

**CONSERVATION OF THE FOREST ECOSYSTEM BASED ON THE *MEMAREK*  
TRADITION AT MULTIRELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN BEBEKEK**

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**Abstract**

The background of this research is the existence of a link between the implementation of rituals in the *mamarek* tradition with the wisdom to preserve the environment, especially in the Bebekek forest, North Lombok Regency, Indonesia. The purpose of this study was to find a relationship between the implementation of the *memarek* tradition carried out by multiethnic and interfaith communities in Bebekek and the development of ecological wisdom with the disposition to build environmental preservation. This research is designed in the type of interpretive qualitative research using a case study model. This research data comes from the results of observations, interviews, and documentation studies. The data were analyzed through descriptive techniques through the stages of data grouping, data reduction, and data interpretation. This study resulted in three findings. *First*, the *memarek* tradition as the application of *tapsila* custom which tends to embody communicative rationality as the basis for building harmony with supernatural powers, fellow humans and the natural environment. *Second*, the implications of the *memarek* tradition through the implementation of rituals tend to build ecological awareness by applying the concept of mutual compassion which has the disposition to preserve the forest environment in Bebekek. *Third*, the *memarek* tradition which is based on a belief system indicates the operation of ecological wisdom in supporting the balance of nature. This study proposes a recommendation to preserve the *memarek* tradition because it contains the values of ecological wisdom as a supporter of ecosystem balance. The conclusion of this study is that the implementation of the tradition of *memarek* as the implementation of a belief system in supernatural powers in the Bebekek forest has important benefits in preserving ecological wisdom.

Keywords: belief system, *memarek* tradition, ritual practice, ecological wisdom,

**I. Introduction**

The *memarek* tradition is a local wisdom inherited from the ancestors of the Selelos Village community, North Lombok Regency which is still being preserved. The *memarek* tradition which is carried out through ritual practices is unique in its implementation, which involves multi-ethnic and inter-religious participants. The people who follow the *memarek* tradition consist of Sasak-Islamic, Balinese-Hindu, Sasak-Buddhist ethnic groups. People who carry out the *memarek* tradition perform rituals that are in accordance with the belief system of these community groups. The ritual is held in the Bebekek forest area on a mountain which is believed to have sacredness. The sacredness is related to the belief system that in that location it is believed that there is a supernatural power that has an influence on the lives of the people of Selelos Village and its surroundings. The supernatural power which is believed to be able to maintain its existence as long as the forest in Bebekek can be preserved. Synergize with that, referring to Sarma and Unyi (2018) that in the *manyanggar* ceremony the Kaharingan community is carried out to build a harmonious relationship with the natural environment and also with supernatural powers that affect human life.

The community groups consisting of differences, such as ethnic differences, religious differences, language differences, customs differences, and a number of other differences carry out rituals in the same place in a way that is in accordance with the belief system of these community groups. Regarding the ritual practices carried out by the participants, it is based on the belief that in the Bebekek forest area there is a magical power that can give grace according to the requests submitted by the participants. People who actively participate in the ritual implementation of the *memarek* traditions as series of the actions they take for the way to obtain an increase in the quality of life are in accordance with the prayers said during the ceremony. They perform ritual communication with supernatural powers which are believed to reside in that place which can grant the wishes of the participants. In this regard, Firmansyah (2017) stated that the Kuta traditional village community has a sacred forest which people often visit to get safety and happiness in life.

The ritual tradition which is carried out every year according to Amaq Musyanto (an informant) has a uniqueness, namely having the belief that the forest area in Bebekek must remain sustainable because it is believed to be inhabited by supernatural powers that can have an influence on the lives of people in the Seelos Village area and its surroundings. In this regard, the community carries out the ritual of a series of *memarek* traditions which are also a vehicle for preserving the forest. Ritual communication implemented by the participants who actively participated in the ritual implementation performed prayers in the forest area as a practice containing the values of social wisdom and ecological wisdom. The two wisdoms implemented in the *memarek* tradition are very important in realizing a better quality of life. People who play an active role as participants in the *memarek* tradition are very concerned about preserving the values of local wisdom as a support for a higher quality of life, both personally and communally. The social wisdom implemented by the participants in the ritual implementation of a series of *memarek* traditions tends to build social bonds among the participants with a number of different backgrounds. The participants communicate with each other, both verbally through speech acts and nonverbally which are implemented in the form of communicative actions. Mutualistic communication implemented in the *memarek* tradition positions the participants on an equal footing. The participants who have an equal position contain social energy that can guarantee the occurrence of intersubjective communication. Communication with this model represents the existence of communicative rationality if it is associated with the formulation of Habermas (2019) that communicative rationality can occur in the position of subject equality.

