



Vidyottama Sanatana  
International Journal of Hindu Science and Religious Studies

Vol. 7 No. 1 May 2023

## THE ARCHITECTURE OF PALINGGIH ULAM AGUNG AND PEDAU: SYMBOLIC ARTEFACTS OF THE NUSA PENIDA, COASTAL COMMUNITY'S BELIEF SYSTEM IN HINDUISM OSMOSIS

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Received: February 3 , 2022

Accepted: May 5, 2023

Published: May 31, 2023

### Abstract

*The architecture of the palinggih 'Balinese shrine' is generally built based on the design of a sacred Hindu building according to the guidelines of traditional Balinese architecture, but different from the two architectural forms of shrines in Nusa Penida, Bali. This study focuses on the transformation of the belief system of Nusa Penida's local coastal community belief system, which is realized into ulam agung (king of fish) and pedau (traditional sailboat) sacred buildings. The results of the study show that the transformation of the metaphor architectural shrine occurs because of the mastery, placement, and conversion of cultural, social, symbolic, and economic capital, that crosses individual and collective habitus in the realm of the Nusa Penida local coastal community belief system. The system of people's belief in local gods undergoes a process of osmosis into gods in the pantheon of Hinduism. The socio-religious practice is also influenced by their level of knowledge, reasoning, and experience of the architectural form of the shrine as a symbolic Hindu religious building.*

**Keywords:** Palinggih 'Balinese Shrine', Coastal Community, Osmosis, Nusa Penida.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The mainstream form of shrines in the individual and collective knowledge of the Hindu community in Bali has been well established in the realm of sacred architecture. The architecture of sacred buildings, shrines, or altars for Hindu worship in Bali is called *palinggih*. According to the 2010 Parisada Hindu Dharma decree, the shrine takes the form of: *tepas, tugu, bale, gedong, prasada, meru, and Padma* (PHDI, 2010).

The architectural forms of sacred worship buildings then become a guide in the tradition of *palinggih* building for all Hindu communities in Bali. However, something different is found in Nusa Penida, which is also developing the form of a shrine that has the metaphor of a king of fish and traditional sailboats. The natural condition of Nusa Penida Island which is separated from the mainland of Bali Island, is suspected of being a geographical obstacle in developing a common ideology in the form of shrine architecture in the mainstream tradition. Likewise, the belief system of the people of the coast of Nusa Penida, is also suspected of being the basis for the construction of the different shrine architectures.

The extent to which these two aspects influence the development of a shrine architecture that is different from the mainstream *palinggih* in the traditional Balinese shrine building tradition is the focus of this study. The socio-geo-religious paradigm is interesting to be traced from the knowledge of mythology, the belief in local gods that developed pre-Hindu, and geographical conditions that gave birth to the worship architecture, which is different from the mainstream.

The presence of physical artifacts of sacred worship buildings in the form of shrines which are metaphors of king fish and traditional sailboats is a cultural practice of the coastal communities of Nusa Penida. This is inseparable from the role of local elites in terms of ownership, dissemination, and conversion of knowledge capital of mythical local gods in the belief system of the coastal communities of Nusa Penida, maritime experiences, and cultural codes as part of mystical and magical activities in the collective habitus. local community. Thus, two

research questions can be formulated as follows: (1) what is the structure of the local community's interpretation of the shrine's architectural works? (2) how is the process of the new meaning of gods in the belief system of the coastal communities of Nusa Penida in the context of gods in the Hinduism pantheon? This article will describe it.

## II. METHOD

Individual and collective knowledge about the belief system of coastal communities is certainly different from people who live on land or mountains. Ownership of knowledge is the basis for the development of socio-religious, architectural forms, symbolic systems, and other cultural systems in different realms of life. In such cases, including those that grow and develop in the knowledge system and shrine architecture of the coastal communities of Nusa Penida, Bali, it is worth exploring on the basis of theoretical concepts from Pierre Bourdieu's theory of generative structuralism.

Pierre Boudieu develops the theory of generative structuralism with several important concepts, namely habitus, capital, domain, and practice. The theoretical formulation is in the form of a formulation (habitus X capital) + domain = practice (Harker et al., 2009). How to read it by placing habitus as the complexity of daily living habits (habit). That is, habits that have integrated with values, norms, philosophy of life, and other ideological complexities. Habitus is then crossed with a number of capitals in the form of economic, cultural, social, and symbolic capital in a domain, then it "will produce" or maybe "do not produce" a socio-cultural practice.

