



## Melukat: purification by water

Yogi Meranggi<sup>1</sup>

### ABSTRACT

Balinese practices an ancient method to neutralize negative energies in someone's mind. the forefather passed the method from one to other generations. strongly influenced by Hinduism, it is used not only for mental wellness but also for balance spiritual life. The method is commonly referred by locals as 'Melukat'. in Hinduism literatures, such as Atharva Veda and Rig Veda, purification ritual by using water mentioned in several hymns. It aims to cleanse and purify someone from 'stain' they may obtain from a previous life, as a consequence of their actions or even other person deeds. water has power of *bhutakhas*, *chitakhas*, and *chudaakhas*, to cleanse and

neutralize sin. the suitable places for melukat are mountains, the meeting of two rivers (*campuhan*), the source of the springs, the sea or a tranquil place. Those sacred places are believed emanating positive vibe. in addition, coconut water has similar properties as holy water that may be utilized for the ritual. To maximize the result, it is suggested to conduct the ritual on certain days, which is suitable for worship. Due to its function to gain goodness and safety, then the melukat ceremony may be done not only for Hindus but also for everyone, as long as they follow the correct steps in performing the ritual.

**Keyword:** Melukat, Purification, Water

**Cite This Article:** Yogi Meranggi, Melukat; a puriicarion by water. Bali Tourism Journal (BTJ)2018, 2 (1): 6-9

### BACKGROUND

Every day in our life, we face various ups and downs that affect our emotions; elated for our work promotion, sulking from broken-hearted, or even grief upon losing someone's we love. Or else, perhaps continuous nightmare keeps haunting every night without any explainable reason. Those phenomena indeed cannot be predicted nor be avoided. If it is a wonderful joy experience, then it would not be a problem. On the other side, what if something terrible seems in a weird simultaneously come after someone? Whether you realize or not, occasionally, the emotion lingers deep down unconsciously as well as affecting how we thinking. Furthermore, slowly but sure, it reflects on how someone behaves towards other people. Imagine if such problems unconsciously change our social life in interacting with others, or to people we care.

Sorrow, depression, grief, anxiety and so forth might be causing detrimental effect if someone allows such negative energies pile up in their mind. Thus, specific treatment is compulsory to be given to ease the burden. We may visit a medical professional or a psychologist to help alleviates the burden. However, in Bali, locals have their approaches to manage it. Ancestors passed the method from one to other generations. The teaching is strongly influenced by Hinduism since it is used not only for mental wellness but also for balance spiritual life purposes. The method is well known by locals as

'Melukat'; a purification ritual by water.

### WHAT IS MELUKAT?

The ritual might sound bizarre in name as well as in its practice. Apparently, there are many versions about the word origin. Some believe the word strongly roots from 'Jawa Kuna' or old Javanese language term. According to Kamus Jawa Kuna Indonesia, *lukat* may be translated as *dihapuskan*, *dibatalkan dari kutukan* or *disucikan* (to be erased, lifted from curse or to be purified<sup>1</sup> whereas from KBBI, the term Melukat could be divided into word 'Lukat' means 'shed' with prefix 'Me' combined makes 'To Shed'.<sup>2</sup> According to Suwantana in his writing entitled *Air dan Spiritualitas*, 'Melukat' comes from the word *sulukat*. the word *su* means good while the *lukat* means sanctification. Thus *melukat* may be understand as an act of sanctification to gain positive results.<sup>3</sup>

This ceremony is a tradition of Balinese Hindu which is hereditary performs until nowadays. As the practice of spiritual, Balinese believes it as a process to eliminate or neutralize various '*klesa*' or dirtiness that exist in human beings.

*Klesa* consists of five types unholy conditions, namely *Awidya* which means the darkness of the soul due to overly pride, *Asmila* means selfish, *Raga* implies lust, *Dwesa* implies hate and vengeance, and last but not least, *Abhiniwesa* means fear. If these five things exist and dominate someone then

<sup>1</sup>PT. PLN (Persero) Area Bali Timur  
Email : [yogimeranggi@gmail.com](mailto:yogimeranggi@gmail.com)

Editor:  
Ida Bagus Ngurah Tri Pramana

Received: 15 April 2018  
Accepted: 5 May 2018  
Published: 21 May 2018



**Figure 1** 'Melukat'; a purification ritual by water<sup>4</sup>



**Figure 2** The Melukat ceremony is often performed in group and usually held in temples, spring, or sea<sup>8</sup>

indeed their life will be shrouded in darkness and tend to misbehave.<sup>5</sup>

Due to its function, to gain wellness and security, the practice does not limit to Balinese or Hindu. It may be done universally<sup>6</sup> regardless of what tribes, races, social classes as well as religions the participant come from, as long as they follow the steps in practicing the ritual.

