

Tutur Brahma Sapa and Dewa Tatwa **Manuscripts as the Main References for** **the Maintenance of *Manak salah* tradition** **at Padangbulia Traditional Village, Bali,** **Indonesia**

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Received: 05-02-2023; Revised: 26-04-2023; Accepted: 07-06-2023

DOI: 10.31291/hn.v12i1.699

Abstract

Padangabulia Traditional Village is the only village in Bali that maintains the *manak salah* tradition. Even though the Provincial Government of Bali officially abolished this tradition in 1951 because it was considered to violate religious, Hindu, legal, and health teachings. It is interesting to study this phenomenon through field research using a qualitative approach to find reasons why they still maintain the tradition of *manak salah* and the rituals that accompany it. Interviews with traditional and religious leaders in Padangbulia village complimented the main data. The results of the study indicated that the maintenance of the tradition of *manak salah* in this village was legitimized by *Lontar Tutur Brahma Sapa* and *Lontar Dewa Tatwa*. These two *lontars* are sacred texts that are believed to be true. *Lontar Tutur Brahma Sapa* emphasized that *kembar buncing*, male and female twins are wrong because Lord Brahma cursed it. The binarism between humans versus animals reinforces this. Married couples with more than one male and female child were identical to animals. This condition

causes contamination of purity or *leteh* in humans. The Tri Hita Karana ideology outlines that humans are united with fellow human beings and the natural environment and God/gods who reside in temples. This idea causes *leteh* in humans and spreads to the natural environment and temples. *Lontar Dewa Tatwa* explains that impurities must be cleaned through a purification ritual, including *melasti* to the sea. Whenever there is a case of *manak salah*, they will implement *melasti* at the Buleleng Harbor beach. This creates a unique tradition: this traditional village does not perform *melasti* at every Nyepi Day celebration but only when there is a *manak salah*. This ritual not only has a religious-magical function but also has a social function. These functions strengthen *Lontar Tuter Brahma Sapa's* position in maintaining the *manak salah* tradition.

Keywords: *lontar manuscript (lontar), manak salah, the purification ritual (melasti), Bali Hindu.*

Abstrak

Desa Adat Padangabulia merupakan satu-satunya desa adat di Bali yang tetap mempertahankan tradisi manak salah. Padahal Pemerintah Provinsi Bali secara resmi menghapuskan tradisi tersebut pada tahun 1951, karena dianggap menyalahi ajaran agama, Hindu, hukum, dan kesehatan. Gejala ini menarik dikaji melalui penelitian lapangan memakai pendekatan kualitatif, dengan tujuan menemukan alasan mereka tetap mempertahankan tradisi manak salah dan ritual yang menyertainya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan pemertahanan tradisi manak salah di desa ini dilegitimasi oleh Lontar Tuter Brahma Sapa dan Lontar Dewa Tatwa. Kedua lontar ini merupakan teks suci yang diyakini kebenarannya. Lontar Tuter Brahma Sapa menekankan bahwa pasangan suami istri manak salah, yakni kembar laki-laki dan perempuan adalah salah, karena dikutuk oleh Dewa Brahma. Hal ini diperkuat oleh binerisme antara manusia versus binatang. Pasangan suami istri beranak lebih dari satu orang, berjenis kelamin pria dan wanita identik dengan binatang. Kondisi ini menimbulkan pencemaran terhadap kesucian atau leteh pada manusia. Ideologi Tri Hita Karana menggariskan bahwa manusia, tidak saja menyatu dengan sesama manusia, tetapi juga dengan lingkungan alam dan Tuhan/dewa-dewa yang beristana di pura. Gagasan ini mengakibatkan leteh pada manusia, menular pada lingkungan alam dan pura. Lontar Dewa Tatwa menunjukkan leteh harus dibersihkan melalui ritual penyucian antara lain melasti ke laut. Setiap ada kasus manak salah, mereka melasti ke pantai Pelabuhan Buleleng. Hal ini melahirkan tradisi unik, yakni desa adat ini tidak melakukan melasti pada setiap perayaan Hari Raya Nyepi, tapi hanya pada saat ada kasus manak salah. Ritual ini tidak saja berfungsi religius-magis, tetapi juga berfungsi sosial. Fungsi-fungsi ini memperkuat kedudukan Lontar Tuter Brahma Sapa dalam konteks pemertahanan tradisi manak salah.

Kata kunci: *lontar, manak salah, tradisi penyucian (melasti), Hindu Bali.*

Introduction

Manak salah is a tradition preserved by Hindus in some areas in Bali, Indonesia. This term refers to a married couple from the *wangsa* (caste) of *jaba* who give birth to male and female twins or locally referred as *kembar buncing*. Old Hindu belief trusted that *kembar buncing* could only be born by high-order *wangsa*, and when *kembar buncing* were born by low-order *wangsa* such as *jaba*, it was believed that the whole village would be cursed, and misfortune would come. *Manak salah* should be isolated for about three months in order to prevent potential harm and misfortune to the whole family. *Manak salah* was mentioned in the *Indik Anak Manak salah lontar* manuscript. The manuscript said the couple coming from the *jaba* caste (the lowest cast) who have twins of different sexes are cursed by God as they equate themselves with the king. *Manak salah* causes the village to be impure. As a sanction, the *manak salah* couple are driven out from the village. They are placed either at the intersection or on the edge of the cemetery for 42 days (*Indik Anak Manak salah* manuscript translated by I Goesti Poetoe Djlantik in Windia, 2014:717).

