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# “Ajeg Bali” and Preserving the Balinese Lontar in Dukuh Penaban, Bali

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## ABSTRACT

The need to know and understand lontar manuscripts arose to save the ancestral values of the Balinese people contained in the lontar media. Research on the social movement of lontar manuscripts, which aims to preserve culture as part of religious rituals and as a guideline for daily life (*Smerti*), has not received widespread attention. This study aims to scrutinize the “Ajeg Bali” campaign, a social movement in Dukuh Penaban Traditional Village, Karangasem, Bali, that empowers the Balinese people to combat globalization through cultural preservation. Additionally, it seeks to understand the community’s response to the legitimacy of the Bali Provincial Government No.1 2018, as well as their efforts to preserve lontar manuscripts passed down from generation to generation, thereby reinforcing life values and AJAWERA’s teachings. The study employs a qualitative descriptive methodology and an ethnographic approach. The researcher used observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation for data collection. The location of the study was Dukuh Penaban Traditional Village, Karangasem Regency, Bali Province, with 10 informants. The research has made it possible for anyone to read Balinese lontar manuscripts, a development that aligns with the *Ajeg Bali* movement, which the *Pedanda* or Brahmana in Dukuh Penaban endorse. The collaborative effort to interpret this lontar document aims to reestablish Bali’s collective identity. It has then showed the initiative to read lontar manuscripts subsequently ignited Balinese unity, equipping the entire Balinese population to serve as agents and participants in a social movement transformation.

Keywords: *Ajeg Bali*; cultural preservation; social movement; Balinese lontar manuscripts; Dukuh Penaban traditional village

## ABSTRAK

Kebutuhan untuk mengetahui dan memahami naskah lontar muncul untuk menyelamatkan nilai-nilai adat warisan leluhur masyarakat Bali yang terkandung dalam media lontar. Penelitian mengenai gerakan sosial naskah lontar sebagai upaya preservasi budaya sebagai bagian dari ritual keagamaan dan sebagai pedoman kehidupan sehari-hari (*smerti*) belum banyak dikaji. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji kampanye “Ajeg Bali” yang memberikan wacana masyarakat Bali untuk melawan globalisasi dengan implementasi melalui gerakan sosial pelestarian budaya di Desa Adat Dukuh Penaban, Karangasem, Bali, dan untuk mengetahui respons masyarakat Desa Adat Dukuh Penaban pada legitimasi Pemerintah Daerah Propinsi Bali, serta usaha preservasi naskah lontar yang dimiliki secara turun temurun yang akan menguatkan nilai-nilai hidup dan ajaran AJAWERA. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian deskriptif kualitatif yang menggunakan pendekatan etnografi. Metode penelitian yang digunakan yaitu observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi untuk pengumpulan data. Lokasi penelitian adalah Desa Adat Dukuh Penaban, Kabupaten Karangasem, Propinsi Bali, dengan informan berjumlah 10 orang. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa kemampuan membaca naskah lontar Bali kini



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dapat diakses oleh siapa saja, sejalan dengan gerakan *Ajeg Bali* yang didukung oleh Pedanda atau Brahmana di Dukuh Penaban. Upaya kolaboratif untuk menafsirkan dokumen lontar ini bertujuan untuk membangun kembali identitas kolektif Bali. Hal ini memunculkan inisiatif untuk membaca naskah lontar yang kemudian memicu persatuan Bali, membekali seluruh penduduk Bali untuk berperan sebagai agen dan peserta dalam transformasi gerakan sosial.

Kata kunci: *Ajeg Bali*; preservasi budaya; gerakan sosial; naskah lontar Bali; desa adat Dukuh Penaban

## 1. Introduction

Bali is often depicted in national media and public discourse as a place where the power of culture and religious beliefs emerge in religious rituals and community traditions that can be actively and harmoniously encountered in everyday life. This has led to Bali garnering global attention due to its strong and balanced blend of cultural, customary, and religious life. Bali's regional excellence and potential have a major influence on the tourism industry, and Bali's spiritual life is one of its attractions, both in the form of performing arts and architectural heritage, as well as the behavior of its people. In the 1970s, Picard introduced Bali as a tourist attraction, building on a special message he received in 1960, recognizing the tourism industry as a key driver of economic development, particularly for Third World countries rich in natural and cultural resources (Picard, 2008). Since then, Bali has preferred 'cultural tourism' as a strategy to maintain Balinese identity from the strong flow of Western influence, both through tourism and mass media (Putra, 2011; Suwita, 2019). The issue of globalization that is inseparable from external influences has increasingly encouraged elite forces to urge Balinese people not to 'lose their Balineseness', meaning to remain steadfast in upholding Balinese religion, customs, and culture.