Ecological wisdom implemented in the *memarek* tradition is indicated by ritual practices which have implications for forest maintenance as an ecological aspect that is very beneficial for the ecosystem cycle in the Bebekek area. The participants in the implementation of the ritual rely on the belief that the forest in the Bebekek area is a sacred area that must be preserved because it is related to the supernatural powers that reside in that place. The community's belief in the supernatural power that resides in Bebekek is the basis for preserving the forest so that the relationship between supernatural forces and the surrounding community is maintained so that an ecological balance is built. The ritual practice as the embodiment of a belief system in supernatural powers which is believed to reside in the Bebekek forest area and its surroundings is used as a model for this ecological wisdom as a vehicle for preserving nature. The implementation of rituals related to forest maintenance in Bebekek has a synergy with the *tumpek wariga* ritual, as revealed by Sudarsana (2017) that in the implementation of the *tumpek wariga* ritual there are educational values in preserving the plants that are very useful for human life. This is the basis for building a harmonious relationship between humans and nature.

Departing from the above phenomenon, this research focuses on the study of the ritual practice in the series of the *memarek* traditions as a basis to embody ecological wisdom. The ritual practice as an embodiment of the belief system adopted by the participants in the *memarek* tradition has significant implications for environmental conservation, particularly with regard to preserving the Bebekek forest. Actions in preserving the forest as a public awareness that cares about the natural environment as an important factor in supporting the ecosystem in the region. In this regard, it is very necessary to conduct a study that relates the belief system of people who are in the metaphysical domain with forest conservation in the Bebekek area as a practice that applies ecological wisdom. Based on the above phenomenon, the tradition of *memarek* as an element of cultural practice has important values in building a dignified civilization. Synergizing with that, Danandjaya (2015) revealed that traditional cultural values have synergy with values that can be used for development based on Pancasila as the way of life of the Indonesian nation.

This study concentrates on three focus studies in the implementation of the *memarek* tradition that involves the active role of the participants in relation to improving the quality of life. *First*, to reveal the *memarek* tradition as the application of *tapsila* custom which tends to embody communicative rationality as the basis for building harmony with supernatural powers, fellow humans and the natural environment. *Second*, finding the implications of the *memarek* tradition through the implementation of rituals in relation to ecological actions in preserving the forest environment in Bebekek. *Third*, formulate the relationship between the implementation of the *memarek* tradition which is based on a belief system with ecological wisdom in supporting the balance of nature. The focus of the study on these three problems has links to each other that is inherent in the implementation of the ritual of a series of the *memarek* traditions. These three events are important entities in order to improve the quality of people's lives.

## II. Methods

This article is the result of research using an interpretive qualitative design. This study uses a case study model of ritual practices carried out by multiethnic and interfaith communities in the *memarek* tradition who are inclined to take actions that represent ecological wisdom. The location of this research in the Bebekek forest area, Seelos Village, Gangga District, North Lombok Regency is based on the consideration that in that place the *memarek* tradition is carried out which involves the active role of participants from multi-ethnic and inter-religious communities, namely Sasak-Islamic, Balinese-Hindu, and Sasak-Budha. The case study model in this study is in accordance with Yin (2004) that in the case study there is an opportunity to maintain holistic and meaningful characteristics in real life.

The data needed in this study were obtained through observation, documentation studies, and interviews. Observations were carried out directly by the researcher assisted by the instrument of observation data collection guidelines. Documentation data were obtained through a number of supporting documents for the *memarek* tradition related to ecological wisdom according to the research focus. Interview data were obtained by conducting direct interviews with a number of informants who were determined based on purposive techniques. The interview process was carried out by asking questions in accordance with the interview guide instruments to the informants in an unstructured depth to obtain data that truly represented actual events, both those involving ideational, action, or in the form of artifacts of civilization results related to the *memarek* tradition. Referring to Fontana and Frey (2009) that unstructured interviews provide a wider space than other types of interviews.

The data obtained in the study were analyzed through the stages of classification, reduction, and interpretation. Data classification is the process of grouping data according to the type of needs used to answer the problems in the research focus. Data reduction is a process of selecting, sorting, and focusing data according to research needs. Data interpretation is the process of interpreting data to find the meaning contained in events related to actions that represent ecological wisdom. This study tested the validity of the data by using triangulation techniques, namely triangulation of data sources and triangulation of methods. Triangulation of data sources is carried out through cross-checking the validity of the data, especially data obtained from interviews. Triangulation method was applied to obtain valid data by cross-checking the methods used for data collection, namely through observation, interviews, and document studies. The results of data analysis in this study are presented in the form of narrative text based on the results of data analysis that has been carried out.