In 1951 the *manak salah* tradition was prohibited based on Law Number: 10/DPRD/1951 dated 12 July 1951 issued by the Regional People's Representative Assembly 'Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah (DPRD)' for several reasons. First, the *manak salah* tradition was considered to be discriminative, as it applied only to *wangsa jaba* while did not apply to *tri wangsa* (*brahmana, ksatria* and *wesya*). *Second*, the sanction that the babies and their parents have to be driven out from their own house and isolated for 42 days violated the principle of health and humanity. *Third*, the ritual was

considered to be burdening for the low caste family who already financially struggling. The tradition required money, time and labor to fulfill what the couple and the babies need for isolation and accompanying *manak salah* rituals (*mecaru* and *melasti*) to purify the village.

Although the *manak salah* tradition had been legally abolished, Padangbulia Traditional Village still maintains it. The most recent case reported in 2019 in Koran Buleleng (Koran Buleleng, 2019) where a couple from *jaba wangsa* named I Gede Sadia Utama and Ni Made Welianingsih gave birth to boy and girl twins. The couple willingly followed through with the *manak salah* tradition by being placed in a hut at the edge of the Padangbulia village near a village cemetery area. The hut was constructed collectively by the local villagers and was equipped with a bedroom, a kitchen, and a bathroom. There were also shifts of the villagers to guard the *manak salah* family every night. During the isolation, the father I Gede Sadia Utama was allowed to keep working as a staff in the local credit office (koranbuleleng.com, 15 March 2019). This case suggests that the recent *manak salah* tradition in Padangbulia was held by still considering with the principals of humanity and security, and the village was present to support the *manak salah* couple.

The persistence of the Padangbulia Traditional Village to maintain the tradition of *manak salah* had been studied by various parties. For example, (Atmadja, 2005) studied it using a religion anthropological approach. He analyzed the cultural system, e.g., the faith and values leading to the *manak salah* tradition. Pursika & Sudiatmaka (2016) investigated the *manak salah* tradition at Padangbulia using the legal

approach. They stated that the *manak salah* tradition violated the human rights; therefore, it should be abolished. Dewi, Sukadana & Sudibya (2012) also explored the *manak salah* in 2021 using the legal approach. They concluded that the *manak salah* tradition at Padangbulia Traditional Village violated the law. However, according to Dewi et al, abolishing *manak salah* was not easy, as it could not be separated from the religion the villagers adhered to. Negara & Parwata (2021) also explored the *manak salah* in Bali using the legal approach. They conclude that the maintenance of the *manak salah* tradition in Bali in general and at Padangbulia Traditional Village, in particular, violated the law and human rights; therefore, any rules that can be universally and consistently applied were required to abolish the tradition.

The studies above had weaknesses because they have not touched on the most profound cognition structure of the Padangbulia Traditional Village community, namely the beliefs that underlie or legitimize them, namely the *Lontar Tutur Brahma Sapa* and *Lontar Dewa Tatwa*. The Padangbulia Traditional Village positions these two lontars as sacred texts that are believed to be accurate. Anyone who studies the *manak salah* tradition in the Padangbulia Traditional Village must pay attention to these two lontars to gain a deep, broad, and holistic understanding of them. Thus, studying the two lontars is very important to complement the existing studies. So, the effort to eradicate this tradition requires understanding the two lontars.

Interviews with several traditional and religious leaders in the Padangbulia Traditional Village, for example, I Gede Supatra (68 years), showed that the reason for maintaining the *manak salah* tradition did not refer to the *Lontar Indik Manak salah* (lontar about

manak salah) which is generally applicable in Bali, but rather to a special *lontar* which apply in the traditional village, namely *Lontar Tuttur Brahma Sapa* and *Lontar Dewa Tatwa*. Checking the Gedong Kirtya Lontar Library, it turned out that the *Lontar Tuttur Brahma Sapa* was not found there. This fact showed that the *Lontar Tuttur Brahma Sapa* is a remarkable collection of the local community of the Padangbulia Traditional Village. The *Lontar Dewa Tatwa* was in the Lontar Library, Gedong Kirtya Number III B/7093. These two *lontars* are related. *Lontar Tuttur Brahma Sapa* provides legitimacy regarding the background of male and female twins being called *manak salah* and the implications, namely causing impurity to human, the natural environment, and temples. *Lontar Dewa Tatwa* provides legitimacy regarding the rituals that must be performed to remove impurity and restore purity. Thus, these two *lontars* are very interesting to study to obtain a more in-depth and comprehensive understanding of the maintenance of the *manak salah* tradition in the Padangbulia Traditional Village.