### WATER IN SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

The next emerging question is why the ritual uses water? The typical answer is due to common usage of Water, an element on earth, that is utilized

to wash, clean and rinse any stains. However, if we dig deeper into the function of water itself, this material which composed from the ionic bond of two hydrogens and oxygen, is an object that cannot be separated from almost any living things on the earth. This liquid object is a source of life for plants, animals, and humans. As for the Balinese, they believe the water may be divided based upon the function. they divide its function into two categories. First, it has profane role, while the next type, they treat water as sacred material. Profane purpose means any activity to apply water as a material to fulfill daily human needs, such as drinking, bathing, washing, etc. While water with spiritual function, often called *Tirtha*, is used in activities related to religious practices.

Despite the term's origin, in the various manuscript of Hinduism, such as Atharva Veda and Rig Veda, purification ritual by using water as media are clearly mentioned in several hymns. It cleanses and purifies someone from 'stain' they may obtain from a previous life, as a consequence of their actions or even caused by other person deeds. In Hindu scripts, water is believed to have purification power. Water has the nature of *bhutakhas*, *chitakhas*, and *chudaakhas*, namely strength as the fundamental element, awareness, and spirituality. Water has the capability to cleanse and neutralize sin.<sup>7</sup> The practice does not mainly belong to Balinese or even Hinduism. Similar tradition has been practicing by various tribes and Religions worldwide; with their respective purposes while mostly practice for sanctification.

### WHERE TO?

Melukat may be done in several places that are considered sacred. Rig Veda mentions a place around the mountains, intersection of two rivers (*campuhan*), the springs, the sea or any peaceful place. Those places are believed to be places that are emitting positive energy.<sup>9</sup> Locals consider them as the embodiment of *tirtha amertha* or life source water, great holy water that benefits in neutralizing negative energies as well as a misdeed.<sup>10</sup>

The *Rsi* of ancient times has often used the place to meditate to find peaceful state of mind, as well as to perform activities related to the ritual devotion. Due to its function for worshiping, the area is being kept sacred for the sake to keep its purity as well as an effort of conservation. Another thing that should be keep in mind is in choosing the location to perform this ritual. The environment's condition must be take into account. It is appropriate to select an area that has unpolluted clear water, since it may affect the quality of water, while at same time