### III. Result and Discussion

The tradition of *memarek* as a continuation of the past civilization which is actualized by the people of Selelos Village and its surroundings contains noble values that can be used as a vehicle to improve the quality of life amongst all of participants. The *memarek* tradition is a customary practice followed by people who have a number of differences, such as differences in religion, ethnicity, language, culture, and a number of other differences. The people who actively participate as participants in the *memarek* tradition consist of groups of Sasak people who embrace Islam, Balinese people who embrace Hinduism, and groups of Sasak people who embrace Buddhism. The participants carried out the *memarek* tradition in accordance with the belief system adopted by each religious group. This phenomenon represents that the participants are categorized as a plural society, which consists of a number of differences which are summarized in a traditional activity in the form of the implementation of the *memarek* tradition. Customary practices that are actualized in the *memarek* tradition which is based on a belief system contribute to the preservation of the forest ecosystem in the location where the tradition is implemented. This event is an implementation of ecological wisdom which is very important for actions to maintain the balance of nature. This phenomenon is in line with the expression of Aditya, et al. (2018) that the belief system affects people's mindset and behavior. This in the end affects the ways of environmental management and utilization.

#### **The *Memarek* Tradition as the Application of *Tapsila* Custom in Building Communicative Rationality**

Ritual practices implemented by multi-ethnic and inter-religious communities, a series of *memarek* traditions in the ecological dimension represent an awareness of the conservation of ecosystems in the Bebekek forest area. The implementation of rituals in three important places in the region in the belief system is related to the belief in supernatural powers that have an influence on people's lives in Selelos Village and its surroundings and in the ecological dimension it is interpreted as a place to maintain the existence of creatures in the forest ecosystem. In this regard, the area where the ritual is performed in the form of a forest must be preserved, otherwise the supernatural powers believed to reside in that place will no longer be able to harmonize human life in the surrounding area. Based on the narrative of Amaq Mangku Sudirman (an informant who is the leader of the ritual of the *memarek* tradition) that the supernatural powers that reside in Bebekek can do things that humans don't want. This incident has occurred when someone who did not heed the appeal of a Sasak traditional leader who

entered the place without permission ended up experiencing unwanted things. This experience is a lesson for the community not to violate the norms that have been set by indigenous peoples. In this regard, Wijarnako (2013) suggests that the traditional wisdom possessed by the community is internalized to all its members which contains wise ideas, values, attitudes, and views.

The above phenomenon implies that there is a belief system of the people of Seuelos Village and its surroundings towards the supernatural powers that reside in the Bebekek area which requires the forest as a place to reside so that its sustainability must be properly maintained. Communities that rely on belief in supernatural powers as invisible forces that can influence their lives to date adhere to customary norms that have been agreed upon by their ancestors since historical times. These customary norms are agreed upon and their existence is preserved in order to organize people's lives, both in relation to vertical aspects related to supernatural powers, with fellow humans, and with the natural environment so that they can live in harmony. The belief system that has a vertical dimension is related to the belief in supernatural powers that have an influence on people's lives, one of which is implemented through the *memarek* tradition. The horizontal dimension related to building harmonious relationships with fellow human beings also has a very close relationship with the *memarek* tradition, namely by communicating with each other in an equal position to realize social harmony. The dimensions related to maintaining a harmonious relationship with the natural environment are also related in the *memarek* tradition, especially in carrying out rituals in the Bebekek forest which is part of ecological awareness. Referring to Suja (2010) that in the end, deep ecological awareness is spiritual awareness.

First, the *memarek* tradition which is actualized by ritual activities involving multiethnic and interfaith communities represents a social awareness to acknowledge and accept the differences that exist among the participants. The elements of difference are not a barrier in realizing togetherness, but instead add to the splendor of beauty with the diversity of colors knitted in one place of togetherness. People who have a majority position in the aspect of quantity do not necessarily become the superordinate that controls other groups that are positioned as groups that have fewer numbers. They view all in the same position in order to realize success in the implementation of the ritual. People who take an active role in the *memarek* tradition make this activity a vehicle for building social bonds by means of ritual practices. People who play an active role communicate with each other, both verbally and non-verbally in order to produce success in the implementation of the ritual. Both types of communication are applied in realizing success in the implementation of this annual tradition. Referring to Kusumawati (2019) verbal communication uses words, both actualized through oral conversations and through written conversations. Verbal communication is widely used in human relations. Nonverbal communication messages conveyed through communication packaged in a form without words which in real life are used more than verbal communication.

