

“Ngedeblag” Traditions in Socio-Cultural Community Life at *Pakaraman Kemenuh Village, Sukawati Subdistrict, District of Gianyar*

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ABSTRACT

“Ngedeblag” tradition in *Pakraman Kemenuh Village* is an activity that is carried out every year, starting on *Sasih Kalima* and has been passed down from generation to generation by village manners. This tradition symbolizes honoring tribute to *bhuta kala* for establishing safety, secrecy, prosperity and neutralizing all negative matters. Moreover, this tradition likewise believed to maintain environmental harmony in *Pakraman Kemenuh Village*, balancing the elements of *Bhuana alit* and *Bhuana Agung*, increasing *sraddha* and devotion of the Hindu’s to *Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa** through the medium of offerings (*upakara / banten*) establishing a closer relation and people's belief in the majesty of God Almighty. *Ngedeblag* tradition as its religious function explained as balancing relationship between humans and natures surroundings symbolized by “*banten caru*” offering to the *Bhuta Kala*. The following function of this tradition is explained as social function where *Ngedeblag* tradition becomes a unifying medium among citizens establishing harmonious relationship. Thus, *Ngedeblag* is explained as repelling evil tradition, in this case it is used to reject the entire negative aura created by the *bhuta kala* during *sasih kalima* to *sasih kasanga*.

Keyword: Tradition, *Ngedeblag*, Social Culture Life.

I. Introduction

Hindus in Bali have five types of *Yadnya* which are *Dewa Yadnya*, *Pitra Yadnya*, *Rsi Yadnya*, *Manusa yadnya* dan *Bhuta Yadnya*. There are two practices of *Panca Yadnya*, first practice conducted in daily basis called *Nityakarma*, second practice is conducted periodically called as *Naimitikakarma*. However, these practices may divers based on each village policy (*Desa Kala Patra*) and based on particular level of ceremony consist of *Nista*, *Madya* and *Mandala*.

Balinese traditions are supported by the Balinese people, whom are often known as ethnic Balinese or Balinese people. As an ethnicity, Balinese people have ethnic identity characteristics that are inherent to themselves and their

respective groups. This tradition arises from a sense of awareness of the unity of local and national culture and is strengthened by the unity of language, namely Balinese and Hinduism. Hinduism belief establishes some kind of tradition, ritual, culture and art that comprises typical characteristic generating a combination between tradition and religion.

Balinese culture is an integral combination between genuine Balinese traditions and Hinduism. Bali is inseparable from beliefs and traditions that are considered as myth by the locals. Hinduism, which has been integrated into all forms of behavior patterns of Balinese society since ancient times, has manifest a culture that has a high level of religiousness, despite having an impact in the forms of many

religious ceremonies it also emerges traditions inheritance to those religious ceremonies.

There is one area in Bali that well known for its distinctive, unique and attractive forms of tradition and culture is Gianyar Regency. Gianyar Regency is known as a city of art and tourism. Many distinctive and unique traditions have grown and developed in this area until present time. One unique and attractive form of tradition in this area is called “*Ngedeblag*”. This tradition is a form of traditional heritage which thus far still maintained and preserved by the people of Pekraman Kemenuh Village, Sukawati District, Gianyar Regency.

The *Ngedeblag* tradition in Pekraman Kemenuh Village is a ritual tradition which aims to plead for the safety of *Bhuana Agung lan Bhuana Alit* (nature and its contents) because during the fifth *sasih* (*sasih gering*) natural disasters, bad weather, drought or successive deaths and illnesses or virus that attacks residents. Prayer ceremony will first be held at *Pura Dalem* where all the Hindus receive holy water (*nunas tirta*) after that they continue with a *pecaruan* ceremony in front of their respective homes. Small children, especially boys, will paint their faces with spooky make up to make them look as scary as *Bhuta Kala*. Likewise, the adult male communities also paint their bodies in spooky looks while carrying gongs and other musical instruments. Combined with the accompaniment of *gambelan baleganjur*, the community wander around the village carrying holy water (*memundut tirta*) while parading a pair of *Barong Landung* consist of female *Barong Landung* and male *Barong Landung* symbolized as spouses (*sesuwunan Ratu Agung Lanang Istri*).

