



# Folk Belief and Magical Practices in Pancur Gading Site, Indonesia

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## Folk Belief and Magical Practices in *Pancur Gading* Site, Indonesia

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study is to reveal various magical practices as folk beliefs that increasingly exist even in a modern era at the *Pancur Gading* Site, North Sumatra, Indonesia. Through this folk belief, it has also been revealed to perform magical practices, trust in worshiped figures, the purposes of performing them, the role of the traditional healers, supernatural experts in convincing their patients, and the meaning of objects used in magical practices. The research method used a phenomenological approach to explain the socio-cultural phenomena at the research location. The research informants were 21 people. Data were analyzed using the Spradley method, namely ethnographic interview analysis, domain analysis, structural, taxonomic, and component analysis. The result shows the community believed that they could solve their life problems using *Pancur Gading* water. The religious behavior of the people who believed in the properties of *Pancur Gading* was based on the folk belief in the worshiped figures. The legend of Putri Hijau provided a conception of revered supernatural figures, including the princess known as Putri Hijau or Nini Biring, her first brother (Grandpa Naga), the second (Grandpa Cannon), her commanders, and the ancestors based on the cultural background of their respective communities. This belief was strengthened by the existence of media from supernatural experts who connect to patients. This paper is an effort to inventory the various folk beliefs and traditions related to the *Pancur Gading* Site as an intangible cultural heritage.

**Keywords:** folk beliefs; Putri Hijau; *Pancur Gading* Site; Magical Practices



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### INTRODUCTION

The folk belief as part of oral folklore is developed by the community as an inseparable part of their life (Andheska, 2018). This is because folklore collectively belongs to the group of a culture. Bascom reveals that folklore consists of religion, which describes the folk beliefs. Balys also explains that folklore consists of folk beliefs, customs, superstitions, myths, and magic. Therefore, the things related to the folklore are believed by the certain collectives. Such as material objects, both profane and sacred, are believed to have benefits for humans to fulfill all their needs. People come to a place that is believed to convey all their intentions in the hope that these intentions can be realized (Bhardwaj & Vikram, 2015; Febriana & Dharma, 2018; Wolf-Knuts, 2020).

One of the places that is believed to be effective is *Pancur Gading* site, located in Deli Tua Village, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia. In this place, people from various backgrounds, religions, cultures, or residences, come with a specific purpose and intention. At this site, it is historically believed to be a relic of Haru Kingdom, which is now also known as the 'Benteng Putri Hijau' (Green Princess Fort). *Putri Hijau*, as it is known, is one of the folk heroes that has been developed and understood in many versions, including the Malay Deli, Karo, Aceh, Alas, Simalungun version, and so on. As folktale, the story of *Putri Hijau* is an oral tradition belonging to the community (communal), originating from one area (local) and passed down informally. Based on (Purnawibowo, 2014), at this site, conservation based on local wisdom has also been carried out by planting banana trees.

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The remains of this site can be seen by the rushing water of the two showers in that place, namely 'pancuran putri' (princess shower) and 'pancuran panglima' (the commander's shower). In the past, it was believed that this place was the bathing place for *Putri Hijau* and her guards. People believe by using this water, all the problems in life they experience can be resolved immediately. Various magical practices were also held to fulfill human desires for their problems. People who came generally bring various offerings to be presented to the supernatural, and would have returned again to bring their *nadzar* (promises) to that place when their request has been fulfilled. Of course, this was done because people believed that this place not only had a useful source of water, but also inhabited by supernatural spirits who were believed to have the power to heal and fulfill human desires. This was where the supernatural experts connect the realm of the world and the supernatural. This connection created a practice of magic that often worships certain occult characters.

<sup>10</sup> *Pancur Gading* is a sacred place. A place where magic and spiritual activities take place. In this place, the myths that are believed by the local community are also maintained. People present with various life complaints, believing that there is a supernatural creature who gives spiritualism to them. The forefathers, or in anthropological terms better known as ancestors, are believed to exist, along with other invisible inhabitants. In that place, religion and magic seemed to unite.

People believe not only in their respective religions, but also for the sacred water of *Putri* (the water of *Pancuran Putri*) can be a blessing for them. So, both religious and magical practices synergized each other. For example, when Muslims visitors came, they were required to take *wudhu* (ablutions) by one of the supernatural experts who were also Muslims, the use of *Asmaul Husna's* sentences (Sudardi, 2015), a series of chapters in Al-Quran also accompany the mysticalness of this place.

Based on this background, the writers are interested in revealing more deeply about the cultural activities practiced by various ethnic groups on this site. Implementation in anthropological studies, cultural practices can be seen from the activities carried out such as religious systems, knowledge, and language, both individually and communally. Therefore, revealing the various beliefs of the people at the *Pancur Gading Site* is an important thing in the study of cultural anthropology.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Folk beliefs that have traditional as well as the local folk beliefs, include beliefs and practices, and personal features, divide two main types as a magic and experiential people's beliefs (Endraswara, 2009; Sever, 2011). Folk Belief is one part of folklore, one of which discusses about belief of supernatural (Danandjaja, 1997; Indrayatti, 2018; McDonough, 2019). Folklore is part of the culture that is owned by community group that has unique characteristics so that it can be distinguished from other groups and is passed down from generation to generation and orally. Part of Folklore is folk belief as the term to supernatural belief by the folk (Henderson, 2009; Sutarmi, 2015). *Pancur Gading* and historic *Putri Hijau* is a belief which because of its sacredness, the local people also consider it a holy or sacred place. The water is also considered sacred. Supernatural experts do not deny the existence of worship in that place, but they realize that all the activities or rituals carried out are not a form of worshiping the Creator alone. This spiritual activity is aimed at local spirits who are believed to be alive even though they are in a different dimension. This means that a dead body does not necessarily leave a living body. Their bodies are indeed placed in their respective graves, but people believe their souls are still alive and around their lives even though it is difficult to prove with the naked eye.

