

Reviving the Sanghyang Grodog Ritual Dance: Promoting Social Harmony and Sustainable Cultural Tourism in Nusa Lembongan Island, Bali

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Abstract: This article explores the artistic significance and revitalization of the Sanghyang Grodog ritual in Lembongan Village, Bali, following a three-decade hiatus. Using a socio-artistic approach supported by social cohesion and semiotic theories, this study examines the ritual's role in fostering social identity and promoting sustainable, culture-based tourism. Data were collected through participant observation, interviews, and secondary sources, with findings reinforced by focus group discussions. The results highlight the ritual's embodiment of spiritual, social, and environmental harmony while addressing challenges posed by increasing tourism pressure. Despite limited public awareness, the ritual's aesthetic and symbolic values serve as a catalyst for communal unity and sustainable cultural tourism. This study proposes a community-based tourism development strategy that includes the creation of a local mascot, visual branding, and the integration of arts into ecotourism and education, ensuring both cultural preservation and economic benefits for the community.

Keywords: Sanghyang Grodog; cultural revival; social harmony; sustainable tourism; Lembongan village

1. Introduction

The Sanghyang Grodog sacred ritual dance in Lembongan Village, Klungkung Regency, Bali, is rich in symbolic and aesthetic elements, representing the community's spiritual response to societal crises such as disease outbreaks (Putri, 2017). This dance, performed through twenty-three genres of *sanghyang* over eleven days (Pramada et al., 2022, p. 442; Wak Laba, 2014), holds profound

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cultural values that have evolved over time, enhancing social cohesion and preserving Balinese heritage (Kasih, 2023). However, after a 30-year hiatus, the loss of generational knowledge and understanding of its significance has posed a threat to the continuity of this ritual, according to a member of the Lembongan Sabha Desa customary association, I Wayan Suwarbawa (Interview, 21 August 2024).

In light of these challenges, this research was conducted in Lembongan Village, located on Nusa Lembongan Island. The island is approximately 11.6 km from Kusamba Beach, Southeast Bali, and about 19 km from Sanur Village Harbor, Denpasar. The village's geographical coordinates are 8°41'24" S, 115°26'24" E (Figure 1). The selection of Lembongan Village for this study is driven by the significant role the Sanghyang Grodog ritual plays in the community, both in its traditional context and in confronting modern challenges like globalization and tourism.

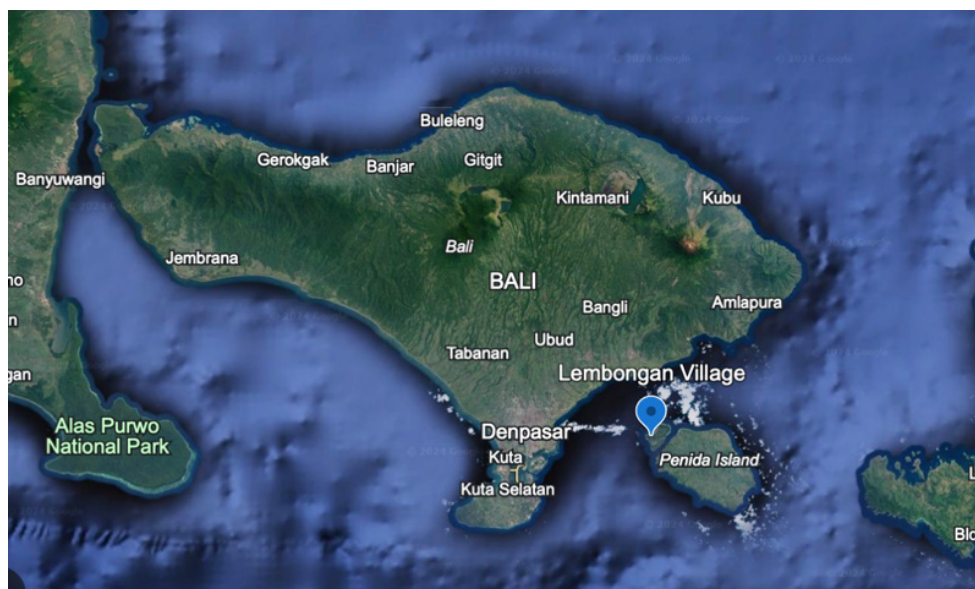


Figure 1. Lembongan Village (blue pin drop), southeast of Bali's mainland, Indonesia (Source: Google Earth, 2024)

In recent decades, the rapid growth of tourism on Nusa Lembongan Island and Nusa Penida has transformed the area from a modest fishing village into a sought-after tourist destination. The islands gained international recognition after being featured in the 2022 movie *Ticket to Paradise*, starring Hollywood icons George Clooney and Julia Roberts (Bestari, 2023). Though the film was actually shot in Queensland, Australia, several scenes showcased Balinese customs and cultural landscapes (Wicahyani et al., 2023, p. 255). While tourism

has provided economic benefits, concerns have arisen about the preservation of local culture amidst commercialization pressures (Harmini, 2017; Jubaedah & Anas, 2019).

The rapid development of tourism in Nusa Lembongan and Nusa Penida has significantly increased visitor numbers and improved tourism facilities. In 2024, daily tourist arrivals in Lembongan reached 5,000–7,000 (Widyati, 2024), up from 3,000–5,000 during peak season in 2023 (Krista, 2023), with hotel occupancy rates stabilizing at 80–90%. This growth has shifted tourism trends from one-day trips to extended stays, especially among Australian and European visitors (Lily Dianasari et al., 2020). To accommodate this influx, the islands have developed various tourism facilities, including 44 hotels and 99 accommodations in Lembongan, and an additional 99 accommodations in Jungut Batu (Widowati, 2024). Key attractions include pristine white sand beaches, a mangrove forest, vibrant marine life for snorkeling, and the iconic Yellow Bridge connecting Lembongan to Nusa Ceningan (Bali Provincial Government, 2025; Orsel, 2024). However, alongside economic benefits, this surge in tourism presents challenges in maintaining cultural integrity and environmental sustainability.