Like other traditions, the *Ngedeblag* tradition has its own charm and uniqueness that needs to be studied more deeply. As explained previously, it is interesting to research how the

Ngedeblag ceremony is carried out and its role in socio-cultural life in the Kemenuh Traditional Village.

II. Research Method

This research was conducted using qualitative methods that originate from the culture that develops in society and attempts to describe those cultures. In this case, it describes the culture of the Balinese people in Kemenuh Village in the *Ngedeblag* tradition. This research is also then to include analytical description through an in-depth and comprehensive perspective of religious anthropology. The data collected through non-participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document study. Data analysis is performed with sorting the data first, then interpreting the data descriptively and deriving conclusions.

III. Result and Discussion

3.1 The History behind *Ngedeblag Tradition*

The history of the *Ngedeblag* tradition begins with the King of Gelgel Kingdom called Dalem Waturenggong. According to source Ida Bagus Nyoman Rusnadana; the establishment of the *Ngedeblag* tradition cannot be separated from the history of Dalem Waturenggong's power in Klungkung with its origins in the village of Kemenuh. At that time there was a major conflict where the people of Nusa Penida felt they were neglected during Dalem Waturenggong' reign resulting revolt between the people of Nusa Penida and the Gelgel kingdom. To secure and prevent any further attack by Gelgel Kingdom the people of Nusa Penida built the Ratu Sakti Ped temple by invoking the power of the spirit of *Ratu Gde Mecaling* distributed by the *Goddess of Durga*, who is the sacred persona of Lord Shiva who resides in Pura Dalem and has very great power.

The form of resentment was expressed in the form of sending a disease epidemic to the island of Bali rose rage of Balinese people. Moreover, Ida Bhatara Dalem Ped manifested to the island of Bali to look for meal in this case soul sacrifices. As a result, the Balinese invaded by disease epidemic. The epidemic injured the Parni Priest Yogi Sinungsung, the son of Dang Hyang Dwijendra who came to Kemenuh Village, as well as the people of Kemenuh village. Seeing this incident, Ida Nyoman Kemenuh, son of the Patni Priest Yogi Sinungsung, received a *pawisik* or intuition to perform the *pesasihan/Ngedeblag* ceremony which was centered at Pura Dalem. During this ceremony, the people of Kemenuh polished their bodies with various kinds of paint to deceive the Bhuta Kala from seeing the people of Kemenuh as their kind in the exchanged with *pecaruan* offerings.

For a comparison, an interview was also conducted with Mr. Ida Bagus Putu Alit as the former Head of the Traditional Village of Kemenuh Village; he stated that; The *Ngedeblag* tradition was implemented due to epidemic occurred in Kemenuh village, which was previously called Tegal Wanasari Village. This epidemic caused people to suffer from red eyes, sudden death, pests on plants and all kinds of other skin diseases. For that reason, the community perceived the necessity of doing the *Ngedeblag* ceremony to rescue the people of Kemenuh village from this disaster.

Based on those previous explanations from two different sources, it can be concluded that the history of the *Ngedeblag* tradition begins with the Gelgel kingdom with its king named Dalem Waturenggong in the Kelungkung area, Bali. During Dalem Waturenggong's reign, there was quite massive conflict, where the people of Nusa Penida felt that they were

neglected by their king. As a result, the people of Nusa Penida opposed the power of Dalem Waturenggong. Nusa Penida under the rule of Dalem Bungkut established resistance but was defeated by the Gelgel soldiers. The people of Nusa Penida still disobey any command of King Gelgel. Thus, the resistance then ensued into a mystical form.

To protect Nusa Penida from being disrupted by the Gelgel kingdom; the people of Nusa Penida built the Ratu Sakti Ped temple by invoking the power of the spirit of Ratu Gde Mecaling from the Goddess Durga. The Ratu Sakti Ped famous for mastering a very strong mystique power even believed that He can cross to Bali Himself to destroy anyone who disrupts Nusa Penida. The Balinese people, especially those who live along the southern coast such as Klungkung, Gianyar and Badung, are very frightened of this mystical power.

