Aesthetic Interpretation
Of Pamedalan And Melasti Sacred Ritual Event
In Balinese Traditional Architecture

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ABSTRACT

Pamedalan (cultured Balinese) or pamesuan is a gate of a house (umah), a gate of Balinese traditional housing
compound’s yard; it can also be a gate of temples or a gate of a village. Pamedalan or pamesuan has a sense of
out/exit place, having outward orientation (medal/pesu) meaning that an exit is an important event. Similarly, the sacred
ritual events of medal/pesu going out that start from pamesuan as an important event in the Balinese traditional
architecture. Through ‘Pleasure of Aesthetic Place’ Method, aesthetic interpretation is revealed by experiencing
pamedalan or pamesuan and the ‘going out start from pamesuan’ sacred rituals events. Aesthetic interpretation
at the pamedalan or pamesuan and sacred ritual event as a unity of Balinese Traditional Architecture constitutes
an pleasure of beauty exciting all the five senses, a servitude-devotion-dedication to his beloved.

Keywords: pamesuan, sacred ritual events, aesthetic interpretation, pleasure

INTRODUCTION

Pamedalan or pamesuan (cultured Balinese) in Balinese Traditional Architecture is a unit of gate of
umah (a house), a gate of a yard of Balinese traditional house, it can also be in the form of a gate of temples as well as a gate of a village (Figure 1). According to Saraswati [1], pamedalan/pamesuan has a sense of an exit place, has outward orientation (pesu/medal), (which is not like in general referred to as an entrance) which means that exit is a significant event. Similarly, a sacred ritual events affected on the pamedalan/pamesuan is an important event in the realization of Balinese traditional architecture where the sacred ritual events in the form of ceremony is one of the three principles in the embodiment of Balinese traditional architecture (upakara/ceremony – tatwal philosophy – tata susila/ethic) which are related each other [2].

Further, to perform interpretation is not an easy task, as conveyed by Lawrence [3], Groat [4], Derida in Lajar [5], Tuan [6], Poepoprodjo [7], as well as Hall [8], while Tschumi [9] revealed that the interpretation of the expressive symbols involving emotion of this sort is creative in nature and pleasure events, pleasure of the illusion. In this case, ‘Place Aesthetic Pleasure’ Method is a method which essentially interprets the sufferings over the aesthetic pleasure of place as the pleasure by relying on the role of senses as recipient (experiencing) creating an imagination [10].

PAMEDALAN AND SACRED RITUAL EVENT IN BALINESE TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE

In addition to the above notion, Saraswati proposes typology of pamedalan/pamesuan. Pamedalan/pamesuan/typology based on its horizontal dimension [11] can be distinguished based on the pamedalan/pamesuan which only has lebuh, which has lebuh in the form of cangkem kodok (frog mouth), which has jaba sisi (outer courtyard), and which has ancak saja (Figure 3). While based on its vertical dimension [12], it can be distinguished into pamedalan/pamesuan in the form peletasan, in the form of angkul-angkul, in the form of kori, in the form kori majajar, in the form of kori and separate apit lawang, in the form of gelung kori,
in the form of kori agung and pamedalan/pamesuan in the form of kori agung accompanied by betelan which is also in the form of kori (Figure 2). In the case study Agung Besakih Temple, here is the pamedalan with ancak saji in the form of kori agung accompanied by betelan in the form of kori, which constitutes the prime type of pamedalan.

Figure 2.
Type of pamedalan based on its horizontal dimension
Sketch: Oka Saraswati (2002: 78-84)

Besides, it is also revealed that the perfect form of pamedalan/pamesuan symbolizes the human personification [13]. Pamedalan/pamesuan has gidat (forehead), kuping (ear), and subeng (Earrings). In addition, there is also awak (body), sipah (armpit), and lelengen (arm) (Figure 3). Lelengen in this case is a depiction that penyengker wall on the left and right are held and connected by lelengen of pamedalan/pamesuan so it is a unit that protects amah (house). Lelengen can be in the form of paduraksa which is cut and attached to the pamedalan or panjak.