Literature Review

The *Manak Salah* Tradition from Past to Present Time

The history of the *manak salah* tradition in the village of Padangbulia is a tradition that originates from the manuscript *lontar* of *Tuttur Brahma Sapa*. The *manak salah* tradition is inherited from the ancestors and carried out from generation to generation. However, it has yet to be discovered precisely when this tradition started in Padangbulia village. *Lontar Tuttur Brahma Sapa* itself talks about the curse of Lord Brahma on his son and daughters-in-law who have sexual intercourse in inappropriate places. The curse takes the form of the birth of twins with male and female sexes or is

called the *kembar buncing* or *manak salah*, Dewa Jutisrana, and Dewi Gayastri. The birth of *kembar buncing* or *manak salah* in the village of Padangbulia is similar to the birth of Dewa Jutisrana and Dewi Gayastri. Local people believe that the birth of the *manak salah* twins is a curse from Lord Brahma. When twins with pinpoint twins are born, the entire temple or temple will be polluted because Ida Bhatara, who resided there, is said to have 'mur' or gone. Because Ida Bhatara, who resided in the traditional village, was already 'mur,' the village remained *cuntaka* (dirty). For three times of *tilem* (42 days), it is forbidden to hold *yadnya* ceremonies in the traditional village environment. If the *manak salah* tradition is not carried out, bad things will happen, such as prolonged crop failures and the death of successive villagers. The thing that the residents of Padangbulia village were most afraid of was the contents of the *lontar Tutur Brahma Sapa* as follows:

“Duk Ida dadi Durgha, ditu Ida mabasmi getih manusa, ditu Ida manguling wong, mangan manusa adasa sai, lekad adasa sai, mati adasa sai, urip adasa sai.” (meaning: When she took the form of the Goddess Dhurga, at that time, she used human blood as a *bashma* (a type of *bija* in Bali or a *Mangal Sutra* in India; a specific object, in this case, blood, which is rubbed on the forehead in a ritual), at that time she was also presented with roll humans, eat ten people (humans) every day, in one day there will be ten births, ten deaths, and ten living (survivors)).

Local people believe that the birth of *manak salah* twins was a curse from Lord Brahma. The place of birth and the family concerned will experience *cuntaka* (in a dirty state). So. to purify the place or village and the family affected by *cuntaka*, the local community must hold a purification ceremony, both from a village and family point of view, so that unwanted things do not happen. As civilization

develops, the situation of society changes. The *manak salah* tradition is not considered in accordance with modernization, specially for human rights issues. This view supports Sztompka's opinion (2017:77-90) that modernization gives emphasis on development, and the traditions that obstruct development have to be abolished.

During the Dutch era, the *manak salah* tradition had generated much controversy. Some intellectuals said that this tradition violates human rights and must be abolished. An article in the *Pandji Poestaka* magazine, published in 1926, contained a proposal to abolish the *manak salah* tradition. At that time, this tradition was very burdensome for families who had *kembar buncing* babies, even to the point of causing the death of the babies. The enormous costs of purging the *manak salah* tradition also made it difficult for the whole community because, at that time, the economic conditions in society were difficult (Suryadi, 2016). After the independence era, several times government policy has required the abolition of this tradition because it is considered a violation of human rights. The decision issued by the Bali Regional People's Representative Assembly (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Bali*) Number: 10/DPRD/1951 dated 12 July 1951, the *manak salah* tradition was officially prohibited in 1951.

Although the *manak salah* tradition had been legally abolished, Padangbulia Traditional Village still maintains it. The people of Padangbulia village are adamant that they do not dare to abandon it. They feared terrible luck. Bad luck not only befalls the twins' family but the entire village. According to I Gede Supatra (68 years), the idea of moving the place of isolation to *Bale Banjar* has occurred in

several meetings (*Paruman*). However, a strange incident always occurred before the idea was implemented. Likewise, when a couple gives birth to twins but does not report it and intends not to carry out the *manak salah* tradition, the family feels insecure when they return home. In the end, they have to live the wrong *manak* tradition. Another unique case occurred when a resident of Padangbulia gave birth to *kembar buncing* but did not carry out the *manak salah* tradition—a family with two wives. The first wife had twins, but they did not carry out the tradition of the *manak salah*. The second wife of the family again gave birth to *kembar buncing*. This made the family no longer dare to avoid the traditions of *manak salah*.

Supernatural events often occur when a family avoids the *manak salah* tradition, making the people of Padangbulia Village realize the importance of preserving this tradition. The birth of *kembar bucing* in 2019 is an example of how all the villagers worked together to help this family, from leaving the hospital until the end of their isolation near the village cemetery. Even the family of I Gede Sadia Utama (the father of the twins) sincerely participated in this ritual (see figure 1 and figure 2). Moreover, the community supports caring for these two babies, so this tradition is still sustainable.



Figure 1. I Gede Sadia Utama, wife, and their *kembar buncing* twins
(Source. Desa Adat Padangbulia, 2019)



Figure 2. The villagers of Padangbulia village fully supported the family with *kembar buncing*.