Magic is a system of human thought using magical powers that exist throughout the universe as a way to achieve a certain purpose (McDonough, 2019). Meanwhile, mysticism is a knowledge related to mysterious rational things. Mystical experience is a human way to achieve a certain purpose through activities that require solitude, silence, and darkness to unite with the unseen. Other studies related to folk life also focus on magical practices (Fortier & Kim, 2017; Patel, 2017; Smiljanić, 2019; Wilburn, 2018)

Magic or occult science is also defined as all human actions using the forces that exist in nature, as well as the entire complex of assumptions behind it (Koentjaraningrat, 1985). While the word mysticism which means closing the eyes or mouth, it means that mystical experience is rooted in the experience of darkness and silence (Armstrong, 2002). Mystical experience, at least to certain types - tends to be interpreted in a pantheistic sense, because mystical life is an experience of unification with the divine (Dhavamony, 1999).

*Pancur Gading* as cultural heritage has been through various studies by related institutions. <sup>21</sup> a cultural heritage must meet the standards of the heritage process (Ireland & Schofield, 2014). The significance of intangible cultural historical refers back to the wealth of expertise and capabilities this is transmitted from one era to the following ones (Petronela, 2016). *Pancur Gading* Site and historic *Putri Hijau* is a belief which because of its sacredness, the local people also consider it a holy or sacred place. The water is also considered sacred. Supernatural experts do not deny the existence of worship in that place, but they realize that all the activities or rituals carried out are not a form of worshiping the Creator alone. This spiritual activity is aimed at local spirits who are believed to be alive even though they are in a different dimension. This means that a dead body does not necessarily leave a living body. Their bodies are indeed placed in their respective graves, but people believe their souls are still alive and around their lives even though it is difficult to prove with the naked eye.

Talk or belief in the sacredness of something is in objects or instruments of religious ceremonies and in objects of the creation of religious life. The object is believed to be sacred. So, the discussion about the sacred as an element of religious life cannot be separated from the object. In religious life, there is also an attitude to make something sacred, places, books, people, certain objects, and so on. Sacred means holy (Agus, 2007).

According to Durkheim, this assumption or belief as holy comes from the subject who thinks or believes in it, not on the object that is believed to be holy. Sacred or holy is not the nature of the thing itself, but is given by humans or society who purify it to things that are purified. Therefore, holiness is the passive nature, not active, of things that are purified. Because in the English dictionary, the word 'sacral' is not known (Durkheim, 2005).

The story of *Putri Hijau* has been claimed by many people in various places, such as Deli Tua, Teluk Haru, Gayo, Silo Buntu (Sumalungun), Sei Panai and Alas. However, this story is very popular, especially in the East Coast of North Sumatra, which is directly adjacent to the Malacca Strait. However, there are at least some notes regarding the name *Putri Hijau* in several authors. This is as revealed by (Damanik, 2009) below: (1) Middendrop's work (1919), which believes that *Putri Hijau* (de Blauwe Princess) is a symbol of the Portuguese flag against Aceh in the era of Iskandar Muda; (2) Palindungan (2007) stated that *Putri Hijau* was the sister of Mukhayat Syah, the first Sultan of Aceh. *Putri Hijau* is the wife of Panglima Manang. Ginting Suka, namely Raja Haru Deli Tua, who after converting to Islam changed his name to Sultan Makmun Al Rasyd I. This opinion strengthens that *Putri Hijau* is an Acehnese; (3) Hurgronje (1985) states that *Meresah* (Mansyar Syah) is the father of Iskandar Muda, namely the result of a 'bloedschande' marriage or one clan-marriage between a man and *Putri Hijau*. *Putri Hijau* is a real character that

originates from Aceh and is very close to the period in the early formation of the Aceh Sultanate; (4) Brahmoputro (1981) reveals that Putri Hijau is a Karonese who has clan name of Sembiring Meliala. She was born with her two siblings, Dewa Naga (dragon god) and Dewa Meriam (cannon god). During her teenage years, Putri Hijau married the great king Haru Sicapah and became empress of the kingdom of Haru Sicapah. The first concept is often mentioned in the writings of Brahmoputro (1981), including in the Palapa Gadjah Mada oath. Meanwhile, the second concept is widely referred to as reports of foreign explorations in the 13-14 century such as Ma Huan and Zheng He; (5) Husny (1975) explained that Putri Hijau was the younger sister of Raja Haru, Dewa Syahdan. When a war broke out with the Kingdom of Aceh, Putri Hijau became a prisoner of Gojah Pahlawan (Commander of Aceh) and was taken to Aceh. Before landing at Tanjung Jambu Air, Aceh, a dragon attacked the Aceh fleet and took Putri Hijau; (6) The report of Ferdinand Mendes Pinto which quoted by Lukman Sinar (2006) states that the attack of the Sultan of Aceh on Haru in 1612 succeeded in seizing the kingdom of Haru and killing King Haru. Furthermore, Pinto said that Putri Hijau fled to ask for help from the Portuguese in Malacca, but was refused by the Portuguese government until finally the assistance was obtained from Johor on the condition that Putri Hijau was willing to marry the Sultan of Johor, Alauddin Riayatsyah II. Based on Pinto's report, it is known that Putri Hijau is Haru's consort, Anche (*Encik*) Sinny, the wife of Sultan Haru, Sultan Husin.

