Batu Taulan: Exclusive Myth of Prohibition of Ngamaduang (Polygamy) in Ritual-Based Pedawa Village

Luh Putu Sendratari¹, I Wayan Pardi², Radha Andhra Swari³

Lpsendra@yahoo.co.id1, wayan.pardi@undiksha.ac.id2, radhaaswari@gmail.com3

Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha^{1,2}, Universitas Warmadewa³

Abstract. Efforts to suppress the occurrence of polygamous behavior are generally carried out with an orientation towards legal norms in Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage. In fact, outside of legal norms there are indigenous people who have ritual-based control mechanisms, namely the Pedawa community, Buleleng, Bali. This study aims to: 1) find out the background of the use of Batu Taulan as a means of controlling the prohibition of polygamy; 2) describe the exclusive myth that underlies the Batu Taulan ritual; 3) disscuss the symbols contained in the Batu Taulan ritual as the cultural foundation of the Pedawa community. Parson's AGIL systems theory was used to find answers to research problems. This research applied qualitative approach which was oriented towards ethnographic research with the first steps, observation, interviews; second, understand the meaning; third, correlating several findings; fourth, developing hypotheses, concepts and theories. The research findings show: the strength of the Pedawa community's attachment to inheritance in the form of their ancestral ideas is the basis for maintaining the sacred stone tradition; The 12 Batu Taulan myths associated with the 12 avatars of Shiva are a form of exclusive myths, and gender-based myths that can be discussed denotatively and connotatively.

Keywords: Rocks; Exclusive Myth; Cultural symbol

1. Introduction

The debate regarding the rejection of polygamy also takes place in Bali. Panetja (in Putra, 2003:29) wrote in Djatajoe magazine (March 25, 1937) about "The Position or Condition of the Wife in Balinese Society". This paper criticizes the mentality of men who view wives as only useful for satisfying men's desires. Apart from that, Metra also criticized the practice of polygamy, which came from the heavy burden placed on the wife, so that the wife deliberately ordered her husband to find another wife so that the burden on the wife would be reduced. The latest data on the pros and cons of polygamy is illustrated by the results of a poll conducted by Venny et al. (2003:100-107) as administrator of the Women's Journal Foundation from September 15-20, 2003. Out of a hundred respondents with educational backgrounds from elementary school (elementary school) to masters

and from livelihood status it can be seen that 87% of respondents refused, while the remaining 13% agreed to polygamous marriages. The long polemic about polygamy also emerged when at the end of 2006 news spread in the mass media that a well-known preacher who was popular among the Indonesian people, Abdullah Gymnastiar who is famously known as AA Gym, decided to become polygamous by marrying Alfarini Eridani after previously taking Muthmainnah as his wife, so that the polygamy polemic heated up again. In this case, state officials in this country also commented on the case. Finally, the government reviewed the rules for practicing polygamy, although only among civil servants (PNS).

The debate about polygamy that has existed so far has indications of rejection of the practice of polygamy. So far, the rejection that occurs can be known through real life, even though the rejection has been embedded in the socio-cultural system of society which is preserved in a ritual system. Several indigenous peoples in Bali reject the practice of polygamy, for example the Penglipuran Village Community which is known as *Karang Memadu*; Bayung Gede village community. These two villages have rules that explicitly and explicitly forbid the community from polygamy accompanied by customary sanctions if there is a violation of these rules. Even though the regulation of polygamy has appeared in the constitution and there are also indigenous peoples who choose to prohibit polygamy openly, it turns out that there are also people who prohibit polygamy covered by customs and religious traditions as practiced by the people of Pedawa village through the *Batu Taulan* tradition.

The Pedawa community is the *Bali Aga*/ancient Balinese community who live in Pedawa Village which is included in the SCTPB area (Sidatapa, Cempaga, Tigawasa, Pedawa and Banyuseri). The five ancient villages have their own unique customs or traditions. Among the five, only Pedawa Village has a religious tradition related to the prohibition of polygamy, which is *Batu Taulan*. The study of traditions that store character values is still needed today so that the inheritance of values instilled by the ancestors can be understood. The main urgency of extracting cultural values is still important so that people can understand the ways of building their collective identity. Bearing in mind, ancestral heritage in the form of character values can become a central function and as the main foundation in the life of the nation and state [9].

This research has an urgency to make theoretical contribution to how humans build a belief system in upholding social cohesion about the ideal institution of marriage. This is a representation that the game of signs and symbols is a means of regulating the social order that continues for generations.