After experiencing a downturn due to the Bali Bombings I and II, the Balinese people, who had always viewed their "paradise" island as a safe, beautiful, and comfortable place, were finally forced to move forward and rise again. According to Allen, P., and Palermo, C. (2005: 1), this became a defining moment for many Balinese people to reflect on themselves, namely the self-awareness that they must have made a big mistake that caused a terrible disaster and brought destruction and imbalance to the island. At a time when the Balinese people faced despair and uncertainty about their future, they found solace in the traditional Hindu values rooted in culture and religion, which enabled them to rebuild a harmonious order that united humanity with the entire universe. This led to the emergence of a discourse known as "Ngiring sareng-sareng ngerajegan jagat Baline" or "let's together maintain the identity of Bali" (Karuni & Suardana, 2018).

Globalization, an evil force, is beginning to undermine the Balinese people's traditions and ancestral cultural heritage. *Ajeg Bali*, which is not far from the issues of modernization and globalization, has caused the Balinese people to experience great and complex socio-cultural changes and threatens their identity (Atmadja & Dewi, 2019). However, some argue that the Balinese Hindu community uses *Ajeg Bali* as a custom to uphold the values and traditions of their ancestors, ensuring their survival (Miharja, 2017). Putra (2021) confirms that threats from outside Bali exist, and the discourse of *Ajeg Bali* serves as a fairly effective counter narrative. The discourse of *Ajeg Bali* has succeeded in hegemonizing Bali's conversation spaces, but unfortunately, the Balinese people are unaware that the most dangerous threat originates from within themselves. However, Putra (2008) asserts that despite *Ajeg Bali*'s initial concerns about the rise of ethnocentrism as a derivative of reform euphoria, people ultimately understood this movement as one that upholds national unity. Only ethnic identity politics, commodified by practical

political interests, actualizes Ajeg Bali. Ajeg Bali is a society that disregards tradition, fails to preserve crucial information about its historical origins, and neglects the various cultures it should preserve. Furthermore, the question addressed to the younger generation of Bali regarding their attention to ancestral heritage is considered “old-fashioned.” Will it help ward off the threats that arise? This discourse enlightened the community about the importance of safeguarding Bali in all facets of their lives, including their outlook on life, communication, attire, social interactions, and the execution of all customary and religious rituals that uphold the Balinese identity, known as taksu, which is characterized by a robust and sacred energy (Karuni & Suardana, 2018).

The idea of the strong tradition of Balinese society, coupled with the Ajeg Bali drive, which emphasizes Bali's unity and distinguishes it from other regions of Indonesia (MacRae, 2010), led me to discuss Balinese lontar. In my opinion, the Balinese people who still have a strong tradition of caring for lontar and upholding the values contained in the lontar manuscripts are one of the great hopes for serious antidotes to cultural shifts and strengthening Balinese identity. This study examines how Ajeg Bali, a Balinese society's discourse to combat globalization, is implemented through cultural preservation actions in the Dukuh Penaban Traditional Village, Karangasem, Bali.