#### RESEARCH METHOD

Researcher used ethnographic research type while the approach was descriptive through phenomenological aspects. The analysis of a symptom or event was done through a phenomenological perspective, the phenomenological content analysis must be considered. (Husserl, 1982) offers phenomenology so that someone has the courage to accept what is actually seen in phenomena precisely. He uses the concept of *epoche* and *eidosis*. The concept of *epoche* leads to the meaning that the subject must let go off or confine all his personal presuppositions and beliefs and sympathy in viewing objects that point to him. Through this process the object of knowledge releases itself from the transient elements which are not essential, so that the essence of the object presents itself, called *eidosis*, which appears or constitutes itself in consciousness. That is, true knowledge is the presence of data in the mind's consciousness, not the engineering of the mind to form a theory.

Through Husserl's phenomenology, the symptoms of human daily life were explored, without considering the question of what the cause, the reality, even their appearance. So, through this approach, knowledge about the anthropological study of folk belief at Pancur Gading Site has been obtained through direct experiences of the informants from the descriptions that were described consciously, real, and as it is. Researcher, through listening and understanding, can capture how informants describe and tell their socio-cultural actions. Even though at the understanding stage, there were obstacles, but through in-depth interviews and reinterpretation of observations and recorded conversations of the informants, this effort could run smoothly.

The location and time of the study were framed in terms of the research setting. The research locations (core) were in the area of Pancur Gading site or Pe<sup>31</sup>ndian Putri Hijau site, both Pancur Gading Panglima, and Pancur Gading Putri which was in Dusun I Deli Tua Village, Namo Rambe District, Deli Serdang Regency. In addition, several areas that became research locations were the informants' houses, namely in the Patumbak area, Medan Johor, Jln. Sempurna Ujung (*Balemarojahan*), and other interviews were conducted in the Pancur Gading area.

Informants were preferred who had experience related to the problems in this study. So that in this study, the selected informants were supernatural experts in Pancur Gading, land owners at site, visitors / patients, and local government / local people, while the number of informants was 21 people. In this study, data collection techniques were used by (a) participant observation, (b) in-depth interviews and (c) document study, and (d) documentation. The authors acted as patients in the context of engaging participant observation. In-depth interviews were carried out for eight months of research by collecting interview data, various document studies correlated with historical research, and documented photos, videos, and recordings.

The data analysis used the *gradual advancement of the 12-step flow* analysis research approach by (Spradley, 1979), which starts with the ethnographic interview analysis. This analysis was carried out after the completion of the ethnographic interview. The terms of the informants' native languages were revealed in the domain and taxonomic analysis. Then, various structural and contrast questions were also asked, which could then be analyzed using component analysis. After completing these stages, the process of determining cultural themes and writing ethnography is carried out.

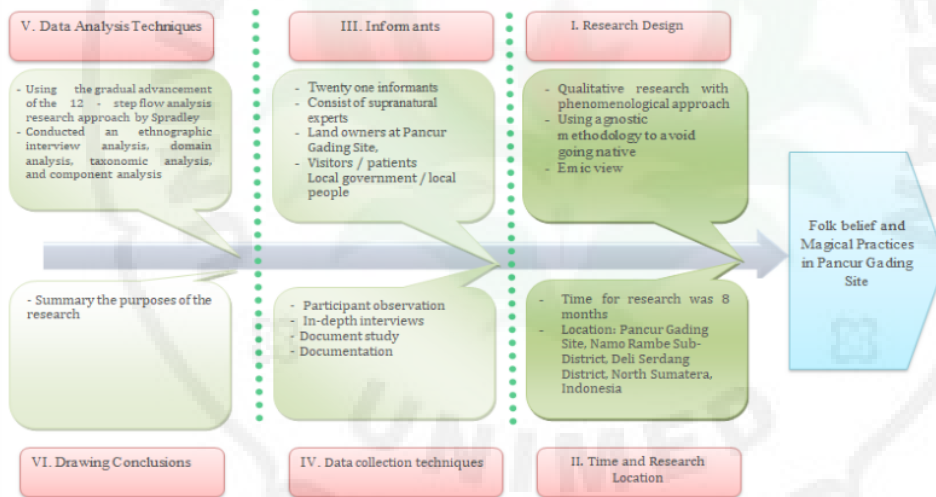
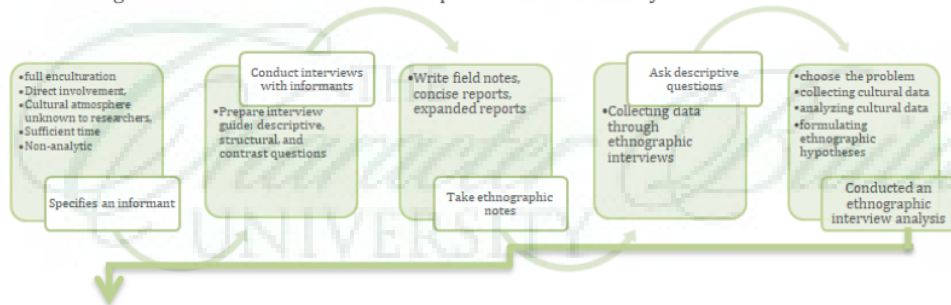