Figure 3. Lelengen/arm as one of the personifications of pamedalan
Sketch: Oka Saraswati (2002:60)

Furthermore, between the penyengker wall are unified by paduraksa which means united together to protect the house. So far, to guard means protection or there is also the possibility of significantly curb, or also may provide lessons or even a process to remove restraints, to the outside, toward higher prepared levels. This is
illustrated as the metaphor of a butterfly struggling out, passing cocoon hole that force of body fluids leading to the wing so its wings are strong to fly. Challenge making a butterfly stronger and able to survive in the nature, outside the cocoon. But butterflies do not return to the cocoon. This illustration is different from the manik ring cucupu (fetus in the mother womb); womb as a place that provides livelihood, protection and development of the fetus. Likewise, the baby provides comfort to the womb so the mother is not suffering or at the extreme point, a mother could die because of pregnancy. Giving comfort means a sacrifice that may also be a suffering. Fetus in the womb is prepared in order to be ready for the outside to the world and a place where humans live, grow and take refuge in the universe, similar as manik ring cucupu. Unlike butterflies, commonly, people will miss the mother – the owner of womb they have ever occupied. In the womb, there are sufferings, and also to get out of the womb is also a suffering. The more numerous, the greater the pleasure, and this interpretation is a portrait that exit as a suffering causes longing to return.

Besides, as enhanced by Ruskin [14] who said that all architectures proposes an effect on the human mind, not merely a service to the human frame. Ritual may be said to be the poetry of function. On the other side, Norberg-Schulz said that place is a space which has a distinct character [15] or in general a place is given as such a character or "atmosphere" [16]. It is also said [17] that the genius loci, which is the "spirit of place", since ancient time has been recognized as the concrete reality man has to face and come to term with in his daily life, thus this illustrates that the place is in the life of society. As such a place is a space that has a spirit in accordance with the character of the society where the place can be felt, enjoyed or pleased. On the other hand, ritual activities constitute of the life of Balinese community which is belief to have been inherited from generation to generation, when the community do their daily life, it will be preceded, completed or based on the way of thinking and way of behave according the religious belief [18]. It indicates that the activities of Balinese in their daily life and ritual activities are a unity, like the philosophy of the manifestation of Balinese Traditional Architecture. In this case, the architecture of pamesuan/pamedulan or space that occurs will not mean as a place (genah) if there is no sacred ritual events in the life of society as a unity of soul/spirit in accordance with the character of the society where the place can be experienced (with experience) and felt or enjoyed. Similarly, as the expression of ‘genious loci’ of a place proposed by Norberg-Schulz, in which the spirit is something giving enthusiasm or fervor.

Further, Dhavamony [19] states that there are two kinds of Hindu rituals commonly performed, namely Vedic and religious ritual. Vedic ritual includes the sacrifices to the gods while religious rituals focus on the worship, the performance of fasting and parties as part of Hindu Religion which close to people. He also said that the puja (worship) is the most frequently performed in all celebration [20]. On the other hand, he said that the ritual of sacrifice occupies prime portion [21] because through this ritual people serve themselves to the gods through the offering of a gift and close relationship and communication between them and Gods set through participation and taking part in the sacred offerings. On the other side, he said [22] that in Hinduism, the religious act is essentially a sacrifice as an act of homage to Gods in the worship. In Balinese community, these two types of ritual performance are almost always performed together in a series of ceremony. In addition, ceremony/upakara is one of the three principle philosophies of the manifestation of Balinese traditional architecture (upakara/ceremony – tattwa/philosophy – tata su silica/ethnic) which are related each other. Thus, as one of the manifestation of Balinese traditional architecture, pamedulan is based on the philosophy where pamedulan and ritual event affected on it is a unity. For instance, the event of Tawur Agung Panca Bali Krama and Bhatar Turun Kabe at Agung Besakih Temple.