## 2. Literature Review

The ongoing tradition of reading lontar manuscripts exemplifies the principle of Tri Hita Karana, which encompasses harmony with the divine, as evidenced by the recitation of lontar texts during Balinese Hindu ceremonies; harmony among individuals, illustrated by the formation of Mabebasan groups within each banjar, where Balinese individuals collectively learn to read lontar manuscripts to integrate the Tri Hita Karana philosophy into their social interactions; and harmony with the natural environment, as the reading of lontar manuscripts imparts teachings of love, care, and the preservation of nature, flora, and fauna, thereby fostering a balanced relationship with the ecosystem (Suci, 2019)). Examining the importance of Balinese lontar manuscripts as cultural legacy offers insights into historical and philosophical values, as well as practical measures for local cultural restoration efforts. This action entails the renewal and/or adaptation of local principles or systems to align with the conditions and requirements of contemporary society (Pilliang in Wahyuni, 2019). This circumstance requires a new perspective on these local systems. The viewpoint asserts that the rejuvenation of local culture not only safeguards existing cultural expressions but also cultivates the emergence of new significances and identities that resonate with modern circumstances. The cultural regeneration of Balinese civilization signifies a strong identity, rejuvenating the declining ancient traditions that necessitate additional attention. The primary principle established during the preparation of this rehabilitation program was that the authorities' involvement in implementing the action sought to preserve its inherent values. obtained therein. Proponents regard it as an essential measure for revitalizing spiritual activities that have waned due to industrialization. Cultural modernization fosters the rejuvenation of aspects that have been diminished by industrialization.

Balinese lontar is esteemed not only as a sacred artifact but also encapsulates the core of Hindu doctrines, illustrating the significance of literacy in multiple facets of existence, including the socio-cultural dynamics of the Balinese community (figure 1). The objective of this initiative is to motivate the Balinese Hindu community to reinvigorate the practice of revisiting Balinese lontar texts. A social movement is characterized as a loosely structured yet enduring campaign that seeks to promote social objectives, including the implementation or prevention of alterations in societal structures or values. The creation of lontar manuscripts, whether undertaken individually or collectively, serves as a medium for community building. This addresses the difficulty posed by globalization. The initiative to revisit lontar manuscripts acts as a mechanism to unify the Balinese populace, facilitating a reconnection

with their cultural heritage and its preservation, thus confronting the escalating issue of globalization. Social backup security In religious rites, the texts facilitate the reconciliation of tradition, so fostering community cohesion.

The Balinese, who value their identity via the study of lontar texts, firmly believe that this intellectual legacy will define their cultural identity in the face of increasing globalization. This aligns with the conception of Balinese identity, often shaped by religion, conventions, and culture (Picard, 1999; Putra, 2011). The tradition of reading lontar manuscripts, motivated by the desire to reinforce Balinese identity, amalgamates knowledge that cultivates wisdom for the Balinese people, enabling them to preserve their traditions and culture, which ought to be perpetuated. Consequently, identity politics possesses a constructive connotation, exemplified by the contemporary social movement focused on the reinterpretation of lontar manuscripts. This initiative represents a commitment to the preservation of cultural values intrinsic to the Balinese populace, who exhibit a robust adherence to their cultural and religious heritage, ensuring that cultural reinforcement remains vibrant and enduring (Habibi, 2017).

Considering Bali's allure to tourists and the potential complications and tensions stemming from the commercialization of Balinese traditions and culture for tourism, it is essential to understand the needs and aspirations of the Balinese populace. Pujaastawa (2017) articulated his apprehension about the growing number of facilities and the extensive opportunities presented by diverse interest groups on the island of Bali, which are critical considerations to address promptly. This is due to the inadequacy of current meso and macro-level policies in ensuring complete and genuine protection for the existence of local culture as a minority cultural group. Consequently, it is unsurprising that the Balinese populace has automatically engaged in various forms of nativistic resistance as a protective strategy for their native culture. Consequently, he advocates for a reform that integrates the Balinese principle of Tri Hita Karana. This reform would create a network of harmonious interactions among (1) humans and God (*parhyangan*), (2) humans and one another (*pawongan*), and (3) humans and the natural environment, as implemented in Balinese culture (*palemahan*).