(Source. <https://www.nusabali.com/berita/48826/punya-bayi-kembar-buncing-wajib-mondok-di-ujung-desa-selama-3-bulan>)

Manuskrip *Lontar T tutur Brahma Sapa and Dewa Tatwa*

A *lontar* manuscript is made up of palm leaves ‘*daun ental*’ tied together under one theme locally referred to as *kropak*. Bali and Java are rich in *lontar* manuscripts (Ariyani, 2013; Rachman, 2017; Rachman, Salim, Rachman, & Ratnasari, 2022). The *lontar* tradition in Bali has a long history and age along with historical values, religion, philosophy, medicine, literature, and other high sciences.

Heritage of Nusantara:

Lontar, the recorder of the Balinese thought in its present form, is a historical witness and a historical cross-section of literacy; character civilization. The Balinese lontar manuscripts in the history of Balinese civilization show the progress of the inner and outer intelligence of the Balinese people. The Balinese believe that lontar has a significant meaning and is helpful for their lives and livelihoods. With all its forms of discourse, lontar provides a mirror of life that can be used as a role model and implementation of what is and is not appropriate for life. The inheritance of the lontar tradition in Bali continues from generation to generation in an atmosphere of spirituality and purity of conscience.

The tradition of *manak salah* in Padangbulia Village, which originates from the *Lontar Tutur Brahma Sapa and the Lontar Dewa Tatwa*, is a tradition that has been carried out from generation to generation. *Lontar Tutur Brahma Sapa* talks about the history of the birth of this tradition, as well as why families who give birth to twins are considered *cuntaka* or dirty. In comparison, Dewa Tatwa's lontar is about rituals and ceremonies for *yadnya* procedures, such as *melasti* ceremonies, *mamungkah*, building temples, exterminating pests, etc. The *manak salah* tradition in the *lontar Dewa Tatwa* also explains the punishment for couples who give birth to *kembar buncing*. When the twins were born, "...*amada-mada sang ratu, leteh ikang rat, wenang katundung genahang ring tepi ning desa, 42 dina suwenya.....* (meaning: emulating and imitating the queen, the universe became impure, so they were isolated and placed at the end of the village for 42 days...."). As they are regarded as bringing bad luck, they are driven away and isolated to the cemetery (Cock-Wheatley, 1927). They are located in a simple hut for three times dead moon (*tilem*) or 42 days. After the period of time during which

they are isolated is over, they are supposed to perform a purification traditional ritual. In this way, the degradation of sacredness and harmonization related to the ideology of THK, that is, *Parhyangan*, *Pawongan* and *Palemahan* become neutralized, causing them to have the opportunity to achieve happiness.

Method

The present study used a qualitative approach with the *Tutur Brahma Sapa* and the *Dewa Tatwa* Lontar Manuscripts as the main data sources. These two lontars can be positioned as text or discourse. These two lontars contain two aspects, namely, the inner structure and the outer structure. The inner structure refers to the ideas, beliefs, and specific meanings which are often latent, which the writer wants to convey to the reader. The outer structure refers to the form of the text that can be immediately recognized and accessed by readers, for example, themes and linguistic manifestations (Titscher, Mayer, Wodak, & Vetter, 2000). This pattern resulted in a study of *lontar Tutur Brahma Sapa* and *lontar Dewa Tatwa* as the main data source in studying the tradition of *manak salah* in Padangbulia Traditional Village, requiring a separate point of view, namely a qualitative content analysis perspective. This perspective emphasizes that the study of texts requires a hermeneutic method to capture not only the outer structure of a text but also its internal structure through interpretation (Halim, 2014; Maryaeni, 2005; Titscher et al., 2000). In this way, the meanings of the ideas in the two lontars can be understood as a whole, not only concerning what is stated but also what is implied or not only in the form of denotative meaning but also its connotative meaning. The two manuscripts were explored using the observation

technique in order to understand their contents on the whole. The data were also obtained from the traditional and religious leaders of Padangbulia Traditional Village. They were interviewed using the in-depth interview method. Matching the contents of the *Tutur Brahma Sapa* and the *Dewa Tatwa* Lontar Manuscripts and the belief system and religious practice related to the *manak salah* tradition is the target. The *manak salah* families, the location where they are isolated, the place where *melasti* ritual is performed for purification and so forth are also equally important the data sources. The data from these different sources were obtained using the observation method. Observation also included the actions of the residents of the Padangbulia Traditional Village at a specific time and space when they experienced cases of *manak salah*. This situation was observed and recorded in photographs by cultural actors and researchers. These photos significantly strengthen the narrative related to *manak salah* in Padangbulia Village.