Figure 1. Fishbone of the research

The gradual advancement of the 12 - step flow used in this study are as follows:



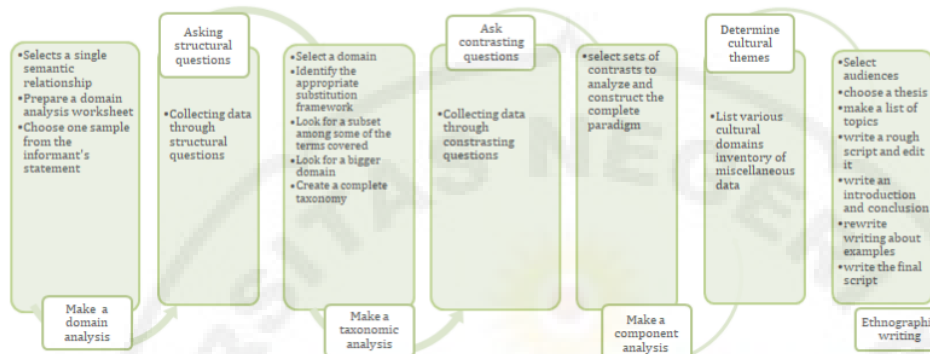


Figure 2. The Process of the Research based on the Spradley Method

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Belief in Worshipped Figures at Pancur Gading Site

The religious behavior of people who believe in the efficacy of *Pancur Gading* was based on their belief in worshiped figures. Differences in culture and religion, even the history of the spread of religion in Indonesia, have created a belief system that is apparently not only aimed at one supernatural being, namely God, but also at spirits who have certain names and roles. There are roles of other supernatural figures that were respected and worshiped by local people and visitors from various backgrounds.

The existence of the legend of Putri Hijau created a conception of worshiped supernatural figures, including the princess known as Putri Hijau or also known by the local people as 'Nenek Putri' or 'Nini Biring', Putri Hijau's first brother is called Kakek Naga, Putri Hijau's second brother is called Kakek Meriam, the commanders of Putri Hijau, and the ancestors who were worshiped according to the cultural backgrounds of their respective communities.

The origin of the belief in this supernatural figure was related to the historical legend of Putri Hijau which her existence was believed to exist. Then, the belief was transferred to the visitors with various suggestions, either through words or actions. Even one of the supernatural experts on the site said that the Acehnese should not pray in that place. If they prayed, then Nini Biring would have not approved of their prayers. This was believed because of the history of Putri Hijau, in which the King of Aceh has tarnished the Haru Kingdom and ruined the life of Putri Hijau's family.

When the supernatural experts were possessed by the spirits around the place, the manifestations are not only the supernatural figures mentioned earlier, but also as animals, such as snakes, and tigers. So that when a supernatural expert was possessed, there will be attitudes like the incarnate animal. A supernatural expert can be possessed by various spirits while treating patients, including the spirits of Karonese's ancestors, the spirits of the patient's ancestors (Javanese), snakes, tigers, and so on.

When a spirit enters the body of a supernatural expert, all the messages conveyed are adjusted to the language controlled by the spirit. When using Karonese language but the patient was not from Karonese, other supernatural experts became facilitators to communicate with the supernatural. The possessed soul would have acted according to the spirit entering the body.

Sometimes the spirit can laughed out loud at times, sometimes it can cried when remembering the patient's behavior which tends to lead to negative activities, such as gambling, cheating, temperament, and so on.

There were three dominant ethnic groups visiting Pancur Gading, namely Karonese, Javanese and Chinese. Karonese, who visited this place, generally besides calling the four existing ancestors, they also praised their ancestors by mentioning their respective names before performing the ritual. When the *ompung* (ancestor) entered the body of the supernatural expert, Karo accent and various advices were uttered. Karo people did not call the name of a supernatural expert *Guru Si Baso* (shaman) as known in Karo's term. They called the experts on their own way, such as father, brother, aunt, or mother.

The Karonese believed that there were spirits who can bring goodness and there were also those who can bring badness. These creatures were called *dibata kaci-kaci*, *jnujung* (one's protective spirit), the spirit of the ancestor and *begu jabu* (the spirit of the closest family that functions as a health provider to all family members, protectors, and family guards from all kinds of threats and evil intentions) In addition, there were also spirits that are considered dangerous, such as: *begu ganjang/mentas/sidangbela*.