Amidst rapid tourism growth, preserving and promoting cultural heritage has become increasingly vital. One key effort is the revival of the long-absent Sanghyang Grodog ritual, aimed at reconnecting the community with its traditions and integrating culture into sustainable tourism (Rosalina et al., 2022). With its deep cultural meaning and aesthetic appeal, the ritual has contributed to social harmony and the promotion of sustainable tourism in Lembongan (Ermilova, 2020; Golovei, 2021; Jhosua & Widyastuti, 2022).

This study, employing a socio-artistic approach, examined the ritual's artistic value and its role in educating younger generations on balancing tradition and modernity in tourism development. The central questions of this study were: 1) How did the artistic significance of the Sanghyang Grodog ritual contribute to identity and social cohesion in Lembongan Village? 2) In what ways could the revitalization of this ritual dance support sustainable cultural tourism? This study aimed to provide practical insights for cultural heritage management and tourism stakeholders, enhancing both the preservation of Balinese traditions and the development of responsible cultural tourism.

2. Literature Review

Previous studies on the Sanghyang Grodog ritual have addressed various aspects. However, this research attempted to fill significant gaps in knowledge thereby emphasizing its novelty and urgency. For instance, Artiningsih (2020) focused on the form, religious aspects and the impact of Sanghyang Grodog in

the socio cultural. Roseadi and Kandiraras (2021) examined the cultural values embedded in the ritual but did not consider the potential for tourism or its role in fostering social harmony. Similarly, Pramada, Mariasa, and Trisakti (2022) explored the philosophical concept of Tri Hita Karana but limited their analysis of its social implications and developmental opportunities, particularly in the context of tourism. These gaps highlight the necessity of a broader examination of the social and tourism-related implications of the Sanghyang Grodog, which this study undertakes.

Social cohesion, a key element for sustainable culture-based tourism, is shaped by multiple factors such as reliance on natural resources, social infrastructure, and cultural heritage. Research suggests that an over-reliance on natural resources can disrupt social cohesion, particularly in areas with centralized resource control (Tsopmo et al., 2024). Conversely, social infrastructure, such as public spaces that encourage interaction, can promote social harmony and well-being (Kustov & Pardelli, 2024; Zahnow, 2024). Furthermore, greater engagement with cultural assets strengthens social ties, enhancing the effectiveness of culture-based tourism initiatives (Li et al., 2024; Young et al., 2024). This highlights the importance of cultural heritage in promoting social cohesion, an essential element for sustainable tourism development.

As globalization accelerates, the intersection of culture-based tourism and environmental conservation presents both challenges and opportunities for local traditions, such as Sanghyang Grodog (Jiang & Dai, 2024; Sakcharoen et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2024). While commercialization may jeopardize cultural heritage (Workneh, 2023), it also holds significant potential for cultural tourism, ensuring that cultural practices remain relevant in the modern world (Singhal et al., 2021). This ongoing debate highlights the need for a deeper exploration of how traditional rituals can evolve in a globalized context, balancing the demands of cultural preservation with the pressures of tourism.

Nusa Lembongan, with its rich natural resources, including mangrove forests and coral reefs, offers significant potential for cultural tourism (Ginantra & Sundra, 2023; Pratama & Albasri, 2021). However, environmental challenges and the limited research on the relationship between cultural heritage and sustainable tourism development call for further study. Sanghyang Grodog, as an integral part of local cultural identity, plays a vital role in preserving traditions and reinforcing social cohesion, both of which are crucial for sustainable culture-based tourism.

There is limited literature on the intersection of ritual, social dynamics, and tourism in Nusa Lembongan, particularly regarding how local cultural practices like the Sanghyang Grodog ritual can adapt to globalization while

preserving traditional values. This study adopts a socio-artistic approach, utilizing theories of social cohesion and semiotics, to address this gap. It explores how the ritual can serve as a strategic tool to balance cultural preservation with the development of sustainable tourism. By examining the dynamic relationship between cultural heritage and tourism through these theoretical frameworks, this research aims to contribute new insights into how communities can navigate the challenges posed by global influences while safeguarding their unique cultural identities (Ruiz-Ballesteros & González-Portillo, 2024).

3. Method and Theory

3.1 Method

3.1.1 Data Collection

Data was collected through a participant observer method and semi-structured interviews for a period of eleven days; providing an opportunity for this author to directly engage with the ritual, which offered insights into its dynamics and significance. An ethnographic stance supported not only observations of the ceremony but also its impact on the social interactions within the community. To gain multiple perspectives on the Sanghyang Grodog ritual, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a diverse group of local community members including:

1. I Komang Erawan, the *Bendesa* (traditional village leader) of Lembongan, who provided historical context and insight into the ritual's process;
2. Mangku Wija, a Bali Hindu priest, who shared detailed information about the sequence of the ritual's phases;
3. I Wayan Suwarbawa, a local cultural observer and academic, who offered contextual understanding of the ritual's significance in the broader cultural landscape;
4. I Komang Tengah, a local entrepreneur, who presented the commercial and tourism-related aspects of the ritual; and
5. I Kadek Wiarta, a youth and creative entrepreneur, who discussed the younger generation's involvement in the ritual and its potential for tourism and cultural innovation.

Secondary data was collected from interviews which explored the cultural importance of the Sanghyang Grodog ritual conducted by members of Forum Krama Banjar Adat Kelod Desa Lembongan and posted on their YouTube channel Sangging TV (2022).

3.1.2 Data Analysis

An interpretive sociology analysis was employed to more deeply understand (*verstehen*), as invoked by Max Weber, the social meanings and cultural contexts embedded in the ritual (Tucker, 1965). This method focuses on interpreting human actions and interactions within their social and cultural framework. Through this lens, the ritual's symbolism and its effects on social cohesion within the community were analyzed. To ensure data accuracy, the findings from observations and interviews were cross-checked with the secondary data sources and corroborated with the interviewees to validate the interpretation and provide a comprehensive overview of the ritual's significance.

