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## **Lamak : ritual objects in Bali**

Brinkgreve, L.F.

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**Author:** Brinkgreve, Francine

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## *Lamak* and their social network

### 5.1 Ni Ketut Pilik, 1988 and 2013

On the Galungan festival day of 9 December 1987 I made a long trip in the area around Ubud to photograph different village styles of *lamak*, especially of *lamak nganten*. In Banjar Kalah, a neighbourhood in the village of Peliatan, I noticed that two *lamak nganten* were similar, but differed in their form from the ordinary *lamak* in the same street. The next day, driving through Banjar Abiansemal in Lodtunduh, three kilometres south of Peliatan, I noticed a large *lamak nganten* in the same style as the ones in Peliatan, and also three ordinary *lamak* with *cili* in the same style. When afterwards I went back to the two addresses in Peliatan, I learned that both *lamak nganten* were made by the same lady, Ni Ketut Pilik, who indeed lived in Lodtunduh. I Made Suta said that he ordered his *lamak nganten*, because “if it’s made at home, it’s too much trouble, we don’t have the time and where do we get the materials?”, while I Ketut Lagas mentioned the material being so expensive in his neighbourhood. They both ordered a *lamak* of 6 metres, for Rp 2500 per metre.<sup>1</sup> They ordered it in Lodtunduh because the *tukang* (the common word for a craftsperson in Bali) in Banjar Kalah was too busy.

On 1 January 1988 I visited Ni Ketut Pilik at her home, a spacious courtyard with simple buildings behind a workshop bearing the sign ‘Modern mask maker’. Her husband, a primary school teacher in Sukawati, and her son carved and sold masks in a modern style which I had seen in shops along the same street.

Ni Ketut Pilik was a very friendly lady, then about 45 years old. According to her son, Made Nurta, she was the best known *tukang lamak* in Lodtunduh. For many years she had received orders for *lamak nganten* from fellow villagers, but for the previous three years she made them also for people from outside Lodtunduh, as friends and neighbours told others about her. She was proud that a few years earlier she was asked to make the *lamak nganten* for the main palace in Ubud, when Cokorda Putra was married. She said she learned the skill herself by copying the *lamak* she saw each Galungan in her own neighbourhood. She knew the names of motifs on the *lamak* she made, and was also very certain about the order of the motifs (discussed in Chapter 3). She not only sold *lamak nganten*, but also helped fellow *banjar* members; for the *lamak nganten* in Lodtunduh that I photographed earlier, different women each made one motif, but she was asked to make the one exclusive to a *lamak nganten*: the *cili nganten*.

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1 In 1987, the value of the rupiah was 1000 rupiah to 1.40 guilders, or €0.64. A meal of rice and side dishes was about 800 rupiah.

On the day before the following Galungan, 5 July 1988, I visited Ni Ketut Pilik again, and I made photographs of her and her work. Helped by family members, she was very busy finishing off the five orders for *lamak nganten* she had received (figs. 5.1-5.3), each 5 to 7 metres long, and also for the *sampian penjor* and the *sampian gantungan* which belong to the *lamak nganten*. Only one was an order from Lodtunduh, three were from Teges (fig. 3.6), and one from Banjar Tengah in Peliatan (fig. 5.50). Her price had gone up; she now asked Rp 3500 per metre (her profit was only Rp 500 per metre).

Twenty-five years later, on 16 October 2013, I found Ni Ketut Pilik again, in the same house in Lodtunduh. The quiet street had become a busy road. The courtyard looked more prosperous and the gateway was recently rebuilt. The mask workshop had become a tailor's workplace. When I showed Ni Ketut Pilik the photographs I took in 1988, she recognized me and was touched that I still remembered her (fig. 5.4). Together with her daughter-in-law, Ni Wayan Tari, also visible on the photographs, they immediately mentioned all the names of the motifs again, including the *kekayonan ingin-ingin*, a name I had only ever heard from her. The two ladies confirmed that the same motifs still appear on the *lamak* of Lodtunduh. Also the traditional material, *ambu* and *ron*, was still in use and certainly no *busung Sulawesi* (see Chapter 4), which was "jelek", 'bad' in her words. Although her eyes were not so sharp anymore, Ni Ketut Pilik still made *lamak nganten* when she was asked to, and still together with Wayan Tari. The price of a *lamak nganten* had risen to more than Rp 50,000 per metre.<sup>2</sup> For the upcoming Galungan they had been asked to make a small *lamak nganten* for family just up the road. When I passed Lodtunduh again a week after Galungan, I immediately recognized this *lamak nganten*, and although it was smaller than formerly and already dried out, I recognized the same motifs, the same two main representational motifs, *gunungan* and *cili* executed in exactly the same way as 25 years earlier, the only difference being some details dyed red.

2 In 2013, this was equivalent to approximately €3.50 per metre. So in 25 years the price of a *lamak* per metre has risen a little over twice.

## 5.2 *Lamak* and their social network

In the previous three chapters I concentrated on the *lamak* as ritual object, which acts as base for offerings and decoration of a shrine. I explained that the motifs and the natural materials of a *lamak* are closely related to the ritual purpose of a *lamak*, which is to attract invisible beings to the offerings, and to let the blessings from heaven come down to earth. In this way a *lamak* mediates between the worlds of the visible (*sekala*) and invisible (*niskala*) beings.

*Lamak* make the offerings work, but it is the Balinese, the visible beings, who make possible this mediating role, by making *lamak* in the first place. It is the Balinese who create them time and again, stemming from the ritual obligation to make *lamak* from natural materials. Or, if they do not have time or the natural materials available for making *lamak* themselves, they buy or order them from Balinese who are professionally involved in making them. In this chapter I will examine the social-economic network of makers, sellers and users of *lamak*. First I focus on the different categories of *lamak* makers and entrepreneurs, their interactions and transactions. In the second part of this chapter I describe some aspects of the regional diversity of *lamak* in relation to the individual creativity of the makers. And finally I investigate to what extent changes in social-economic relations are reflected in this variation of *lamak* and in their developments and changes over time.

## 5.3 *Lamak* makers and entrepreneurs

### 5.3.1 *Balinese villagers*

Many Balinese housewives are able to make palm leaf *lamak*. Making *lamak* is part of the preparations for many rituals their households are involved with, although they are not part of routine activities at home, such as preparing the daily offerings (which do not require a *lamak* or *ceniga*). Besides occasional life cycle ceremonies, such as weddings and cremations, within their own household women make *lamak* only for two major festivals, their own house temple's anniversary (*odalan*) and the Galungan-Kuningan festive period. Making *lamak*

then is part of their religious obligations towards their own deified ancestors and the deities they worship from home.

Outside their own household, Balinese women as well as men are involved with the preparation of rituals not only as religious obligation, but also because of social obligations, since they are part of several social networks. Besides their own kin group and extended families, they are members of the *banjar*, their neighbourhood association, and they belong to many (sometimes a dozen or so) congregations of different categories of communal temples. Moreover, they often have a special relationship with a former court and with the family of a priest from whom they receive the holy water needed for rituals at home. In all these networks, the preparation of rituals is a communal activity, and making *lamak* is often part of this.

Balinese women learn the skills of making *lamak* and *ceniga* from other women in the household, just as they learn how to make offerings. In Sanur, in the family where I lived, the old grandmother passed on the skills of making palm leaf artefacts (*jejaitan*) to her granddaughters, after school, simply through teaching by example. Her granddaughters tried to copy the way Nenek (grandmother) handled the sharp knife, palm leaves and small bamboo pins. The mother in the household, Ibu Made Latri, often took a bundle of palm leaves with her to the artshop where she worked, and made *jejaitan* while waiting for customers. These *lamak* were not so difficult to make, for they did not have complicated motifs. And like most Balinese housewives, they made themselves the dozens of *lamak* needed for the Galungan period.

Years later, after the marriage of her son, Ibu Made Latri still made *lamak* for Galungan, but now together with her daughter-in-law, Nyoman Murni. Being also born in Sanur, Nyoman Murni, educated by her own mother, already knew what a Galungan *lamak* in Sanur should look like. But a woman who, on marriage, has moved to a different village or another district in Bali, usually takes over the style of her new place of residence. And when Nyoman Murni's brother-in-law married, her new sister-in-law had in fact to learn from scratch how to make *lamak* and other *jejaitan*, since she grew up in Sumatra as child of transmigrants; she learned

from *lontar* leaf examples she copied herself from fresh palm leaf ones (pers. com. 20/5/2015).