Furthermore, economic capital in the form of material and financial wealth, cultural capital in the form of knowledge, diplomas, and cultural codes. Social capital in the form of social relations, colleagues, friendships, brotherhood, and symbolic capital including nobility, descent, rank, position, and all other forms of symbolic respect (Bourdieu, 2016: xv-xx; Haryatmoko, 2016: 45).

Local actors or elites play a very important role in controlling, strengthening, toying with, or

converting a number of these capitals, especially cultural capital in the form of knowledge in myths based on a mystical and magical storyline. This knowledge is captured and through discourse it is disseminated in the midst of the social sphere according to their respective interests. Of course to fight for an ideological. The mystical and magical individual and collective habits of the coastal communities of Nusa Penida have become a fertile ground for metamorphosis of mythological practices to become physical artifacts of shrine-metaphor architecture. The metaphorical forms can resemble human icons, fauna, natural objects, daily/profane objects and so on.

Design studies on architectural forms, one of which is developed from a metaphorical approach. Metaphors usually focus on similarities between two completely different things. The term metaphor actually comes from the Greek metaphor which means transfer. It can be said that metaphor transfers meaning from one object to another so that the second object can be understood in a new way (Aska, 2023). That is, in the context of architecture, architectural works that materialize are the result of an analysis of iconic forms of natural objects, living things, or artificial objects around the human environment. In the case of this study, we find shrines as worship architecture for the coastal communities of Nusa Penida, taking the form of *ulam agung* (king of fish) and *pedau* (traditional sailboats). The combination of the results of the metaphorical approach and knowledge of the local community's belief system is embodied in an architectural work of sacred buildings or shrine called *palinggih*.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 1. Shrine Architecture Significance Structure

##### a. Shrine of the *Ulam Agung* Metaphor

This shrine is the main shrine at Segara Temple. This temple is one of four temples in the Penataran Dalem Ped Temple complex, Nusa Penida. Other temples include Taman Beji Temple, Ratu Gede Temple, and Penataran Dalem Ped Temple (layover of Puncak Mundi Temple). Segara Temple is located on the north side close to the shores of the Bali Strait.

The shrine which was developed from the metaphor of the great *ulam* or the iconic fish king or big fish is the main shrine at Segara Temple (see Figure 1), besides being equipped with several auxiliary shrines.



Figure 1. Architecture of the Ulam Agung Shrine  
Source: I PG Suyoga, 2020

The architectural design of the shrine which was developed from the physical form of the *ulam agung* (king of fish) shows an architectural design approach through the metaphorical process of the physical form of a large fish in the depths of the ocean which is distilled into an architectural shrine form. Shrine specially designed for the worship of the god of the oceans. The requests made by worshipers at the shrine, especially for safe fishing and the acquisition of abundant fish catches. These two petition prayers are the main cult of worship for local fishermen at the shrine (I Ketut Nalon, interview July 2020).

This shows a trajectory of individual and collective knowledge trajectories, as well as ownership of the cultural, social and symbolic capital of the coastal communities of Nusa Penida. The shape of the *ulam agung* or the figure of a large fish has become the individual and collective knowledge of fishing communities along the coast of Nusa Penida. The daily life of fishing communities is indeed very familiar with the existence of big fish. Respect for Ida Betara Segara (god of the sea) with the existence of a large fish figure as a representation of metaphysical existence and his real presence in the middle of the ocean. The individual and collective knowledge of the coastal community regarding the belief in Ida Betara Segara through the representation of the presence of big fish in Bourdieu's terms is referred to as cultural capital. Collective

ownership of cultural capital thus also constitutes social capital. This cultural and social capital then gets stronger after synergizing with the belief system of a local deity called Ida Betara Segara or has turned into symbolic capital. This symbolic capital is ideological in nature so that it has the potential to move a cultural practice in the form of worship artefacts.

Cultural, social and symbolic capital in Bourdieu's terminology takes place intensively in the realm of the fishermen community of Nusa Penida. They are still very strong based on mystical and magical habitus. This cross between habitus and capital has been captured and used as the power of knowledge by local elites. These local elites, through religious discourse, have moved the next stage of cultural practice, in the form of artifacts or physical cultural objects, namely the *Palinggih Ulam Agung* architecture.