Data analysis follows Berger's thought (in Samuel, 2012: 49-57) that are referred to in the data analysis of the current study. *First*, as the stage of conceptualization, the local concepts related to the *manak salah* tradition and the *melasti* ritual taken from the *Tutur Brahma Sapa* and the *Dewa Tata Lontar* Manuscripts and the information given by the traditional and religious leaders, as the informants, and the results of observation were discovered. *Second*, the result of conceptualization. These concepts are analyzed using a hermeneutic method to find new meanings denotatively and connotatively, even continuing to the possibility of an ideology behind the local community's belief in *manak salah* and the *melasti* ritual. *Third*, the authentication, the accuracy of the meanings and definitions were proved by observing again the *Tutur Brahma Sapa* and the *Dewa*

Tatwa Lontar Manuscripts and interviewing the informants. Either strengthening and completing or refuting the meanings and definitions given by the researcher is the target in this stage. In this way, the meanings and definitions become intersubjective. That is, it is agreed upon by the researcher and the informant so that the accuracy of the interpretation is more valid. *Fourth*, as the objectification stage, the intersubjective meanings and definitions were used as the basis for formulating the narration of the *manak salah* tradition before being strengthened using social theories. In this way, the narration of the *manak salah* tradition becomes objective, not only resulting from being supported by the theories proved to be true but also resulting from being clearly related to the treasury of social theories available.

Results and Discussion

The *Tutur Brahma Sapa* and the *Dewa Tatwa* Lontar Manuscripts as References for Maintaining the *Manak Salah* Tradition

The *Tutur Brahma Sapa* and the *Dewa Tatwa* Lontar Manuscripts are the collection of the local community of Padangbulia Traditional Village. Who wrote and when they were written are not known. They are originally written in the Old Javanese language using the Balinese characters. Nobody knows who has kept the original forms of the two manuscripts. As they have been transliterated using the Latin characters, they become more easily understood. Their copies are well kept by the traditional and religious leaders of the traditional village. They are treated as the holy manuscripts in order to legitimate the *manak salah* tradition at Padangbulia Traditional Village.

Analysis of the Contents of the *Tutur Brahma Sapa* Manuscript

The *Tutur Brahma Sapa* Lontar Manuscript narrated the period of honeymoon of God Sangkara and his wife named Goddess Wisabrata in Mount Indrakila. They visited different places and rested in the middle of the forest of Mount Indrakila. At that time their sexual appetite rose and they had sexual intercourse. God Brahma suddenly appeared from a tree and said this to his son, "*Dewa Sangkara, di kene-kenene I Dewa metemu makrama lawan rabi: ambek raksasa sarba sato I Dewa, yaning ngelah pianak rabin I Dewane wekasan, wastunan sukreta apang lekad BUNCING*" (meaning: Dewa Sangkara, in a place like this you had intercourse with your wife: like a giant and a dog, later when your wife had children, they will be born *kembar buncing*). God Brahma reprimanded them that they should not have sexual intercourse in the open place. It is wrong to have sexual intercourse in the open place as what giants or dogs (animals in general) do. He condemned them that they will have twins with different sexes locally known as *kembar buncing*.

The curse finally came true and God Sangkara and His wife had twins with different sexes (*kembar buncing*). Their daughter's name was Dewi Gayastri and their son's name was I Dewa Jutisrana. Dewi Gayastri resided at Dalem Temple as the king of different demonic creatures, and I Dewa Jutisrana resided at Desa Temple.

“Bhatari Dalem mepinunas ring Ida Bhatara Mrajapati,
mekarya Ida: Leyak, Bhuta Bhuti mwang Kala Kali.
Manglekas Ida ring Pamuhunan, Setra Ganda Mayu,
mangilehin karang sma, mider Kiwa ping tiga, matehenan
tendas manusa dadua, mategakan tendas manusa abesik.
Manglekas Ida ring Pamuhunan, dadi Ida: I Calonarang.

Manglekas Ida ring Bale Agung metu: Bhut, Kala Kali,
Dengen, mwang metu I Leyak Abang, I Leyak Ireng, I
Leyak Putih, I Leyak Kuning, I Leyak Manca
warna.....

Ida ngawe sisiane mekejang: I Lenda, I Lendi, Ni Guyang,
Ni Larung, I Waksisa, Misa Wadana, I Setan Sasab, I
Wakilian.”

The text above shows that Dewi Gayastri created many demonic creatures. The demonic creatures supervised by Dewi Gayastri can invite different disasters for human beings. One of her creatures is I Calonarang. She was a powerful witch who was believed to be able to kill only with the power of thought (Dwijayanthi & Gunawijaya, 2021). When she becomes Durgha, Dewi Gayastri likes to bring sorrow to humans. Durga can bring sickness, plague, and other calamities. It was this that inspires God Siwa to teach human beings what to do to neutralize the disasters caused by the different demonic creatures supervised by Dewi Gayastri, causing the human life in the rural area to be peaceful. In the *Tutur Brahma Sapa*, Bhatara Shiva creates various repellents (mantras, rituals, and equipment) to prevent humans from the disaster caused by the Goddess Gayastri.

The important aspect of the contents of the *Tutur Brahma Sapa* Manuscript that needs to be analyzed is the warning and advice given by God Brahma to God Sangkara and His wife, Goddess Wisabrata, should not have sexual intercourse in the open place imitating what the giants or animals do. When connected with Diamond's (2019) opinion, he stated that the place where human beings have sexual intercourse is certainly different from that where animals have it. Unlike animals that do not choose closed places to have sexual intercourse, human beings do it in private places. Gods that have sexual intercourse in the open place is said to do an

abnormal action, as it is commonly done by giants or lower creatures like animals.