3.2 Theory

This research examines the Sanghyang Grodog ritual in Lembongan Village through a socio-artistic perspective (Surya Peradantha, 2024; Taghi Sheykhi, 2019), which views art as symbolic communication that reflects cultural, social, and ecological values. Each artistic element in the ritual, such as dance, music, and ritual objects, is not only an aesthetic expression, but also part of a cultural discourse that conveys social, spiritual, and ecological messages to the community (Surya Peradantha et al. 2023)

To analyze the meaning of these elements, this study integrates Roland Barthes' semiotic theory (Dweich & Al Ghabra, 2020; Jazeri & Susanto, 2020), specifically the concepts of signifier and signified. The artistic elements in this ritual function as signifiers that point to deeper meanings. For example, the bamboo in Sanghyang Bumbung is not only a ritual element but also signifies ecological harmony, while the barong in Sanghyang Barong represents the balance of life dualism. This approach shows how ritual symbols strengthen the cultural identity and social cohesion of Lembongan society.

In addition, social cohesion theories of Durkheim, Malinowski, Van Gennep, and Fortes (Giovagnoli, 2021) are used to understand how these rituals strengthen social solidarity. Shared rituals not only build collective identity, but also bind individuals into meaningful social structures (Hann, 2023; Shteynberg et al., 2022). Thus, this study analyzes the role of Sanghyang Grodog as an artistic expression that strengthens social networks and preserves spiritual and ecological values.

This integration of theories seeks to address two primary inquiries: (1) the role of the artistic elements of Sanghyang Grodog in fostering identity and social cohesion in Lembongan, and (2) the potential of its revitalization to enhance sustainable cultural tourism. The semiotic theory is utilized to analyze the artistic meaning of the Sanghyang Grodog's artistic elements, while social cohesion theory examines the relationship between these meanings in fostering

social cohesion and how the preservation of Sanghyang Grodog can respond to modern demands. This theoretical framework establishes a basis for examining a balance between innovation and the safeguarding of spiritual values in the advancement of culture-based tourism.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Results

4.1.1 Artistic Elements in the Sanghyang Grodog Ritual: Shaping Cultural Identity and Social Cohesion

The Sanghyang Grodog is a sacred ritual dance performed in Lembongan Village, Bali, comprising a series of rites featuring various manifestations of “Sanghyang.” While “Sanghyang” typically refers to a sacred divine presence in Balinese rituals, the term “Grodog” derives from the rhythmic sound created when a wooden wheel, upon which the sacred objects of the *sanghyang* are placed, is dragged across the ground during the procession. The tighter the wheel is turned, the louder the distinctive “*grodog...grodog...*” sound becomes, hence the name Sanghyang Grodog (Sudibya et al., 2023). Unlike other *sanghyang* rituals that typically feature trance in specific dancers, Sanghyang Grodog embodies a spirit of joy and gratitude, with the community coming together to push a wheeled wooden structure adorned with symbolic figures of *sanghyang* (Mantra, 2023). The sequence of Sanghyang Grodog performances in Lembongan Village, along with their timing and specific characteristics, is detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. The sequence of Sanghyang Grodog sacred ritual dance

No.	Sanghyang Grodog Form	Day of the Ritual	Artistic Element and the Meaning
1.	Sanghyang Sampat	Day 1	Uses a broomstick (<i>sampat</i>); Symbolizing cleansing; emphasizes spiritual and moral cleanliness.
2.	Sanghyang Lingga	Day 2	<i>Lingga</i> attribute symbolizes Lord Shiva; Represents the infusion of divine essence into humanity.
3.	Sanghyang Penyalin	Day 2, 4, 5, 6	Emphasizes resilience and adaptability; Rattan (<i>penyalin</i>), symbolizes intimacy and collective strength
4.	Sanghyang Joged	Day 3	Features a statue of a female <i>joged</i> dancer; Represents the connection between individuals and mastery of human desire.
5.	Sanghyang Bumbung	Day 3	Uses bamboo (<i>bumbung</i>); Symbolizes multi-functionality and environmental harmony.

No.	Sanghyang Grodog Form	Day of the Ritual	Artistic Element and the Meaning
6.	Sanghyang Dukuh Ngaba Cicing	Day 4	Symbolizes elder man (<i>dukuh</i>) and hunting dog (<i>cicing</i>) connection; Emphasizes environmental harmony (<i>palemahan</i>).
7.	Sanghyang Jaran	Day 4	<i>Jaran</i> (horse) represents power, courage, and self-discipline; Symbol of profound self-control (<i>parahyangan</i>).
8.	Sanghyang Dukuh Ngaba Bubu	Day 5	Represents wisdom and ecological balance; <i>Dukuh</i> (elder man) adorned with <i>bubu</i> (traditioal fishing tools) symbolizes human wisdom in fishing.
9.	Sanghyang Sampi	Day 5	<i>Sampi</i> (cow); Symbolizes equilibrium in cattle farming; reflects environmental harmony (<i>palemahan</i>).
10.	Sanghyang Kebo	Day 6	<i>Kebo</i> (buffalo); Symbolizes conservation; crucial for agriculture and rice cultivation.
11.	Sanghyang Bangu-bangu	Day 6	<i>Bangu-bangu</i> (crane); Represents crane and mangrove habitat conservation; stresses environmental importance.
12.	Sanghyang Enjo-enjo	Day 7	Abstract masculine statue; Symbolizes fertility and connection to nature.
13.	Sanghyang Tiling-tiling	Day 8	Abstract female genitalia; Symbolizes fertility and ecological equilibrium.
14.	Sanghyang Menjangan	Day 8	Deer (<i>menjangan</i>) puppet, despite the absence of deer in the local ecosystem, representing a blend of mythology and tradition.
15.	Sanghyang Barong	Day 8	<i>Barong</i> figure; Represents life's dualism and the need for balance between positive and negative energies (<i>parahyangan</i>).
16.	Sanghyang Jangolan Dukuh Ngaba Penyu	Day 8	<i>Jangolan</i> (traditional boat); <i>dukuh ngaba penyu</i> (figure of the elder man carrying a turtle); Symbolizes preservation of fishing profession and marine environment.
17.	Sanghyang Tutut	Day 8	Male and female doll figurines; Emphasizes balance for harmonious existence (<i>pawongan</i>).
18.	Sanghyang Kelor	Day 9	Uses two moringa (<i>kelor</i>) tree branches containing kelor leaves; Symbolizing nutritional properties of food and warding off negative energies (<i>palemahan</i>)

