

Inheritance System of Ngeloang Capah Tradition as a Symbol of Harvest Success in the Subak of Tamblang Traditional Village

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ABSTRACT

The Ngeloang Capah is a sacred, ancient harvest tradition in Tamblang Traditional Village, Buleleng, Bali, symbolizing gratitude for an abundant harvest through the presentation of the capah. Initiated by the Subak Community (Bali's traditional irrigation organization, recognized by UNESCO), the tradition is a tangible expression of the Balinese life philosophy, Tri Hita Karana. This philosophy emphasizes harmony in three relationships: with God (Parhyangan), fellow humans (Pawongan), and nature (Palemahan). Subak operates not just as an irrigation regulator but as a socio-religious institution, managing rice and water as divine gifts in accordance with these values. The study found that the tradition is maintained through a vertical inheritance system, passed directly from the older generation to the younger, and is inseparable from religious life. This mechanism is key to preserving local wisdom. The elements passed down include the capah symbols, the ceremonial sequence, and also some art practice like Gong Alit, Mask (Topeng) and Dawang - dawang. Crucially, the tradition fosters kinship and mutual cooperation (gotong royong) through the practice of ngayah (communal volunteer work), which concretely embodies the Pawongan pillar. By preserving Ngeloang Capah, the Tamblang community ensures the continuity of their cultural identity and the fundamental Tri Hita Karana philosophy.

KEYWORDS

Ngeloang Capah,
Ngayah, Subak
Tamblang, Balinese
Tradition



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Introduction

Indonesia is a country with diverse customs and cultures from each of its regions, where every custom and culture possesses its own uniqueness through its facilities and infrastructure, series of activities, as well as its philosophy and values. Customs and cultures in Indonesia are often intertwined with religious activities, necessitating cultural inheritance to prevent these customs and cultures from disappearing. According to research by Cendrawani [1], Indonesian customs and cultures are being eroded by modernization and globalization, yet this is counterbalanced by facilitated access to information and opportunities to introduce local cultures globally. Cultural inheritance is the process of transferring values, customs, and traditions from generation to generation to maintain the cultural identity of a society. Cavalli - Sforza and Feldman divide cultural inheritance into three types: vertical inheritance (from parents to children), horizontal inheritance (among peers), and oblique inheritance

(through educational institutions) [2]. In the context of Balinese socio - cultural life, art is fundamentally integrated with customary traditions (adat) and the religious system, specifically Hindu Dharma. Art forms, such as dance (Wali, Bebali, Balih - Balihan), gamelan music (karawitan), and visual arts, do not function merely as aesthetic expressions (art for art's sake) but primarily as a functional medium within religious rituals and traditional ceremonies. Art serves as a means (upacara sarana) to support the activities of the Panca Yadnya (Five Sacrifices), imbuing the rites with spiritual and aesthetic nuance. Sacred dances (Wali), such as the Rejang Dance, are considered holy offerings possessing high philosophical value and magico - religious power, performed at specific times and places prescribed by tradition (within the temple pura).

Bali holds its own principles for preserving tradition, namely Tri Hita Karana and Menyama Braya, both of which are interconnected. Tri Hita Karana is a philosophy of the three paths to happiness, emphasizing three aspects of human relationships in life on earth. These three aspects encompass the relationship between humans and God as the source of life, the relationship with fellow humans, and the relationship with nature. Meanwhile, Menyama Braya itself is included in Pawongan within the context of Tri Hita Karana, applied through local traditions, namely Tat Twam Asi (I am you and you are me), Wasudewa Khutumbhakam (we are all brothers and sisters), segilik seguluk selulung sebayantaka, paras paros sarpanaya, saling asah, asih, asuh (to unite, respect others' opinions, remind, love, and help each other) [3]. Thanks to these two principles, the Balinese community can preserve tradition while confronting the influx of foreign cultures in this era of globalization.