The Javanese know the term of supernatural figure as 'Mbah' or 'Kyai' (Fadli, 2015). If the visitor who came was a Javanese who understood and believed in supernatural figures in their culture, then he would have called out the name of the supernatural figure he believed in. Based on the interviews, generally Javanese visitors referred to supernatural figures (sheikhs), the names of the *Wali Songo*, and *Kyai* by various names that were reluctant to be mentioned. This reluctance was because visitors were not allowed to mention the name of the supernatural figures. When performing the magical practices, the Javanese people develop beliefs in their culture, such as the provision of yellow rice (*pulut kuning*), *ingkung* chicken offerings, incense, and flowers.

Another visitor was the Chinese ethnic group, which is also closely related to syncretism (Xing & Murray, 2019). They believe in various systems of belief such as Animism, Taoism, Confucianism and Buddhism, so that in their worship practices, some supernatural figures were often worshiped. Although they did not mention the names of supernatural figures during their visit to Pancur Gading, but in front of their respective houses, Chinese groups with 'Shenism' (traditional belief of Chinese) made offerings to their traditional leaders, namely *Pe Kong* and *Datuk*. Both are supernatural beings who according to Chinese belief should be worshiped. According to (Agustrisno, 2005) "Pe' Kong" is a supernatural being which according to their belief inhabits the world above, heaven, or sky, but has a direct influence on human life in this world. It can be identified with the gods guarding the heavens. Meanwhile, *Thie Kong* is considered the king of gods or supreme gods, and *Hwan Tie Kong* is the commander of Pe' Kong who has the highest structure in Pe' Kong's society. Meanwhile 'Datuk' inhabits the underworld or the earth, and is believed to be a Muslim spirit.

Generally, Chinese Ethnic who came to *Pancur Gading* bring various offerings based on their religious beliefs and supplemented with magical objects that have been instructed by supernatural experts. They usually called supernatural experts as 'Bibi'. Candles were lit and placed on the altar, 3 sticks of *Hio* (agarwood) were burned and placed on the altar of Putri Hijau, various flowers and fresh fruits were also brought as offerings for the local ancestors.



#### The Purpose of Performing Magical Practices in Pancur Gading, Deli Tua Village, Namo Rambe District

The deceased who already have ancestral status were not just an entity through which the living people gave priority to relationships in the supernatural world, because that place was also inhabited by a large number of spirits and gods. However, it appeared that the souls of the deceased have an autonomous existence without direct contact with the Gods or spirits (Chambert-Loir, 2006).

Supernatural experts and people who came to *Pancur Gading* created a conception that the ancestors/ the spirits would have helped them in solving their life's problems. As stated by Hertz (1960) in (Chambert-Loir, 2006) that there is relationship between reciprocity, interaction, and 'exchange of services' which is formed from the relationship between living people who pray to supernatural beings such as the spirits of the ancestors. The ancestors, by definition, were benevolent: they protect their offspring, ensure their prosperity, and guide their offspring in all important works of life, in the condition that they are respected and nourished.

Belief in ancestors/spirits has been started since the 1960's. At that time people who had problems prayed in that place which gradually their prayers came true. Magical practice at night was also considered better than other options of time. This was believed because the time during the day was not the proper time to focus on praying, while the time at night was much wiser, so it was more sacred and easier to manifest. The visitors came to the place for ritual performance. Durkheim explains, rituals and worship were aimed at increasing social solidarity and eliminating concern for self-interest. Although there were still visitors who were not the patients, they performed rituals in private, such as meditating, doing *dzikir*, and praying privately. Likewise, people who carried out rituals were immersed in the common interest of achieving the expected intentions.

The purposes of performing magic practices depend on the intentions of each visitor. There were several reasons that visitors / patients come to *Pancur Gading* site, including seeking healing for their illness, expecting their businesses run well, getting a mate, opening the aura, getting magical powers or wanting the supernatural powers that are already in their body and need to be released, purifying material objects that are considered sacred, and so on.

Supernatural experts believed that all intentions conveyed should have a positive meaning, so that activities such as hurting someone through mystical powers, *penglaris* (something which made the business run well), and things that require sacrifice, should not be done. If it was done, it was believed that the person who had these bad intentions would have experienced harm. Supernatural experts were also reluctant to deliver the prayers with bad intentions to the ancestors (*Nenek Putri, Kakek Naga, and Kakek Meriam*).

#### Visitor Trusts to Supernatural Experts at *Pancur Gading* Site

States that trust is a basic part of creating a good relationship. The foundation of trust includes mutual respect for one another and accepting differences. Visitors/patients who have previously treated by one of the supernatural experts at the site generally do not want to return to another expert, even though that person was the son of the same expert. The trust which was built means that the medical case was about harmony and disharmony. Therefore, there was a belief that the

success key of the cure or treatment was the harmony created by the experts who treated the patients.

Based on the experience of the patients' above, the flow of the visitors' trusted to their supernatural experts can be drawn as the following figure.