No.	Sanghyang Grodog Form	Day of the Ritual	Artistic Element and the Meaning
19	Sanghyang Capah	Day 9	<i>Capah</i> (balinese traditional offerings form); Spiritual connection between humanity and divine authority, highlighting the central role of ritual practices in the religious realm (<i>parahayangan</i>)
20.	Sanghyang Perahu	Day 9	Boat (<i>perahu</i>); Symbolizes spiritual voyage and religious realm (<i>parahayangan</i>)
21.	Sanghyang Sumbul	Day 10	<i>Sumbul</i> (decoration of flower arrangement); Symbolizes community's elation and veneration of religious realm (<i>parahayangan</i>)
22.	Sanghyang Payung	Day 11	Traditional umbrella (<i>payung</i>); Symbolizes divine descent; shield and emblem of devotion.
23.	Sanghyang Bunga	Day 11	Floral tower; Symbolizes appreciation and gratitude for divine blessings.
24.	Ngeluarang Ceremony	Day 12	Marks the conclusion of the ritual sequence; Reflects balance between humanity and nature.

Source: Author’s Observation

According to I Wayan Suwarbawa, a cultural expert and academic, and Mangku Wija, a spiritual leader, the Sanghyang Grodog ritual is an immutable system, as each stage represents a profound philosophy of life balance (Interview, August 22, 2024). I Komang Erawan, a community leader and local customary authority, further explains that this ritual is not merely an artistic expression but also a spiritual medium embodying the principle of *Tri Hita Karana* (three causes of goodness or prosperity), namely a harmonious relationship of human beings toward three matters: the *parahayangan* (sacred places/God), *palemahan* (environment), and *pawongan* (all human beings) (interview, August 22, 2024).

The ritual begins with *Sanghyang Sampat*, signifying the purification of both the physical and spiritual realms (see Figure 2). This is followed by successive stages aimed at cleansing the heart and mind while cultivating self-restraint, as represented in *Sanghyang Bumbung*, *Sanghyang Penyalin*, *Sanghyang Lingga*, and *Sanghyang Joged*. Once spiritual clarity is attained, individuals are guided toward *karma* control through *Sanghyang Dukuh Ngaba Cicing* and *Sanghyang Jaran*, ultimately leading to a deeper understanding of harmony with nature, symbolized by *Dukuh Ngaba Bubu*, *Sampi*, and *Penyalin*.



Figure 2. The Sanghyang Sampat ritual (Source: Wiarta, 2024)

The ritual progresses with *Sanghyang Bangu-Bangu* and *Kebo*, which emphasize the balance of the ecosystem. This is followed by the fertility symbolism in *Sanghyang Enjo-enjo*, *Tiling-tiling*, and *Menjangan*. The unification of life's dualities is commemorated through *Sanghyang Tutut* and *Jangolan*, with the ritual reaching its peak during the full moon with the invocation of sacred power via *Sanghyang Kelor*, *Capah*, and *Perahu*. *Sanghyang Perahu* is regarded as the culminating ritual, symbolizing the descent of divine power in the form of a boat to bless humanity (see Figure 3). The final days of the ritual express gratitude through *Sanghyang Sumbul*, *Payung*, and *Bunga*. This sequence cannot be altered, as each stage is interconnected, maintaining the harmony between human life, nature, and divine power. The eleventh day concludes with the *Ngeluarang* Ceremony, a gesture of gratitude and the formal end of the *Sanghyang Grodog* ritual. According to Mangku Wija, *Ngeluarang*, derived from the word *luar* meaning "outside" or "beyond," reflects both the completion of the ritual and the emphasis on harmony between humanity, nature, and spiritual entities (Interview, August 22, 2024).



Figure 3. The Sanghyang Perahu ritual (Source: Wiarta, 2024)

The analysis of the ritual's sequence and the meanings reflected in each artistic element reveals that the *Sanghyang Grodog* ritual encompasses not only the teachings of the Tri Hita Karana harmony but also the concept of a continuous life cycle. This interpretation is grounded in the Hindu concept of *Tri Kona* (Wiraputra, 2022), which emphasizes the cyclical nature of life: *Uthpti* (creation), *Sthiti* (preservation), and *Pralina* (dissolution). The ritual structure mirrors this cycle, where the initial stages mark the balance of the ecosystem, followed by processes of fertility, and culminating in the invocation of divine blessings, before concluding with an expression of gratitude. This pattern reinforces the notion that the ritual not only preserves cultural heritage but also serves as an ecological and spiritual mechanism ensuring the continuity of the relationship between humanity, nature, and transcendental power. The *Sanghyang Grodog* ritual functions not only as an expression of collective belief but also as a model of cultural and ecological sustainability (Table 2).

Table 2. The Phases and Meanings of the *Tri Kona* Concept in the Context of the Sanghyang Grodog Ritual Dance

No.	Phase of Tri Kona	Meaning
1.	<i>Uthpti</i> (creation)	Humans connect with divine spiritual forces, seeking blessings from nature and knowledge.
2.	<i>Sthiti</i> (preservation)	Humans engage in life's activities, aligning with the principles of <i>Tri Hita Karana</i> by fostering connections among humans, nature, and the divine.
3.	<i>Pralina</i> (dissolution)	Humans express gratitude for the blessings of nature and knowledge necessary for survival.

Source: Author's Interpretation.