With this mystical power, the people of Nusa Penida send defiance in the form of epidemic and disasters to all over Bali and its people during Sasih Kalima which is believed as fevered month with less prosperous conditions for the Balinese people. The disease outbreak also reached Pekraman Kemenuh Village, many village residents' experienced prolonged illness and disaster. This disease also attacked the Priest of Panti Yogi Sinungsung who at that time stopped in Kemenuh Village to visit his husband, Mpu Romo Sinungsung, who was none other than the son of Dang Hyang Dwijendra. The Priest of Panti Yogi Sinungsung was stricken with paralysis after arriving in Tegal Wanasari Village (now known as Kemenuh Village) and finally perished in that village.

Following this incident, his son, Ida Nyoman Kemenuh, carried out meditation to received guidance from God to protect of Kemenuh from the epidemic and disease outbreak. During this service, he received a *pawisik*

(sacred whisper) to perform the *pesasihan/ngedeblag* ceremony at the *Khayangan Tiga* temple which is centered at Pura Dalem by deliver offerings and performing the *Ngedeblag* ceremony. Moreover, the people of Kemenuh performing the *Ngedeblag* ceremony, by polishing themselves with various painting on their face and body to make them look scary, resembling Wong Samar and Bhuta Kala, then wandering the village carrying a sacred vibration to neutralize negative forces. This was intended to trick the eyes of Ida Bhatara Dalem Peed/Ratu Gde Mecaling so that the people of Kemenuh Village would not be sacrificed. Besides, the community also prepares various kinds of offerings/*pecaruan* in front of their respective houses to be offered to the *Bhuta Kala*.

3.2 Best Time to Implement Ngedeblag Tradition

The *Ngedeblag* tradition in Pekraman Kemenuh Village is performed starting from the day of *kajeng kliwon sasih kalima* which begins with the *matur piuning* stage in all the temples in the Pekraman Kemenuh Village environment. Each banjar is divided into several tempekan during the *matur piuning* ceremony. The next fifteen days, the *Ngedeblag* Tradition is performed coincide with Kajeng Kliwon Day. Since this period is starting to enter *Sasih Kalima*, which is considered *Sasih Gering*/excessive summer and rainy season and the final peak of the whole ceremony is arriving at *Sasih Sanga*.

The *Ngedeblag* tradition in Pakraman Kemenuh Village is performed three times consecutively, namely on *sasih kalima*, *sasih kaanam* and *sasih kapitu*, the difference lies in the appearance of the village karmas who only smear their faces and bodies once, namely on *sasih kalima*, the other

two period which are *sasih kaenam* and *sasih kapitu* they wore traditional clothes as usual and wander around the village. Ida Sesusunan Ratu Agung Lanang Istri remained calm to *mececingak* (look around) in all area of Pakraman Kemenuh village and accompanied by *gambelan beleganjur*, this ritual is to maintain the security of the people living in the village from all disasters and disease outbreaks.

The ceremonial means used during the *matur piuning* procession are *banten pejati*, *banten ajuman*, *canang sari*, *banten prani*, *segehan* and *tetabuhan* which are offered by the priest leader of each temple (Pemangku), then continued with praying together to gain safety and compassion so that the implementation of the traditional *ngedeblag* ceremony which will be performed during *Sasih Kalima* which coincides with *Kajeng Kliwon* Day fifteen days later will perform without obstacles and expeditious in accordance with the expectations of the local community.

3.3 Ritual in Ngedeblag Tradition

Performing ceremonies (rituals) always uses facilities or ceremonial equipment that will be used to support the implementation of the ceremony. The ceremonial means are called *upakara*. *Upakara* comes from two words, namely "upa" which means surroundings, or something related, while the word "kara" means action, work and hands. So, *Upakara* is everything related to an action, work, or hand (Surayin, 2002:4).