Verbal communication that is expressed through speech made by the participants has the disposition to melt the barriers of differences that exist between the participants. At the same time, the participants also took coordinated actions regarding the obligations that must be carried out to support the success of the *memarek* tradition. The actions of the participants are also a form of non-verbal communication that represents an attempt to build emotional bonds, especially the emotion of togetherness. Multiethnic and interfaith communities who play an active role as participants in the ritual implementation of a series of *memarek* traditions, as stated by Amaq Musyanto (an informant) that the differences that exist in the participants do not become a problem when they mingle in performing rituals. The participants have a number of

differences, such as ethnicity, religion, language, customs, and other differences that do not become obstacles for them in carrying out the *memarek* tradition. They communicate with each other to jointly follow the *memarek* tradition. Communication has a very important role in melting the boundaries of differences between the participants so that they can work hand in hand to carry out the ritual. An important event in relation to the implementation of the rituals of each community group with different ethnicities and religions is their actions to work hand in hand with the aim of making the *memarek* tradition a success. This event is related to the cybernic tradition revealed by Morissan (2018) that people will continue to adapt their behavior based on feedback from other people in a relationship. In this regard, adaptation is carried out jointly by all parties.

*Second*, ecological awareness which is actualized by performing rituals by implementing a belief system to respect the supernatural powers that reside in the Bebekek forest by implying the existence of ecological wisdom. The community's belief in carrying out the ritual of a series of the *memarek* traditions is the basis for the awakening of awareness to preserve the location where the ritual is carried out because the participants who actively support the ritual believe that supernatural powers to still maintain themselves must have a suitable place, namely in the form of a forest. The people in Selelos Village have great respect for the supernatural powers that reside in Bebekek so they preserve the forest with the main aim of being able to maintain the existence of supernatural powers in that place. This phenomenon is related to the community's belief that with the preservation of the Bebekek forest, supernatural powers are still in that place. If the Bebekek forest and the surrounding area are damaged, it is believed that supernatural powers will no longer give gifts according to the request submitted. Forest conservation as a place for carrying out rituals in the *memarek* tradition is very important as a vehicle to maintain the goodness of life for the people in Selelos Village and its surroundings. With regard to the function of the forest in the lives of creatures, Nurrochmat, et al. (2014) stated that forests are very important as climate regulators that have a role in the absorption of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere through the photosynthesis process and store it in the form of biomass.

Communities who actively participate as participants in the implementation of the *memarek* tradition carry out rituals in accordance with the belief system adopted by each group, namely the Sasak-Islamic ethnic group carrying out rituals in accordance with customary traditions by using facilities laden with symbols. The ritual facilities used as offerings to supernatural powers which are believed to reside in Bebekek consist of elements of flowers, leaves and fruit which are arranged aesthetically to express beauty. They offer ritual tools accompanied by prayers containing thanks and requests according to the intentions of each participant. Amaq Mangku Sudirman (an informant and as a ritual leader) revealed that the prayers conveyed were in the form of gratitude for all the goodness of life that had been received. In addition, in the prayers, certain requests were also conveyed according to the intentions of each participant. People whose wishes are granted at the next ritual performance pay the "*saur niat*" according to their abilities. Those who pay for the "*saur niat*" take an animal, such as a goat, chicken, or other and place it in the forest where the ritual is performed. With regard to the actions of the people who perform the rituals in Bebekek, they respect the area where the ritual is carried out so that no one dares to disturb the preservation of the trees in the forest for their own benefit.