According to research by Suweta [4], the unique socio - cultural capital of Bali, when compared to other regions in Indonesia, grants Bali significant potential for the development of cultural tourism rooted in Balinese culture. Therefore, such traditional inheritance can aid in the development of tourism in every region, including the Tamblang Traditional Village (Desa Adat Tamblang). Furthermore, according to Subawa [5], in facing the challenges of globalization, it is crucial to maintain the Balinese Hindu religious identity so it is not lost due to foreign cultural influences. Balinese Hinduism serves as the primary pillar of social and cultural life, especially in desa pakraman (traditional villages), which are expected to be centers for the implementation of religious teachings and activities, as well as strengthening Balinese identity through the preservation of culture and religion.

Cultural inheritance is highly essential for the development of tourism. Bali, with its principles of Tri Hita Karana and Menyama Braya, as well as the strong connection between culture and religion, makes it important and difficult to disappear. However, it is highly expected that the government, community, and international institutions

need to collaborate to develop policies supporting customary inheritance law, thereby enabling Indonesia to ensure that customary inheritance law remains an effective instrument in preserving and transmitting the cultural wealth owned by its diverse societies. In this way, Indonesia's cultural heritage can continue to flourish, inspire, and become a source of pride for future generations [6].

The Tamblang Village, which has been established for a long time, is closely related to the story of Ki Pasek Bayad who meditated and guided the community in forming the Tamblang Traditional Village in ancient times, including the establishment of Pura Puseh (currently called Pura Bale Agung) which is the venue for this tradition [7]. Furthermore, the role of Subak is also very important in this tradition; Subak is a group focused on the agricultural sector. Additionally, Subak is a group that oversees the management of rice field irrigation canals and sets the guidelines for religious rituals with its own rules [8]. Therefore, the inheritance of this tradition needs to be carried out within the context of Ki Pasek Bayad's message not to forget the ancestors, as well as the role of Subak in the agricultural system that produces food as a basic necessity.

The Ngeloang Capah tradition, performed in the Tamblang Traditional Village, is one of the many customs and cultures found in Indonesia, particularly Bali. This tradition symbolizes gratitude for the successful harvest achieved by the Subak Community of the Tamblang Traditional Village. The tradition boasts uniqueness through its capah (offering container), which utilizes a distinctive blue - colored penyangkaan (holder) with a height of nearly 1 meter. The objective of this research regarding the tradition is to ascertain the Ngeloang Capah tradition, its uniqueness, and its inheritance system, thereby determining how this tradition can be executed annually. Meanwhile, the benefit of this research is to contribute to the preservation of this custom and culture in the form of a literature study for the wider community, ensuring the existence of this culture is maintained beyond its direct execution by the Tamblang Traditional Village community itself.

The research employs a qualitative method approach, which, according to Arif Rachman [9], is an in - depth and comprehensive research approach aimed at understanding and explaining phenomena within their natural context. Unlike the quantitative approach, which emphasizes numerical measurement and statistics, the qualitative method focuses on interpretation, contextual understanding, and subjective meaning. In qualitative research, the researcher is directly involved with the research subjects to gain profound insight into various aspects of human life, society, or culture. Data collection methods utilized were interviews and literature studies. An interview is a communication between two or more parties, which can be conducted face - to - face, where one party acts as the interviewer and the other as the interviewee, with a specific purpose, for example, to obtain information or gather data. The interviewer

asks a number of questions to the interviewee to elicit answers [10]. Through interviews with the Former Kelian (Head) of the Tamblang Traditional Village Subak (irrigation system organization), Made Sudarasta, and several members of the Tamblang Traditional Village community, it was possible to ascertain the history of this tradition, how it is implemented, and the facilities and infrastructure utilized. Meanwhile, the literature study pertains to theoretical frameworks and other references relevant to the values, culture, and norms prevalent in the studied social situation, as research is inseparable from scientific literature [11]. In this regard, relevant literature on the research topic, namely cultural heritage, was used by identifying comparative findings. This literature study method will assist the researcher in broadening insight through previous research, which can then be utilized for further development in subsequent research.

Definition of the Ngeloang Capah Tradition

The Ngeloang Capah Tradition constitutes a component ritual within the Ngusaba Desa Ceremony. Ngusaba is a celebration or commemoration conducted at a place of worship (Pura) that is intrinsically linked to agricultural concerns, encompassing both dry fields (lading abian) and wet rice fields (sawah) [12].