In addition to the development of the global industry and cultural modernization, this is related to the problem of challenges to local/primordial cultural identities that no longer only arise because of personal relationships with the communities around us and with the nation state, but also with the world (Laksono, 2009). Therefore, the world problems that have penetrated into the human beings of the earth show that the challenge ultimately also comes from within each of us. This phenomenon is a threat in itself and becomes an important issue when the Balinese people who have the potential to move towards a jagadhita society, face problems in the process of forming a Balinese cultural identity that has elements of customs, culture, and religion (Putra, 2004). Putra, (2004) stated that the problems that emerged were related to customs and traditions in Bali that had existed since the 1920s between groups that were still conservative in upholding customs and traditions and aggressive groups that were ready to accept the new era. However, the tradition of reading lontar manuscripts that had been a tradition for a long time must receive important attention to restore this cultural identity.

### 3. Methods

The research is a qualitative descriptive study using ethnographic methods. Almalki in Helaluddin (2018) asserts that qualitative methods typically characterize research inductively, relying on assumptions rooted in the concept of social reality, challenging-to-measure variables, intricate interrelationships, and the gathered data offering in-depth insights from informants. In this study, the researcher conducted ethnography by establishing relationships, selecting informants, and engaging in intellectual endeavors. This involved an in-depth description of the process of re-reading the Leontar manuscript, as described by Gilbert Ryle (Geertz, 2000).

The researcher conducted this study to examine how the residents of Dukuh Penaban Traditional Village, Karangasem, perform the ritual of reading Balinese lontar manuscripts as the movement to preserve Lontar manuscripts by the Dukuh Penaban community in Karangasem, Bali. Anggito & Setiawan (2018) advocated for the use of natural settings, primary or secondary data sources, and a variety of methods for data collection in qualitative research. We can collect data through observation, interviews, and documentation (Haryono, 2020; Hennink et al., in Patton, 2011). The researcher used ethnographic notes, observations, in-depth interviews, and literature studies as data collection techniques.

There were two techniques in this study, namely data collection techniques and data analysis techniques. Data collection techniques include observation, interview, and documentation methods (Haryono, 2020; Bruna, 2022). The research was conducted in Dukuh Penaban Traditional Village, Amlapura, Karangasem Regency, Bali Province for the following reasons: (1) Dukuh Penaban Traditional Village has a Lontar Library Museum from community self-help for education programs and preservation of lontar manuscripts owned by the community itself; (2) In 2019, Dukuh Penaban Traditional Village won 1st place in the National *Pokdarwis* in the Independent category and on December 20, 2022, the Lontar Library Museum of Dukuh Penaban Traditional Village, Karangasem, received a prestigious national award, the 2022 Indonesia Museum Award, for the Inspiring Museum category; (3) The Dukuh Penaban traditional village has 313 lontar manuscripts from around 400 manuscripts owned by residents, and only 108 manuscripts have been conserved and digitized.

There were 10 informants of the research who have already experienced in guiding and facilitating the Balinese lontar preservation in Dukuh Penaban. They were the Bendesa of the Dukuh Penaban Traditional Village, the Dukuh Penaban Traditional Village Apparatus, the Coordinator and Member of the Balinese Language Care Alliance of Karangasem Regency, members of the Bebasan Lontar group (lontar manuscript readers) of Dukuh Penaban, and Penedun (writers and translators of lontar manuscripts). They were selected using the Purposive Technique, namely the technique of selecting informants by considering various criteria (Chu, et al., 2017), namely (1) the involvement of informants in the Balinese lontar literacy movement and knowledge of lontar manuscripts in Dukuh Penaban; (2) being in the Dukuh Penaban traditional village community; (3) Balinese language activists and instructors; and (4) the traditional village apparatus of Dukuh Penaban related to the lontar manuscripts and socio-cultural movements in Dukuh Penaban.

#### 4. Results

Specifically, the Bali Provincial Culture Office and Balinese cultural preservation activists often advocated for the preservation of the traditional values inherited from the Balinese people's ancestors, which are