Further, it is necessary to be proposed that in a sacred ritual event, Yadnya is commonly offered. Yadnya has the meaning of worship, giving sacrifice or making divine, and also has the sense to act as an intermediary, as a description of social life, love and brotherhood (tat wam asi). Yadnya may be in the form of debt (Dewa Rna, Pitra Rna, Rsi Rna) and the worship of holy sacrifice (Dewa Yadnya, Pitra Yadnya, Rsi Yadnya, Manusa Yadnya, Bhuta Yadnya) [23]. Yadnya offerings in the form of knowledge are nobler in nature than Yadnya in the form of object in whatsoever [24]. However, the ability of each people is different therefore the other alternative recourse is given which can be taken, namely Yadnya through sacred rituals based on desa-kala-patra (place-time-situation). Sacrifice, willing to sacrifice or even the victim has the meaning of suffering, as well as adjusted, reflects the existence of things that are sacrificed in order to become appropriate. Although the suffering occurs many times, a Balinese sacred ritual event can still be witnessed. This suffering is like servitude-devotion-dedication to his beloved. This uneasy matter is a spirit of place that provides excitement which makes the sustainability of the sacred ritual events.

The fact is that there is an equality of the essential/eternal meaning between pamedulan and the sacred events in the form Yadnya forming a synergy, a unity that reinforce, bond, and are inseparable each other. The inseparable unity between pamedulan that causes longing and the sacred ritual events providing excitement, which also raises longing like servitude-devotion-dedication, thus the place has the meaning as the soul which constitutes the "spirit of place".
AESTHETIC INTERPRETATION OF PAMEDALAN AND MELASTI SACRED RITUAL EVENT

Pamedalan and sacred ritual events are a unity making up a place and Balinese community places the experience of sacred ritual events in Balinese traditional architecture and interaction. Talking about experience, human beings are endowed with senses. The importance of the visual sense is expressed by Dovey [25]. This is also supported by the opinion of Tuan [26], that of the five human senses, traditional people is more dependent on the vision to make their way in the world than the other senses, however, do not forget that people view the world through all senses simultaneously. While for most people, music is more powerful emotional experience than seeing a picture or scenery, this indicates that the human body experiencing with the five senses and the human soul with an emotional experience are inseparable.

Then, the aesthetic interpretation is obtained through spatial experience on the event of Melasti in Agung Besakih Temple. This event is one of the serial events of Tawur Agung Panca Bali Krama and Bhatara Turun Kabeh at Agung Besakih Temple. The pleasure of spatial experience in an event according to Tschumi is a form of “presence of the absence”, leans toward the poetics of unconscious [27], and an imagination [28]. In addition, Derida in Leach also referred to as a personal-reference [29]. Besides, visual sensation according to Lawson [30] largely dominates our perception, since over two-thirds of the nerve fibres that enter our central nervous system are from the eyes. The process of visual sensation to surrounding world involves complex interaction between eyes and brain. However, please do not forget that space can also be felt through the sensations of sound, smell and even touch. Perception is actually more than just sensation. Perception is an active process through which we make sense of the world around us. To do this of course we rely upon sensation, but we normally integrate the experience of all our senses without conscious analysis. It is only when something is unusual or out of place that we notice the different sensations, our differential attention to them, and any incongruities. Further, sensation is clearly indicates a neurological possibility of cross-communication between sensory organs such as eyes and ears and the parts of the brain responsible for our feeling of experience while perception is an integrated experience. Perception, in reality, does not feel as if it is an analytical process; however it is suggested that this experience depends on the analysis.

