of Kapat. The main offering in this peak ceremony is banten munggah pedangsilan or dangsil gede, which consists of various sacred equipment such as: bamboo wakul containing dasepatan rice (10 kg), 4000 pieces of kepeng money, wooden bananas, five coconuts, tekulan thread, fruits, 200 pieces of begina snacks, bekayu snacks, red chicken (siap biing), tumpeng, and decorations from busung (janur) and gemitir flowers. These offerings are considered as pelinggihan Ida Bhatara [11].

The series of peak ceremonies were held for five consecutive days.

On the first day, a procession of mendak pedangsilan is carried out starting at Jro Kubayan's house, then continued with prayers together at Penataran Pura Bintak.

On the second day, the community carries out Layud or Wayun Ageng, which is an offering of jaje biyu (banana snacks) by each Jro Pelampuan. On the third day, the Jug procession is held, which is the transfer of pedangsilan from Penataran Bintak Temple to Bale Agung Temple, accompanied by Jro Krama Sundingan. After arriving, prayers are immediately held together. On the fourth day, the community organizes Ongge-ongge, a humorous performance of reciprocal rhymes between male and female participants, with banten teg-teg or banten palian as a means.

On the fifth day, the Babuangan Sundingan procession was held, which is a symbolization of warfare using suren leaves carried out by Bayunggede villagers. Before that, the community first offered prayers so that the ritual would run peacefully and not cause quarrels, with banten peras pejati as the main offering. This banten consists of a complete daksina, five tumpeng, fruits, chicken, snacks, and other symbolic elements.

To conclude the series of rituals, a Penyineban Ceremony is held, which takes place on a day deemed auspicious by the elders. This ceremony is accompanied by gamelan and uses banten teg-teg and building ayu. Bangunan ayu consists of various elements such as pork, whole coconuts, pieces of raw duck decorated with raw and cooked satay, uli snacks, fruits, and spices such as chili and onions, all neatly arranged and stuck into the coconut with bamboo skewers. As a symbolic finale, the Jro Lampuan Lanang and his wife perform prayers at the village intersection which has a spiritual connection to Ida Bhatara Batur. After this procession, the participants return to their respective homes with a symbol of life balance. Lampuan Lanang carries firewood, while Lampuan Wives carry wild vegetables that they pick along the way home. This whole series is not only a form of ritual implementation, but also an affirmation of the cultural and spiritual identity of the Bali Aga community in Bayunggede [11].

3.3 The Meaning of Sacredness Contained in the Ngusaba Melampuan Tradition

Table Traditional rituals in Bali are an important part of community life that is full of meaning, not only as a form of religion, but also as a reflection of social identity and a means of strengthening relationships between people in traditional communities [12]. The meaning of sacredness in the Ngusaba Lampuan tradition in Bayunggede Village is manifested through three fundamental dimensions that are interrelated. Quoted from [13], in the implementation of the Ngusaba Lampuan Tradition in Bayunggede Village, there is a deep meaning of sacredness which is reflected through the values of Hindu religious teachings that are internalized in the ritual, namely:

- a. **Tattwa Value:** The Ngusaba Lampuan tradition reflects the value of tattwa which is deeply accepted by Hindus who believe that they can through this ceremony worship for the well-being of Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa. This shows that this ritual is not simply a ceremonial form of ritual, but rather a devotion and hope to the divine power in the core meaning of holiness.
- b. **Ethical Value:** Each performance of the Ongge-ongge ceremony is punctuated by interactions between the Lampuan Lanang and Lampuan Istri guided by the teachings of Susila and Tattwa. This shows why the Ngusaba Lampuan tradition also has moral elements that enrich the ethics of the community. Therefore, the meaning of sanctity contained in this tradition is to present moral values for the community.
- c. **Ceremonial Value:** The process of making banten as part of this tradition provides clues about the rite to the participating community. This suggests that Ngusaba Lampuan is not simply a ritual but also functions as an intellectual and cultural transmission. The sacred meaning here lies in respecting customs as well as preserving a culture that is considered sacred by the community.

3.4 How the Ngusaba Melampuan Tradition Represents the Socio-Cultural Reality of the Bali Aga Community

The Ngusaba Melampuan tradition in Bayung Gede Village is a real implementation of the socio-cultural reality of the local community, especially in the aspect of social function. Fundamentally, Ngusaba Melampuan aims to educate the youth of the village to respect each other and establish harmonious relationships, and to become a place of learning and training for Daha Truna. Which, this social function is in line with the meaning of the word "social" which refers to anything related to society and its interests.

The Ngusaba Lampuan ceremony is a ceremony that aims to ask God / Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasagarpara Daha Truna to be given physical and mental obligations so that they can carry out the obligations of life during the household period. In this ceremony, it is taught that in choosing a partner for married life, it is better to still follow existing traditions to find a happiness in scale and niskala so that a tradition that exists from the past can still survive and occur until later, and so that the tradition does not become extinct. This means that the reality of this tradition towards social life is that what is taught during this tradition is a provision for young men and women to continue a more complex life.