Some women really enjoy doing this kind of work, which becomes not just an obligation but something of a hobby. For example a young woman in Jasan (Sebatu), in 1987 still a traditional village to the north of Ubud, said that in her household she was always the one who made the *lamak* for Galungan (pers. com. 24/2/1988), whereas the other women made the offerings. She once won second place in a *lamak* competition in the region Gianyar, for which a large *lamak* had to be completed in two hours; and once represented the PKK<sup>3</sup> of Jasan in a similar competition organized by the women's organization Dharma Wanita of her district (*kecamatan*).

When groups of women gather in a temple to prepare the offerings and ritual decorations for a ritual or festival, usually some women are especially skilful at making *lamak* with more elaborate patterns, whereas others are more talented in making other types of palm leaf objects. An example of such specialization was the preparations (4/10/1982) for a temple anniversary in Pura Puseh, Kerambitan (6/10/1982). Besides the dozens of women making offerings, a group of some 20 women in a corner of the temple courtyard was busy making the necessary decorations from palm leaves of various colours, yellow, green, and some dyed red. In one afternoon they worked on 16 *lamak* with refined, elongated *cili* patterns, the *sampian gantungan* for hanging alongside the *lamak*, and four *sampian penjor* for the *penjor* a group of men was constructing outside the temple. For the *lamak* some women were mainly cutting the leaves, while others were pinning the motifs onto the background. Among them were Dayu Komang and Dayu Made Sapri, two ladies of Brahmana descent, specialists in temple offerings (figs. 5.6-5.7). But in this group they participated not because of their knowledge of the ritual meaning of the decorations, but because of their skill in cutting the beautiful motifs; whereas another lady from the village, Sagung Putu Alit, although especially gifted in making *jejaitan* and experimenting with new palm leaf creations, did

3 PKK (Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga) is a governmental women's organisation operating at the village level.

not participate in this specialist group, because, as she explained (pers. com. 3/10/1982), the making of *lamak* was not her hobby. She knew how to do it, though, and at my request made a *lamak* for the collection of the National Museum of Ethnology<sup>4</sup> and she has participated in various contests in the making of *jejaitan*, like *lamak*, where she always won first prize. But on that day in the temple she made *sampian*, the palm leaf crowns for larger offerings, indeed also rather specialist work. Even at home, preparing for Galungan, Sagung Putu preferred to buy ready-made *lamak* of fresh palm leaves at the market (fig. 5.5),<sup>5</sup> although she stressed that her own work was much more beautiful.<sup>6</sup>

Another example of specialization was evident during the communal preparations for a large ceremony in the Pura Bale Agung in Intaran (Sanur) in 1987, where for days on end dozens of people were hard at work fashioning all the offerings and ritual decorations, among them 16 long, elaborate *lamak*. At first the organizers wanted to order those *lamak* from outside specialists, but it turned out there were enough skilled people in the village who were able to do it themselves. Three people worked on each *lamak*, one to make the base, one to cut the patterns and one to pin the patterns onto the base. Had they bought the *lamak*, they would have cost Rp 1000 per metre (pers. com. Ibu Made Latri 1/5/1987).<sup>7</sup> Usually *lamak* makers in a temple are women, but sometimes a man cuts the motifs. For example two younger brothers of Ibu Latri were good at cutting *lamak* motifs, because they were also skilled woodcarvers. My most recent example is from the Usaba Dalem (large biennial

temple festival in the Pura Dalem) in Budakeling, where members of different *banjar* (subdivision of a village) take turns in making offerings and ritual decorations. The *lamak* and the accompanying *gantung-gantungan* or *capah* were made by women at home and brought to the temple in the morning of the day of the ritual, where the women suspended them themselves from the shrines and altars (figs. 2.33 and 2.35).

But larger *lamak* for temple ceremonies are not always made by the members of the temple communities themselves. While in 1987 villagers still made the 16 long *lamak* for the ritual in the Pura Bale Agung, for another big festival in 1994 they were partly ordered outside, for Rp. 8000 per *lamak* (pers. com. Ibu Latri 9/4/94).<sup>8</sup> And when all offerings and ritual decorations for a very large temple festival in Kuta were ordered from Dayu Made Putra, a well-known offering maker and 'manager' of an offering home industry in Gria Puseh in Sanur, only the smaller *lamak* were made by people in Kuta themselves, while the longer, more elaborate ones were made in Gria Puseh and taken to Kuta the day before the ritual (pers. com. Dayu Made Putra 13/12/87). In her turn, when occasionally she cannot find the time in her offering business, she calls upon specialist *lamak* makers herself.

The *lamak* makers who because of their talent and skills make the *lamak* in a village temple, also sometimes make *lamak* for relatives and friends. Their help is called upon for larger temple festivals in family temples, or for life cycle ceremonies within a family, like weddings or death rituals. They are often not paid for their work, but receive a meal and they can expect help in return when need be, on the basis of reciprocity.

### 5.3.2 *Tukang lamak (nganten)*

In many villages a man or woman, and occasionally several, are acknowledged in the community as *tukang lamak*, a *lamak* specialist. Since long, elaborate *lamak* are required only for certain rituals and not on a regular basis, a *tukang lamak* always has other skills or sources of income as well. Besides

4 Inv. no. RV-5258-106, see Appendix 1.

5 This was described in the introduction to Chapter 2.

6 At the village market of Intaran (Sanur), this possibility of buying fresh *lamak* just before festival days did not yet exist in the 1980s. But in 2010 on the day before Galungan small fresh palm leaf *lamak* were for sale there, for only Rp. 2000 (€0.20) per piece. However, buying *lamak* was regarded by Nyoman Murni, Ibu Made Latri's daughter-in-law, as "only for lazy people". She only bought the materials for her *lamak* at the market, since, although there are still many coconut palms in her garden, according to her it was difficult to find people to climb the trees to cut the leaves.

7 This was half the price, incidentally, of the *lamak* Ni Ketut Pilik in Loddunduh, who was introduced in the beginning of this chapter, was asking in the same year.

8 This would have been approximately €4.





Figure 5.5: Sagung Putu Alit buys lamak at the market. Kerambitan, 4/10/1982.



Figure 5.6.



Figures 5.6-5.7: Women work together making lamak for an odalan in Pura Puseh, Kerambitan, 4/10/1982.

making elaborate *lamak* when needed, such skilled craftspeople often specialize also in other aspects of ritual art.

For example, I Wayan Sudarma from Banjar Telugtug, Sibetan (Karangasem), made the long, special *lamak* called *lamak catur* for the very elaborate ritual Karya Agung Petabuh Gentuh in Pura Bale Agung.<sup>9</sup> He was also a specialist in wood and stone carving, traditional architecture, cremation art, and large offerings like *pulagembal*. “The whole family helps out, we are always being asked to make the big *lamak*. The high priest (*pedanda*) from Gria Kawan Sibetan told me what motifs had to be made,” he said.<sup>10</sup> Sudarma was from an artistic family; his five brothers were also involved in ritual arts. Although he had only three years of primary school (he had to stop when Gunung Agung erupted), he had taught himself all these skills, and he was often asked to participate in the preparations of major festivals. For the Eka Dasa Rudra ritual in Pura Besakih in 1979, he was one of the craftsmen (pers. com. 24/6/89).

In the Gianyar area, it is especially the long *lamak nganten* that are often ordered from a *tukang lamak*. As discussed in previous chapters, especially in the Gianyar area, in front of the houses where a wedding has taken place in the previous year, for Galungan a large bamboo shrine is erected, called *sanggar nganten*, with a long *lamak* hanging from it. Also the *penjor* has extra decorations. At Galungan neighbours and members of the neighbourhood (*banjar*) pay a visit to these families. Usually the men of the *banjar* help erect the *sanggar nganten* and the special *penjor*, whereas the women help make the *lamak nganten*. However, many people prefer to order such special *lamak* and they give various reasons for doing so. The commonest reasons are the lack of the necessary skills for making such elaborate *lamak* up to six metres in length, the difficulty in finding the raw materials, and sometimes simply a lack of time. I Nengah Rata from Ubud Kaja, for example, ordered a *lamak nganten* for Galungan of 9 December 1987

in the village of Petulu, because his family did not know how to make one (pers. com. 29/12/1987). He chose to order in Petulu, because he had heard it was cheap there, only Rp 2000 per metre. For the same Galungan I Ketut Budiana, from Banjar Ambengan in Peliatan, bought his *lamak nganten* in Junjungan, from Bapak Senti, because he was a well-known *tukang lamak*. Budiana’s family did not make the *lamak* themselves owing to the difficulty finding the materials, and also because people in Peliatan do not much like making *lamak*. However, the young members of the family helped with the *penjor*, and the *sampian* was made at home. The *lamak*, with a length of 5.5 metres, cost Rp 2000 per metre (pers. com. 27/12/1987).