**Figure 1:** Balinese lontar manuscripts (palm-leaf manuscripts)  
(Source: Author's Collection, May 2023)



**Figure 2:** Lontar Library Museum of Dukuh Penaban  
(Source: Author's Collection, May 2023)

preserved in the lontar medium. Lontar contains numerous records and traces of Balinese thought and civilization (see Figure 1). Many villages in Karangasem Regency have had a tradition of writing and distributing lontar for centuries. This is because lontar leaves grow abundantly on dry land, such as the Abang and Kubu areas. Experts handwrite each letter from generation to generation. In addition to being filled with ancient manuscripts, the existing lontars also serve as educational tools. In response to the Bali Provincial Culture Office's appeal, the Dukuh Penaban Village Head, who was elected following the unification of two traditional villages on February 14, 2017, along with Ida I Dewa Catra and several traditional village administrators, aspires to transform Dukuh Penaban into a tourist village, complete with an iconic lontar museum (Figure 2). Coincidentally, at that time in Karangasem Regency there was no museum. Mr. Jero Suarya (2022) said that the initial idea for establishing this museum came from a sale between him and Mr. Dewa Catra, who was very concerned about the existence of lontar manuscripts and wanted to help the community in reading, copying, and maintaining them. From several meetings at Mr. Jero's shop to serious conversations, the initiative to establish a lontar house emerged, which became the forerunner of the Dukuh Penaban lontar museum. As a *Penedun* (a copyist of lontar manuscripts in Old Javanese and Balinese script) and an expert in reading Balinese lontar manuscripts, Mr. Dewa Catra hopes that the education curriculum will include learning Balinese, including Balinese manuscript.

The Lontar Library Museum serves not only as a venue for *pasraman* (Hinduism education centre) but also as a tourist attraction showcasing the lontar collection, as well as a center for education and conservation of lontar, ensuring the preservation of knowledge and scholarship related to it (see Figure 2). The campus network, encompassing Sebelas Maret University, visited and engaged in events at the Dukuh Penaban Lontar Library Museum. The Surakarta Indonesian Institute of the Arts also visited, offering assistance through digitalization tools. These instruments presently assist the lontar clinic program at the Lontar Library Museum, where a Lontar team operates on a voluntary basis. The lontar clinic to address the problems of lontar proprietors who uphold spiritual beliefs, regard lontars as precious artifacts, and resist their preservation. Mr. Suarya (2022) clarifies the persistent concerns within Balinese society pertaining to the sanctity of lontar manuscripts, which are presently being examined at the Lontar Library Museum. Are the lontar manuscripts considered sacred? He stated that this constitutes a challenge. The community of lontar owners in Dukuh Penaban regards lontar as sacrosanct due to its status as a hereditary legacy from their deceased ancestors. The museum management intends to instruct lontar owners in the future, highlighting that lontar manuscripts are not merely religious artifacts but also necessitate preservation. A notable concern is the inability to access certain lontar collections owing to



**Figure 3:** Educational activities of the Dukuh Penaban the Lontar Library Museum  
(Source: Author's Collection, May 2023)



**Figure 4:** A Pemangku as a volunteer in the Lontar Library Museum providing a lesson to read lontar manuscripts  
(Source: Author's Collection, May 2023)

their age and deterioration. Consequently, the museum supplies human resources, specifically volunteers, to restore damaged or illegible lontar, transcribe manuscripts, and replicate fragile or deteriorated ones into new lontars.

The Lontar Library Museum of Dukuh Penaban is presently launching literacy initiatives for the community, adhering to the museum's premise that "the more Balinese who possess Lontar understand Lontar, the more enriched they will become." The museum offers Balinese language and Lontar manuscript literacy workshops free of charge to the community, as the facilities given aim to assist the Balinese community in preserving Lontar literacy tradition. A group of volunteers from the Dukuh Penaban Library Museum aids in the reading, transcription, and preservation of lontar manuscripts (see Figure 4). Notwithstanding their constrained workforce and prolonged completion durations, they have successfully garnered the community's trust. Mr. Suarya, the Operational Director of the Lontar Library Museum, indicated that a rise in guest numbers will therefore assist in covering the museum's operational and maintenance expenses through voluntary donations made by tourists during their visits. The museum administrators and the Dukuh Penaban community harbor positive anticipations for the future development of the Lontar Library Museum. Their endeavors has the capacity to influence the museum's history and stimulate future progress and innovation in Dukuh Penaban.