Experiencing the case study of this Melasti event is preceded by the procession of pralingga [31][32] from the temples around to Penataran Agung Temple of Besakih as a preparation procession, up to Segara Watu Klotok Beach and back to Penataran Agung Temple of Besakih. This preparatory procession is preceded by the Pralingga Ida Bhatar Lingsir and Ida Bathara around Agung Temple of Besakih in the Shrine (Pralinggih) of Pesimpanan of Kehen to the Shrine of Paruman Agung of Penataran Agung Temple of Besakih. Pralingga is a symbol of the manifestation of Ida Hyang Widhi, Ida Bhatar or Ancestors in the reflected form to assist the unification of thoughts in a holy atmosphere as He has an Acintya character which is very difficult to be imagined by mankind. The Pralingga can be either in the form of wood or metal plate, jewels, water, statues, pratima, kris, Chinese coins, and daksina. Furthermore, almost at the same time, the procession is followed by the Pralingga of Ida Bhatar Catur Lokapala Temple, namely, the Pralingga of Ida Bhatar Batu Madeg Temple in black clothes, the Pralingga of Ida Bhatar Kiduling Kreteg Temple in red clothes, the Pralingga of Ida Bhatar Gelap Temple in white clothes and Ida Bhatar of Ulun Kulkul Temple in yellow clothes. And then not in a very long period of time, the Pralingga of Ida Bhatar Catur Lawa Temple, namely the Pralingga Ida Bhatar Ratu Pande Temple, Ida Bhatar Ratu Penyarikan Temple, Ida Bhatar Ratu Pasek Temple, and Ida Bhatar Dukuh Sagening Temple and then also come the Pralingga of Ida Bhatar Pedarman. And further, from Penataran Agung Temple of Besakih, all the Pralinggas are enthroned on their own palanquins before being carried to Segara Watu Klotok Beach in the Melasti Event procession. This Melasti procession exits (medal) through pamesuan/pamedalan and not through betelan (supporting door). This also describes that pamesuan/pamedalan and sacred ritual event constitutes an integral unity (Figure 4).

**Figure 4. Pamedalan and sacred ritual event constitute an inseparable unity.**

_Sketch & modification: Widnyana Sudibya-Oka Saraswati_
Since deciding a good day (nuasen karya) (the signal of the commencement of a serial event), the Shrine of Paruman, other shrines, bale, pamedalan as well as dark color of natar have been decorated with complete kua/clothes and its accessories and also configuration of penjor, lelontek (banners) and pajeng (umbrellas) in colorful and gleaming golden. In addition, the clothes as well as accessories of Ida Bhatara also have various colors as well as contain prada/gold color shining when reflected with the sun shine. Also seen is white cloth of lantaran dangling of the stairs and lay along the path passed by the Pralingga to step into the stairs of the shrine (palinggih) dominantly forms horizontal lines. Then the penjor, lelontek and pajeng form vertical lines. The vertical line is also complemented by sunari straightened the direction of Penataran Agung Temple. In addition to color and vertical shape, pajeng also made ornamented color dots, while Pelinggih Paruman in rectangular form is roofed with symmetrical pyramid. The symmetrical Paruman Shrine (Pelinggih) is different from the placement one shrine and the others which have asymmetrical composition. This configuration forms visual ambiance of colors, lines and planes in the Penataran Agung Temple of Besakih.

Beside that, during this process as well as in each event of the ceremony of Tawur and Ida Bhatara Turun Kabeh, the ambience is always filled with kakidungan (religious songs), tatamburan (religious music; gong gede, semar pegulingan, slonding, gender), and sasolahan (religious performance). In addition to the sound of kidung and tetamburan, also appears in the midst the sound of sunari whistle forming the silence which can be heard from the distance. The blows of wind into the hold of sunari in the form of circle, triangles and quadrangle produces sound like flute. The audio ambiance integrates with the chimming bell of sulinggih (priest), the worship kidung, the sound of tatamburan, and sound of sunari as well as the sound of wooden bells between kulul lanang (male) and wadon (female) from the direction of wooden bell tower (bale kulul).