In synergy with the above, the Balinese-Hindu community groups who take an active role as participants in the *memarek* tradition also perform rituals with procedures for

implementing Balinese culture. They use ritual facilities in the form of offerings, such as the facilities used in the implementation of Hinduism in Bali. The *banten* is made of flowers, leaves, and fruits which are arranged in a aesthetic manner so as to reveal the aspect of beauty. The Balinese-Hindu community groups who participated as participants delivered offerings at three locations before entering the main venue in Bebekek. *First*, they offer offerings accompanied by prayers in a place called *tenten*. *Second*, they also offer offerings at a location that was once believed to be *wantilan*, a place where people gather to perform certain activities. *Third*, they offer it in a place that was previously believed to be a *bencingah*, namely a field area for carrying out certain activities. The *banten* which is used as a ritual is offered at Bebekek next to the location of the ritual implementation of the Sasak-Islamic community group. All places to offer offerings of the Balinese-Hindu community are in the form of forests. They believe that the forest is a place of supernatural powers so that its existence must be purified. This ritual practice has implications for forest maintenance because in their belief system there is a supernatural power that resides in that place. This action is the basis for building attitudes that respect the forest environment as an implementation of ecological wisdom. Synergize with it, Angin, et al. (2020) revealed that the Watowara Village community carried out rituals in order to preserve the forest as a guardian of the ecosystem balance related to awareness of respecting ancestors.

Rituals are carried out by the Sasak-Buddhist community groups in almost the same way as the procedures for performing worship with facilities adapted to the traditions they have carried out, such as those inherited from their ancestors. Their ritual facilities also consist of elements in the form of flowers, leaves, and fruit which are arranged aesthetically so as to show beauty. They carry out rituals at Bebekek, which is the place where the rituals of the Sasak-Islamic and Balinese-Hindu community groups are performed. The ritual action of the Buddhist group also implies a concern for the environment around the Bebekek forest. They also do not dare to take the wood in the forest because it is related to preserving the forest as a place to pay homage to the supernatural powers that are believed to reside in that location. Preservation of the forest as an act to respect the supernatural powers that reside in that place because in their belief system they also believe that these supernatural powers can have an influence on their lives. In this regard, Humaedi, et al. (2014) suggested that forest conservation is an expression of balance in addition to being oriented towards meeting the needs of life in the Tau Taa Vana community.

The *memarek* tradition which is actualized through rituals performed by the Sasak-Islamic, Balinese-Hindu, and Sasak-Buddhist community groups is based on a belief system that in the Bebekek forest area and its surroundings there are supernatural forces that can influence their lives. The ritual actions they carry out as an ideology that grows from within as cultural awareness which involves three groups of followers which involve different religions to carry out ritual practices. Ritual practices that are actualized, such as Hindus have links to procedures in religious practice through ritual means that are used as symbolic communication media. The ritual practices carried out by three groups of followers of different religions are aimed at the rulers of supernatural powers who reside in Bebekek in an immanent dimension as an ecological awareness to always maintain and preserve the Bebekek forest and its surroundings. In this regard, the implication of a belief system in the implementation of rituals is to realize a caring attitude towards environmental sustainability which is part of ecological wisdom. This phenomenon is in synergy with the ecological wisdom expressed by Swandi (2017) that the *palemahan* concept is a form of integration of Balinese society with nature. Balinese people according to this concept embody complete unity in peace and happiness, both physically and

spiritually. In this regard, Balinese people always cannot be separated from their ecological environment.

The ecological wisdom applied by interethnic and interfaith communities represents an attitude of concern for the environment which is based on a belief system strengthened by *awik-awik*, namely the rules that have been agreed upon by the Selelos Village community which regulates the actions of each community member to create social order. The *awik-awik* has become a guide in behavior, including in preserving the forest so that its existence can be preserved. The synergy between the belief system and the *awik-awik* that is constructed by the community becomes a reinforcement in maintaining forest sustainability which has implications for the preservation of forest ecosystems which have a positive influence on the life cycle in the Bebekek and surrounding areas. The *awik-awik* which was constructed during the historical period by the predecessors of the Selelos Village community are still firmly held and used as guidelines for behavior. This *awik-awik* in Balinese life is called *awig-awig* which is also used as a guide to act in realizing the orderliness of social life. In synergy with that, Widyastini and Dharmawan (2013) suggest that *awig-awig* is a local rule that regulates the system of human behavior in people's lives. The *awig-awig* is a form of control so that the agreed values and norms can create a harmonious life.

Community actions in preserving the forest are the determinants of the biological and non-biological cycles in the Bebekek area. The biological dimension is concerned with maintaining the quality of life of individuals in the community, the animals that live in forest areas, and the plants that are the main components of life producers. Strength in sustaining sustainability has the potential to maintain a life cycle that will become the basis for realizing the next life balance system. Success in protecting the forest is highly dependent on the active role of the community in Selelos Village and its surroundings. In synergy with that, Damayatanti (2011) revealed that success in managing forests is largely determined by the joint participation of the community.