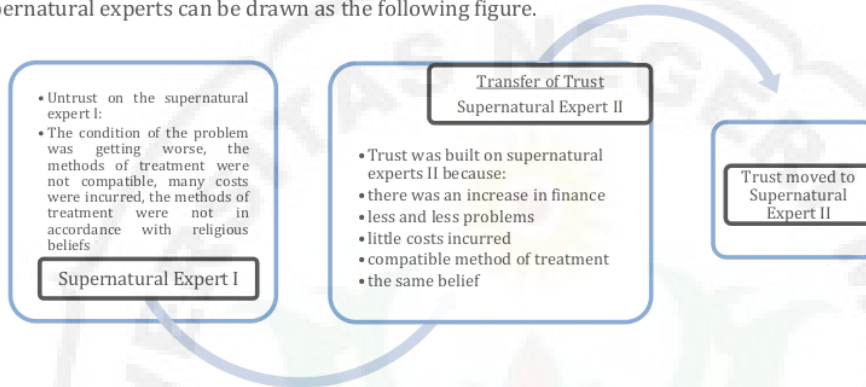


Figure 1. The flow of the selection of supernatural experts

The differences of healing/treatment method done by the two supernatural experts can be seen in the following Table.

Table 1. The Differences of Method between the supernatural experts

No	Categories	Supernatural Expert I	Supernatural Expert 2
1.	Requirement of Treatment	Using no offering	Using offering, such as flowers, cigarettes, incense, <i>bertih</i> (roasted rice), and eggs
2.	Treatment Process	Guided while bathing with prayers / spells to the divine and ancestors without offerings	Before bathing, there was a series of rituals that must be followed, sometimes not being guided in the shower because it has been directed before bathing.
3.	The connection with religion during the treatment process	The use of the Names of Allah, Qur'anic Surahs, Wali Songo's prayers	Adjusted to the patient's religious background, if the religion was Muslim, then it was instructed to read Surah Al Fatihah 3 times and prayer to the Prophet 3 times as well. Whereas in other religion, they usually immediately called their respective God.
4.	The time of treatment	Sometimes flexible, but sometimes used the determination of the good day ( <i>nogo dino</i> )	Did not specify any day.

5. The Spells	Javanese and combined with Arabic and Indonesian	Karonese language if the patient was a Karonese ethnicity, and Indonesian
6. Frequency of the Treatment	Relatively, an average of seven to nine times	Relatively, between five and six times
7. Duration of the Treatment	Relatively, between 30-60 minutes	Relatively, between 60-120 minutes
8. Duration of staying at Pancur Gading	All day long, because he lives around Pancur Putri, unless the patient calls him home	Generally, from 10:00 a.m. - evening, except for certain nights, until early morning
9. Most Crowded Time	Friday	Friday
10. The loneliest time for patients	Tuesday and Saturday	Saturday

Even though the two supernatural experts looked very different, they were both crowded with patients / visitors respectively. For patients who have strong religious teachings, were flexible in medical treatment (did not want to be bothered), they were afraid of being considered shirk. They were usually reluctant to bring ritual objects, so they often chose supernatural experts 1. But for visitors, who had strong Hindu-Buddhist cultural traditions, usually chose supernatural experts who understood about it. However, there were also people who did not believe in these sites. One community member, who lives near Pancur Gading, said he did not go to *Pancur Gading* because he "had a religion". This meaning can be understood as a manifestation of the belief of some people that the place to ask for help is in the God of each religion, not in the place and the sacred spirits.

### The Meaning of Objects Used in Magical Practices in Pancur Gading, Deli Tua Village

#### Water of Pancur Gading

Signs, symbols, myths, rituals are always present in life in any society, even in modern society (Anzali, 2017). There are profane things that are found and experienced in human life (Eliade, 2002). Some force intruding from beyond the limits of the human self-causes genuine mystical events to arise (Woehrer, 2020). However, it turns out that what is considered profane can become something sacred depending on the person who experiences it. Imagination, emotions, will, subconscious life, can emerge with symbols and myths to see what is behind the natural world (Eliade, 2002). Water becomes something that is not profane (Eliade, 1987). For managers of the site, supernatural experts, and visitors, *Pancur Gading* water was a means to carry out rituals. A myth was built in that place. Ancestors were invited to their presence through various symbols, namely incense, *bertih* (roasted rice), eggs, fragrances, flowers, which are then covered with magical rituals to help humans solve their cases. In general, water is one of the elements of nature among the other three elements: fire, wind, and earth. Water is a source for living things to continue their life. Water can be a source of blessings, but it can also be a source of chaos. Good use of water can have a positive impact on human life.

The water of *Pancur Gading* was also considered sacred or magical as Durkheim explained. There is nothing special in water, but the subject who considers it sacred constructs belief as

something holy. Humans purified it, adored it, gave it offerings, and then the object became holy and believed to be useful. According to one of the main informants, the first Pancur (fountain) was believed to provide health, while the second Pancur can provide sustenance, and the third Pancur can provide energy for both physical and mental strength, so that all patients who took a shower were encouraged to use the three showers. As previously stated by Solihat (Rudiansjah, 2015), belief about religion is a subjective human experience of something that is unseen. So, Javanese cultural background of Pak Amin influenced and constructed an object. This meaning was inseparable from the teachings of Wali Songo who suddenly appeared in his dreams, giving influence and knowledge to heal people.

Meanwhile, according to the visitors, the water of Pancur was respected, but the offerings were not placed near the water, but at each shrine / altar. The Chinese Ethnic who visited this place generally bring various offerings, such as fruits, large flowers, and incense that filling the containers, as well as roasted rice (*bertih*) and eggs.