In the *Uthpti* phase, humans strive to establish a connection with spiritual forces and seek blessings for the balance of life. This is represented in various symbolic artistic elements such as: *Sapu* (broom), *lingga*, *rotan* (rattan), *boneka penari joged* (joged dancer puppet), and two bamboo poles (see Table 1), all of which signify that the early stages of life in Lembongan society are rooted in spirituality and a harmonious relationship with the forces of the universe. The *Uthpti* phase is observed from the first to the third day of the *Sanghyang Grodog* ritual.

The *Sthiti* phase indicates that humans begin to engage in daily life by managing natural resources and maintaining social balance. The artistic elements used become more concrete, depicting humans, animals, and plants, as seen in the *Sanghyang Grodog* ritual from the fourth to the ninth day (see Table 1). In this phase, the philosophy of *Tri Hita Karana* is clearly evident, where humans maintain balance in their relationships with others, nature, and God. These concrete artistic elements illustrate how the Lembongan community understands and practices their professions within the cycle of life.

The final phase of this cycle is *Pralina*, in which humans express gratitude for the blessings received from nature and spirituality. The artistic elements in this stage return to an abstract form, reflecting a release from the material world and a return to God. The main symbols in this phase include: *Perahu* (boat), *Sumbul*, *Payung* (umbrella), and *Bunga* (flower), which are carried out from the ninth to the eleventh day (see Table 1). On the twelfth day, the entire community members gather at the ritual center to perform the *Ngeluarang* ceremony. This interpretation aligns with the explanations of informants I Wayan Suwarbawa and Mangku Wija, who highlight that the sequence of the *Sanghyang Grodog* ritual cannot be randomized due to its interconnectedness. This interpretation demonstrates that the ritual functions as a continuous cycle: (1) Seeking divine blessings in the *Uthpti* phase, (2) utilizing nature and

maintaining social harmony in the *Sthiti* phase, and (3) expressing gratitude to divine forces in the *Pralina* phase (Figure 4).

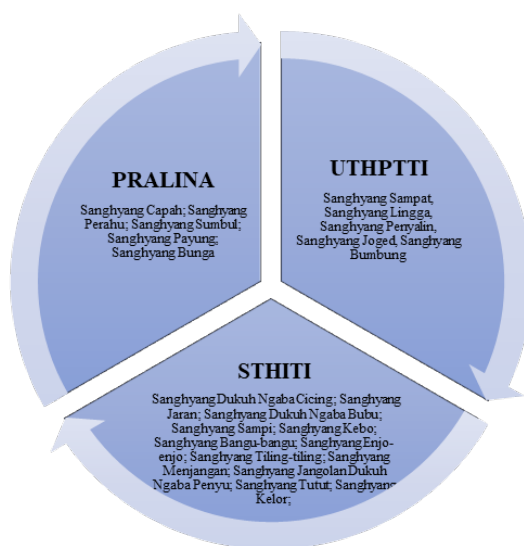


Figure 4. The *Tri Kona* cycle as illustrated in the sequence of the Sanghyang Grodog ritual (Source: Authors' Interpretation)

The cultural identity of the Lembongan community in this ritual is reflected in the involvement of the various *banjars* (village hamlets), namely Br. Kaja, Br. Pegadungan, Br. Kangin, Br. Batu Melawang, Br. Kelod, Br. Anggrek, Br. Kawan, Br. Gili Mekar, Br. Parangan, Br. Amben Tiing, and Br. Ceningan. Each *banjar* takes turns preparing and carrying out the ritual, based on customary deliberation. For example, Br. Pegadungan, which is scheduled to perform the Sanghyang Sumbul ritual in 2024 (Figure 5). According to I Komang Erawan, a *bendesa* or traditional village leader in Lembongan, this rotation system ensures that all community members have a role in maintaining the continuity of the tradition, making the Sanghyang Grodog ritual a social glue that strengthens solidarity among the *banjars* (Interview, August 22, 2024). This was underscored by Mangku Wija, who pointed out that the absence of a specific dancer in the ritual, as well as the freedom for anyone to push the wooden cart carrying the Sanghyang figures, reflects the concept of togetherness and inclusivity in the culture of the Lembongan community (Interview, August 22, 2024).

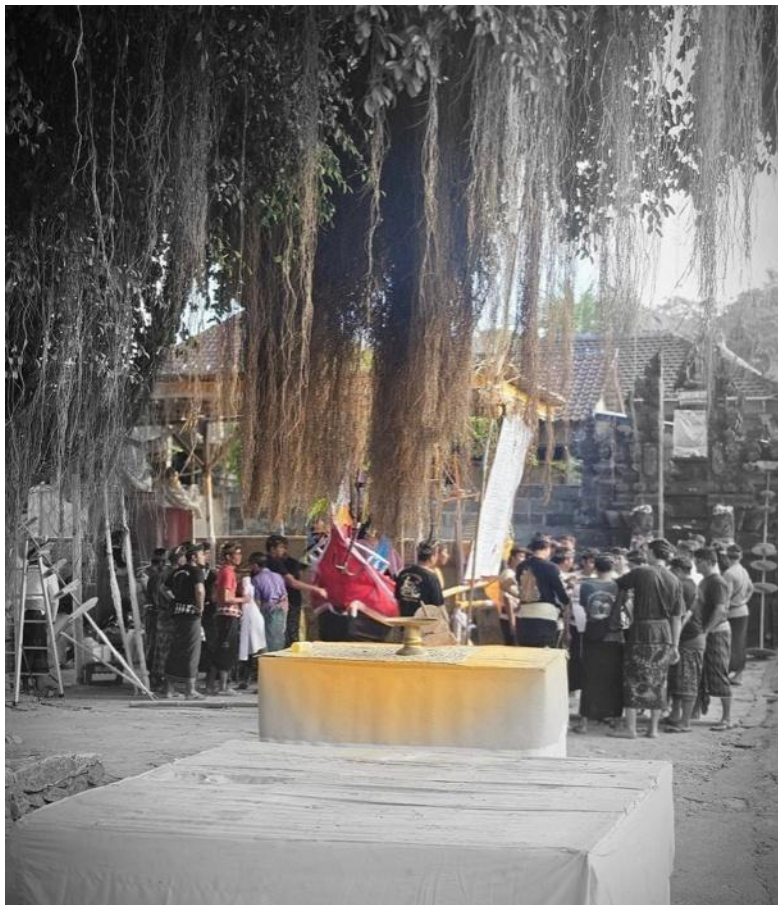


Figure 5. The Br. Pegadungan community preparing the artistic elements for the Sanghyang Sumbul ceremonial accoutrements (Source: Br. Pegadungan, 2024)