By referring to Talcott Parson's AGIL theory [8], it can be understood the background of the community in caring for and the legitimacy of its belief system. The social system initiated by Parsons is summarized in an acronym "AGIL" which consists of four kinds of social institutions. This system serves to compile a social system integrity in social life, among others, namely:

Adaptation (political orientation/institutions), integration (legal institutions), and cultural latency (educational institutions); Goal-attainment (a system that explains and performs functions in order to achieve a goal); Integration (how legal institutions function to create a stronger bond in regulating patterns of societal behavior; and Latency (has a fairly important role to maintain a social fact or authority, personality or ideal type, and social character in social life.)

This article answers the following two questions: (1) Why is *Batu Taulan* used as a means of controlling the prohibition of polygamy in Pedawa?; 2) What is the exclusive myth that underlies the *Batu Taulan* ritual?

2. Method

A qualitative approach was utilized in answering research questions. The informants are traditional community leaders namely Wayan Sukrata (72 years old); Made Sugita (55 years old); Wayan Dolat (64 years old). In addition, the informants also include *Balian Desa* (1 person); *Deha* (Chairman and member), *Iluh* (Chairman, 35 years old) and Mega Aulia (24 years old, member). Data collection techniques were carried out through interviews and observation. The validity of the data was done using triangulation technique. Qualitative descriptive analysis was used in describing the answers to research questions.

3. Results and Discussion

Traces of Stone Worship: Representation of Ancestor Worship

Worship of ancestral spirits is well known to the Balinese people who are believed to have existed since the farming era and the *Perundagian* era. This veneration emerged as a form of respect for the social status of deceased figures and ancestors. The main purpose of worship is to ask for safety and well-being (Rema, 2014: 1. Archaeological Forum Volume 27, Number 1, April 2014. Link. https://forumarkeologi.kemdikbud.go.id/index.php/fa/issue/ views/10). The religious system in the form of respect for ancestors rooted in the *Perudagian* era is also known as the Megalithic tradition. The megalithic concept is literally a tradition of worshiping large stone buildings that are commonly known in the Southeast Asia and Pacific Region, including Indonesia. According to [11] worship of the megalithic tradition in Bali does not only consist of large stone buildings but can include sarcophagi, menhirs, dolmens, statues of ancestors, stone thrones, river stone arrangements, terraced terraced buildings, and others. Based on this understanding, the worship of the *Batu Taulan* in Pedawa Village is closely related to the purpose of respecting the ancestors.

Worship that was known to the public in the Megalithic era was generally found in mountainous areas. This is related to the community's belief system about mountains or high places as places for

the spirits of people who have died. This is evident from the traces of relics in the form of cult stones. The spread of Megalithic traditions in Bali can be found in the village of Tenganan Pengrisingan, Karangasem Regency; Kintamani area, Bangli Regency; Penebel Village, Tabanan Regency; Keramas Village, Gianyar Regency; Sembiran Village, Buleleng Regency [3;7].

Worship of the ancestors using stone media is popularly known as *Menhir*. According to Rema (2014: 5) Menhir is a medium of worship, for the safety of the community, the role is to maintain good relations between the community and the spirit world. The stepped terrace is a pyramid-shaped building used as a medium for worshiping respected figures. This terraced terrace stems from the belief in the spirits of ancestors who are considered to live on the top of a nearby mountain or hill, as a link between the living and the dead. The stone throne is a symbol and throne for the arrival of ancestral spirits, at certain times. In its further development, ancestral worship through certain rituals purified ancestral spirits are worshiped in a place of worship with a god which is usually referred to as *Atmasiddhadewata*. The tradition of worshiping ancestral spirits called *Dewa Pitra*, is carried out in places of worship, such as *sanggah* or *merajan*, *pura dadya* or *paibon*, *pura panti*, and *pedharman* [5].

The worship of the sacred ancestors of each citizen or kinship group is called the *pura kawitan*, the sacred places in the nuclear family are called *sanggah*, *kamulan*, *merajan*, and *taksu kamulan*, namely *sanggah* dedicated to the ancestors so that it is possible for the house owner to worship the ancestors. The worship of the *Batu Taulan* in Pedawa Village is carried out at the Bingin Temple which is also called Kamulan. The following picture shows the location of the *Batu Taulan* worship in Pedawa Village.



Fig.1. Location of Batu Taulan Worship in Pedawa Village

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Bingin Temple or also called Kamulan Kemmitan Wong Bali Age Temple. In Pedawa village, Sabih village is located. Under the shady trees which are surrounded by clove plantations belonging to the residents, standing shrines stand in the Bingin Temple area. According to Sukrata (70 years old), as the name implies, Kamulan Temple is meant to worship the ancestors in Pedawa. The peak of worship at this temple is carried out during the *Saba Malunin* ceremony.