That Gods are similar to giants or animals in that they have sexual intercourse in the open place reminds us of the Balinese people's way of thinking that they are strongly bound to what is locally referred to as *rwa bhineda* or binary opposition (Eiseman, 1998). Gods are opposed to giants. The latter's position is lower than the former's. The reason is that what giants do is based on greed and lust. On the other hand, the things done by Gods are based on holiness and virtue. Therefore, if Gods imitate what giants do – having sexual course in the open place, then degradation will take place, meaning that the status of being Gods changes into the status of being giants. Such a degradation is not only abnormal but it is also wrong and bad. A sanction will be imposed upon such a behavior in the form of having twins with different sexes, *kembar buncing*.

As rational beings, human beings should not have sexual intercourse in the open air as what God Sangkara and His wife, Goddess Wisabrata, do. Human beings have what is known as *tri pramana*, that is, *bayu* (locomotion, enabling human beings to move from one place to another), *sabda* (the ability to speak), and *idep* (common sense) (Karta et al., 2022). On the other hand, animals have what is known as *dwi pramana*, namely *bayu* and *sabda*. They do not have *idep*. What human beings do is not only based on the instinct they have but also on the common sense they have actualized in the form of culture (Diamond, 2019). Therefore, if human beings do what animals do then degradation will take place in which the status of human beings changes into the status of animals. Human beings who

do that are stated to be abnormal human beings, as God Sangkara and his wife, Goddess Wisabrata. If human beings are stated to be abnormal, wrong and bad, they are automatically cursed by God Brahma that they will have twins with different sexes *kembar buncing* or *manak salah*.

Analysis of the Contents of the *Dewa Tatwa* Manuscript

The *Dewa Tatwa* Manuscript, which is related to the *Tutur Brahma Sapa* Manuscript that is referred to in the maintenance of the *manak salah* tradition, does not specifically discuss the *manak salah* tradition. In general, the *Dewa Tatwa* Lontar Manuscript provides guidance so that people will be wise enough not to degrade the sacredness of human beings, the traditional village as a community, the temples and the natural environment. The thing that can degrade holiness is, among others, having twins with different sexes *kembar buncing*. It does not only degrade sacredness but it can also lead to what is known as *awantara*, that is, a chaos taking place within the area of a traditional village indicated by different disasters, for example, pandemic causing many people to die, any conflict among the villagers caused from nothing, the spreading rice plant disease and crop failure also illustrate it.

The way offered by the *Dewa Tatwa Lontar* Manuscript to overcome the chaos is that the villagers are obliged to go to the beach to perform the purification ritual referred as *makiis* or *melasti*. Such a procession is also performed for the couples who have twins with different sexes or *manak salah*, the members of the traditional village, the temples, and the natural environment. It is performed to re-purify them all. In this way, the relationship between human beings and the Gods residing at the temples, the relationship among

the villagers, and the relationship between human beings and the natural environment become purified – in other words, the re-purification process takes place. The life of the villagers that used to be threatened by the disasters is now becoming harmonious, meaning that it is getting more possible for them to achieve happiness.

The important aspect of the contents of the *Dewa Tatwa Lontar* Manuscript that needs to be analyzed is the *Tri Hita Karana* ideology, which is a Hinduism-based global view of the Balinese people. According to *Tutur Brahma Sapa*, *manak salah* is a result of an abnormal, wrong and bad sexual behavior. The birth of *kembar buncing* is responsible for the degradation of sacredness initially occurring within the domain of *Pawongan* where there is a couple having twins with different sexes. This couple are part of the traditional village, as every married couple is obliged to become the members of the traditional village or *Pawongan*, namely the traditional village community (Geertz & Geertz, 1975; Picard, 2017). *Pawongan* is integrally related to *Parahyangan* and *Palemahan*, implying that the impurity occurring in *Pawongan* automatically contributes to the impurity taking place in *Parhyangan* and *Palemahan*, finally causing the relationship between *Parhyangan*, *Pawongan* and *Palemahan* not to be in harmony and more opportunities for disasters to appear at Padangbulia Traditional Village.

The Isolation and Purification Ritual

Padangbulia Traditional Village issued a regulation regulating that if married couples living in the traditional village have twins of different sexes, they must report to the traditional village

leader, *bendesa adat*. Based on the report, they would do two essential things, isolating the couple with *kembar buncing* closed to the cemetery, and the *melasti* ritual performed to purify the degraded sacredness.

When *kembar buncing* were born, the babies' family would report it to the *bendesa*. The *bendesa* invited the villagers to gather at the village hall. The objective was to report the information that a sanction would be imposed upon the *manak salah* couple. The villagers then are requested to work together to prepare everything needed for the isolation. The location where the couple will be isolated is determined to be close to the cemetery, where the villagers are requested to construct a hut for the couple to stay at during their isolation. The choice of the location refers to the contents of the *lontar Tujur Brahma Sapa*. The area was chosen because Dewi Gayastri resided there, and villagers propose that She will take care the couple as well as the villagers from being disturbed by different demonic creatures. It is believed that Dewi Gayastri will fulfill what is proposed by the traditional village as She has the same background of being born as one of the twins with different sexes resulting from the curse imposed upon by God Brahma.