The creation of artistic elements in this ritual is carried out collectively, reinforcing the value of mutual cooperation within the community. The lengthy process of preparing Sanghyang figures, floral towers, and other ritual ornaments reflects that this ritual is not merely a performance but also a medium for strengthening social bonds. For instance, during the preparation of the Sanghyang Bunga ritual, community members take the initiative to gather white, yellow, and red frangipani flowers, which are then collected at the Catus Pata Desa pavilion, the central site of the ritual procession (Figure 6). According to Suwarbawa, even schoolchildren in the Lembongan area are encouraged to help gather flowers for the ritual. This concept aligns with Durkheim's theory of ritual as a means of reinforcing social solidarity, where active community participation in cultural practices strengthens interpersonal connections (Syah, 2023; Zidniyatul Hidayah, 2022).



Figure 6. The Sanghyang Bunga ritual (Source: Peradantha, 2024)

The artistic elements of the Sanghyang Grodog ritual symbolically reflect principles of environmental sustainability. Observations on the materials used in these artistic elements indicate that all components are derived from natural, eco-friendly materials. Ritual elements made from organic materials such as wood, leaves, and flowers demonstrate the Lembongan community's awareness of ecological balance. As noted by I Komang Erawan, the Sanghyang Grodog ritual serves not only as a religious practice but also as an educational medium for fostering harmony between humans, nature, and the divine (Interview, August 21, 2024). By embedding environmental consciousness and gratitude within its practices, Sanghyang Grodog functions not only as a cultural heritage but also as a social mechanism contributing to environmental and communal sustainability.

Based on the various aspects discussed, it can be underscored that the Sanghyang Grodog ritual plays a central role in shaping the cultural identity of the Lembongan community, which is deeply rooted in Hindu spirituality, communal solidarity, and ecological wisdom. The ritual's artistic and symbolic

elements not only embody the community's history, beliefs, and social values but also serve as a platform for strengthening social cohesion and maintaining harmony with nature and spirituality. Thus, Sanghyang Grodog is more than an artistic and cultural expression; it is a living representation of how the Lembongan community understands and celebrates their existence within a harmonious cosmic balance.

4.1.2 Revitalization of Sanghyang Grodog for Sustainable Cultural Tourism

The revitalization of the Sanghyang Grodog ritual is not only essential for preserving local cultural values but also holds significant potential for supporting sustainable cultural tourism in Lembongan. The ritual's recognition through a communal intellectual property protection certificate from the Government of Indonesia underscores the importance of safeguarding its authenticity and cultural integrity (Figure 7). This official recognition affirms the cultural significance of Sanghyang Grodog as an intangible cultural heritage that must be preserved. Moreover, the certification provides a strong legal foundation for the management and development of the ritual, including its integration into the tourism sector.

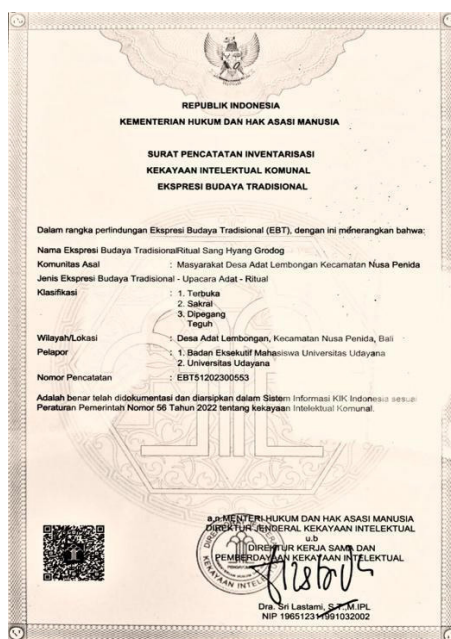


Figure 7. Communal Intellectual Property Registration Certificate for the Sanghyang Grodog Ritual (Source: DJKI Kemenkumham RI, 2024)

The concept of sustainable cultural tourism requires a balance between cultural heritage preservation, environmental protection, and economic development through tourism (Aulia et al., 2024; Hikmah & Vidiati, 2024;

Krogmann et al., 2021; Wasela, 2023). In this context, active participation from the local community is crucial in ensuring the continuity of the ritual (Cole, 2006; Zunaidi et al., 2022). For instance, in the ritual implementation report presented on August 22, 2024 by I Wayan Wira Candra, the head of the organizing committee, it was noted that the total financial contribution for the Sanghyang Grodog ritual amounted to IDR 235,000,000 (approximately USD 14,400) (Bagian Protokol dan Komunikasi Pimpinan Kabupaten Klungkung, 2024). This substantial funding reflects the Lembongan community's commitment to preserving their cultural heritage. According to I Komang Tengah, these funds were sourced from personal donations, local businesses, and external companies, all of whom collaborated to support the event (Interview, August 22, 2024). This well-organized financial support not only demonstrates the solidarity within the community but also serves as a model for cultural tourism that integrates the local economy into its framework.

The revitalization of this ritual within the context of sustainable cultural tourism can be achieved by ensuring that its management remains in the hands of the local community, which actively participates in all aspects of its preparation and execution. Visitors can be encouraged to develop a deeper understanding of the ritual's artistic elements and, in some cases, engage in aspects of its production or organization, such as assisting in the creation of Sanghyang figures or joining specific processions, while always respecting traditional boundaries (see Figure 8). Through this immersive experience, tourists do not remain passive spectators but gain firsthand appreciation of the authenticity and depth of local cultural traditions.