The architecture of the *Ulam Agung* shrine then becomes the main place of worship at Segara Temple. Communities that have been economically successful from trading fish and other marine products and have received an increase in family finances or life welfare, in Bourdieu's perspective, are interpreted as having succeeded in converting capital. This means, in a different language, that the ownership of cultural, social and symbolic capital in the *palinggih Ulam Agung* has been successfully converted into economic capital.

In short, the chronological description directs understanding to the trajectories of knowledge traces from the era of ancient maritime communities who lived in Nusa Penida. The belief system which is still very simple to the powerful of natural creatures (dynamism), is represented by the form of a biggest fish in the ocean. The basis of this belief, then developed increasingly complex into a pre-Hindu local belief system, so that in that era it was known as a tribute to Ida Betara Segara as the god of the ocean ruler. This discourse about this form of homage to Ida Betara Segara, later became the 'fertile sap' of the growth and development of the transplantation of the role of the Varuna deity in the pantheon of the gods of Hinduism

until now.

Architecturally, an iconographic pattern of worship has developed that is parallel to that ancient period, namely the way of respecting the source of creation of all creatures represented by the shape of the genitals. The metaphor, architecturally, then underlies the shape of the shrine elements called *lingga-yoni*. The iconographic pattern through the concept of metaphor is very strong in influencing the system of symbolic communication in other mystical and magical spiritual contexts. The strength of this discourse collectively facilitates the choice of a symbolic form of a large fish, the ruler of the ocean, then becomes a form of shrine to worship the gods of the ocean ruler.

#### a. The Shrine of the *Pedau* Metaphor

Another shrine in Nusa Penida whose architectural design proceeds through a metaphorical approach is the *palinggih pedau* or traditional sailing boat form of shrine found at Segara Temple, part of the Batu Medau Temple complex which is located on the east coast of Suana Village, Nusa Penida. The existence of this temple is related to the concept of establishing the Nusa Penida temple, which is based on the Dalem Nusa concept. The Dalem Nusa concept is one of the conceptions that underlies the establishment of temples in Nusa Penida. The concept was inspired by the legend of the ruling kings of Nusa Penida, as described in the Babad Dalem Nusa.

The shape of the boat is reminiscent of a historical event concerning the attempted conquest by the ruler of Nusa, I Renggan, against the king of the rulers on the mainland of Bali Island. I Renggan is the grandson of Dukuh Jumpungan with a powerful boat that can split the land or mountains. However, Ida Betara Tohlangkir, who is worshiped on Mount Agung, knew about his attempt to split Mount Agung on the island of Bali, so he was thwarted first. I Renggan realized that he could not conquer Bali, so he decided to return to Nusa Penida.

When it reaches the east side of the island, the boat will be moored, but the boat is blown up to the mainland and divides Nusa Gede Island. While the tip of the boat is still sticking out to

the beach. The tip of the boat that still sticks out to the beach later became the Segara Temple. One part of the Batu Medau Temple complex. Batu Medau Temple comes from the word *pedau medah watu* (a boat dissecting rocks). Nusa Gede Island (Penida) was successfully split by the boat so that it split into Nusa Lembongan and Nusa Ceningan Islands (Nusa Ceningan Island) (Buda, 2007).

Historical knowledge of the rulers of Nusa Island is a form of ownership of cultural and symbolic capital which strongly underlies the self-esteem and beliefs of the people of Nusa Penida. This knowledge becomes a cultural code and strengthens social relations among the people of Nusa Penida as well as a symbol of respect for the power of the king of Nusa Penida at his time. In Bourdieu's perspective, these fragments have been converted into social and symbolic capital. The mystical and magical habit that thrives in the community further strengthens the belief in the truth of this legend. So, to commemorate this great event, the practice of building the architecture of Segara Temple (at Batu Medau Temple) is complemented by the main shrine from the metaphor of a traditional sailboat, as shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2 Architecture of the Pedau Shrine**

Source: I Ketut Nalon, 2020

The description above directs a chronological understanding, that the discourse on heroism with the ancestral fighting spirit of the people of Nusa Penida can be represented by the figure of Raja I Renggan with a ride on a magic boat

given by his grandfather I Dukuh Jumpungan. The form of respect for the ancestor "atma siddah dewata", is architecturally embodied with a shrine. So, through the concept of an architectural metaphor, the shrine can be simplified by borrowing the iconic shape of the sacred boat (pedau) as a shrine for a sacred building as a means of worshipping ancestors.