This tradition commences with the napetin tirta (fetching of holy water) procession, which relates to the rituals at Pura Ulun Danu Batur where nunas tirta, or the request for holy water, is performed. The procession then continues to Tamblang, where the Meayu - ayu ceremony is held with the objective of welcoming the arrival of this holy water [13]. Capah itself is an offering (banten) similar to a gebogan, containing agricultural yields such as various fruits, chicken, cakes, and eggs. The Capah in Tamblang possesses a distinct feature, namely its container (penyangkaan), which is colored blue.

The Ngusaba Desa ritual, facilitated through this tradition, is highly correlated with the success or abundance of the harvest obtained by the Subak Community of Tamblang Traditional Village. The tradition is observed based on Purnama Kedasa (a full moon ceremony calculated using the sasih lunar calendar, which determines auspicious/inauspicious days [14]) in April. This timing is chosen because it also coincides with the odalan (sacred ceremony) at Pura Dalem Desa Tamblang. The Ngeloang Capah Tradition is executed only upon the conclusion of this odalan.

History and Procession of the Ngeloang Capah Tradition

The Ngeloang Capah tradition has been practiced since ancient times, typically performed by the Subak community in Tamblang Traditional Village (Desa Adat Tamblang). While there are no precise records documenting the exact year this

tradition began in Tamblang Traditional Village, it is estimated to have been in existence since the establishment of the Subak system itself.

Historically, this tradition is carried out over two days. On the first day, a procession is held to request tirta (holy water) from the Kembang Sari Village area, specifically from a spring originating directly from Mount Batur. This preliminary ritual is referred to as Napetin Tirta. The second day is dedicated to the Ngeloang Capah Tradition. Prior to this, the women (istri) perform the metanding process, which involves preparing or creating the capah (a type of offering), while the men (lanang) prepare a roasted pig (babi guling) or other meats as an offering. The Ngeloang Capah ritual is conducted at the Pura Bale Agung (Village Temple) of Tamblang Traditional Village. The procession involves circumambulating the temple's outer area (jaba) three times, followed by three circumambulations within the temple's innermost or holiest section (jeroan). This is then followed by a collective prayer session, performed in shifts, which continues until the evening.

Inheritance System in the Ngeloang Capah Tradition

The transmission system utilized within the Ngeloang Capah Tradition is categorized, according to the model proposed by Cavalli - Sforza and Feldman, as vertical inheritance. This occurs through the mechanism of customs and culture, a type of cultural transmission frequently termed Hegemony. This tradition is primarily overseen and regulated by the Tamblang Subak Community. Subsequently, the entire sequence of activities is also observed by all pakraman (community members) of Tamblang Traditional Village (Desa Adat Tamblang). Consequently, this tradition is sustained annually and avoids extinction, primarily due to the practice of ngayah. Ngayah represents a social obligation within Balinese society, serving as an application of the karma marga doctrine, executed collaboratively (gotong royong) with sincere and voluntary participation, whether in the local community unit (banjar) or in sacred places such as temples (Pura) [15]. The synergistic role of Ngayah and the Ngusaba Desa ceremony is identified as a critical factor in the tradition's perpetuation, given the strong interrelation between customary and cultural practices and religious activities. Through ngayah, which is viewed as a mandatory communal service, all members of the community are actively involved in the tradition itself. The continued inheritance of this tradition is deemed essential as it functions as a symbolic expression of gratitude by the Tamblang Traditional Village community for an abundant harvest, while simultaneously fostering a sense of kinship and mutual cooperation (gotong royong) through the collective engagement of ngayah.