## 5. Discussions

For supporting the issue of Ajeg Bali, since 2018, activities to support the Balinese Regional Law No. 1 of 2018 for which the Balinese Language, Script, and Literature literacy program through the Language Month program has been regularly held every February (Putra, I.W,S & Wangsa, R.J., 2022). It has strengthened the movement to read lontar manuscripts. The government agenda is also responded by the Dukuh Penaban community. Here, there is the role of intellectual agents together with *Pedanda* as cultural who are referred to as the agents in the movement to read Balinese lontar manuscripts. It tends to be integrated. In line with this movement, the definition of culture in Balinese society through the activity of reading Balinese lontar manuscripts can be stated as more than just a massive product but rather the result of dynamic community life and an inseparable internal part of society in Bali (Dayakisni & Yuniardi, 2022). In other words, culture is a very complex idea that touches many aspects of life that become life itself. As part of cultural activities, a real movement towards the preservation of Balinese lontar, both Balinese lontar as intangible and tangible cultural heritage, has its own meaning if this activity gets the same response from its people, one of which is by reading Balinese lontar manuscripts which have many topics of discussion.

Dukuh Penaban with all its daily activities in organizing cultural activities as supporters of the lontar manuscript reading movement, shows the creativity of the agencies in democratizing the reading of sacred lontar manuscripts. Residents of Dukuh Penaban donated some of their lontar manuscripts, which now belong to the Lontar Library Museum for communal reading. This illustrates the process of desacralization of lontar manuscripts, as the act of reading lontar manuscripts engages the public and fosters a sense of belonging among the Balinese people. The Balinese people take pride in their Balinese identity when they comprehend, recognize, and experience their Balinese heritage.

The Dukuh Penaban Traditional Village community is committed to support the Balinese government in Balinese literacy and lontar preservation. Besides there was a community involvement independently, the agencies of Dukuh Penaban also collaborated with *Pedanda*, lontar conservators, philologist, and Balinese language activists to establish the Lontar Library Museum, aiming to transform it into a hub for lontar education and conservation. Lontars owned by the Dukuh Penaban Traditional Village community that were donated to the Lontar Museum are important assets for its collections, one of which is a grant from Mr. Dewa Catra. His collection, which spans over 50 years and consists of hundreds of lontars,

includes a 399-year-old one. Meanwhile, he has written more than 100 lontar manuscripts, of which around 50 are stored in his house. He has also copied more than 600 lontar manuscripts, starting in 1981, and until now has copied an average of 25 lontar manuscripts/volumes each year. Based on the outcome of the conversation with Mr. Catra, he shared information about the specific collection of the Dukuh Penaban Lontar Library Museum. The Lontar Library Museum houses manuscripts from Balinese literature, such as the *Kakawin* manuscripts, *Parwa* (prose), *Babat* (a story with historical elements), *Usada* (about medicine), and numerous other manuscripts about architecture and agriculture (known as *Sri Purana Tattwa*).

Additionally, the Lontar Library Museum of Dukuh Penaban houses various types of lontar, such as *Geguritan* (a term derived from the Old Javanese word *gurit*, meaning to write), and *Peparikan* (a concept derived from the Ramayana story, originally written in Old Javanese as *Kakawin*, then translated). Furthermore, Mr. Catra mentioned that some of the Bharatayuda manuscripts are also written in this manner, indicating their inclusion in Balinese literature. The manuscripts that are already written in Balinese contain philosophical meanings that are divine in nature, known as *Pujastawa* (Puja Astawa). In addition, these are manuscripts containing sacred mantras that are meaningful for worshipping Hyang's greatness. This *pujastawa* is a Balinese model of Weda lontar, not like the Catur Weda in India. A collection of prose story manuscripts on Balinese lontar is also in the Lontar Library Museum, such as the *Nidiatantri* story, the *Bagus Diarsih* story, and children's stories, although currently there is no place to store them.