I Made Sangkil from Tebesaya also said it was easier just to buy a *lamak* since it was difficult to find the material (pers. com. 26/12/1987). He ordered from Pak Sadra in Padangtegal two *lamak nganten*, one for his fifth son and one for his relatives next door, for Rp 4000 per metre. However, he admits that when they made the *lamak* themselves for the first four sons, they were better and more complete (“*lebih lengkap*”), because they also contained the wedding *cili* (*cili nganten*) and moon motifs, that Pak Sadra does not make (see Chapter 4).

Opinions varied concerning the skills of various *tukang lamak*. The *gria* (Brahmana household) in Ubud ordered a *lamak nganten* (for Galungan on 13 May 1987) in Padangtegal, because the *tukang* there were thought to be the best. For the same Galungan, however, one of the Ubud palaces (*puri*) ordered their *lamak nganten* in Junjungan, although they agreed that it would have been better to have ordered it in Padangtegal, admitting that the *tukang lamak* there knew more about the contents of a *lamak*, one could discuss the motifs with them, and the patterns were more beautiful because the *lamak* makers were also painters (pers. com. 3/5/1987).

During the five successive Galungan of 13 May 1987, 9 December 1987, 6 July 1988, 1 February 1989 and 30 August 1989, I saw and photographed dozens of *lamak nganten* in and around Ubud and surrounding region. For many of these, I asked the owners of the *lamak* who had made them. Although these data are far from complete, since I only “covered” the *lamak nganten* visible on the main road, it appeared that a small majority of *lamak nganten* were made at home, with help from

9 This ritual was held on 22/2/1989, see also Chapter 3 (fig. 3.40).

10 *Seluruh keluarga ikut membantu, kami selalu dicari kalau dibuat lamak yang besar. Dulu Pedanda Gede Gria Kawan Sibetan kasih nama.*



family and neighbours, and sometimes under the supervision of a *tukang lamak*. Slightly less than half of them were ordered from a *tukang lamak*, most of whom were mentioned by name. But in several cases people only mentioned where the *lamak* was ordered, not the actual person who made it. I identified more than 30 different *tukang lamak* from 12 villages, most of whom I talked to. Most of them came from two villages within the administrative village of Ubud, Padangtegal to the south and Junjungan to the north.

The *tukang* from these two villages, in particular with regard to their gender, make an interesting comparison, and these are the main focus of the following section.

### 5.3.2.1 Padangtegal

During the 1980s Padangtegal was famous for its *tukang lamak*. Three *tukang lamak* lived close to one another in the same street (Jalan Hanoman). Two of them, I Made Sadra and I Gusti Putu Nonderan have already been introduced in Chapters 2 and 3. Pak Sadra (fig. 5.8) I knew already in 1983, whereas I met I Gusti Putu Nonderan, who lived opposite Pak Sadra, in December 1987 (fig. 5.9) (pers. com. 27/12/1987). A third *tukang*, Pak Tantri (pers. com. 5/5/1983), I met in 1983 when I was collecting ritual objects for the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden. All three of them were born around 1930, all three were farmers, all three started making *lamak*, just small ones, for their own families, in the 1950s. Later they began making *lamak nganten* also, in the beginning just for their own families. But because people appreciated their work and saw their *lamak nganten* in the village streets, they received increasingly more requests and orders for *lamak nganten* before the start of every Galungan period.

Whereas Pak Sadra learned the skills himself, by following what others were doing, Pak Tantri learned it from his father who was a *dalang* (wayang theatre puppeteer), and I Gusti Putu Nonderan “received inspiration” to make *lamak*, together with the arts of sculpture and carving, from the famous artist I Gusti Nyoman Lempad. He used to work together with him whenever Lempad received requests from the palaces in Ubud to prepare cremation towers and other requirements for royal death

rituals. Just as with making cremation paraphernalia, Pak Nonderan also learned the technique of making *lamak* by following the example of others. He never went to school and he called himself just a simple farmer, but he had taught himself to read and was particularly fond of *kekawin* poems. He even had a small collection of *lontar* books himself, stored in the roof of a pavilion. People often consulted him, for example, about the auspicious day (*dewasa*) for holding a particular ritual or activity (pers. com. 23/5/89).

In their turn, Pak Sadra and Pak Nonderan transferred their knowledge and skills to their sons, but they did not become *tukang lamak* like their fathers. When he was still living in Padangtegal, the son of Pak Sadra, who became a school teacher, helped his father to finish his orders for Galungan in time but afterwards he moved to Buleleng (North Bali) where he got a job. The son of Pak Nonderan, I Gusti Putu Taman, also learned to make *lamak* by helping his father cutting and pinning the motifs. After he was educated as art teacher, he started to paint *lamak* motifs on canvas, and created in this way his own modern variety of *lamak*. They were used in the family’s house temple (fig. 4.78). In 1989, 1990 and 1994 he made all the drawings in this book, based on photographs of *lamak* I had made in previous years. However, since he has a job in the office of Universitas Udayana in Denpasar, he no longer makes either real *lamak* or painted ones. When I visited the house of Gusti Putu Nonderan in 2014, I learned from Gusti Putu Taman that his father had died, at the age of 82, in September 2013 (pers. com. 20/4/2014). Nowadays in their house temple only small *lamak* or *ceniga* are used, made by his wife.

Of these three *tukang lamak*, I Gusti Putu Nonderan worked in the most traditional manner. He almost never sold *lamak nganten* by the metre, but made them at the request of family and friends. For Galungan 9 December 1987 he made a *lamak nganten* for his own house, since his son, I Gusti Putu Taman, had just married (fig. 3.3). As he used to do when he worked with I Gusti Nyoman Lempad, he still helped out in the palace when requested. For example on 5 April 1994, the Sunday before Galungan, Pak Nonderan made a *lamak nganten* for a Cokorda (prince) in Puri Saren, the main palace in Ubud. He did not sell the *lamak nganten*, for if a



Figure 5.8: I Made Sadra works on a lamak nganten. Banjar Padangtegal Kaja, Ubud, 11/5/1987.



Figure 5.9: I Gusti Putu Nonderan works on a lamak nganten. Banjar Padangtegal Kaja, Ubud, 3/4/1994.



Figure 5.10: Ni Wayan Klepon works on a lamak nganten. Banjar Junjungan, Ubud, 4/7/1988.



Figure 5.11: Ni Made Paji makes jejaitan. Banjar Junjungan, Ubud, 4/7/1988.

Cokorda makes such a request he must respond. He did not know what he might receive in return. The Cokorda himself provided the material.

Also Pak Sadra sometimes made a *lamak nganten* for family (for example on 2 May 1983, see Chapter 4 and figs. 4.1-4.2), but not for money; he did however receive meals during the two days he worked on the eight metre long *lamak nganten*.<sup>11</sup> According to his son, he was famous in Padangtegal, for he had done this work already for a long time. Orders and payment are normally per metre. Sometimes the person giving the order provided the material, but generally Pak Sadra took care of this, including it in the price. For the Galungan of 13 May 1987, Pak Sadra received three orders for *lamak* of five metres, besides making one for family (fig. 5.62). He told me that he could not make more than five *lamak* (of five metres), for otherwise the material would dry out too much. He did the cutting himself, but his family helped with the pinning. He only made *lamak nganten* to order, since most people at that time made ordinary *lamak* themselves, he said. But for a festival in the Pura Desa he did help with the long *lamak*, the women coming to him and learning from him. Of all *lamak* makers in Padangtegal, he was the best known, he claimed. The other *tukang lamak* in Padangtegal were according to him his pupils. Pak Sadra enjoyed making *lamak*, he did this after all only for a few days per year, for *odalan* (temple festivals) and for Galungan. But because he was so busy he decided to use for his own *sanggar penjor* a painted canvas *lamak* which he bought from Pak Tantri across the street. Likewise on the following Galungan of 9 December 1987 he again used this same canvas *lamak*, for he had five orders, four of five metres each and one of eight metres. The price was Rp 4000-4500 per metre. Two of these orders were for two neighbours in Tebesaya (Peliatan), family members who shared a single *sanggah* or ancestor temple, where two weddings had taken place at the one time. According to the man who ordered these *lamak*, they had chosen Pak Sadra because he was said to be good and not too expensive.

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11 Very likely the *lamak nganten* of figures 2.23 and 5.60, Galungan 21 August 1985, were also made by Pak Sadra.