In general, *upakara* takes the form of material, the material form of *upakara* in religious ceremonies, especially in Hindu communities in Bali, is usually called *banten* or *alattenan*, which is a form of sacred Hindu religious culture that has a local form. *Banten* is a means of ceremonial equipment that is arranged in order to create a beautiful

display, and has a symbolic and sacred meaning from Ida Sang Hyang Widi Wasa and its manifestations, and is a tool that can connect oneself with the creator because of the limited human abilities we have. Thus, it requires facilities as a means of concentration to worship God Almighty/ Ida Sang Hyang Widi Wasa.

The offerings offered by the people of Pakraman Kemenuh Village, starting from Sasih Kalima, are as follows:

- At Pelinggih Gedong, Mangkalan, Pempatan Catus Pata, Klabah Besil, Tanggun Titi, Kaja Kangin, Tunon, dan Pura Desa offerings are banten as peras ajengan santun asoroh, ajengan pangkonan, segehan, tabuh, miwah ulam kawisan.
- At Pelinggih in di Pura Dalem, such as Pelinggih Meru, Ida Ratu Ayu, Ida Ratu Agung Lanang Istri, Ida Ratu Niang Lingsir, Pura Prajapati, and Pura Beji. Banten offerins are sayut pengambeian asoroh, tebasan prayascitta, peras ajengan santun, nasi pangkonan, canang tadah wong kalih tanding, segehan, tabuh, ulam kawisan, canang burat wangi, lenga wangi, batu salak, anaman bantal akelan, prani, jaje giling-giling mewarna barak lan putih, jaje kukus barak lan putih, lalak tape, sumping pasung, miwah crocot kuntir.

Based on an interview with the pura dalem administrator (26 October 2017), He explains that: "In each Krama house in Pakraman Village, it is mandatory to set up a *sanggah cucuk* in front of the house (*lebu*), and they must place a sujang made of bamboo shaped in special form inside the *sanggah cucuk*. The Bamboo form is used as a place or container for storing wine and berem, as well as delivering the burden or ceremony that has been determined in accordance with the contents of the letter circulated by the Village *Prajuru*."

The banten or upakara at each sasih are prepared by the women, except for

the upakaras performed at each temple held by the leaders of each Kahyangan Tiga Temple, Pakraman Kemenuh Village. *Sanggah cucuk* is one of the ceremonial equipment that must be present during sasih kalima.

- In sasih kalima the offerings are: nasi punjungan kalih tanding, iwak bawi maolah, jatah lambat asem akatih, raka sakewaneng, canang sari atanding, caru ini ditunjukkan kepada Sang Kala Mangsa.
- In sasih kaenam the offerings are: tumpeng danan selem, iwak jatah calon, urab barak lan putih, canang petang tanding, raka marupa jaje begina, pisang rateng, mesanggah cucuk, pelawa kayu tulak, tuak, yeh mewadah cameng. Ring lebu: segehan sia (9) tanding, iwak jeroan bawi matah, getih mewadah takir. Ini dihaturkan kepada Sang Bhuta Ngadang Semaya Pati.
- In sasih kapitu the offerings are: tumpeng danan bang, iwak ayam biying mepanggang, rake sakawenang; ring sanggah cucuk. Ring lebu: ajengan apunjung, iwak bawi maolah don agenep, segehan liamang (5) tanding, urab barak putih, tuak, yeh mewadah takir. Ini ditujukan kepada Sang Bhuta Semaya.
- In sasih kaulu the offerings are: tumpeng limang bungkul mewadah don telunjung limang muncuk, iwak rumbe gile, kekomoh, lawar kekumbuh kacang, calon limang katih, raka geti-geti medaging pisang batu, tuak lan arak mewadah bungbung, ajengan takilan, iwak adeng bekasem megantungring sanggah cucuk. Ini dihaturkan kepada Sang Kala Dengen.
- In sasih kasanga the offerings are: ajengan punjungan metungtung ati megoreng, iwak adeng medadar, peras penyeneang, raka sakawenang, tuak miwah yeh mewadah sujang

katur ring lebu. This is served to Sang Kala Rong Tiga.