The *memarek* tradition which is carried out through ritualistic practices by the Sasak-Islamic, Balinese-Hindu, and Sasak-Buddhist communities represents local wisdom that has two aspects of action, namely social wisdom and ecological wisdom. The social wisdom is part of the public awareness system to maintain good relations with each other to realize social harmony as a local knowledge system that has been applied since historical times. The ecological wisdom is related to the maintenance of the surrounding environment as a natural element that supports the ecosystem cycle in the Bebekek area. This event implies social action to preserve the ecosystem. The forest ecosystem cycle according to Amaq Mangku Sudirman (an informant) also involves water sources in North Lombok and its surroundings. This is because forests are able to regulate the water cycle. In the rainy season, which has high rainfall, the plants in the forest can absorb it and in the dry season it can be removed so that the rivers can continue to drain their water. The water cycle is very important for people's lives in the North Lombok region. This is in line with the statement of Samsul, et al. (2019) that the wider the forest, the availability of water in the dry season increases.

### **The Memarek Tradition as a Basis for Building Ecological Awareness in Preserving the Forest Environment of Bebekek**

The *memarek* tradition as a continuation of the noble values of the legacy of past civilizations in the Selelos Village community is actualized through ritual activities in which it involves a mutualistic communication process, both internally among the same group and with



other groups involved in these activities. Multiethnic and interfaith communities that play an active role as participants in the *memarek* tradition involve verbal communication and non-verbal communication in the form of meaningful social actions. *First*, verbal communication is in accordance with the results of observations in the field which is implemented in the implementation of the *memarek* tradition in the form of speech starting from the beginning of the activity until the end of the activity. The participants who take an active role in the implementation of the ritual communicate orally with each other starting from planning activities, namely through meetings with traditional leaders to decide on auspicious days, communicating the results of the meeting to the community, the ritual preparation process, the peak of ritual activities, and until the end of the ritual implementation. The communication through this speech act is more informal in nature, which has become a tradition since the past, that in conveying messages related to the implementation of the *memarek* tradition, it tends to be done by word of mouth directly. The developments in the field of telecommunications equipment, in particular the increasingly widespread use of cellular phones, have made it easier to convey messages related to the *memarek* tradition. The cell phones that are present in the lives of the people of Seelos Village are very helpful in accelerating the verbal communication process that is informally carried out by the community for the delivery of important messages. This reinforces Ginting's (2019) statement that cell phones have an important role as a communication tool in human life and also have other benefits, such as improving social, economic, and political conditions.

The annual ritual tradition carried out by cross-ethnic and inter-religious communities in the *memarek* tradition also implies involvement in the ecological aspect. This phenomenon is indicated by the efforts to preserve the environment in the Bebekek area where the *memarek* ceremony and surrounding areas are being held. People in Seelos Village and its surroundings are still preserving the forest around the place of the ceremony because it is believed that the area has spiritual energy which is based on the belief system of the local community. People who rely on the belief in the existence of supernatural powers in Bebekek always preserve the forest in order to make the place sacred from disturbances by irresponsible people who have bad intentions to damage the forest ecosystem in the Bebekek area. Synergizing with that, Putri (2015) revealed that supernatural powers in the Bayung Gede community belief system has the value of ecological wisdom that can maintain forest ecosystems that are beneficial to human life.

*Second*, communication in the form of actions that operate in the *memarek* tradition is actualized through meaningful activities carried out by each religion in order to make the ritual implementation a success. Each group of religious adherents, namely Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, carries out rituals in accordance with procedures related to their belief system. Sasak-Islamic community groups carry out rituals using symbols related to the implementation of the *adat tradisional* (customs). These symbols are used in ritual facilities as well as in procedures for presenting rituals. The ritual facilities used by the Sasak-Islamic community are in the form of an arrangement of materials consisting of leaves, fruits, and a number of agricultural crops as symbols that are aesthetically arranged that have important meanings related to their belief system. Analogous to that, the ritual process also has standard procedures, starting from leaving Amaq Mangku Sudirman's house (as the ritual leader) to the research location in Bebekek. Amaq Mangku Sudirman on his way to Bebekek was in the front row to lead all participants towards the ritual location in Bebekek. The position of traditional leaders who are in the front row indicates a synergy with the statement of Rostiyati (2009) that traditional leaders have always been role models in regulating and maintaining traditional values adopted by the community.