WUKU	Minggu ke - 1 14. BRESANGSA Kl. Ingor Basah Cenik BHATARA BRAHMA	Minggu ke - 2 15. PUJUT Rangdaga, Salihwadi, Basah Cenik BHATARA GUSTINA	Minggu ke - 3 16. PARANG Rangdaga, Salihwadi, Lanus BHATARA TANTRA	Minggu ke - 4 17. KRULUT Waspanganten, Kl. Sarang, Lanus BHATARA WISNU	Minggu ke - 5 18. MERAKSI Lanus BHATARA KURINGSARA	Minggu ke - 6 19. TAMBIK Salihwadi, Basah Cenik BHATARA SINIA
MINGGU Regdite מגדית Sunday Niciyobi Sing Chi Rek	Bintang CAPRICORN MAKARA RASI 21 Desember 1912 19 Januari PRANATAMANGSA KAPITU : 43 hari 22 Desember 1912 2 Februari Tahun ke-156	KAPITU 13 Muhamad 27 Cap J.G. 28 Sura 27 Sato Papel 28 Menga Kajeng 29 Ume Sri 30 Engang Mendala 31 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 14 Muhamad 28 Cap J.G. 29 Sura 28 Sato Papel 29 Menga Kajeng 30 Ume Sri 31 Engang Mendala 1 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 15 Muhamad 29 Cap J.G. 30 Sura 29 Sato Papel 30 Menga Kajeng 31 Ume Sri 1 Engang Mendala 2 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 16 Muhamad 30 Cap J.G. 31 Sura 30 Sato Papel 31 Menga Kajeng 1 Ume Sri 2 Engang Mendala 3 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 17 Muhamad 31 Cap J.G. 1 Sura 31 Sato Papel 1 Menga Kajeng 2 Ume Sri 3 Engang Mendala 4 Pang, Sri
SENIN Coma שבת Monday Getsuyobi Sing Chi Ik	Gerhana Matahari Parial 4 Januari 2011	KAPITU 14 Muhamad 28 Cap J.G. 29 Sura 28 Sato Papel 29 Menga Kajeng 30 Ume Sri 31 Engang Mendala 1 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 15 Muhamad 29 Cap J.G. 30 Sura 29 Sato Papel 30 Menga Kajeng 31 Ume Sri 1 Engang Mendala 2 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 16 Muhamad 30 Cap J.G. 31 Sura 30 Sato Papel 31 Menga Kajeng 1 Ume Sri 2 Engang Mendala 3 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 17 Muhamad 31 Cap J.G. 1 Sura 31 Sato Papel 1 Menga Kajeng 2 Ume Sri 3 Engang Mendala 4 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 18 Muhamad 1 Cap J.G. 2 Sura 1 Sato Papel 2 Menga Kajeng 3 Ume Sri 4 Engang Mendala 5 Pang, Sri
SELASA Anggara אנגגרא Tuesday Kayobi Sing Chi El	BINGKATAN : B = Baka D = Dhadhara G = Gungah J = Jumi K = Kula L = Lala M = Mungah N = Nuh P = Prah S = Saka T = Taka U = Uka W = Waka Y = Yaka Z = Zaka	KAPITU 15 Muhamad 29 Cap J.G. 30 Sura 29 Sato Papel 30 Menga Kajeng 31 Ume Sri 1 Engang Mendala 2 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 16 Muhamad 30 Cap J.G. 31 Sura 30 Sato Papel 31 Menga Kajeng 1 Ume Sri 2 Engang Mendala 3 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 17 Muhamad 31 Cap J.G. 1 Sura 31 Sato Papel 1 Menga Kajeng 2 Ume Sri 3 Engang Mendala 4 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 18 Muhamad 1 Cap J.G. 2 Sura 1 Sato Papel 2 Menga Kajeng 3 Ume Sri 4 Engang Mendala 5 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 19 Muhamad 2 Cap J.G. 3 Sura 2 Sato Papel 3 Menga Kajeng 4 Ume Sri 5 Engang Mendala 6 Pang, Sri
RABU Buda רביעי Wednesday Suiyobi Sing Chi San	<b>Selamat Tahun Baru 1 Januari 2011</b>	KAPITU 16 Muhamad 30 Cap J.G. 31 Sura 30 Sato Papel 31 Menga Kajeng 1 Ume Sri 2 Engang Mendala 3 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 17 Muhamad 31 Cap J.G. 1 Sura 31 Sato Papel 1 Menga Kajeng 2 Ume Sri 3 Engang Mendala 4 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 18 Muhamad 1 Cap J.G. 2 Sura 1 Sato Papel 2 Menga Kajeng 3 Ume Sri 4 Engang Mendala 5 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 19 Muhamad 2 Cap J.G. 3 Sura 2 Sato Papel 3 Menga Kajeng 4 Ume Sri 5 Engang Mendala 6 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 20 Muhamad 3 Cap J.G. 4 Sura 3 Sato Papel 4 Menga Kajeng 5 Ume Sri 6 Engang Mendala 7 Pang, Sri
KAMIS Wraspati אבד Thursday Mokuyobi Sing Chi She		KAPITU 17 Muhamad 31 Cap J.G. 1 Sura 31 Sato Papel 1 Menga Kajeng 2 Ume Sri 3 Engang Mendala 4 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 18 Muhamad 1 Cap J.G. 2 Sura 1 Sato Papel 2 Menga Kajeng 3 Ume Sri 4 Engang Mendala 5 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 19 Muhamad 2 Cap J.G. 3 Sura 2 Sato Papel 3 Menga Kajeng 4 Ume Sri 5 Engang Mendala 6 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 20 Muhamad 3 Cap J.G. 4 Sura 3 Sato Papel 4 Menga Kajeng 5 Ume Sri 6 Engang Mendala 7 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 21 Muhamad 4 Cap J.G. 5 Sura 4 Sato Papel 5 Menga Kajeng 6 Ume Sri 7 Engang Mendala 8 Pang, Sri
JUMAT Sukra אמרי Friday Kinyobi Sing Chi U		KAPITU 18 Muhamad 1 Cap J.G. 2 Sura 1 Sato Papel 2 Menga Kajeng 3 Ume Sri 4 Engang Mendala 5 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 19 Muhamad 2 Cap J.G. 3 Sura 2 Sato Papel 3 Menga Kajeng 4 Ume Sri 5 Engang Mendala 6 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 20 Muhamad 3 Cap J.G. 4 Sura 3 Sato Papel 4 Menga Kajeng 5 Ume Sri 6 Engang Mendala 7 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 21 Muhamad 4 Cap J.G. 5 Sura 4 Sato Papel 5 Menga Kajeng 6 Ume Sri 7 Engang Mendala 8 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 22 Muhamad 5 Cap J.G. 6 Sura 5 Sato Papel 6 Menga Kajeng 7 Ume Sri 8 Engang Mendala 9 Pang, Sri
SABTU Saniscara שבת Saturday Doyobi Sing Chi Lioek		KAPITU 19 Muhamad 2 Cap J.G. 3 Sura 2 Sato Papel 3 Menga Kajeng 4 Ume Sri 5 Engang Mendala 6 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 20 Muhamad 3 Cap J.G. 4 Sura 3 Sato Papel 4 Menga Kajeng 5 Ume Sri 6 Engang Mendala 7 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 21 Muhamad 4 Cap J.G. 5 Sura 4 Sato Papel 5 Menga Kajeng 6 Ume Sri 7 Engang Mendala 8 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 22 Muhamad 5 Cap J.G. 6 Sura 5 Sato Papel 6 Menga Kajeng 7 Ume Sri 8 Engang Mendala 9 Pang, Sri	KAPITU 23 Muhamad 6 Cap J.G. 7 Sura 6 Sato Papel 7 Menga Kajeng 8 Ume Sri 9 Engang Mendala 10 Pang, Sri
INGKEL :	SATO	MINA	MANUK	TARU	BUKU	WONG