The tradition is also complemented by the medeeng procession, which is typically conducted during the Ngaben (cremation) ceremony. The purpose of this medeeng activity is to escort the soul to eternal life. Unlike the medeeng performed a day prior

to the Ngaben ceremony, the medeeng in the Ngeloang Capah tradition is carried out simultaneously with its complete procession, which includes an art form featuring dolls, similar to the Ondel - Ondel of Jakarta, known as Dawang - Dawang. These Dawang - Dawang dolls symbolize Rwa Binedha, representing two distinct yet constantly coexisting elements in this world, as well as the meaning of Purusa and Pradana, the male and female principles [16]. Furthermore, the gong alit (small gong) ensemble provides the musical accompaniment for this procession, usually featuring the Gong Kebyar and its Tabuh (musical compositions). In addition, there are children who mepayas (put on make - up/dress up) to become dancers, wearing masks of their own making, sometimes with the intent to entertain (or occasionally to deliberately frighten other children in jest). All these activities form an integrated unit within the Ngeloang Capah tradition. Consequently, in practice, Ngeloang Capah does not merely preserve the symbol of a successful harvest executed by the Subak (traditional irrigation system organization) of Tamblang Traditional Village, but also indirectly establishes a system of preservation through its artistic components.

The youth of Tamblang Traditional Village will not merely become inheritors of a tradition, but also of its arts. This begins with decorating the Ngeloang Capah, which is fundamentally regulated, yet without completely discarding the artistic aspects, such as the intricate jejahitan (offerings made from woven leaves), the colour application, or the “penyangkaan” (container) which remains blue. Subsequently, the youth of Tamblang Traditional Village will continue to preserve the arts outside the Capah, such as serving as penabuh (musicians) for the gong alit to perform the Gong Kebyar and Tabuh in accompanying the medeeng procession. They also learn to mepayas for the medeeng and to create the dolls for the parade—the meticulously crafted Dawang - Dawang. Finally, the creativity involved in making masks for entertainment is also a significant attraction of this tradition; not a few children become enthusiastic due to the masks displayed by others, driven by a mixture of fear and curiosity. From this confluence, the Ngeloang Capah tradition becomes a holistic entity that fosters not only customary or religious practices but also unleashes the creativity of the Tamblang Traditional Village youth through the preservation of its arts. Thus, this inseparable tradition and its arts are ensured against obsolescence in the future.

Transformations in the Ngeloang Capah Tradition

Initially, a misunderstanding arose between the Tamblang Traditional Village Subak Community and the Village Institution due to the lack of a clear justification for the necessity of this tradition. Consequently, in the past, the tradition was more frequently conducted solely by the Subak Community on a private basis. This led to variations in the capah (offering) construction, often constrained by financial limitations. Previously, the height of the capah could reach up to 1.5 meters, depending on the individual

producer. This resulted in a noticeable social disparity during the Ngeloang Capah procession if some participants' capah were not of comparable height.

Following the 1970s, a formal agreement was established between the Subak Community and the Village Institution, which subsequently improved the funding resources allocated for this tradition. Post - agreement, the capah construction was reorganized into a group - based system. This institutional change enforced a uniform standard for the capah created, stipulating a required height of 1 meter. This standardization was implemented specifically to mitigate social disparities and prevent potential conflict or social misunderstanding. This stipulation remains in effect to the present day.

Conclusion

The Ngeloang Capah tradition is a significant example of the numerous customs and cultures extant in Indonesia, particularly in Bali, which necessitate sustained inheritance and preservation. This tradition not only symbolizes the gratitude of the Tamblang Traditional Village community for an abundant harvest but also cultivates a sense of kinship and mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*) through the collective service of *ngayah*. Furthermore, the Ngeloang Capah tradition forms a unity that fosters the harmonious concept of life in Bali, such as the *Tri Hita Karana*, especially the component of *pawongan* (human relations). This tradition also maintains a strong connection between tradition and art, which ensures that the youth of Tamblang Traditional Village continue to pay attention to artistic expression through the *medeeng* parade while simultaneously not forgetting the tradition that symbolizes their life's sustainability.

The implementation of a vertical inheritance system, as facilitated and led by the Tamblang Subak Community and involving the entire populace, is instrumental in ensuring the resilience of this tradition against cultural erosion. Furthermore, the intrinsic link between the Ngeloang Capah tradition, the *Ngusaba Desa* ceremony, and the practice of *ngayah* serves as a crucial factor for its continuous existence. However, future integration, such as the established standardization for capah construction, remains necessary to ensure its annual execution. Consequently, the Ngeloang Capah tradition is highly meritorious for recognition as a unique and invaluable cultural heritage that warrants systematic perpetuation.

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