The communication that is actualized by the participants in a series of *memarek* traditions has very important specifications in realizing social harmony. The communication is characterized by the positioning of the actors in an equal position. Community groups consisting of a number of differences are able to interpret these differences as elements that build splendor in the frame of togetherness. The Sasak ethnic group in terms of quantity as the majority population in Lombok does not necessarily become the superordinate, and on the other hand the Hindu ethnic group in terms of numbers as a minority group is not positioned as subordinate. The equality of these actors has implications for harmonious social relations. The communication that can be built, both verbally and in the form of actions, runs mutually. These conditions contain potential energy that can be activated into meaningful actions in order to create a harmonious life. Communicative actions that are actualized by each group of participants in addition to building harmony with fellow humans, also implies a tendency to build mutualistic relationships with the natural environment. In this regard, Naraswari, et al. (2021) revealed that communication is actualized in communicative actions carried out, both verbally and non-verbally involving a number of things, such as statements, requests, orders.

The actions in environmental conservation by protecting the Bebekek forest are also strengthened by customary rules. The customary community of Selelos Village prepares and stipulates regulations related to protecting the forest so as not to be disturbed by irresponsible parties, especially cutting down forest trees for certain purposes. The regulation stipulates that those who cut down forests for personal interests are subject to sanctions that they must replace the felled plants a thousand times over. The regulations only allow the felling of trees for customary purposes, ie the felled trees are used to repair damaged traditional buildings. This customary regulation is a reinforcement in forest conservation in the Selelos Village area. According to Amaq Eshar (an informant) that the Selelos Village community did not dare to cut forest trees carelessly because they were afraid of the sanctions imposed on those who violated it. The people of Selelos Village are very concerned about the preservation of the trees in the forest because there are regulations, namely *awik-awik* that regulate and at the same time the forest is very beneficial for life. The incident is an implementation of community compliance with customary regulations. In this regard, Tanjung (2021) reveals that people's awareness of obeying customary law which contains a religious-magical style with elements of religion and belief that underlies it becomes the basis for obeying it. Mulyono (2014) revealed that implementing customary law has also implemented the noble values of the Indonesian nation.

### **The Memarek Tradition as the Implementation of the Mutual Compassion Concept in Maintaining the Balance of the Forest Ecosystem**

The communities who play an active role in the implementation of the *memarek* tradition which in the ecological dimension has an act of preserving the ecosystem in the Bebekek forest area through the implementation of rituals implies the implementation of the *saling asih* (love each other) concept. They preserve the existence of the forest as a place to carry out rituals as an action that must be done because if the forest can no longer be maintained its existence then they no longer have a place to implement their belief system to respect the Supernatural powers that reside in that place. The concept of *saling asih* that underlies actions to keep forests sustainable is an ecological wisdom that is very important for the sustainability of forest ecosystems. This phenomenon was expressed by Amaq Mangku Sudirman (an informant) that humans must be able to live well in order to maintain the environment around them. In order to live well, it is necessary to have *awik-awik* as customary rules that can be followed by the

community, such as one of them in the form of customary rules that are not allowed to cut trees carelessly. This customary regulation is customary law that binds the community to always maintain the customary forest so that it is sustainable. In this regard, Maheswara, et al. (2020) argues that customary law is the traditional law of society as a manifestation of the real needs of life and as a perspective on life in the culture of the community.

Forest maintenance as an ecological wisdom applied by the Sasak indigenous people is strengthened by regulations as an important pillar in realizing an ecosystem cycle that is able to create a balance of life for living creatures. The ecosystem cycle has a mutualistic relationship with living things, especially humans, animals, and plants. Humans need a number of materials needed to support their lives from the plants in the forest analogous to that, animals also need important materials to sustain their life from the forest. On the other hand, the forest also requires a number of necessities to live from humans and animals. Referring to Suryatmojo (2006) that the forest as an element of a large ecosystem has an important meaning and role as a support for living systems because a number of important benefits can be obtained from the existence of the forest. Forests can provide benefits for the availability of water resources that are needed by humans and the environment. Forests can also absorb carbon, provide oxygen supply in the air, provide tourism services, and can also regulate the global climate.

Actions in conserving forests in Bebekek are related to the application of regulations in the form of *awik-awik* according to the expression of Putrawadi (an informant) that people from wherever they come from are prohibited from cutting down trees in the Bebekek forest. It has been stipulated in *awik-awik* that anyone who dares to cut down a tree in the Bebekek forest will be subject to a fine for paying with one goat. The more trees cut down, the bigger the penalty. If people dare cut down ten trees, they will be fined one buffalo. The rules in this *awik-awik* become guidelines for community behavior, especially in maintaining forest sustainability. Sanctions in the form of fines in the form of material imposed on people who dare to cut trees in customary forests will protect the preservation of trees in the forest so that it is hoped that their sustainability will continue to be maintained. The *awik-awik* is a normative rule that is always held by the community to act so that they do not dare to cut trees indiscriminately. They are still very obedient to uphold the *awik-awik* because the sanctions given to those who violate the *awik-awik* are not only in the form of material fines, but also have a moral impact. Referring to Rasta (2019) stated that customary sanctions aim to restore the balance that has been disturbed as a result of violations of *adat*.