## 2. The Osmosis Process of the Belief System of the Coastal Communities of Nusa Penida

Knowledge in myth reveals the role of gods, giants, super humans, divine animals, sacred plants, and natural objects with superpowers. It is these figures of beings with divine powers that inspire artists to create their metaphors for worship buildings. It is also based on the power of knowledge in myths. Myth is similar to ideology because mythology will appear like universal truths that are presented in the rotation of people's everyday reasoning memories (Barker, 2005: 93). Likewise, the myth of the fish king and the magic sailboat that underlies the establishment of the *Ulam Agung* and *Pedau* shrines.

*Ulam Agung* and *Pedau* Shrine, dedicated to the appreciation of Ida Betara Segara or called Dewa Baruna in the pantheon of Hindu gods. The title Ida Betara Segara is the term of the local coastal community to honor the important role of Ida Betara, the ruler of the sea and all its contents. Ida Betara Segara is believed to be the bestower of safety during voyages on the high seas and avoiding disasters that come from the ocean. Likewise, the abundant catch of fish and marine products is believed to be a blessing from Ida Betara Segara.

The concept of gods that has long been established in the local belief system of the coastal communities of Nusa Penida has been gradually given a Hindu meaning. This is in accordance with the opinion of Geriya (2002) who said that the presence of Hinduism glorifies Balinese culture. Likewise, Titib (2008: 66) states that the arrival of Hindus to Bali did not change local beliefs but provided enlightenment by further developing local beliefs. In Hinduism, the concept of God's holy light or His personification as the god of the ocean is called

Dewa Baruna. Thus, the term Ida Betara Segara was slowly understood as Dewa Baruna. This is known as the process of osmosis (Holt, 2000: 33). In the context of this study, slowly Ida Betara Segara is given the same meaning as Dewa Baruna (Varuna Deity) in the pantheon of Hindu gods. Varuna Deity as one of the pantheons in Hinduism is worshiped as the gods of water or the ocean in the form of a terrible dragon (Titib, 2001: 175).

Varuna is worshiped by reciting mantras from Rigveda V (Maswinara, 2004: 133). The most popular worship mantras (Suhardana, 2015: 289; Vedananda, 2020: 328), are as follows:

*Om Nagendra krura murtinam,  
Gajendra matsya-vaktranam,  
Varuna-deva-ma-sasiram,  
Sarva-jagat-suddhatmakam.*

It means,

Oh God, in the form of a great terrible dragon,

The form of an elephant king with the snout of a fish,

The personification of the Gods Baruna,  
Purifies the entire universe.

The Hindu priests (assistant priests and high priests) when leading the worship of the gods who are placed at the *Ulam Agung* shrine will use the worship mantra. Besides that, it is also equipped with puja *saa* or mantras in Balinese language, especially by the *pamangku* (assistant priest). This completeness of worship in the local language becomes a space for repeating the name of the god in the local belief or repeating the collective memory, namely Ida Betara Segara.

Up to this point, another cultural, social, and symbolic capital in the form of Hinduism divine knowledge complete with worship mantras is developed and becomes the property of the individual and collective property of the Nusa Penida coastal community. Cultural, social and symbolic capital in Bourdieu's terminology has become an attraction for spiritual tourism or *tirtayatra* to Nusa Penida today. Thus, the increase in temple visitors (Hindu devotees who attend the temple), of course, has an economic

impact on all components of the Nusa Penida community, from temple managers, ferry services, local transportation services, offering traders, lodging, and others. That is, in Bourdieu's perspective, cultural, social, and symbols contained in the temple have been converted or developed more broadly into economic capital.

Different things were revealed in the *palinggih Pedau's* at Segara Temple in the Batu Medau Temple complex. The existence of the *Pedau* shrine is a religious milestone for the people of the coast of Nusa Penida. The form of traditional sailboats owned by fishermen and commonly seen on the coast, is manifested as a physical artifact of the shrine's architecture. Its historical value, the sailboat at the temple refers to the legend of the Chronicle of Nusa Penida. It is said that the sailboat became the vehicle for the king of Nusa Penida in his attempt to conquer Bali. Thus, the *pedau* shrine also commemorates the spirit of struggle and pays homage to I Renggan, one of the rulers of Nusa Penida who was victorious in his time.

The shrine is enlivened with periodic symbolic rituals (*piodalan*) to commemorate the shrine's mystical purification event (*pemlaspas*). In Eliade's view (2002: 4), this is what is referred to as hierophant. The sacred object of worship or shrine from the traditional sailboat metaphor as a vessel for divine power (Ida Betara Segara and the holy spirits of the ancestors), thus distinguishing it from the shape of a boat as a profane object.