Worship using stone media in Pedawa Village is found in several temples surrounding Pedawa Village. There are stones that are called *Gaingan*, namely stones arranged according to the Pedawa community as a *pelinggih* place of worship. The highest number of *Gaingan* is found in Munduk Temple, namely five (Sadnyana, 45 years old). It is believed that these stones are *Stana Taksu*. At Telaga Waja Temple, there is a stone worship which is also interpreted as a shrine called the Tan Katon shrine (*pelinggih* which is intangible), namely the Gunung Raung shrine, the Belang Pelinggih and the Rambut Siwi. The three *pelinggih* were built like *pelinggih* in general in Bali, but underneath the stones that were already there before the *pelinggih* was made were placed under the *pelinggih*. This is a sign that the Pedawa people, before knowing worship in the form of a monument/*pelinggih*, actually acknowledged worship using a pile of stones as a medium.

Apart from that, there is also the Pecetiaan Temple in the form of a large tree which is also called the Tan Katon Temple. According to the informant's view, the concept of worshiping the Tan Katon pelinggih spread across Pedawa Village is interpreted to be related to the worship of Embang (empty). There are stones of worship on one side and there is a form of *pelinggih* on the other side, both of which are interpreted with different meanings, the stone as the personification of worship is "empty", while the *pelinggih* with the meaning of worship is tangible, all of this can be interpreted that the foundation of the community's belief system Pedawa rests on a binary ideology, two different things but always there. The belief in binary oppositions (empty, tangible, dark, bright, etc.) is believed that the worship of the "empty and the "real" will be able to create security and prosperity for the Pedawa community both spiritually and abstractly.

The stones that are used as worship tools in Pedawa Village are not only scattered in the temples, but also scattered in the fields belonging to the residents. According to Wayan Sukrata (70 years old) these stones are called "*Umah Taksu*". In general, taksu means strength. The presence of these stones in the moor residents is interpreted as guarding the moor which will provide security to the owner. These stones have been inherited from the ancestral owners. Along with the development of the times, there is a story that the owner of the garden wanted to build a *pelinggih* as a *stana* to place the worship stones found in his moor. However, this was not done because there was a message through a dream so that the stone would not be moved, and left as it was. There are also people who have already made *pelinggih*, but still left the stone in place.

Based on the views of the Pedawa people regarding the worship of ancient stones, this is a manifestation of the Pedawa people's mindset, action patterns and feelings in actualizing their belief in Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa. Apart from that, the difference in the way of treating ancient stones found in the moor of the inhabitants reflects the diversity of perspectives and ways of interpreting the existence of stones for worship functions.

The worship of the *Batu Taulan* at Bingin Pedawa Temple is interpreted as the worship of Ciwa which, when linked in the form of a stone, is identical to the shape of a phallus. [2], the word Lingga comes from Sanskrit in addition to other meanings Linga means "sign equivalent of Phallus, male genitalia". Lingga, among other things, means a symbol or symbol of the male sex. Linga is a building that is used as a medium to worship God in his manifestation as Lord Shiva [11]. The function of the symbol (linga) in Hinduism includes several aspects: 1). Improving and strengthening sraddha (faith or deep belief) of the people in order to foster devotion (devotion), which will form the personality of mankind with high morality which will ultimately increase the noble character of society; 2). Fostering and maintaining artistic and cultural values through sculpture, painting and craft art, other things made that do not violate the provisions of the Silparasatra book in question; 3). Fostering togetherness among Hindus in realizing the means of worship, especially in relation to the sacredization and functioning of the symbols made. Symbols in Hinduism are very useful, because they are a medium to get closer to God Almighty, and foster a sense of devotion in the people themselves [12]. This is also reinforced [13] that humans who interact with their environment cannot be separated from symbols, because symbols can also evoke emotions and encourage people to be creative. Siwananda explains the use of symbols as follows: "No matter how intelligent a person is, he cannot concentrate without the help of a symbol at first, in order to worship the goal (Brahman),

These views are in accordance with the Pedawa community's thinking and acting patterns towards the existence of *Batu Taulan* in the Bingin/Kamulan Temple which interprets the presence of the *Batu Taulan* as a symbol that protects the Pedawa community so that it is considered a sacred stone that bridges the public belief system in worshiping the Gods, especially Lord Shiva and worship their ancestors.