For Galungan 6 July 1988 Pak Sadra received two orders, one of five metres and one even longer (fig. 5.61). For Galungan 2 February 1989 he made one *lamak nganten* for his own family, because his own son had married (fig. 3.2). The price in 1990 had risen to Rp 5500 per metre, for raw material had become increasingly expensive. He now bought the material in the market, for his own garden did not produce enough anymore.

For the Galungan in April 1994 Pak Sadra accepted no orders for *lamak nganten*, because he was too busy renovating his house temple. According to him the price had now risen to Rp 10,000 per metre.<sup>12</sup> Pak Sadra died at some time between 1994 and 2001 as a result of an accident in the ricefields. Probably the only surviving palm leaf *lamak* from his hand, two *lontar lamak* with *cili* and *kekayonan*, are in the collection of the National Museum of World Cultures in Leiden.<sup>13</sup>

The third *tukang lamak* in the same street, Pak Tantri, formerly made *lamak* only from palm leaf, just like Pak Sadra and Pak Nonderan, and still did so for his family; for the Galungan of 13 May 1987 he made a *lamak nganten* in connection with the marriage of his own son. But in the early 1970s, for the first time and for his own house temple (*sanggah*), he made a *lamak* from canvas, painted with the same motifs he used for the palm leaf *lamak*. This was such a success that he continued making these painted *lamak*, discussed later.

Pak Mider, another *tukang lamak* who lived in Padangtegal, was at least ten years older than the previous three craftsmen. He did not speak Indonesian since he never went to school. Like Pak Sadra, he was a farmer and he learned to make *lamak* just by looking at the examples along the roadside at Galungan. Like Pak Nonderan, despite his lack of formal education, he loved to join in *kekawin* singing performances, and he was regarded as a real specialist in *adat* affairs. People asked his help when they had to prepare *patulangan* (sarcophagi) for cremation ceremonies, and he could carry out small family rituals, such as a three-months ceremony (*nelu bulanin*) for little children, or small wedding ceremonies. He also made meat offerings for temple festivals. Being now too old to

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12 Approximately €5 per metre.

13 Inv. nos. RV-5258-96 and 97, see Appendix 1.

work in his rice fields, his sons took over this job, and he kept himself busy by making masks, and also *lamak* when asked to do so. For the Galungan of December 1987, Pak Mider did not sell *lamak nganten*, but helped in the house of family in Peliatan (Banjar Kalah) to make one; while the men made the *penjor*, he told the women how they had to make the *lamak*.

I Wayan Sutoya, the fifth *tukang lamak* who lived in Padangtegal, made in December 1987 a *lamak nganten* for his younger sister in the same village, because her son had recently married. He did not receive money for this work, although sometimes he made *lamak nganten* to order, for Rp 3500 per metre. He could also make the *sanggar nganten*, while his wife made the *sampian penjor*. He learned the skills from his grandfather. Pak Sutoya used to be a painter, but at that time earned more money building houses. Like Pak Tantri, he also had made canvas *lamak* with painted motifs and he could make those to order.

It is remarkable that all five *tukang lamak* I talked to in Padangtegal were male. According to Pak Nonderan, this was because Padangtegal is close to Ubud, with its tradition of woodcarving and painting, which traditionally were male professions. Except for Pak Sadra, who was only a farmer, the other four *tukang lamak* indeed were also themselves experienced in or came from a family specializing in ritual arts. Furthermore the development of the painted canvas *lamak*, practised by Tantri, Sutoya, and the son of Nonderan, was probably made possible because people in this area were familiar with the use of paint and canvas.

### 5.3.2.2 Junjungan

In the 1980s, although Padangtegal was well known for its *lamak* makers, they tended to be more expensive than *tukang lamak* a little further away from Ubud. For that reason, sometimes people from Padangtegal and from nearby villages like Peliatan ordered their *lamak nganten* outside their own villages, for example in Junjungan. One well-known *tukang* in Junjungan was Ni Wayan Klepon.<sup>14</sup> For the Galungan of 9 December 1987, I

Wayan Pande from Banjar Pande, Peliatan, ordered a *lamak nganten* from Ni Wayan Klepon (fig. 5.90) because of lack of time (pers. com. 25/12/1987). He would have preferred to find a *tukang lamak* in his home village, since he thought these *lamak* were more beautiful, more complete, however they usually cost Rp 4000 per metre, as against Rp 2000 in Junjungan. But he complained that compared with *lamak nganten* in Peliatan, the ones from Junjungan had “less story” (*cerita*) in them, as he phrased it, meaning not so many motifs.

Ni Wayan Klepon (fig. 5.10), at that time, was one of five *tukang lamak* in Junjungan, all women, all housewives who also assisted their farmer husbands. Two days before the Galungan of 6 July 1988, I paid them all a visit, when they were busy preparing their *lamak nganten*. Ni Wayan Klepon had two orders for *lamak nganten* of six metres, both for people in Tegallalang. Her younger sister was helping her to finish them in time. Compared to the *lamak* she had made in December 1987, which were of *ambu* and *ron* in their natural colours only, this time she added to the motifs some decorative touches using red coloured leaves. Her price was still Rp 2000 per metre. She used material from sugar palm trees in her own garden, which were cheaper than buying them, although it was not so easy to reach the best quality leaves, “high up towards the top of the tree”, she said.

On 20 April 2014 I revisited Ni Wayan Klepon in Junjungan. She does not make *lamak* anymore, only smaller *jejaitan*, but members of her family, who live in the neighbourhood, still make *lamak nganten* of four to five metres in length, at a cost of Rp. 60,000 (approx. €4.50) per metre. When I showed her the photographs of *lamak nganten* that she made in 1987 and 1988, she immediately recognized the patterns, which are still used in Junjungan, she said. It is now cheaper to buy the material at the market than to pay somebody to climb the trees to get the leaves.

In 1988, of the other four *tukang lamak* in Junjungan, Ni Sumpel, whose *lamak* looked similar to those made by Wayan Klepon, used leaves from palm trees on her own land and sold her *lamak nganten* for Rp 2000 per metre. If she had to buy the material, her price was Rp 2500 per metre. In 1988 she made only one *lamak nganten*, an order from a family in Junjungan itself. Usually she handled two orders for Galungan.

14 Very likely the *lamak nganten* of figure 2.22, Galungan 13 May 1987, was also made by Ni Wayan Klepon.

The *lamak nganten* Ni Jangklek was making that day was for use in her own home. Ni Jangklek did not take orders, but only made *lamak nganten* if friends requested her to do so. Ni Nyoman Damping worked in the same style as Ni Jangklek (pers. com. 30/12/1987). For Galungan in December 1987 she made three *lamak nganten* to order for people from Peliatan, one each in Tebesaya, Teges and Banjar Kalah. For Galungan July 1988 she had just one order, also from outside Junjungan. For Galungan 30 August 1989 she made a *lamak nganten* for a family in Junjungan which she sold for Rp 2500 per metre. She had been making *lamak* already for ten years, together with members of her family.

Like Ni Nyoman Damping and living in the same courtyard, Ni Made Paji (fig. 5.11) had been making *lamak nganten* already for more than ten years. She made for Galungan of December 1987 two *lamak nganten* for two neighbours in Banjar Tebesaya in Peliatan (pers. com. 30/12/1987). Although living in the same courtyard as Nyoman Damping, her *lamak* looked remarkably different. Her *lamak nganten* had a *kekayonan* motif, made out of thick paper, between the usual palm leaf motifs. This was made by her husband, since this motif was too difficult for her to make, she said. However, for Galungan July 1988 she again made a *lamak nganten* ordered from Tebesaya, but this time the *kekayonan* motif was cut out of *ron* (again by her husband), and she sewed the motif onto the palm leaf background with black thread (not with *semat*, bamboo slivers).

### 5.3.2.3 Peliatan and other villages

It was not only the female *tukang lamak* in Junjungan who made cheaper *lamak nganten* to order than their male colleagues in Padangtegal. In Peliatan, Ni Ketut Resep, a middle-aged woman from Banjar Tengah (pers. com. 29/12/1987), sold cheaper *lamak nganten*, for just Rp 2000 per metre. She bought the materials, *ambu* and *ron*. She did good business, usually in Peliatan itself, because of contacts she made from being the owner of an eating stall (*warung*) where she also sold on order the duck delicacy *betutu*. It was also possible to order *lamak* from her and bring your own material. She learned to make *lamak* 18 years earlier by looking at *lamak* along the roadside, not from anyone in

particular, and she thought there was money to be made there. And indeed people who had seen her *lamak* somewhere, ordered from her. She made two *lamak nganten* for Galungan in May 1987, for two neighbours in Banjar Teruna, Peliatan, who ordered from her since she was the nearest *tukang*. In preparation for the following Galungan, 9 December 1987, she was very busy with five orders, and had to request the help of two assistants who did the pinning while she herself did the cutting. Usually she began only four days before Galungan, so that the *lamak* did not dry out. Then she had to work until late in the evening. In her own neighbourhood she also helped a friend make a *lamak nganten* (fig. 5.63), working on it for three days. For Galungan July 1988 she had four orders, all in Peliatan (pers. com. 5/7/1988) (fig. 5.64). For Galungan 30 August 1989 she made a *lamak nganten* in Banjar Teruna, Peliatan, which she sold for Rp 3500 per metre (pers. com. 31/10/1990). For Galungan in October 1990 she received orders for more than 50 *betutu*, leaving her no time to make *lamak nganten* as well. Many people from outside the village wanted to order from her but this time she had to refuse, although if her help had been asked by her own family or fellow *banjar* members, she would have had to accept.