The Dukuh Penaban community inaugurated the Lontar Library Museum and performed *pemelaspasan*, a ceremony that cleanses and purifies newly constructed or recently occupied buildings on Tuesday, April 11, 2017. Despite not having completed its construction at that time, a plan for its future stages was already in place. At that time, they named the building "Bale Sangkul Putih" to facilitate the construction of other buildings, as well as the successful implementation of lontar conservation activities and lontar reading and writing training. Suarya (2022) said Bale Sangkul Putih, the first building to be constructed, was a *pasraman* place named after the lontar *kepemangkuan Puja Sang Kul Putih*. This *pasraman* served as a learning place to enhance and improve the quality of *Pinandita/Pemangku*, Hindu religious leaders who have duties as clergy and leaders of religious ceremonies, in the Dukuh Penaban. The construction of Bale Sangkul Putih involved the empowerment of all *Pemangku/Pinandita* in Dukuh Penaban Traditional Village, beginning with the establishment of the foundation. The *Pemangku/Pinandita* in Dukuh Penaban Traditional Village, comprising thirty-eight individuals, carried out the construction of the physical building. The *Pinandita* specifically studied how to lead religious ceremonies or carry out traditional ceremonies in Bali.

Responding to the activity of reading the lontar manuscripts that community of Dukuh Penaban does regularly, in the lontar manuscripts, there is the Sangkul Putih lontar, which is the reference or SOP (standard operating procedure) of the *Pinandita*. The Sangkul Putih is a also a place for the *Pinandita* to learn reading lontar manuscripts which show the Hindus teaching, as well for common people learn the Balinese literacy in lontar. Furthermore, Mr. Suarya (2022) said that there was one *Pinandita* who had helped copying two lontar manuscripts, *Sangkul Putih* and *Kusuma Dewa*, with his own handwriting. The *Pinandita's* extraordinary contribution to the establishment of the Lontar Library Museum persisted until the emergence of the Dukuh Penaban tourist village. Since then, guests have started to visit the Lontar Library Museum. However, due to the absence of visitors during the COVID-19 pandemic for two years, the museum faced challenges in maintaining and managing the building. Mr. Suarya (2022) added that the majority of the original buildings of the Lontar Library Museum were previously occupied by individuals who held *Ngaben* ceremonies, such as *ombangan*, and could be repurposed for the Bale Panjang building. The first activities of the Lontar Library Museum took place here, followed by the development of the museum building.



The joint effort to further introduce the Dukuh Penaban with its Lontar Library Museum brought the desire to hunt for awards to get MURI records for 2 categories, namely the Most Lontar Manuscript Collectors, which was given to Mr. Dewa Catra, and community work independently by empowering its community for the Lontar Library Museum. Such achievements are such trigger to further improve the welfare of the Dukuh Penaban community, and also efforts to preserve Balinese culture to create a Balinese society that has a Balinese identity. It shows that reading the lontar manuscripts is a more strategic effort to overcome the globalization in Bali by bringing up the Balinese identity through lontar preservation.

## 6. Conclusion

Since the legitimacy of Bali Provincial Regulation No. 1 of 2018 concerning Balinese Language, Script, and Literature, the literacy movement in Balinese lontar manuscripts has increasingly strengthened its position in society. The essence contained in the Balinese lontar manuscripts then brought the community of Dukuh Penaban has actively brought Balinese language literacy to have their respective roles in educating the Balinese people. They have certain dedicated action to learn, read, and write Balinese script which makes it easier for them to understand the texts in the lontar manuscripts, and the preservation of lontar manuscripts.

Such movement in preserving Balinese lontar manuscripts carried out by the educated elites or agents in literacy movement to strengthen the literacy tradition as being promoted by Ajeg Bali, to strengthen the Balinese identity. The Lontar Library Museum in Dukuh Penaban is used to improve change, namely when the museum becomes a hub or link between the new world and the old world, with its function to change the Balinese people or preserve the Balinese people.

The Dukuh Penaban has employed their potential by empowering its community to strengthen their identity for building up the Lontar Library Museum. The research finding shows that reading the lontar manuscripts are accessible to every people anyone to read Balinese. Its development aligns with the *Ajeg Bali* campaign, which the *Pedanda* or Brahmana in Dukuh Penaban endorse. The collaborative effort to interpret this lontar document aims to reestablish Bali's collective identity. The initiative to read lontar manuscripts subsequently ignited Balinese unity, equipping the entire Balinese population to serve as agents and participants in a social movement transformation.

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