On the other side, along the procession the ash of fragrant incense is puffing. In this occasion the fragrant of flower is also smelled, kuwangen as well as the parfum on the clothes. Furthermore, the procession of departure on this Melasti event is preceded with the sound of kulul, and the journey is followed with kekidungan, the sound of bell (genta) (which is also called as the God’s bell) as well as bleganjur gamelan (encouragement rhythmic). The departure procession is opened with the sprinkling of Tirtha Pabersihan (purification holy water) and continued by the march of spears and banner as well as palanquin of Ida Bhatara. Walking together with the Palanquin of Ida Bhatara which is being crutched also raises sensation of humility scale, without grandness is being seen. Sensation of intimate approach however remains to place Him on higher level, because from shoulder to the top of head (siwaduar) in Balinese community’s ethic, is the main place on human body. The existence of Palanquin of Ida Bethara completed with pajeng (umbrella) and the pamundut (carrier) in various colors, forms as well as contrast ornament, attract attention amongst the ocean of people wearing white shirt produces a sensation (Figure 5). Similarly, along the journey, the fragrant of incense, flower, kuwangen as well as parfums of clothes endlessly cover the smell of sweat dropping and vaporizing as well as drying on the bodies under the brightness of sun shine.

![Figure 5. Contrass in cheerful visual ambience at pamedalan on Melasti event.](Photo: Oka Saraswati)
Arriving at Segara Watu Klotok Beach, the Palanquins of Ida Bhatara are carried toward the edge of the beach, makekobok dispersing the ripples of the sea water, sheltered with the purple sky of dusk (Figure 6). Further, all members of the religious ceremony for the purpose of worshipping sit with the knees bent and folded back (matimpuh) on the plain of beach facing Them, Ida Bhatara in their manifestation as Pralingga, enthroned on the palanquins and placed on the platform (asagan) in shoulder to head height, more or less 180 centimeters. Sitting with the knees bent and folded back in the distance of 3 meters from the platform under the gloomy afternoon shine as well as drop of light during the event of this Tawur Pelelaskan and Pekelem is performed for more or less two hours, from preparation, worshipping or pangastawa for tawur, worshipping or pangastawa by the members and the priest (sulinggih), nunas tirtha (sprinkling the holy water), and nunas bija beras. During this time, small or low scale atmosphere is felt to Him located on the height with warm purple sky background.

After the event of Tawur Pelelaskan and Pekelem is over, Ida Bhatara return to Agung Besakih Temple and during the journey return, Ida Bhatara firstly take a rest (marepem/spend the night) at Penataran Agung Temple of Klungkung. The next day Ida Bhatara also take a rest (masanekan) at Puseh Tohjiwa Temple, Sidemen Sub-District and again spend the night at Puseh Temple of Tebola, Sidemen Sub-District of Karangasem Regency as well as the next day directly go toward Penataran Agung Agung Temple of Besakih.

Returning from Segara Watu Klotok Beach, during the midday (at 1.00 p.m.), by arricing at the Penataran Agung Temple of Besakih, step by step, breathlessly due to slope upward road, Penataran Agung Temple of Besakih is seen standing at the horizon of Mount Agung with the bright blue sky as its background as well as spears, banners and umbrellas framing the view on the front line. The distant object is framed by nearer objects, the greatness of God Palace. Then bigger scale is felt until silhouette is seen at the big pamesuan/pamedalan with black chromatic color on the spread of wall with colorful dots providing direction. The pamesuan/pamedalan puffs up itself into something bigger than it really is for the gate. The greatness of God’s house is really felt, and there is a sensation scale of grandness here. Besides, the reaching access from asymmetrical distant does not form it to be formal, and does not make it monumental. Further the closer, the more directive with the scale of slow movement, the colorful dots are seen as statues completed with the clothes and umbrellas. The signals are seen signing that one is higher that the others in accord with their functions, based on their social context. Tens of statues located in front of the pamesuan/amadalalan wear red, white, yellow, black and black and white plaid clothes/kuaca, complete with their umbrellas as well as penjor which bent on the height with their tips return back to the ground in the height of two meters. Besides, in front of pamesuan/pamedalan, at the platform of Ambal-Ambal Jaba Sisi of Penataran Agung Temple of Agung Temple of Besakih welcome offerings (banten pemendak) are served with the basis of (madasar) ofbufallow as a welcome service to all palanquins (jempana) of Ida Bhatara with their Pralingga on them as well as Pralingga Ida Bhatara Tirta. The Palanquins of Ida Bhatara with the umbrellas in different colors, form and contrass ornament enliven the atmosphere of welcoming ceremony.