The other reason of the choice of the isolation place is the existence of *campuhan*, a place where two small rivers meet. According to Hinduism, *campuhan* is the miniature of the sea – as the sea is the collection of water coming from different rivers. It is believed that the sea can purify what is impure. The belief that *campuhan* is identical with the sea means that it has the same power as the sea in that it can change what is impure into pure (Meranggi, 2018; Titib, 2003). While the *manak salah* family stayed in their isolation, they

used the water from the *campuhan* for domestic purposes (see figure 3). It is believed that the water of *campuhan* can gradually decrease the impurity of the couple with *manak salah*.



Figure 3. *Campuhan*, a place where the *manak salah* couple took water for domestic purposes.

(Source. Private documentation, 2023)



Figure 4. The isolation place for *manak salah* couple and their babies, close to the cemetery.

(Source. Private documentation, 2023)

The couple and their babies were carried on to the isolation place (see figure 4) using what is known as *tandu* (sedan chair), accompanied by the villagers. The reason is that the mother who has just given birth to the twins is not fit or able to walk properly yet.

Apart from that, as the new born babies, the twins need to be protected to keep them healthy. The other consideration is related to the religious-magical aspect of the contents of the *Tutur Brahma Sapa* Lontar Manuscript. The religious-magical aspect consideration is also related to the impurity of the couple with *manak salah*. Padangbulia Traditional Village believes that if the *manak salah* couple walked to the isolation area, the impurity would spread faster through the roads they took, and bigger disasters would happen. During the isolation, the villagers were obliged to fulfill the foods, clothes and health care of the *manak salah* family. Every night the villagers took care of them to guarantee their safety. The fact that many parties were involved in the tradition performed for the *manak salah* couple caused the location where they were isolated to be crowded during day and night time.

As soon as the *bendesa adat* announced the *manak salah* case, the sacredness of the *Tri Hita Karana*-based three pillars of the traditional village, namely *Parhyangan* (the temple), *Pawongan* (the human beings or the community), and *Palemahan* (the natural environment of the traditional village), become degraded. This is called *sebel desa* when the traditional village is perceived as impure. As the traditional village's sacredness is degraded, the villagers cannot enter the village's temples. Apart from that, every family belonging to the small patrilineal clan to which the couple with the different sex twins belongs (known as the *dadia*) is not allowed to enter their family temple or the *dadia* temple, their holy place where they worship the Hindu Gods and their ancestors (Geertz & Geertz, 1975). Such collective impurity lasts long enough, from when the couple reported the case to when the isolation is finished. It lasts for about 42 days.

A few days before the isolation time was finished, the traditional village prepares every equipment needed for the purification ritual performed for the family with the *manak salah* case. They prepared offerings for village's temples (*Parhyangan*), the traditional village community (*Pawongan*) and the natural environment (*Palemahan*). The *manak salah*'s families at the same time prepared every equipment needed for the purification ritual for their *dadia* or clan's temple. All villagers took part in making offering or *banten* because *banten* is the main medium in every ritual (Atmadja & Maryati, 2016).



Figure 5. The journey of the Melasti ritual, attended by all villagers
(Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CqZ0g8u_Vtc)



Figure 6. The *melasti* ritual at Buleleng Harbour beach.
(Source. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CqZ0g8u_Vtc)

When the time of isolation was finished, the *manak salah* family left the isolation hut in the midnight, walking to Buleleng Harbor accompanied by their family. In the next morning the Padangbulia Traditional villagers followed them and performed the *Makiis* or *Melasti* ritual to re-purify and re-harmonize *Parhyangan*, *Pawongan*, and *Palemahan*. They went to Buleleng Harbor, the place where the *Melasti* ritual was performed to transform impurity into purity (see figure 5 and figure 6). The sea water was believed containing the holy water of life or known as *tirtha amertha* (Titib, 2003).

After *melasti*, the ritual continued at *Pura Desa* temple, clan's temple, and the *manak salah*'s family house. *Melasti* and the ritual at *Pura Desa* temple and the clan's temple (see figure 7) were not the ends of the *manak salah* ritual. After the *melasti* and final ceremonies at the village temple, the *manak salah* family still had to visit three villages willing to welcome them. Usually, there are already certain villages that are willing to accept and welcome them with pleasure. They will stay overnight in villages that accept them. They will usually be provided with a place at the banjar hall and

accompanied by the villagers they visited. Every village provided all their needs. After visiting three villages, they were able to return to their homes.



Figure 7. Pura Desa temple was the place, where the ritual of Padangbulia traditional village ended.