The *awik-awik* owned by the people of Selelos Village have a very important role in realizing a harmonious life regarding human relations with supernatural powers, relationships with fellow humans, and the relationship between humans and the natural surroundings. Based on the expression conveyed by Putrawadi (an informant) that the people in Selelos Village and also other villages have implemented *awik-awik* which is intended to regulate people's lives so that they are harmonious. The *awik-awik* is still very much obeyed by indigenous peoples so that people can realize a harmonious life, both with aspects of supernatural powers, with fellow community members, as well as with the natural environment around them. In line with that, the Balinese people apply the *tri hita karana* as a vehicle for realizing harmony with the Supernatural powers, with fellow humans, and with the natural environment which has also been mandated in *awig-awig*, as revealed by Budiantara (2017) that in Sengkidu Manggis Village, Balinese *awig-awig* has written *tri hita karana* as a basis for behavior that can create a happy life. *Tri hita karana* is implemented in the life of the people of Sengkidu Village by applying *parahyangan* in the practice of worshipping Tri Murti (Symbol of God), in the *pawongan* aspect it

is implemented in the *sekaa* (organization), and implementation in the *palemahan* aspect by doing community service to protect the environment. Synergize with that Subagia, et al. (2016) emphasized that *tri hita karana* in the study of dialectics of natural law builds harmonious relationships between humans and *Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa* (God Almighty), harmonious relationships between humans and fellow humans, and harmonious relationships between humans and their environment.

#### IV. Conclusion

The tradition of *memarek* as a customary practice inherited by the past civilization of the Selelos Village community has a very important meaning in building a better quality of life among its participants. The *memarek* tradition which involves the active roles of three community groups, namely the Sasak-Islamic community, the Balinese-Hindu community, and the Sasak-Buddhist community conducts mutualistic communication in order to make the implementation of the tradition a success. The three community groups perform rituals of a series of *memarek* traditions in a way that is adapted to the belief system they profess. The differences that exist between them do not become an obstacle in realizing harmony in the implementation of the *memarek* tradition and at the same time harmony can be realized in everyday life. One event that is very important in relation to building harmony in activities related to the implementation of the *adat* (custom) is intersubjective communication. The participants who actively participate in ritual activities in the *memarek* tradition are in the form of awareness to understand other people in an equal position. Even though in reality the Sasak-Islamic community group in terms of numbers is the majority group, it does not make itself a superordinate. In contrast, other groups whose numbers are minorities do not become subordinate positions. They have the same view of others so that the process of communicative rationality is built. This event became the basis for building stronger social relations which in its accumulation had the disposition to create social harmony.

Ritual practices carried out by the Sasak-Islamic, Balinese-Hindu, and Sasak-Buddhist community groups in the ecological dimension tend to create awareness to maintain the Bebekek forest and its surroundings. They are very concerned about the preservation of the forest because it is believed to be the abode of the Supernatural powers that they offer rituals. They believe that the Bebekek forest is a sacred place because it is inhabited by supernatural powers that can have an influence on people's lives in Selelos Village and its surroundings. Indigenous peoples in Selelos have a regulation in the form of *awik-awik* which contains an imperative not to cut down trees in the forest carelessly. Those who cut down trees with personal interest motives are subject to sanctions for planting a thousand times the number of trees cut. The community actions to preserve the forest that have been regulated in *awik-awik* are intended to preserve the forest so that the ecosystem in the forest can run well. Forest sustainability also has a huge impact on the lives of creatures because they realize that living things in the Bebekek forest area can live depending on each other. In this regard, the *memarek* tradition as the implementation of the belief system of the Selelos Village community and the surroundings has an impact on forest sustainability as the implementation of ecological wisdom. This study recommends the importance of preserving the *memarek* tradition by always complying with health protocols during the Covid-19 pandemic because the tradition contains noble values from past civilizations that can be used to improve the quality of life by preserving ecosystems through the implementation of ecological wisdom. The implementation of ecological wisdom has the disposition to build a mutualistic relationship between the community and the surrounding environment.

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