All the priests and members of community perform welcoming ceremony at Penataran Agung Temple of Besakih sit with knees bent and folded back in yellow and white cloth as well as with hair bun like a piece of mosaic plain of people wearing clothes dominantly white. This procession is performed for about 30 minutes, while the Palanquins of Ida Bathara are still carried on the shoulders and their accessories such as, spears, kris and other fittings remain on the shoulder and on the head; in the ethic of Balinese society, from the shoulder to the top of the head (siwaduara), is the prime place of the human body. In a series of Melasti event turns out when sitting knees bent and folded back, tired, thirsty, sweating, in front of the Pralingga of Ida Bhatara with the background of clean spread of blue sky, there is a sensation being experienced, the small scale is felt of His greatness. When the audio ambiance is also integrated, between tinkling bell of the priest (Sulinggih) the silence, worship and praise songs are lilting, encouraging rhythmic sound of tatamburan, sunari sound that sounds faint and there is also a knock of rhythmic sound from the direction of wooden bell towers (bale kulkul). In addition, the smell of fragrant incense, flowers, and kuwangen as well as the parfum on clothes that covers up the smell of sweat evaporated under the hot sun, although wind breezes at Besakih Temple at the temperature ranges of twenty Celsius degrees. The atmosphere of audio visual and fragrant scent fills up the experience at that time. In
addition, the sparkling of scent and smoked Tirtha wangsuhpada, touching the skin to provide coolness on the skin and drunk bring with it pleasure to the tongue. Besides, the fact is that the color during this event uses monochromatic colors (leading to a white or black) equipped with points of interest in contrast color, ower the integration with natural paintings as the background has formed a harmonious unity (Figure 7).

Geck said that colors have sensation [33] and supported by Rockow [34] that colors have psychological, physical effects and also constitute a symbol. Meanwhile, gold color and black and white spot give the impression of the sacred.

Further, Lawson [35] said that many people describe red and yellow as warm colors which tend to advance and thus seem nearer, demanding more foreground attention. Blue and green colors are described as cool and receding colors. The warmer colors do pay more attention. Raise levels of arousal and alertness, and thus enhance performance. In addition, for Vitruvius (in Pérez) [36], the geometric configuration propeties the “winds” (the breath of nature), and enhances the harmonic sound of the words and music of the performance, thus contributing to the spectators’ psychosomatic health.

In addition, the sense of hearing also gets sensation being given pleasure. Kalkul the rhythmic sound of wooden bell (not machination sound of bell during a catastrophic event), and the sound of bell (silent), gambelain (tempestuous), and songs provide a sense of beauty that can be enjoyed by ears united in this event. It is also complemented by fragrant flowers, kuwangen and incense covering the smell of dried sweat on the body, like aroma therapy.

After the event of pamendak or welcoming is over, Ida Bhatara are enthroned at the Shrine of Paruman Agung of Penataran Agung Temple of Besakih through pamesuan/pamedalan having a lot of stairs. The great staircase is to go up to the higher levels as it is an excuse to process grandly. When going up the stairs of pmedalan/pamesuan, this movement raises a sensation of smaller scale compared to the high, great, black pamedalan/pamesuan and claimed with tens of wide stairs which are felt as the greatness of God’s house. Then, when arriving in front of the pamedalan/pamesuan, the hole of pamedalan/pamesuan is felt a small dimension compared with thousands of members. Patience of spirit is very necessary. Later it is to produce the dramatic central setting for Agung Temple of Besakih.

From the above description, it is seen that sacred ritual event is a repeated sufferings however it constitutes an exciting pleasure so this sacred ritual event can be seen up to the present time. Furthermore, the sufferings as a sacrifice of body and soul is like servitude-devotion-dedication to his beloved. The more difficult the servitude-devotion-dedication, the greater the pleasure will be.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, it can be concluded that the aesthetic interpretation of pamedalan/pamesuan and ‘going out start from of pamedalan/pamesuan’ sacred ritual event is like servitude-devotion-dedication to his beloved which provides spirit to place

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