Besides *lamak nganten* to order, as business, Ni Ketut Resep also participated once in the Art Festival (Pesta Seni) organised by the Art Centre in Denpasar. She liked making *lamak*, but could not make all motifs. The tree (*kekayonan*) motif in particular she found too difficult; according to her, only woodcarvers (*tukang togog/ukir*) were capable of that.

Other villages where *tukang lamak* were active during that period include Singakerta (*kecamatan Ubud*), Tegallalang (*kecamatan Tegallalang*), and Singapadu (*kecamatan Sukawati*).

In Singakerta, Ni Putu Darmi, from Banjar Kengetan (pers. com. 18/1/1988) made in December 1987 a *lamak nganten* for the *gria* in her village, on account of her *sisia* relationship with the *gria*.

Ni Made Tombiah, from Banjar Gentong, Tegallalang (pers. com. 4/7/1988), for Galungan 4 July 1988 only made a *lamak nganten* in her own home, owing to the pressure of work in the fields. In December 1987 she made two *lamak nganten* in Banjar Gentong (pers. com. 17/1/88) and others in Teges en Kliki. For people outside of her own *banjar*,



her price in 1987 was between Rp 2000 en 3000 per metre. For Galungan on 30 August 1989 she made a *lamak nganten* in Banjar Gentong, helped with another there, besides an ordinary *lamak* at home. Born in 1948, she remembered she started making *lamak* in the year Gunung Agung erupted, 1963. Her first *lamak nganten* was 11 metres, ordered by a family in Peliatan. She learned it from her father who was both a *tukang lamak* and a woodcarver (*tukang ukir*). Her children in turn were learning it from her, and helped her whenever she was too busy.

Singapadu is a large village consisting of several smaller customary villages and neighbourhood associations (*banjar*), each with its own *lamak* specialists, who do not always sell their *lamak*. Ni Wayan Candri from Banjar Kediri (pers. com. 27/2/1988) does not sell *lamak*, but is regarded as a specialist in her neighbourhood. Desak Patupang, from Banjar Kediri (pers. com. 18/1/1988), although often asked to help making *lamak nganten*, does not have the time to make them on order. She was able to explain the meaning of the motifs, owing to her knowledge of rituals gained from her activities as a *balian* (traditional healer) and her help making offerings in the local *gria*. Men Gomblok, also from Banjar Kediri, made a *lamak nganten* for Galungan 9 December 1987 in nearby Banjar Silakarang, and also helps others, including Ni Wayan Roje, also called Ibu Gana, in Silakarang (pers. com. 18/1/1988). Indeed the style of the motifs of these two *tukang* is similar. Ibu Gana, born in 1932, is the owner of a small *paras*-stone factory along the main road. She likes making *jejaitan*, and is very proud of her work; she often wins first place in competitions. Ni Wayan Jenjen (pers. com. 18/1/1988), from Banjar Kutri, made for Galungan December 1987 three *lamak nganten* (see fig. 3.5), all in her own *banjar*, and for Galungan 1 February 1989 one in Banjar Negari. She has been a *tukang lamak* for just two years, and so far has received orders for each Galungan. Like many other *tukang lamak*, she learned to cut the motifs by copying the *lamak* she saw along the roadside, and also through helping the Brahmana ladies making offerings in the two *gria* in Kutri. For both these *gria* she made two out of the three *lamak nganten*. If she sells a *lamak* she asks Rp 3000 per metre. She has also participated in competitions in the *bale banjar*.

### 5.3.3. *Lamak entrepreneurs*

Most of the *tukang lamak* described in the previous section only made ephemeral *lamak* on request or order, and only in preparation for Galungan or temple festivals, not on a regular basis. This is a part-time or temporary occupation. Helped by members of their family in busy times, in principle they worked by themselves. As was stressed by several *lamak* makers, a *lamak*, and especially a *lamak nganten*, has to look fresh on the main day of the ritual, so this limits the number of orders a *tukang lamak* can take at one time. Men, like Pak Sadra, were first and foremost farmer; women, like Ni Ketut Pilik, were housewife and sometimes, like Ni Ketut Resep, *warung* owner. Sometimes they were ritual specialists who could make other kinds of ritual objects such as cremation towers and sarcophagi or meat offerings, like Pak Nonderan.

But many Balinese are also involved in the production of *lamak* on a more permanent, continuous basis, and this is particularly the case when they make *lamak* from materials of a more durable nature than palm leaf (as described in Chapter 4).

Traditionally, only women specialists, probably mainly from Brahmana or Ksatria households, made permanent *lamak* requiring special decorating techniques, like embroidery, appliqué or supplementary weft (together with other textiles for ceremonial use), whereas men specialized in making ritual objects from Chinese coins. They were made to order, often together with other textiles or ritual objects, and in these home industries usually more than one person was involved in the production. For example, in Gria Puseh in Sanur, Ida Bagus Nila, cousin of the resident Brahmana priest (*pedanda*), had in the 1980s a small workshop where he made ritual objects from Chinese coins (*kepeng*), including *lamak*. He worked together with other male members of his extended family, in addition to his work as postman. Meanwhile, Dayu Made Putra, the daughter of the priest, employed on a daily basis several women from her own family and from the village, to make complete sets of ready-made offerings to order in her workshop in the *gria* (house of a Brahmana family). These sets often included a *lamak*, and after completion they were taken to the temple or household concerned just before or on the day of the ritual,



which would be performed by her father. These *lamak* were almost always made of fresh, ephemeral palm leaves. However, if for reasons of a tight time schedule they had to be prepared well in advance, Dayu Made chose to work with the more durable leaves of the *lontar* palm (pers. com. 8/11/1990). This “home industry” of ready-made offerings and ritual decorations started in the early 1980s, and is still going, although Dayu Made is already in her eighties (pers. com 17/3/2016).

However, besides this kind of entrepreneurship related to the offerings industry, there are other kinds of craft industries involving *lamak*.

### 5.3.3.1 *Lontar jejaitan* workshops

Making and selling *lontar lamak* is not a recent development. Already in 1983, in the shops selling ritual objects (*toko yadnya*) at the main market in Denpasar *lontar jejaitan* were for sale. These included *lamak* made of *lontar* leaves, with green and red painted motifs, rather than motifs cut out of dyed coloured leaves that are used nowadays.<sup>15</sup> They were very cheap, and usually were ordered from individuals working from home on a commercial basis and more regularly than just at times prior to rituals, like the *tukang lamak nganten* in Gianyar. These *lamak* and other *jejaitan* made of the durable *lontar* leaves were bought by those who wanted to prepare for their rituals well in advance.

An example of a maker and ‘entrepreneur’ of *lontar jejaitan* was Ni Komang Soka in Temega, Padangkerta (Karangasem) (pers. com. 22/4/1994). In a *warung* belonging to family of hers, she was continuously busy making *lontar lamak* and *ceniga* to order, which she sold for Rp. 500 per piece, in those days equivalent to approximately €0.25. She also sold other *jejaitan*, in the *warung*, at the market or at her own house, to people from her own neighbourhood. According to her, and in contrast to what Ni Wayan Suartini (see Chapter 4) would tell me 20 years later, *lontar* leaves were more expensive than the leaves of the coconut and sugar palm trees. Although *lontar lamak* lasted longer and so could be made longer in advance, Komang

Soka also once in a while made to order *lamak* from sugar palm leaves for temple festivals.

She said that the *lontar* came from Seraya (in Karangasem) or from North Bali. The trees closest to the beach gave, according to her, the best leaves. One complete frond cost Rp. 700-1000, depending on trade conditions. From one frond she could make ten *lamak*. For one day’s work making *jejaitan*, she could earn Rp.1500-2000 (approximately €1). At that time, and in contrast to Wayan Suartini 20 years later, Komang Soka always worked with *semat*, because staples then were too expensive. She had no other source of income. She only went to primary school and she learned to make *jejaitan* by copying the work of others.