As for discussions with informants (serati banten), it was generally concluded that every change of sasih starting from sasih kalima to sasih sanaga upakara or banten caru must continually made and presented in accordance with the contents of the letter that has been circulated. These regular rituals perform to maintain peace and safety living of Pakraman Kemeneuh Village. The rituals also preforme to avoid all disease outbreaks as well as to balance the universe and all its contents. Thus, the result of all this ceremony is to neutralize all negative things into positive ones (disomya para bhuta kala) so that Pakraman Kemenuh Village is secured from nature disasters.

3.4 The Function of *Ngedeblag* Tradition in Pakraman Kemenuh Village Religious Function

Hindu society considers an aligned, harmonious and balance relationship within microcosm and macrocosm as relationship between humans and the natural surroundings to obtain physical and spiritual well-being. Therefore, the Hindu community, especially Krama Desa Pakraman Kemenuh, always maintains and preserved the harmony of *Bhuwana Alit* and *Bhuwana Agung* by performing *Ngedeblag* tradition which is initiated by pecaruan ceremony at sasih kalima.

"The religious function is to somya (harmonize) the bhuta kala to preserve peace in the community. "The offering of caru offerings aims to harmonize the natural environment with all its aspects, including humans, which is called *bhuwana alit*, and to prosper nature or the earth with all its contents, which is called *bhuwana Agung*" (Ida Bagus Putu Alit, interview 27 October 2017).

The relationship between microcosm and macrocosm needs to be

harmonized to avoid a negative influence on these elements which can harm living things, especially the people in Pakraman Kemenuh Village. All offerings or ceremonies instruction distributed through letters and handed out by each Kelihan Banjar Adat to the community of Kemenuh Village. Furthermore, the community then prepares all those rituals and ceremony properly to prevent negative creatures and elements in disturbing the local community.

3.4.1 Social Function

Humans are creatures created by God Almighty who are considered as the most perfect among all His creations, this is because humans can live well. The human body will only have meaning if it can live together with other humans as a community group which has three elements, namely Tri Pramana (Sabda, Bayu, and Idep). Sabda (voice) is the human ability to speak as a means of communication, Bayu (strength) is the energy that humans have to be able to carry out all activities in their lives, Idep (thought) is the ability to be able to choose, and sort out between good and bad, and between right and wrong. Humans are basically individual creatures who socialize themselves because humans cannot always live alone, but are also social creatures who will always need the help of other people, interacting with other humans (Donder 2006:14).

Humans require love, understanding, emotional responses, and positive relationships and survival. *Ngedeblag* tradition in Pakraman Kemenuh Village has a social function both within the family environment and towards the surrounding community, which is portrayed from the process of implementing this tradition which triggers social interaction because *Ngedeblag* traditional ceremony

procession involves all components of society in Pakraman Kemenuh Village.

Each ceremony serves as a unifying tool, a place for community gathering, such as the community in Pakraman Kemenuh Village, before the implementation of Ngedeblag tradition takes place, the men gather together to perform mutual cooperation activities around the Pura Dalem area, after completing the activity, they continue by installing the pengider -ngider, lamak, tedung, penjor, and so on.

Other communities, especially women, prepare the ceremony facilities that will be used later during the implementation of Ngedeblag tradition, these ceremonies are made by housewives. All of these activities will inadvertently establish social interactions, namely greeting each other and communicating so that they can build and strengthen the ties of brotherhood in the community, regardless of a particular point of view.

Among the three banjars in Pakraman Kemenuh Village divided and grouped into 12 tempekan. 6 tempekan in Kemenuh Kaler, namely tempekan grija, tempekan pacek, tempekan bale Agung, tempekan batan nyuh, tempekan manyar Tengah, tempekan Kaler Kangin, and 6 tempekan in Kemenuh Kelod, namely tempekan dangin margi, tempekan manyar kelod, tempekan mayar kaja, tempekan Bale Agung, Tempekan Tengah, and Tempekan Kelod Kauh. (Ida Bagus Putu Alit, Interview, 27 October 2017).

The social function of *Ngedeblag* tradition in Pakraman Kemenuh Village is as a unifying medium between members of the community, without distinction, and looking at their position, class or social status. As a result a harmonious, peaceful and prosperous relationship will be achieved. Tri Hita Karana concept also teaches Hindus to maintain balance and a loving relationship with Ida Sang Hyang Widhi

Wasa called Parhyangan, a harmonious relationship between humans called Pawongan, and a harmonious and balanced relationship with The natural surroundings are called Pabelasan.