(Source. *Left*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CqZ0g8u_Vtc; *right*: Private documentation, 2023)

The Meaning of Manak Salah from the Perspective of Social Religious Practice

Even though the traditional ritual of *manak salah* is very long, the people of Padangbulia village live it with complete sincerity and are determined to continue maintaining it. They believe that violation will lead to a religious-magical sanction that cannot be avoided, as a supernatural strength can do whatever it can without being bound to space and time (Atmadja, 2020). This is in line with the opinion of Oommen (1997:31) that “human beings are both individual and collective seeking creatures”, implying that the maintenance of *manak salah* tradition has something to do with the attempt made by Padangbulia Traditional Village to seek identity. This can also be related to the tradition annually performed in Bali a few days prior to the *Nyepi* Day celebration – the Saka New Year celebration, when every traditional village is obliged to go to the beach to perform the *melasti* ritual in order to remove all kind of impurities (Suroyo et al.,

2022). Padangbulia Traditional Village does not perform the *melasti* ritual annually as it only performs it when there are a couple having twins with different sexes '*manak salah*'. The occurrence cannot be predicted. However, empirically, the case of *manak salah* appears around once in every ten years.

On average, Padangbulia Traditional Village performs the *melasti* ritual once in ten years – it does not perform it every year as the other traditional villages in Bali do. So, in their understanding, the *manak salah* case has to take place, as it is desired by Gods with the objective that the traditional village will perform the *melasti* ritual regularly, every ten years. This enables the degradation of the sacredness and harmonization of *Parhayangan*, *Pawongan* and *Palemahan* resulting from *manak salah* and other things to be well overcome. In this way, there will be more opportunities for the traditional village to achieve happiness.

The participation of the villagers staying at Padangbulia Traditional Village and outside, shows that the *melasti* ritual does not only function religiously and magically but also functions socially. Its social function refers to the social solidarity developed among the villagers. Based on what is stated by Nottingham (1992), it can be stated that the *melasti* ritual plays an important role in maintaining the society. Based on what is claimed by Sairin (2002:161), the participation of those living outside the traditional village in the ritual can also mean that they are the bridge revitalizing the traditional cultural values of the traditional village where they originally come, and indicate that they are also committed to the maintenance of the *manak salah* tradition at Padangbulia Traditional Village.

It can be stated, in short, that the refusal shown by Padangbulia Traditional Village on the abolishment of the *manak salah* tradition is not only based on the religious and magical considerations but also on its function as the media for strengthening social solidarity and both collective and individual identity. This function is legitimized by *Tutur Brahma Sapa* and the *Dewa Tatwa* Lontar Manuscripts of as the holy manuscripts which are believed to be true. These findings strengthen what is stated by McGuire (1981) that, as far as the general rural life is concerned, traditions are closely related to myths and religions. This supports what is claimed by Giddens (1994) that the fact that traditions cannot be separated from rituals and social solidarity also clearly supports the maintenance of the *manak salah* tradition and the *melasti* ritual accompanying it, as what has occurred at Padangbulia Traditional Village.

Conclusions

The legitimacy of the tradition of *manak salah* or *kembar buncing* refers to the *Tutur Brahma Sapa* and the *Dewa Tatwa* Manuscripts. These two lontars are main references for the maintenance of this tradition. According to these lontars, *manak salah* causes the sacredness and harmonization of the relationship between human beings and the Almighty God/Gods, the sacredness and harmonization of the relationship among the human beings, and the sacredness and harmonization of the relationship between the human beings and the natural environment referred to as *Tri Hita Karana* to be degraded. The condition can lead to disasters; therefore, any couple having twins with different sexes are isolated as the sanction before the *melasti* ritual is performed. The reason is that repurification and reharmonization are the basis for achieving

happiness. The ritual of purification follows the *lontar of Dewa Tatwa* and the traditional village is obliged to do this, as, if neglected, disasters that are difficult to overcome will happen as the religious-magical sanction. The reason is that the supernatural strength can do what it likes without being restricted by time and space. The *manak salah* tradition and the *melasti* ritual cannot be separated from one another. They do not only carry religious-magical function but is also a symbol that Padangbulia Traditional Village has the autonomy based on the local wisdom, including *desa* (space), *kala* (time), and *patra* (situation). These different functions are related to each other; therefore, it is not surprising that nobody, including the state, can abolish the *manak salah* tradition and the *melasti* ritual accompanying it.

With reference to the findings of the current study, it is recommended that it will be better if the *manak salah* tradition and the *melasti* ritual accompanying it are not abolished. It is recommended that they are adapted in such a way that they will not violate the prevailing regulation. As an illustration, the place where the *manak salah* couple is isolated is arranged in such a way that its sanitation can be guaranteed. Apart from that, they are optimally served by referring to the modern medical system. As well, the *melasti* ritual performed as a must, should follow the modern management principles. As a result, there will be an efficiency regarding time, labor and financial capital without neglecting the religious meaning that the ritual has.

Acknowledgement

The authors thank the residents of Padangbulia village for the data related to *the manak salah* tradition, especially informants who have

agreed to be interviewed during data collection. The authors also thank all reviewers of the Heritage journal for all input and suggestions for improving this article so that this article can be published.

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