The moral message is directed to devotional awareness for all future generations to pay homage to the holy spirits of the ancestors. The basics of bhakti awareness towards ancestors that had developed in the pre-Hindu era by osmosis or were given Hindu meaning, especially in the context of *atma sraddha* and *punarbhawa sraddha* or belief in the existence of the soul and repeated birth/reincarnation in the concept of *panca sraddhas* (Hindus five believed doctrines). Its cultural practice is symbolically used in a ritual approach and in real terms it is developed into a spirit of work in order to achieve physical well-being (*jagatdhita*) and spiritual happiness

(*moksartham*). In Bourdieu's terminology, the ownership and placement of cultural, social and symbolic capital has been able to be converted into economic capital. Similarly, the process will rotate, from economic stability can be converted back into other capitals in accordance with the individual and collective habitus and the realm in which the cultural practice takes place.

On the other hand, geographically the island of Nusa Penida is separated from the mainland island of Bali and was in conflict over political power during the royal era. It influences social and religious development policies. The local elites of Nusa Penida developed their own concept of the architectural form of the shrine and the concept of local theology thrived, because it was far from the central control of the kingdom at that time. Geria (1997) stated that Nusa Penida does indeed retain many traces of pre-Hindu archaeological artefacts and remains of the classical Balinese period in near-original condition, because there has been very little cultural change.

The role of local elites cannot be ruled out in capturing knowledge and making it power through discourse. Discourse in this case is understood as language in praxis or language practice (Haryatmoko, 2016). Discourse is a social practice that will always shape power relations (Foucault, 1990 in Piliang and Jaelani, 2018: 149). Referring to Foucault's perspective, in fact they are not driven by values and norms, in this case, the mainstream shrine design standards on the mainland of Bali, but compromising with the discourse conveyed by people who have the power to speak on behalf of these values in building a new worship architecture (developed from Foucault, 2002: 175).

Thus, the form of the *Ulam Agung* and *Pedau* shrines which do not follow the values and norms of traditional mainstream shrine construction, shows that there is a strong discourse conveyed by local agents/elites, so that it is different from the design of traditional Balinese worship buildings mainstream. It is these ideological discourses in the realm of social interaction that will further complicate

life, including the development of shrine architectural designs that are unique and different from those that have been previously established.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The conclusion that can be drawn from some of the descriptions above is that the habitus of the coastal communities of Nusa Penida is to build shrines through a metaphorical process based on their daily lives in the coastal and oceanic environments. Knowledge of big fish, sailboats, the history of the rulers of Nusa Penida, and the local belief system, underlies the development of an architectural design concept that is different from the mainstream concept that is developing on the mainland of Bali Island. Cultural capital in the form of knowledge in myths, chronicles, and other Hindu literary traditions complements the transformative ideas of the most advanced forms developed. The ownership of cultural capital individually and collectively is thus social capital, it even strengthened to become a symbolic capital in the midst of the people of Nusa Penida who are geographically isolated from mainland Bali. The combination of these three capitals with the strong mystical and magical habitus in the realm of the social struggles of the people of Nusa Penida, has resulted in the practice of shrine architecture from the *Ulam Agung* metaphor at the Segara Temple in the Penataran Ped Temple complex and the *Pedau* metaphor at the Batu Medau Temple Nusa Penida complex.

The existence of the *Ulam Agung* Shrine indicates adherence to spiritual discipline or *sadhana* through prayer activities, so that they always remember or are aware of the great power of nature (ocean) as a representation of God's omnipotence (*Brahman sraddha*). Likewise, the *pedau* shrine can be a religious pillar of respect for the ancestors (*atma* and *punarbhawa sraddha*) and can take inspiration for the spirit of work from how great the spirit of patriotism of the ancestors was in the past. Nusa Penida's local theological system, experienced a process of osmosis or was slowly given a Hindu understanding. The term god in the belief system of the coastal communities of Nusa Penida is

slowly being given meaning in the pantheon of gods of Hinduism, so Ida Betara Segara is also known as Dewa Baruna. Likewise, the substance of the 'puja mantra' cult spells to Baruna deity is personified into the architectural form of the shrine. The metaphorical concept that underlies the design gives figurative space designs to form great fish (*ulam agung*) and traditional boats (*pedau*) to become shrine forms.

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