Although this commercialization of *lamak* making already existed in past decades, nowadays mass production seems to be more professionally organized. More shops are in operation and they have more varieties of *lontar jejaitan* for sale than there used to be. These shops vary from small one-person kiosks to larger workshops where several people are employed.

For example recently (at the end of 2014, just before Galungan), Ni Ketut Remping opened on the main road in Budakeling a small *toko jejaitan*. It was a kind of *warung*, open to the street, where she had a variety of objects in stock. It was located opposite her own houseyard, where she made the *jejaitan* together with her daughter-in-law. She bought the material, mainly *lontar* leaves in different colours, at the nearby market town of Bebandem. Like Komang Soka 20 years ago, she learned new forms by just copying the work of others. She decided to start this small business, first to have something to do besides being a housewife and to make a bit of useful extra income, but also because she always liked making all kinds of *jejaitan*, and she is rather good at this craft (pers. com. 6/6/2015). However, after just a year she decided there were insufficient regular customers to keep the shop open and pay the rent. She now works only from home ‘on demand’, to help prepare for larger rituals at the request of people from the several *gria* in Budakeling.

A similar story is that of Ni Made Raka, also from Banjar Pande Mas in Budakeling. A lady in her late sixties, who since she was left by her husband tries to make a living by making *jejaitan* and small offerings at home, ‘on demand’. She also

15 Two examples are in the collection of the National Museum of World Cultures: inv. no. RV-5258-99 and 100, see Appendix 1.



Figure 5.12: Ni Wayan Suartini in her jejaitan workshop. Bebandem, 17/7/2010.



Figure 5.13: Lamak for sale in workshop 'Mahkota Pelangi', Bebandem, 29/3/2016.



Figure 5.14: Ni Wayan Suartini shows the lamak she uses as example. Bebandem, 29/3/2016.

learned the skills and the motifs on *lamak* by looking at the work of others. She has tried to teach and motivate some of her cousins and their children to learn to make *lamak*, but they were not interested. “It is too much work for not much result”, they said (pers. com. 4/4/2016).

A larger-scale workshop of *lontar jejaitan* is the ‘Palm Leaf Artshop’ in Bebandem, where Ni Wayan Suartini worked as an employee (figs. 5.12-5.13 and figs. 4.3-4.4).<sup>16</sup> This workshop was started in 2007 by Ibu Suriani, wife of a silver- and goldsmith, in the space next to the shop of her husband at the market in Bebandem (fig. 5.12). At first Ibu Suriani worked only with members of her own family, but after a few years she also took on paid employees, like Ni Wayan Suartini. When a few years ago Ibu Suriani died, her husband and daughter continued the business. They opened a larger workshop with the sign ‘Palm Leaf Artshop’ (but with the official name *Mahkota Pelangi*, ‘Rainbow Crown’) about 200 metres from the market, where three adults and two children (after school time) work. To attract customers, they also opened a small workshop at the market, where Ni Wayan Suartini worked, originally by herself but later joined by another girl (pers. com. 28/5/2015 and 8/6/2015).

According to Wayan, when in 2007 Ibu Suriani started her workshop, she only made *sampian penjor*. But then she brought home from Denpasar and Gianyar examples of all kinds of other decorations to be used on a *penjor* or *sanggar penjor*, and people in Karangasem liked these new varieties. So she started to make them herself in her workshop and they became very popular (*laku*). Spectacular large Garuda birds sold for Rp. 800,000. A single *sampian penjor* could be bought for Rp. 25,000-50,000, and all the decorations for a complete *penjor* for Rp. 200,000.<sup>17</sup> In contrast to such rather expensive *penjor* decorations, the *ceniga* were very cheap in this workshop, only Rp. 1500 (equivalent to €0.10). Wayan could make up to 50 *ceniga* a day, and she always made them well before Galungan. On 28 May 2015 she was already making stock for the Galungan of 15 July.

16 An account of Ni Wayan Suartini at work is given in the introduction to Chapter 4.

17 In 2015, Rp. 15,000 was approximately 1€.

Wayan had to learn from scratch, since at home her mother usually made the *jejaitan*, while Wayan helped with other aspects of daily offering making. She found making *jejaitan* very difficult in the beginning, especially with the rather tough (*keras*) *lontar* leaves. But Ibu Suriani, who taught her the different forms, always told her “Never say you can’t!”, so she practised until she finally managed. Wayan also looked in booklets with drawings, photographs and practical information about how to make different *jejaitan*.

In 2013 Wayan earned Rp 750,000 a month, which at that time was equivalent to €50. She worked every day, from seven in the morning till five in the afternoon, except on public holidays when shops in town are closed. Once in a while she received a bonus, in compensation for working overtime in the evenings to finish an order. Although her income was very small, Wayan still contributed to the family income. Her father, who used to be a driver on a mini-bus, lost his job because of illness, and her mother tried to make ends meet selling homemade rice porridge at the market, every third day from one o’clock in the morning. Wayan also preferred to use the ready-made coloured plastic decorations, instead of cutting them herself from coloured *lontar* leaf, which is much more time-consuming. People from Gianyar brought kilograms of these little things, a small packet of which she sells for Rp. 5000.

When I visited the *jejaitan* workshop on 29 March 2016, a *lontar lamak* decorated with little plastic ornaments (fig. 5.13) cost Rp. 15,000, approximately 1 euro. It appeared that Wayan Suartini had just stopped working for Mahkota Pelangi, because she was about to get married and wanted to set up her own *jejaitan* business, working from home (as described for Ni Ketut Remping and Ni Made Raka). Although she already has a lot of experience, she still wants to learn new models and varieties, and so she asked for two *lontar lamak* with flower decorations which were used at a previous temple festival and would not be used again, to serve as examples (fig. 5.14).

Also in other parts of Bali, for example in Tabanan, and especially along the main roads, there are many more *toko yadnya* specializing in *lontar jejaitan* than there used to be. Even the supermarket chain Hardy’s has its own small department in the

period prior to Galungan and Kuningan where *lon-tar jejaitan* are for sale; for example in January 2012 in Sanur a large *sampian penjor* sold for Rp. 40,000 and a small one for Rp. 20,000 (resp. €4 and €2).

### 5.3.3.2 Painted *lamak*

Another home industry of durable or permanent *lamak* is the development of painted *lamak* on canvas (see Chapter 4). Pak Tantri from Padangtegal, who formerly made *lamak* only from palm leaf (see earlier in this chapter), started making painted *lamak* in the early 1970s. For the first time and for his own house temple (*sanggah*), he produced a *lamak* from canvas, painted with the same motifs as on his palm leaf *lamak*.<sup>18</sup> This was a success and family and friends also asked for such canvas *lamak* which they could use again and again each Galungan. In 1983 Pak Tantri received many orders from outsiders, even already for the next Galungan. From photographs the customers could choose which motifs they wanted to order. Pak Tantri gave them a choice of four different representational motifs (*mangong, cili, kekayonan* and *gebogan*) and four geometric ones (*kapu-kapu* and three varieties of *candigara*). For a painted *lamak* with one representational and one geometric motif Pak Tantri asked Rp. 4000 (pers. com. 5/5/1983), approximately €4.50, at that time equivalent to the average price of one metre of *lamak nganten* made by *tukang lamak* in Padangtegal.

Other craftsmen followed the economic success of these permanent (non-ephemeral) painted *lamak*, which in colour and design imitated the palm leaf ones. On Galungan of 9 December 1987 I noticed many more of these cloth *lamak* in the Gianyar area than in 1983 or 1985. One such craftsman, I Wayan Wira from Banjar Kalah, Peliatan (pers. com. 26/2/1990), sold hand-painted cloth *lamak* and made them to order. His price was Rp. 5000 for a *lamak* with only the geometrical pattern *kapu-kapu* and the *gebogan*. For a larger one with more motifs he asked Rp. 20,000. In 1987 and the previous year, he received for Galungan 200 orders for small cloth *lamak*. Customers ordered 20 to 40 pieces, for each shrine in their family temple. He made them all by hand, painting the motifs with

green paint on yellow canvas. For some motifs, like the *gebogan*, he used a template made of carton. He used to make *lamak nganten*, together with his wife, Ni Ketut Lunus. But in 1990 he only made cloth *lamak*, for he found that much more practical. He could do all kinds of other things as well, from making statues, selling jewellery, to managing building projects. When I met him for the first time in 1987 he had just started making these canvas *lamak* but then he considered this work “not so attractive” (pers. com. 30/12/1987).