**Figure 3** A good day can be determined by discussing with a priest or to someone who is having the competence to calculate the day based on Wewaran, sasih and pawukon system in Balinese calendar<sup>12</sup>

dirtiness or negativity will be neutralized, return to its clean, sacred state and replaced by positive energy that helps human to continue their living in harmony.

## GOOD DAY TO PERFORM THE RITUAL

In order to acquire its maximum benefit, the teaching suggests to conduct the ritual on certain days, which is suitable for worship. A good day can be determined by discussing with a priest or to someone who is having the competence to calculate the day based on *Wewaran*, *sasih* and *pawukon* system in Balinese calendar. If someone wishes to appeal for a specific intention, then the day will be counted based on the applicant's date of birth. Example of good days are during a full moon day or new moon (*tilem*), religious holidays and other good days adjusted according to Balinese calendar calculations. Usually on the day, the number of people doing the ritual will increase drastically. In well-known areas such as Tirta Empul Temple, beaches, lakes, rivers, and other temples will be flocked by people. They pray for salvation and purify themselves through melukat. In this occasion, Melukat ceremonies are often performed by schools, groups, government offices, local communities or alone.

Before the ritual begins, the participant will be asked to present an offering. The offering can be a *canang* in simplest degree, while for more luxurious offerings, *Banten* will be dedicated to the creator. It aims to ask for approval thus the ritual that will be conducted may be done without any difficulties. Albeit the offerings degree, the success rate of this ritual is not based on the type of the presented offering. The offering is adjusted according to the participant financial condition.

In massive rites or on a broader scope, for instance, a ritual for village or temple, a Priest will lead the procession of melukat or water-purifying ceremony. While for personal, it is may be conducted by the priest, or done in private. However, it is advised to ask help from a Priest since they are more well-informed about the procedures for the execution of rituals, mantras and other offerings that may be required if the engagement is made, especially with a particular purpose.

## THE RITUAL

Before starting the ritual, the participant is advised to determine a good day to carry out the ceremony. A good day can be chosen by consulting to a priest, a competent practitioner of *wewaran* or only by following the instructions which usually listed on the Balinese calendar. Furthermore, if the

providing a sense of safety to the participant of the ritual. Since melukat is a ritual that based on faith, then things that may disturb person's psychology should be avoided.