### Offerings

Offerings or better known to the general public as *Sesajian* were defined as a sign of respect or gratitude for the owner of the intention towards all the spirits in the *Pancur Gading* location. The sign of respect was shown by giving offerings to the ancestors who are believed to be in that place and then believed to be an important part, because by giving offerings, an expectation of the completion of life's problems can be realized.

For supernatural experts who used offerings from the patients who carry them, it was a belief for them to have this supernatural power. When examined further, this tradition has developed since the days of Hinduism and Buddhism. People in that era used to worship the gods, certain spirits that were believed to bring good luck to people's lives, such as the ceremony before the harvest which was offered to *Dewi Sri* (the goddess of rice and fertility), the *Nglarung Ceremony* (throwing bad luck) into the sea, *Tepung Tawar Ceremony* as a form of gratitude, prayer, blessing and being kept away from disturbance by evil spirits.

Offerings were a sign for patients seeking blessings that are believed to be given by the ancestors of the place, namely *Putri Hijau* (*Nenek Putri*), *Mambang Yazid* (*Kakek Naga*), and *Mambang Khayali* (*Kakek Meriam*). There were various requirements for ritual objects to be carried in the healing process according to the instructions of each supernatural expert. The ritual objects were distinguished by the type of patient's complaint.

### Requirements for Ritual Items

The existence of such belief that was built by humans through ceremonial rituals raised a manifestation of human belief in the unseen. In the study of folklore as an oral word, people's beliefs were an inseparable part of ritual performance. Religious languages such as *Mantra* (spells), poetry, prayers are important part of performing rituals (Alam et al., 2020). Although in some rituals, the addition or subtraction was an indisputable part because of the acculturation and syncretism processes. However, the ritual can still exist. This is inseparable from the efforts of religious propagators such as the Wali Songo in Java who spread Islam in the midst of Javanese society who live a life of animism and dynamism. So that people can easily accept the presence of religion as an

element of their culture, Wali Songo often incorporate Islam into aspects of Javanese life, one of which was the implementation of religious rituals wrapped in magic.



Figure 3. The Activities of the Supranatural Experts, patients, and requirements for ritual items

Koentjaraningrat said that religious ceremony is always a sacred act, therefore its important components are also considered sacred. Koentjaraningrat added that there are four most important components that are interrelated in every religious ceremony, namely: the place of the ceremony, the time of the ceremony, the objects and tools for carrying out the ceremony, and the people who perform the ceremony and who lead the ceremony (Koentjaraningrat, 2009). The place of the ceremony was the area around *Pancur Gading* which was focused on 4 points, namely Sanggapura Putri, the water of Pancur Putri, Sanggapura Panglima, and the water of Pancur Panglima. The time of the ceremony was determined by each supernatural expert according to the arrival time of the visitor. Generally, on Thursday nights, full moon nights, and before Ramadan. The ceremonial objects and tools included a variety of flowers, kaffir limes, *bertih*, fragrances, eggs, incense, betel, green coconut, white/black/red rooster, the water of Pancuran, and storage containers. The people who performed the ceremony were supernatural experts in Pancur Gading. In addition, there were visitors who have supernatural abilities and were able to create an atmosphere of magical rituals.

A pair of kaffir lime or citrus hystrix (male and female) was interpreted as a ritual object that can clean or keep away from disturbance by evil spirits. For one supernatural expert, kaffir lime was one of the most important ritual objects when it came to take a bath, because kaffir lime was able to relieve fatigue in the body. Even though it was not ritualized, the medical functions and benefits of kaffir lime still work and it was believed that if the visitors made an intention, the benefits will be stronger (Hakim et al., 2019). For all patients, the expert convinced that flowers and kaffir lime were requirements so that bathing in *Pancur Gading* was more sacred and brings the manifestation of the patient's intentions. Kaffir lime has become an ingredient in magical rituals because it has been the tradition for a long time.

The use of kaffir lime can be distinguished when it comes to finding a mate. Female kaffir lime and mermaid oil are for men, while male kaffir lime and mermaid oil are for women. The two are

opposites which mean that men must find women, not the other way around. The kaffir lime which was bathed in *Pancur Gading* should not be cut lengthwise, but rather round.

*Bertih* and local chicken are believed to be the food of the ancestors, which means that if the ancestors are given food and are respected either through offerings or prayers, they will give kindness and grant all requests. However, for a supernatural expert who felt that performing ritual practices with magical objects did not produce goodness, the only creator he believed in is God, while water was His essence. Therefore, one of the supernatural experts always, in the delivery of prayers, did not leave the sentence "In the name of God (Allah)".

Various flowers, especially white flowers, were interpreted as fragrances for Putri Hijau. Supernatural experts believed that Putri Hijau liked fragrances. Flowers were gardens that adorn her house. Generally, the flowers for Sanggapura Putri were white. On the other hand, the flowers / leaves were used for ritual practice or for bathing, the leaves had a meaning, for example, the Moringa leaves were effective in cleaning oneself and eradicating the power of evil spirits. Moringa leaves were used by supernatural experts to erase the badness that was in the body or to bring out evil spirits in the patient's body. Furthermore, Moringa leaves were believed to be anti-immune so that spirits no longer approach the patient's body.