Background of Batu Taulan as a Tool to Control Polygamy

Batu Taulan in Pedawa Village is housed in Bingin Temple/Kemulan Temple which is located in the Sabih village area. There are currently 12 *Batu Taulan*. Eight stones are in Kemulan Bingin, the remaining four are in *Pelinggih Deha Tua*, *Pelinggih Teruna Tua*, *Pamesan* and *Pengandel*. It is believed that before the construction of the Bingin Temple in the form of shrines, there were already a number of stones worshiped by the community. These stones are associated with the 12 avatars of Shiva, but until now the physical existence of the stone pillars at Bingin Temple has not been definitely associated with Linggaa Yoni worship.

There is a background for the use of a stone as a means of controlling polygamy, namely. Strong Binary Opposition Beliefs about the Understanding of Sex (Gender) of men and women who are united through the family institution. There is an understanding of lanang-wadon - as the personification of a husband and wife. The strength of this understanding is also demonstrated by the occult experiences experienced by some of the residents who had experience picking up stones at the *Gaingan* (Taulan House) located in Lambo village. As a result, the person concerned was in pain and finally asked *Jro Balian* for help. Based on Jro Balian's reading, information was obtained that the pain was caused by the stones being taken which resulted in stones at the Munduk Temple which felt they had lost their partner/wife. The sense of loss is considered as a moral message related to the high value of loyalty between partners. This kind of moral message can be read through the personification of the stone pillars wrapped in sacred myths.

The existence of the *Batu Taulan* which is currently sacred at Bingin Temple, Pedawa has a hidden message to the Pedawa community in general and the younger generation in particular not to practice polygamy. This can be seen from the existence of a belief about the prohibition of cleaning the stone of the stone for the younger generation (*Deha* and *Teruna*) who have a family history of having been polygamous. The *Batu Taulan* was cleaned by *deha teruna* before the fall of the Malunin Saba ceremony. The cleaning must be carried out by *deha* and *teruna* whose families do not have a history of polygamy. The cleaning place must be done in Kayuan Sabih (the water source is located in Sabih village) which is not far from Bingin Temple. Until now, the procedures for cleaning up the stones are still maintained by the indigenous people of Pedawa Village, because they are seen as sacred.

The spirit of *ngayah* (giving service) for *Deha* and *Teruna* Pedawa is seen as very important, because one form of respect for the Gods who have protected the village and respect for the ancestors is carried out by maintaining the *ngayah* spirit in the form of donating energy during ceremonies at the temple. Cleaning the *Batu Taulan* is a form of pride for *deha* and *teruna* to continue to be able to maintain the emotional bond with their ancestors. In plain view, the size of the *Batu Taulan* is quite heavy, but the *ngayah* spirit shown by *deha* (a young woman) who is in charge of holding the stone continues to carry out this task with enthusiasm. This is shown in the following figure.



Fig.2. A *Deha Pedawa* is Carrying a *Batu Taulan* to be Cleaned Documentation: Yuli Supriandana, July 2023

After cleaning, the 12 stones are decorated and put back in their original places for the next ritual stage. The treatment of the stone continues from generation to generation, so that it has become part of a belief system that is strengthened through rituals. The following is a picture of *Batu Taulan* that has been cleaned and put in its original place.



Fig.3. Batu Taulan that has been Cleaned and Decorated

Documentation: Yuli Supriandana, July 2023

In addition to the community's attachment to the belief system that has been passed down from generation to generation, another factor that underlies the making of the *Batu Taulan* as a means of

controlling polygamous behavior is that the magical power contained in the *Batu Taulan* has been able to construct people's understanding of the monogamous marriage model as something that is idealized. The magical elements in the 12 *Batu Taulan* which are shrouded in exclusive myths make them no longer ordinary stones, but sacred stones that are guarded and sacred. The deha and cadets of Pedawa who are in charge of cleaning the taulan stones become a link in the chain which is expected to be able to maintain the sacred principle of monogamy, which will automatically inherit the practice of monogamy so that their offspring can continue to take part in caring for and maintaining the sacredness of the stones.

Through Talcott Parson's point of view with AGIL theory, the background for using it as a role model as a means of controlling polygamy in Pedawa village can be explained as follows.

Adaptation - Through the *Batu Taulan* tradition, the Pedawa people adapt through *deha* and *teruna* by instilling abstract educational values about the meaning of responsibility between women and men. The sacredness of the *Batu Taulan* through spiritual and abstract care is on the shoulders of the *deha* and *teruna* so that moral values can be instilled regarding the importance of dividing tasks between the two parties.