In addition to water sources, the community also believes the ability of coconut water, which has similar properties for purgation. in *usadha taru Pramana*, it mentions that coconut water has the ability to neutralize all kinds of diseases and problems. Coconut, especially in the local language referred as *bungkak nyuh gading* philosophically held a symbol to offset the power of *sad ripu*, the six enemies to human according to the Hindu teachings. The coconut water is *sukla*, has the power of *Tirtha Mahamerta*, and the symbol of Lord Vishnu's power. Then, in *Yadnya*, coconut is always included in several rituals associated with worship, including in melukat.<sup>11</sup>

In its implementation, the Melukat ceremony is often performed in group and usually held in temples, spring, or sea. Balinese Hindus believe that by implementing this Melukat ceremony any

activity will be done at a temple or a particular place, it is recommended to contact the local *pemangku* to ensure that rituals can be performed without interrupting any ongoing activities or in future.

On the appointed day, it is essential to make sure the participant's health. Cleanse the body thoroughly and concentrate to the almighty God for a well-conducted procession sake. The priest will begin the activity by reciting a mantra to the creator by offering canang or banten. It aims to notify about the planned ceremony to the universe. Furthermore, as a request for the procession may run smoothly, and the applicant may obtain salvation as well as achieved his desire to purify themselves physically and spiritually. Then, the minister will begin to recite mantras and sprinkle holy water as a sign of early cleansing and purification.

The next phase is the priest will request to start the ritual by dipping the participant into the water or wash them in the water source. The priest will also ask the participant to wash their face, rinse their mouth and drink the holy water, then clean their whole body. It may be done without taking the clothes off. The ritual will take place approximately for 10 minutes. In the end, the priest will ask the participant to pray or meditate. Usually, the participant will be starting to feel the fresh sensation of water that drips in their skin. it slowly gives a feeling of relaxation in the body and mind. A complete resignation is a key to the ritual. After the procession is complete, the participant should try to feel any differences or changes after the ceremony. It is essential to be known; sometimes the ritual may be done more than once, depending on how long the problem lingers on someone. However, if the problem is a mild one, then the participant may feel the change instantly.

## CONCLUSION

Balinese views Melukat as method to help them purify and improving a better spiritual life. the practice has been done since ancient time and passed throughout generations, which means the

benefits are undoubtedly questioned. Scientific Research may be conducted in order to support the ritual as an alternative treatment for someone who experience uneasy feeling all the time. however, since the process require strong will and faith, some may find it is difficult to follow or understand.

## REFERENCES

1. Zoetmulder PJ., Robson SO., Darusuprpta., Suprayitna S. KAMUS JAWA KUNA – INDONESIA. Gramedia Pustaka Utama.2011.p.611-612.
2. KBBI Online. Keyword : Melukat. Available at URL : <https://kbbi.web.id/lukat>
3. Suwantana IG. Air,Tradisi, dan Industri : Air dan Spiritualitas (Pelestarian Air dari Sisi Riual Hindu di Bali).1<sup>st</sup> Ed.Tabanan : Pustaka Ekspresi.2016.p.42
4. Muriarka G. Available at URL : <http://hindualukta.blogspot.com/2015/11/pengertian-melukat-dan-asal-usulnya.html>
5. Anonymus. Upaya Pembersihan Spiritual dalam Upacara Melukat. Available at URL: <http://bali.panduanwisata.id/festival/upaya-pembersihan-spiritual-dalam-upacara-melukat/>
6. Anonymous. "MELUKAT" Untuk Pembersihan Diri. 2013. Available at URL: <http://pangpadetulus.blogspot.ru/2013/11/melukat-untuk-pembersihan-diri.html>
7. Suryadharna IGP. Air,Tradisi, dan Industri : Air dalam Kehidupan: Integrasi Bhutaakas, Chitaakhas, dan Chudaakhas.1<sup>st</sup> Ed.Tabanan : Pustaka Ekspresi.2016.p.20
8. Wayahan Blog. Available at URL : <http://wayahan.blogspot.com/2014/07/pancuran-tirta-sudamala.html>
9. Maswinara IW. VEDA SRUTI RG VEDA SAMHITA (SAKALA SAKHA) RESENSI DARI SAKALA. Surabaya : Paramita.1999.p.525-528
10. Blissful Bali Magazine. Melasti Ceremony. Vol 5. Denpasar : Dinamika Media Mandiri.2016.p17
11. Artiningrat KS. Mengenal Makna Filosofi Bungkak Nyuh Gading Dalam Hindu. MantraHindu.com. 2015. Available at URL : <http://www.mantrahindu.com/mengenal-makna-filosofi-bungkak-nyuh-gading-hindu/>
12. Padmayowana Blog. Available at URL : <http://padmayowana.blogspot.com/2014/01/wewaran-dalam-lontar-bhagawan-garga.html>



This work is licensed under  
a Creative Commons Attribution