Kalinjuhang leaves were able to remove evil spirits in the body, Kesaya Silima-lima which consists of ginger, black pepper, onion, garlic, and *kencur* mixed with betel to cure illnesses. Those leaves used by spraying then on the body, mermaid oil as a fragrance for bathing, green young coconut as a personal cleanser to be consumed and offered to worshiped supernatural figures. Then there was the black taro plant, which is meant to erase black magic in the body. Black taro plant was considered effective for paralyzing the powers of spirits.

In addition, there was a potion for people who were experts in the supernatural which in Karonese is called *Perngiang-ngiani* rice which consisted of rice, brown sugar, coconut, eggs, cigarettes, matches, red / white / black rooster with the intention of preventing the expert from the patient's illness or problem which can turned on them. There were also various types of cigarettes besides 'Gudang Garam' cigarettes, such as Nipah leaf cigarettes, Cendana cigarettes, Menyan cigarettes, which were used as offerings to previous ancestors. The use of cigarettes was adapted to the life of the ancestors of their time, who certainly did not know the various cigarette brands which sold nowadays, so to respect them, visitors must provide such offerings

## CONCLUSION

The efficacy of a site in which there was a spring and its own history, turns out to be able to bring hundreds of people to the place with various purposes. Generally, visitors who came were not only once or twice, but many times. The three dominant ethnicities who had visited this place were Karonese, Javanese, and Chinese. This was a form of effort for them to make their intentions come true. *Pancur Gading* gave its own meaning to individuals who wish for its efficacy. There were a belief and suggestion that a hope is present and considered capable of giving strength.

The religious behavior of patients or visitors who believed in the efficacy of *Pancur Gading* was based on his belief in worshiped figures. As for the supernatural figures, including Putri Hijau or Grandma Putri or Nini Biring, Putri's first brother (Grandpa Dragon), Putri's second brother (Grandpa Meriam), the Princess Commander, and the ancestors who were worshiped according to the cultural background of their respective communities. When the spirits around the place possessed the intermediaries, their

incarnations were the supernatural figures and as animals, such as snakes, tigers, and tigers. So that when the intermediary was possessed, there would have been attitudes like the incarnate animal.

The purpose of performing magical practices in *Pancur Gading* included cleaning themselves, curing illnesses, making it easier to find a mate, asking for the generosity of sustenance, getting rid of supernatural powers in his body, asking for magical power for his body, warding off the evil influence of others, solving family problems, work problems or asking for a decent job, asking for strength to succeed in education, changing names children who are considered to have a heavy name, and cleaning ritual objects such as keris and stone rings.

The patterns of magical practices were ritual practices with magical objects and ritual practices without magical things. The form of ritual practice with magical objects was carried out by preparing several offerings including kaffir lime, various flowers according to problem complaints, fragrances, incense, turf, free-range chicken eggs, complete betel, free-range chicken/rooster / white chicken / black chicken / red chicken, green coconut, and a water container. Meanwhile, ritual practices without magical objects were carried out by delivering prayers and mantras to God and ancestors.

The belief system related to this site was not only seen from the loyalty of patients carrying out rituals by bringing offerings to this place, but also to individuals who were supernatural experts. Apart from that, various religions and beliefs also offered a variety of ways to fill this need. These methods depend on the socio-cultural conditions of the collective / individual. For the practice of magic to the ancestors, it was believed that offerings must be filled with various ritual objects.

Folk belief is built with the meaning as an embodiment or sign of respect for the applicants to the spirits in that place who are believed to be able to provide what humans need in the world. The meaning of offerings, water, and *Pancur Gading* can only be understood by people who believe in the power of these objects. People who felt successful in their business generally had *nadzar* (promises) that must be fulfilled, one of which was by improving the construction of *Pancur Gading*, or bringing various livestock to the place. Folk belief in the *Pancur Gading* site is evidence of intangible cultural heritage that is still preserved by people with various cultural backgrounds.

The implication of this research is to show that the reality of folk belief still exists along with the legacy of the *Pancur Gading* Site and the existence of supernatural experts who manage this site. In addition, this research can contribute to the government in managing *Pancur Gading* as a cultural heritage that can become a better potential for religious tourism, especially with the beautiful springs that provide coolness for visitors. As stated (Weng et al., 2017), it is important that people's trust is constructed into the public space for the activation of rural culture and to support development.

## SUGGESTION

Some suggestions can be conveyed in the results of this study are as follow (1) Belief in something is absolutely the choice of human life, so respect and mutual tolerance are ways of maintaining peace; (2) *Pancur Gading* site is an archaeological area that still needs a lot of excavation and research to be able to reveal the history of the Aru kingdom and the legend of Putri Hijau, so it seems that the government needs more attention to study the location; (3) Making *Pancur Gading* as an option of a religious tourism object for tourist destinations in North Sumatra. The beauty of the springs in *Pancur Gading* can provide serenity for visitors. Therefore, it is necessary for the local community and government to have good management.

#### LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

Research using the folklore concept is limited by revealing the folk belief in the *Pancur Gading* Site. It is intended that researcher can focus in-depth descriptions of folk belief in the *Pancur Gading* Site. However, this research still needs to be studied more deeply, especially in describing the other forms of folklore available on this site. Besides that, it needs in-depth analysis of the evidence of the visitors' testimony about the greatness of this site.

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