Goal Attainment - The implementation of the *Batu Taulan* ritual aims to remind the community as well as *deha* and *teruna* of the importance of ancestor worship which at the same time leaves a moral message about the nobility of the institution of marriage which is based on the principle of monogamy.

Integration - Community integration through the *Batu Taulan* tradition using traditional institutions and *sekeha teruna teruni*. Customary institutions have a control function in regulating the behavior of the Pedawa community which is accompanied by sanctions when there are violations in the implementation of the *Batu Taulan* tradition. The traditional elders known as *Balian Desa* have the authority to exercise control over violations in the implementation of the *Batu Taulan* tradition.

Latency - The value of the prohibition of polygamy that is hidden through myths becomes a latent value that is not realized by society which will later construct people's perspective on the ideal model of marriage. In other words, the important value of the principle of monogamous marriage is confirmed through the *Batu Taulan* tradition.

The Exclusive Myth Underlying the Batu Taulan

Myths that generally exist in religious traditions in Bali can appear through legends, stories of gods accompanied by supernatural things. According to Nurgiyantoro (2005) in Annisa (2017:14) myth is a truth that is believed by the community and gives a kind of demand and spiritual strength

to the community. Hence, based on the fact that people's lives are bound by belief in myths. Then the Balinese tradition is closely related to the spiritual concept because spiritual is the soul for the Balinese people.

Gamabali (2016) also conveyed a similar opinion regarding the spiritual aspect of myths, stating that each tradition or ceremony must contain spiritual power. Likewise, the tradition of *Batu Taulan* is shrouded in myth, which can be explored by using Roland Barthes' thoughts to express connotative and mythical meanings. Connotation is a subjective meaning, indirect and uncertain and myth is a meaning that develops in society that marks a society [6].

The exclusive myth known by the Pedawa community about Batu Taulan is as follows.

1) Batu Taulan is the personification of the Avatara Ciwa

2) *Batu Taulan* is centered in *Gaingan* (Taulan House) which is located in Bangkiang Sidem village and is sacred as a place to pray for rain. This place is considered to have a magical aura and there is a prohibition on taking stones at *Gaingan* and a prohibition on indecent behavior at *Gaingan*'s house

3) Batu Taulan that reside in Bingin Temple can disappear or decrease in number

4) There is a prohibition that *deha* and *teruna* who have a family history of polygamy may not touch and clean the *Batu Taulan*

5) There is a difference in responsibilities between *deha* and *teruna* when cleaning *Batu Taulan* at Kayuan Sabih. *Deha* were in charge of tying the Batu Taulan while *teruna* poured water on the *Batu Taulan*

If these four myths are dissected using Roland Barthes's thoughts, the following denotative and connotative meanings can be found.

Denotative Meaning:

1) 12 Batu Taulan at Bingin Temple, Pedawa Village, are sacred ancestral heritage

2) Batu Taulan is sacred through the Saba Malunin ritual

3) Treatment of the sacredness of *Batu Taulan* is based on the spirit of community members and deha/cadets.

4) The Pedawa community has a strong attachment to the legacy of the *Batu Taulan* as ancestral heritage so that the Bingin Temple is also called the Kemulan Temple as the personification of respect for the ancestors.

Connotative Meaning

1) Recognizing Shiva's power as taksu in obtaining the welfare of the Pedawa community.

2) Batu Taulan contain religious magical powers/meanings so they are considered lucky

3) The meaning of cooperation and responsibility between women and men in building a household (reflected in the duties of *nyangkol* and *nyiram* which are interpreted by the community by giving [*nyiram*] and receiving [*nyangkol*])

4) The meaning of loyalty with each partner.

The finding of denotative and connotative meanings is a sign that the system of social behavior is highly regulated by the existence of a belief system that is institutionalized through rituals and strengthened through myths that are passed down from generation to generation. The existence of traditional institutions escorted by traditional elders/*Balian Desa* is a determining factor that participates in preserving a tradition.

4. Conclusion

The *Batu Taulan* ritual in Pedawa Village is a construction model based on religious magic regarding the prohibition of polygamy. The treatment is carried out continuously every time the *Malunin Saba* ceremony comes. *Deha* and *Teruna Pedawa* are responsible for cleaning up, which contain hidden messages so that they maintain the monogamous marriage model as the foundation of ideal kinship. The existence of a continuous treatment pattern is the basis for strengthening the prohibition of polygamy. The exclusive myth contained in the Batu Taulan is associated with Shiva's avatars, while the inclusive myth is in the form of a prohibition for *Deha* and *Teruna* to clean the *Batu Taulan* if they have a family history of polygamy.

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