3.4.2 Misfortune Repellent Function

Hindu society expresses its feelings through hopes, requests and other goals which are expressed through symbols, including communication between humans, sign language and symbols, and certain codes are sometimes also used. Moreover, it is related to something that is abstract, or noetic, namely to Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa through his various prabhawa, and the universe and all its contents.

The use of nyasa or symbolism is expressed through the form of a yadnya ceremony, or upakara which is felt to represent the entire hopes. Hindus view that by using this symbolic language, God will be able to understand and accept the aims and objectives that His people want to convey (Krisnu, 1990:62).

The people in Pakraman Kemenuh Village perform various kinds of ceremonies, known as Panca Yadnya, including Dewa Yadnya, Rsi Yadnya, Manusa Yadnya, Pitra Yadnya, and Bhuta Yadnya. There are five components of the yadnya ceremony; in essence every time a yadnya is carried out in general it is usually accompanied by tools, or other ritual equipment, such as Ngedeblag tradition which is included in the Bhuta Yadnya ceremony, which has a function as a complement to religious ceremonies which are still carried out by the village community. Pakraman Kemenuh has been passed down from generation to generation; this tradition is believed to ward off all negative forces.

The housewives wait in front of the house simultaneously bringing offerings in the form of ajuman, canang sari

accompanied by tangkep fire, segehan alit, and so on according to their respective abilities, and balanced with sincere feelings, all these offerings will later be given by when Ida Sesuwunan and his entourage arrived at each end of the road, their aim was to ask for safety and secrecy.

The concept of rwa bhineda which is placed in the form of Barong Landung (Ida Sesuwunan Ratu Agung Lanang Istri), can be seen as a sacred and holy object, so that its magical aspects and religious elements believed as a binding sraddha, and devotion to Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa who is able to provide compassion for the people who praise God.

Barong Landung, which is praised by the people of Pakraman Kemenuh Village, is believed to have a power capable of protecting the community, and the village itself, so they show respect by offering a sacred offering sincerely for the protection given by Ida Sesuwunan, whom they praised.



The picture of *Ida Sesuwunan Ratu Agung Lanang Istri* at Tradition ceremony Ngedeblag

Ngedeblag tradition functions as a repellent for evil, which is a ritual performed by the people of Pakraman

Kemenuh Village, with the aim of ensuring that the community can avoid all dangers or natural disasters, such as landslides, diseases or viruses that will befall the people in the area. It again believed in establishing a tranquil and peaceful, harmonious and prosperous social life between humans and the environment, which in the Tri Hita Karana concept is called palemahan. The cult's belief in repelling evil which is offered to comfort the Bhutas is now believed and is always carried out every year by the people of Pakraman Kemenuh Village. Every Krama Desa trip that accompanies the implementation of this tradition always sounds instruments that can produce noisy sounds, such as kulkul, gong, cengceng, kempur and so on.

IV. Conclusion

Ngedeblag tradition in Pakraman Kemenuh Village is an activity that is carried out every year, starting from saish kalima from generation to generation by village community, which has a symbolic meaning as a tribute to bhuta kala so that it always provides safety, serenity, prosperity, and can neutralize all things. Negative things become positive. This tradition is also believed to maintain environmental harmony in Pakraman Kemenuh Village, so that the elements of bhuana alit and bhuana Agung become balanced, and can increase the sraddha and devotion of Hindus to Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa through the medium of upakara (banten) to get closer to God. so that it can grow people's belief in the majesty of God Almighty. The function of Ngedeblag tradition divided as religious function, namely balancing the relationship between humans and the natural surroundings by offering caru gifts to the Bhuta Kala, social function where Ngedeblag tradition becomes a unifying medium between citizens so

that a harmonious relationship is created, then repelling evil in this case Ngedeblag tradition is used to reject all the negative aura created by the bhuta kala during sasih kalima to sasih kasanga.

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