Figure 8. Participation of Foreign Tourists in the Sanghyang Penyalin Ritual (Source: Wiarta, 2024)

However, with the growth of tourism and the influence of global cultural dynamics, it is essential to integrate this ritual into the context of sustainable cultural tourism (Wirawan & Devi Rosalina, 2024). The revitalization of the Sanghyang Grodog ritual must be carried out carefully to maintain its authenticity and traditional values while creating opportunities for interaction with tourists who can participate in this cultural practice. According to recent data from the Bali Central Statistics Bureau, which shows a significant recovery in the number of foreign tourists, there is a great opportunity to develop more sustainable culture-based tourism. In 2023, Bali attracted over 5.2 million foreign tourists, and in 2024, that number continues to grow rapidly (see Table 3). This increase opens opportunities to promote the Sanghyang Grodog ritual as a profound cultural attraction, offering a unique experience for tourists.

Table 3. Number of Foreign Tourists Visiting Bali 2019-2024

No.	Year	Number of Foreign Tourists (persons)	Growth
1.	2019	6,275,210	3,37 %
2.	2020	1,069,473	-82,96 %
3.	2021	51	-
4.	2022	2,155,747	-
5.	2023	5,273,258	144.37%
6.	2024	4,155,540 (January – August)	21.55%

Source: Biro Pusat Statistik Bali (2024)

Looking at the historical emergence of the Kecak performance, which originated from the Sanghyang Dedari ritual choir in the 1930s (Erawati, 2019; Seriasih, 2019), a similar development approach could be applied to the Sanghyang Grodog ritual. The process, adapted by Walter Spies with the help of local artist I Wayan Limbak, ensured that the Sanghyang Dedari ritual remained a sacred art, preserving its authenticity, while the Kecak dance was created to meet the demands of tourism (Seramasara, 2017). In this context, the concept of “rite of passage” provides a framework for revitalizing Sanghyang Grodog in a way that aligns with its original cultural values.

The “rite of passage” concept, as proposed by Arnold van Gennep, offers a relevant lens for understanding cultural change dynamics in the context of sustainable tourism (Burrow, 2023). Van Gennep explains that every cultural transition undergoes three main stages: separation, transition (liminality), and incorporation (Freeman et al., 2022). This concept can be applied to the strategy for developing the Sanghyang Grodog ritual in Lembongan, ensuring that local culture is preserved while remaining relevant within the modern tourism landscape.

In the separation stage, the sacred elements of the Sanghyang Grodog ritual are distinguished from the more flexible components that can be adapted into a performance art form. Similar to how the Kecak Dance was inspired by the Sanghyang Dedari, the reinterpretation of symbols in the artistic elements of Sanghyang Grodog and vocal music can be developed into new creative works without altering the ritual's sacred essence. In the transition stage, these elements are adapted and adjusted, with the local community playing a crucial role in ensuring the preservation of the ritual's spiritual values. Technologies such as lighting and stage design can be used to make the performance more engaging for tourists without diminishing its philosophical meaning. This process also helps the performing arts become a source of income for local artists and communities. The final stage, incorporation, sees the transformed Sanghyang Grodog accepted as part of Lembongan's cultural identity in two forms: the ritual, preserved in accordance with tradition, and the new tourist performance. This approach supports the principles of sustainable tourism, where culture is preserved while allowing for innovation that respects tradition.

By applying the concept of rite of passage, the development of Sanghyang Grodog for tourism need not lead to commercialization that diminishes cultural values; rather, it can become a controlled process of cultural evolution. The successful transformation of Kecak into a global performance art in Bali demonstrates that cultural revitalization can occur while maintaining a clear distinction between the sacred and entertainment. If this strategy is effectively implemented, Lembongan could serve as an example of how cultural tourism can support the sustainability of tradition without compromising the cultural identity of the local community.

However, to ensure sustainability, attention to environmental preservation and natural resource conservation must be prioritized. Since this ritual uses natural materials in its artistic elements, it is essential to manage these resources wisely and sustainably. Natural resources such as flowers, leaves, wood, and trees used in the ritual must be maintained to prevent over-exploitation that could harm the local ecosystem. This aligns with traditional religious practices in Ghana, such as totemism and the worship of deities, where the intent is more spiritual than ecological, yet these practices indirectly contribute to environmental protection (Benson, 2021). Similarly, in Papua, cultural practices like the Isolo dance are not merely cultural expressions but also carry ecological educational values (Surya Peradantha et al. 2023; Surya Peradantha et al. 2023). This ritual preserves cultural heritage while also upholding the sustainability of the natural world. The natural world is an inseparable aspect of the Lembongan community's traditions and is maintained through an environmentally responsible approach.

Thus, the revitalization of the Sanghyang Grodog ritual can support sustainable cultural tourism by developing it as a rite of passage that functions not only as a spiritual heritage but also as a source of inspiration for the creation of structured cultural attractions (Garfinkel, 2018). With active community involvement, the ritual can reinforce cultural identity and environmental awareness. Adopting a model like Kecak, balancing sacredness with tourism, alongside intellectual property protection and transparent funding can sustain economic benefits while preserving authenticity. This approach ensures Sanghyang Grodog's revitalization strengthens cultural tourism while remaining relevant in modern society.

4.2 Discussion: Cultural Tourism as a Challenge and Opportunity for Social Cohesion

Durkheim distinguishes between mechanical solidarity, based on shared values in traditional societies, and organic solidarity, grounded in interdependence in modern societies (Sidiq et al., 2021; Söylemez & Ergun, 2024). The growth of tourism has driven a shift from a community-based social system to a more individualistic economic model, fragmenting society into those who preserve tradition, pursue economic gain, or adapt culture for the market. This imbalance in the process can undermine social cohesion.