In the 1980s people in more traditional villages in Gianyar, like Lambing and Jasan, were proud of the fact that they did not participate in these new developments, but still used palm leaves for their traditional, authentic (*asli*) *lamak*. For example the maker of some fine palm leaf *lamak* in Jasan (Sebatu) said (pers. com. 24/2/1987), “Here the tradition is still strong, and no cloth *lamak* are used. In Pujung it is otherwise, there people are busy with their businesses, and there is a large production of tourist woodcarvings.” According to her, women in Jasan were capable of making themselves all the offerings, even for a cremation. Each person had her own speciality, and everyone helped one another. The girls learned how to do it simply by joining in. But in Pujung people often bought offerings because they had no time, on account of their businesses.

Another element that entered the field of commercialization was renting instead of buying. The first time I saw a painted *lamak nganten* was on 9 December 1987, in Banjar Ambengan, Peliatan. This *lamak nganten* was not bought, but rented from I Ketut Gampil of Banjar Tegal, Tegallalang. At a cost of Rp. 5000, I Wayan Neka rented this *lamak* for the entire Galungan-Kuningan period (pers. com. 25/12/1987). He thought this an excellent and efficient new possibility for coping with problems of lack of time and materials for making *lamak nganten*. However, others thought differently. I Nengah Rata, Ubud Kaja (pers. com. 27/12/1987), knew it would be cheaper to rent a cloth *lamak nganten*, “but not really proper, not so diligent, not so artistic”. According to Cokorda Ngurah from Puri Menara, Ubud (pers. com. 31/10/1990), the renting of *lamak nganten* was in 1990 already in decline. Especially in Tegallalang, where many families used to rent them, people started to feel embarrassed (*malu*) about it.

18 Pak Tantri made in 1983 a painted example for the Leiden collection (inv. no. RV-5258-50), see Appendix 1.

### 5.3.3.3 *Lamak sablon*

*Lamak sablon*, silkscreen *lamak*, probably developed out of the painted *lamak* (as discussed in Chapter 4). In contrast to the hand-painted canvas *lamak*, *lamak sablon* are very cheap, since they are mass-produced. One entrepreneur, I Ketut Lantur who lived in Banjar Tebuana, Sukawati (Gianyar), said that in 2001 the production in his small household workshop could be as many as a hundred pieces a day.<sup>19</sup> He worked with two silkscreens, each the size of a *lamak*, one for the main patterns and one for the accents that were added afterwards. The base was a bright yellow piece of cloth, the paint for the main patterns was a dark green colour, with accents in red paint.

I Ketut Lantur, who already for a long time was busy as a painter of patterns on dance costumes and cloth fans, started around 1995 with the less time-consuming silkscreen technique of decoration. Since this appeared to be a success, he then also started with the production of silkscreen *lamak*. He bought the silkscreens in Denpasar where they were made, but he designed the motifs on the screens himself. His *lamak sablon* were about 70 cm long and 19 cm wide. For a longer *lamak* the silkscreen was used twice, on a piece of cloth twice as long, so that the motifs and structure of a small *lamak* were simply repeated or doubled. Pak Lantur only worked to order, and he sold his *lamak sablon* for Rp 2000 (in 2001 equivalent to €0.25) a piece. He received his orders mainly from a middleman who sold his *lamak sablon* at the market in Klungkung. He only made *lamak sablon* once he received a new order.

According to Pak Lantur, he was the first in the area to start producing *lamak sablon*, but by 2001 in Sukawati many other *lamak sablon* workshops had opened. I do not have historical or economic data on this matter, but at the main market in Sukawati I was told that the main centres of production were in Banjar Babakan of Sukawati. Also at such major markets as those of Denpasar (the capital of Bali) and of Bebandem, in Karangasem, the vendors also said that their *lamak sablon* were all made in Sukawati.

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19 This section on *lamak sablon* is based on an earlier article, Brinkgreve 2010a.

Along the roads of Bali in the summer of 2001 the use of *lamak sablon* was very visible. Many shrines outside the gateways of homes in villages and towns used the *lamak sablon* on an everyday basis. Also the small wooden shrines hanging on walls, for example inside shops, were now often decorated with a *lamak sablon*.

Just as the lady quoted in the discussion about *lamak sablon* in *Sarad* magazine (see Chapter 4), people explained that they used the *lamak sablon* to make more decorative these 'daily' shrines which are permanently in use, and because the *lamak sablon* are cheaper than other types of textile *lamak*. In the long run they are even cheaper than the palm leaf *lamak* for which the material has to be bought time and again, especially for people who do not own or have access to coconut or sugar palms. At the market in Ubud in 2001 a small *lamak sablon* cost the same price as a ready-made palm leaf *lamak*: Rp 3000 to 5000 (then around €0.50). A *lamak sablon* one metre long was about twice that price. The *lamak sablon* clearly was a response to a growing economic need.

It was interesting to see large numbers of *lamak sablon* not only at the market in Denpasar but also at the market in Bebandem, a still fairly traditional town in Karangasem. In the former, lack of time to make one's own ritual decorations and the lack of sufficient palm leaf would seem a sufficient explanation, whereas in rural areas these arguments in favour of the *lamak sablon* would seem to be less relevant. Probably in this Karangasem case sensitivity to the latest fashion with regard to ritual objects has been more important, though economic need cannot be entirely ruled out. The fact that once remote places are now easily accessible to transport means that new developments or fashions spread quickly all over Bali.<sup>20</sup>

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20 Since by that time I did not come regularly to Bali, it was difficult to estimate to what extent the *lamak sablon* had replaced the traditional palm leaf *lamak* during special festive days and rituals. According to Dayu Putu Sriani, who did some research for me during Galungan festivals in September 2001 and February 2002, and Aafke de Jong, who did the same in November 2002, the use of the *lamak sablon* in villages around Ubud had certainly increased, but they had by no means replaced the palm leaf *lamak*, which are still produced in the traditional styles of the respective villages.



Whereas in 2001 *lamak sablon* were very prominent, during my next visit to Bali in 2005 I had the impression that there were fewer *lamak sablon* than four years earlier. In 2001 in the *toko yadnya* of the main market in Denpasar, Pasar Badung, there were many *lamak sablon* for sale, mainly with the Dewi Saraswati and *padma* motifs. They sold for Rp. 8000 for two ordinary ones or Rp. 10,000 for one twice as long, but with the traditional end pattern, *cracap*, in the centre. In the *toko yadnya* there were no *lontar lamak* for sale anymore. However, in July 2005 there were fewer *lamak sablon* for sale in Pasar Badung, while there were again some varieties of *lontar lamak* for sale. At the market in Sukawati they sold for Rp. 2000 to 6000, depending on size.

In 2010 at the Ubud market there were no *lamak sablon* for sale anymore. One of the saleswomen said that they were not so fashionable anymore, because after a while the colours faded. This was also the opinion of saleswomen at the market in Negara, West Bali, who remarked that their local embroidered *lamak* kept their colours much better. However, at this market and also at the markets in Tabanan and Bebandem *lamak sablon* were still for sale, as the cheapest variety of cloth *lamak* available. The saleswoman in Tabanan who sold *lamak sablon* with a *cili* motif, said that they still “sold” (*laku*), especially for Galungan, and that a salesman from Gianyar brought them along.

I revisited *lamak sablon* maker I Ketut Lantur in his workshop in Banjar Tebuana, Sukawati in 2012. The sign on his shop read: “I Ketut Lantur, *kipas* maker”. A *kipas* is a fan, and he made many of them, all from *prada* cloth. In fact formerly his *lamak sablon* also developed from his *prada* silkscreen work. He told me (pers. com. 26/1/2012) that “already since five years *lamak sablon* do not sell well, because they are thought of as false. Something printed is not good for God. Better to use *prada*, because God likes gold, as does Buddha.”<sup>21</sup>

Formerly he made *lamak sablon* for Rp 1000 each, and by selling them at Rp 3000 each, made a profit of Rp 2000. But the screen for the *lamak sablon* was already broken. In 2012 instead he sold *lamak prada*, with gold-coloured flower motifs, for

Rp 4000 each. He used gold-coloured foil which came from Surabaya; “hot pressable foil” was written on the box. This is far more shiny than the earlier *prada* using gold paint. His business was going well, he made a lot of *prada* dance clothing and temple hangings (*langse*) and he had built himself a new house. In 2012, this decline was further confirmed in a *toko yadnya* by the market in Sukawati: “*Lamak sablon* do not sell anymore” (*tidak laku lagi!*). However, further away from the former production centre, like the markets in Klungkung and Karangasem, some *lamak sablon* were still for sale, also in October 2013. They were especially “*laku*” by people who cannot afford to buy the more expensive permanent *lamak* varieties. In Bebandem (31/1/2012) their prices varied from Rp. 2500-4000 (less than €0.25-0.40), and they were said to have been brought there from Sukawati or Buleleng in North Bali. Nowadays along the roads *lamak sablon* are still visible, although often rather weathered.