Then in carrying out this tradition, the main key to making this ceremony successful is communication. Social interaction is like interconnected threads, forming the web of social life. It is any form of relationship that lives and moves between us, whether an individual interacts with another individual, a group interacts with another group, or even an individual interacts with a group. In short, social interaction is how we all relate and communicate with each other in society. In community life, we all need and depend on each other. The family is the smallest unit in society where we learn to socialize and interact with those around us. Indeed, humans always give meaning to everything around them. Generating concepts to interpret the successful "cooperation" of a group of individuals given the environmental setting in which they live. This thinking then builds society to further create the cultural values that exist today.

The Ngusaba Lampuan tradition is an important means of interaction, especially with the kulkul as a communication tool. The kulkul functions both supernaturally (niskala) and visibly. Visibly, communication occurs when people interact directly, either group to individual or individual to individual, and also when the kulkul is sounded to gather the community and convey information. Kulkul is considered a very effective communication medium; each sound has its own purpose, for example during ceremonies (tedun) or during gotong royong. When the kulkul sounds, the community will hear and understand the message, so social gatherings and interactions automatically occur. This proves that humans are indeed social creatures who cannot live alone and always need others. The community of Bayung Gede also demonstrates this social trait with the existence of groups that are active in the implementation of the Ngusaba Lampuan Tradition and various other activities.

Although this discussion has revealed the various meanings and functions of tradition, it is important to recognize some limitations. All analysis is based on written sources and observations that are not continuous, so details of practice or symbolic meaning may be missed. In addition, some of the data is contextualized to the time of the tradition, so the results may not fully represent future changes or variations. The interpretation of the source authors also has the potential to introduce certain biases. Therefore, these findings should be read as a specific portrait of the conditions of the Ngusaba Melampuan tradition in Bayung Gede at the time of the research, not as an absolute picture that applies at all times and situations.

4. Simpulan dan saran

The Ngusaba Lampuan tradition in Bayunggede Village is not just a religious ceremony, but a true representation of the Balinese Aga way of life. Each stage of the ceremony, from the well-organized procession, the traditional clothing worn, to the special foods such as *jajan biyu* and *penjor lampuan* decoration, contains a deep meaning. This tradition is an important means to instill moral and ethical values to the younger generation, especially *Daha Truna*, so that they are ready to live a household life in the *Grahasta Asrama* phase. In the midst of modernization, this ceremony teaches the importance of maintaining tradition for the sake of inner and outer happiness. These values are the last bastion that protects the cultural identity of the Bali Aga so that it is not lost to the times.

In addition, Ngusaba Lampuan demonstrates the close social ties between communities. Every part of the ritual, from *matur piuning* to the *Babuang Sundingan* procession, involves the active participation of the entire community. *Kukul*, as a means of summoning the community, serves to strengthen the sense of community and solidarity. The noble meanings of *Tattwa*, *Ethics* and *Ceremony* implied in this procession show that Ngusaba Lampuan is not only a cultural heritage, but also a means of passing on life values that continue to be maintained from generation to generation. This tradition plays an important role in shaping the social, spiritual and cultural order that unites the Bayunggede community to this day.

Given the role of the Ngusaba Lampuan tradition in maintaining the social, spiritual and cultural values of the Bali Aga community, it is recommended that efforts to preserve this tradition continue to be improved, both through formal and non-formal education. Local governments, traditional institutions, and the younger generation need to work together to document every aspect of the ceremony in writing and visually so that it is not eroded by changing times. In addition, it is also important to open a space for dialogue between traditional actors and the younger generation so that there is a process of inheriting values that are contextual and relevant to contemporary life. Further research on the influence of this tradition on the character building of the younger generation of Bali Aga is also highly recommended, in order to strengthen academic understanding and support its preservation scientifically. Finally, the active involvement of the local community in maintaining the purity of the meaning and implementation of the ceremony is the key to keeping Ngusaba Lampuan alive and empowered to face the challenges of modernity without losing its cultural roots.

In the future, the preservation of the Ngusaba Lampuan tradition in Bayung Gede village can be strengthened through further, more focused research, such as comparative studies with similar traditions in other Bali Aga villages to see the similarities and differences in inherited values. The perspective of the younger generation, especially the *Daha Truna*, also needs to be addressed to understand how they interpret this tradition in the midst of modernization. In addition, the development of culture-based education programs, both in schools and communities, can be an effective means to ensure that the noble values of tradition remain relevant and alive in the community. This approach is expected to integrate local wisdom with the dynamics of contemporary life, so that Ngusaba Lampuan not only survives as a cultural heritage, but also inspires the character building of future generations.

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