Tourism may preserve the existence of rituals, but it risks diminishing their meaning. Research indicates that after 30 years of inactivity, public understanding of the Sanghyang Grodog ritual's significance has weakened, particularly among the younger generation. According to Mangku Wija (Interview, August 22, 2024), modernization in Sanghyang Grodog has been limited to visual aspects, such as the use of stapless instead of *semat* (a traditional bamboo pin used for sewing coconut leaves) and the adoption of *bondres* masks, which are typically used in Balinese comedy performances, on Sanghyang figures. These masks, known for their exaggerated expressions and humorous characterizations, represent a shift towards incorporating more contemporary or playful visual elements into the traditionally solemn ritual. However, I Wayan Dangled, Ni Wayan Enpe (Sangging TV, 2022), Suwarbawa (Interview, August 22, 2024), and I Kadek Wiarta (Interview, September 15, 2024) highlight that these adaptations have not been accompanied by a deeper understanding of the ritual's core meaning.

The loss of intergenerational knowledge threatens the sustainability of the ritual, impacting cultural transmission and social cohesion, in line with Malinowski's perspective on the role of rituals in maintaining community balance (Bowie, 2021; Ramadhan et al., 2023). As a result, while visual appeal may increase, the spiritual and social dimensions of the ritual risk being

diminished. To ensure sustainable cultural tourism, local communities must be mindful of balancing innovation with the preservation of the ritual's meaning, ensuring that Sanghyang Grodog continues to function as a social unifier for the people of Lembongan. Moreover, tourism attractions in Lembongan remain limited (Shantika et al., 2018, p. 180), making it crucial for local communities to balance innovation with the preservation of the ritual's meaning. Given these opportunities, we propose several forms of development for Sanghyang Grodog to support sustainable cultural tourism in Lembongan, as follows:

1. The authors suggested that the creation of a local mascot based on a dance inspired by the Sanghyang figure can increase tourism appeal and highlight the uniqueness of the local culture in Lembongan Village. We anticipate that the mascot will enhance the village's cultural repertoire and serve as an educational tool, imparting spiritual values and ecological equilibrium to both the community and visitors (Julianto et al., 2021; Ruspawati, 2020).
2. The branding of tourism with visual components from the Sanghyang Grodog ritual can enhance tourist understanding of cultural values via distinctive gifts. One such case in Guizhou, China of Miao-themed souvenirs illustrates the effectiveness of the representation of rituals in enhancing local branding and bolstering the local economy (Jiangwei & Keai, 2024). This approach suggests that Lembongan Village can enhance its tourism appeal and increase tourist understanding of traditional values by integrating visual elements of the Sanghyang Grodog ritual into tourism branding. Inspired by the successful use of Miao-themed souvenirs in Guizhou, China, this strategy can help strengthen local branding and support the local economy.
3. Third, the incorporation of arts and culture into ecotourism, including dance performances and installations, can function as a vehicle for environmental education, according to the principle of *Tri Hita Karana*. This could enhance ecological understanding among both tourists and the community, hence supporting environmental conservation in Lembongan (Akamani, 2020).
4. Fourth, to enhance the younger generation's comprehension, education rooted in local wisdom must be incorporated into school and art studio curricula. This is significant given the prolonged absence of the ritual's execution and can enhance cultural continuity in the future (Nguyen et al., 2023).
5. Fifth, organizing inclusive cultural festivals and parades can actively engage tourists, fostering a distinctive tourism experience and reinforcing Lembongan's character as a sustainable tourism destination (Quan-Baffour, 2023).

Meyer Fortes emphasizes the importance of kinship structure in maintaining social stability (Evans et al., 2021; Fortes, 2013), which in Balinese society is manifested through the role of the *banjar* as the center of adat and social activities. The challenges faced by the Lembongan community highlight the impact of tourism development on social dynamics. The Sanghyang Grodog ritual, which takes place every two years over a 12-day period, is now hindered by the busy schedules of community members employed in the tourism sector. This shift reflects changes in kinship structures and the traditional role of the *banjar* in organizing adat rituals, which are increasingly influenced by economic pressures. Commercialization and modernization affect not only the economic aspects but also the cultural and religious dimensions, potentially altering the social values that form the foundation of Bali's identity and the social structures that support the sustainability of such rituals.

The community's awareness of this ritual highlights the enduring strength of cultural values. As Suwarbawa notes, Lembongan's younger generation recognizes the need for preservation, though deeper understanding is still required (Interview, August 22, 2024). If traditional village leaders allow flexibility in task distribution and scheduling, the ritual can continue without hindering economic activities. Rather than a constraint, this challenge presents an opportunity to balance tradition with sustainable tourism. Tourism has significantly boosted Lembongan's economy, raising monthly incomes from IDR 1,000,000–2,000,000 in the era of seaweed farming to IDR 4,000,000–5,000,000 today (Shantika et al., 2018, p. 179). However, economic growth must align with cultural preservation to maintain social cohesion (Darma Putra & Pitana, 2010). Community-based tourism, which actively involves locals (Dyah Krismawintari & Rai Utama, 2019), offers a solution, ensuring tourism strengthens both financial stability and cultural identity (Azwar et al., 2023; Dłużewska & Giampiccoli, 2021). Success depends on strong community engagement and supportive policies at the village and district levels.

Conclusion

This study reveals the fundamental role of the Sanghyang Grodog ritual in shaping cultural identity and strengthening social cohesion in Lembongan Village. The ritual serves as both a preservation of ancestral values and a platform for the community to adapt to social changes. However, the increasing pressures of tourism present challenges in maintaining the sacred essence of the ritual amidst commercialization demands.

The revitalization of this ritual, within the context of sustainable tourism, offers potential as an adaptive cultural conservation strategy. In response to these challenges, this research proposes a community-based tourism

development approach. This includes steps such as the creation of a village mascot based on the ritual, the use of ritual visual elements for local branding, and the integration of art and culture into ecotourism and educational curricula. These initiatives not only raise community awareness but also contribute to strengthening local cultural identity, while offering economic benefits that help mitigate the commercialization pressures.

Despite the promising direction, the study acknowledges limitations in exploring the long-term impacts of ritual revitalization on community identity. Further research is needed to explore the role of the younger generation in preserving this practice, as well as to develop an interdisciplinary approach that incorporates economic, cultural, and ecological perspectives, ensuring the ritual's sustainability for future generations.

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