Whereas since 2001 I had only seen yellow *lamak sablon*, with green motifs and sometimes some red touches, in January 2012 I saw in a temple close to the beach in Sanur, Pura Patal, a *lamak sablon* with silver motifs on a white background. According to the temple priest, this colour is used for the shrine for Siwa. But when offerings are placed in the shrine there has to be always a leaf on top of the *lamak sablon*, “for the leaf is from God”, he said.

In 2015 there were still *lamak sablon* for sale on the markets of Bebandem, Amlapura and Klungkung, but not very prominent. Besides old ones, also some new ones were visible on shrines along the roads, also in Sukawati, so they are probably still being made.<sup>22</sup>

#### 5.3.3.4 *Toko yadnya*

Not only *lamak sablon* but nowadays a wide range of cheap, mass-produced varieties of permanent *lamak* is available at the markets and *toko yadnya*, shops selling ritual objects (figs. 5.15-5.16). There are more varieties of cloth *lamak* and *lamak* made of fake coins, and larger quantities available than when I was collecting for the National Museum of Ethnology in 1983. Due to better transport

21 *Tidak laku, karena dianggap palsu. Cet tidak bagus untuk Tuhan. Lebih baik: pakai prada, karena Tuhan suka mas, seperti Buddha.*

22 In 2016 I bought in Bebandem the last *lamak sablon* the seller had in stock, for Rp. 3000 (€0.20).



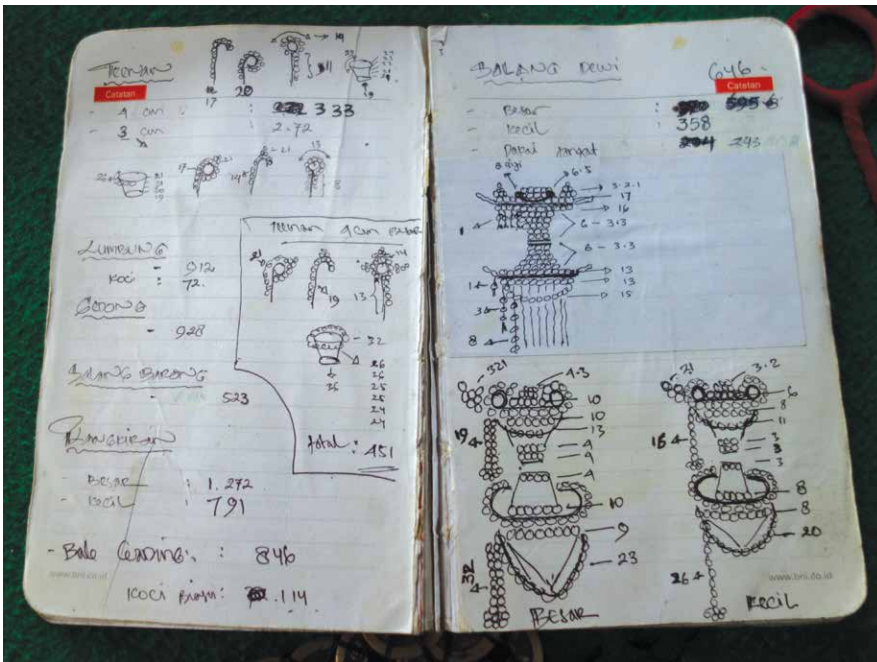


Figure 5.15: Toko yadnya at Denpasar market, 20/7/2005.



Figure 5.16: Toko yadnya at Bebandem market, 17/7/2010.





Figures 5.17-5.18: Making kepeng lamak in the workshop of "Industri uang kepeng Kamasan Bali". In the notebook is written how many coins are used per object. Tojan (Klungkung), 30/5/2015.

facilities, these permanent *lamak* are often not locally made anymore. In 2012 and 2013 at the markets of Bebandem and Amlapura (in Karangasem) I was informed by the saleswomen that these cloth *lamak* were brought to them by middlemen from Buleleng in the north or Sukawati in central Bali. Some *lamak sablon* made in Sukawati (Gianyar) are still for sale in Tabanan in the west and Amlapura in the east, and cheap coin *lamak* produced in Klungkung are sold everywhere.

But contemporary permanent *lamak* are not only cheap and mass-produced. In Kamasan and neighbouring Tojan, several workshops (figs. 5.17-5.18), where ritual objects from newly fabricated *panca datu* coins (see Chapter 4) are made to order, have beautiful showrooms with fancy and expensive objects, including *lamak* (fig. 4.58). The price range for *lamak* is here from Rp. 400,000 for the smallest variety to five million rupiah for the longest one.<sup>23</sup> The *lamak* and other ritual objects are all handmade, the workers receive payment per day, depending on the number of coins that they have tied together. The coins themselves are mass-produced; in this workshop they make approximately 150,000 coins per month.

The newest development of *toko yadnya* is the online webshop. One such enterprise has the web address [www.kerajinanklungkung.com](http://www.kerajinanklungkung.com). According to the web page, “KerajinanKlungkung.com is an online shop that sells craftwork (*hasil kerajinan*) available in the region Klungkung, Bali. This online shop is inspired by the government enterprise Nusa Kertha Kosala (PDNKK) of the government of Kabupaten Klungkung.”<sup>24</sup> In 2016 a search under the word *lamak* found eight kinds of *kepeng lamak* and three different coloured “*lamak pentol tanggung*”, a type which is common in *toko yadnya*. Prices ranged from Rp. 840,000 for a *lamak panca datu* of one metre in length to Rp 9000 for a cloth *lamak*.

23 In 2015, Rp. 15,000 was approximately €1.

24 *KerajinanKlungkung.com adalah toko online yang menjual hasil kerajinan yang ada di kabupaten Klungkung Bali. Toko online ini diberdayakan oleh perusahaan daerah Nusa Kertha Kosala (PDNKK) pemerintah Kabupaten Klungkung.*

### 5.3.3.5 Commercialization

The overview in the paragraphs above of the involvement of Balinese in making *lamak*, from housewife and skilled craftsman to ritual specialist, employee or entrepreneur, shows a tendency towards a growing commercialization in the making of *lamak*.

As informants often explained, one of the reasons is lack of time. As women’s occupations outside their homes increase, especially in the cities and tourist regions of the island, women have less time to prepare for rituals themselves, and to help other people in this way. Also, especially in the case of more complicated *lamak*, like *lamak nganten*, they simply do not know how to make them. Moreover, the natural materials for *lamak* are less easily available for people who do not have access to trees, and in any case there are problems in Bali of a growing shortage of fresh palm leaves.

So instead of creating *lamak* themselves or helping others, many Balinese prefer to buy *lamak*, or, in case of a larger *lamak nganten*, order them from a *tukang lamak*. The smaller *lamak*, made from coconut palm leaves, are only available at village markets shortly before general festival days like Galungan because they stay fresh for just one or two days. As a consequence, more and more people go to a *toko yadnya*, or a workshop specializing in *lontar jejaitan*, which always has a supply of *lamak* or *ceniga* in stock, since these are much more durable.

When ordering a *lamak nganten*, it is also often economic reasons which prevail in the choice of *tukang lamak*, the one chosen being he or she who offers a good price per metre. On the other hand, some changes occurred not only for economic reasons but also because the Balinese like to experiment and try out new things, for example making painted *lamak* or *lamak sablon*. Once successful, these new techniques were readily copied by others.

Commercialization of the production of *lamak* has developed in a number of ways, as related above, since the 1980s. For those who, for whatever reason, are unable or unwilling to make their own *lamak*, these new types of *lamak* are acceptable, although sometimes with certain reservations. The ‘consumption’ of *lamak* still takes place only in the context of Balinese ritual, and although some *lamak* have become a commodity, their ritual purpose remains the same. The networks linking pro-

fessional makers, sales people, and ‘consumers’ in practice strengthens the continuation of the *lamak* as ritual necessity. Moreover, the social system of exchange, of mutual help in making *lamak*, has not (yet) been totally replaced by commercialization.

#### 5.4 Style: diversity and development

All *lamak* makers, whether *tukang lamak* or ordinary villagers, said that they learned the skills from other, more experienced people, and by helping others. They learned by copying what they were doing and also by looking at and copying the motifs on the *lamak* displayed along the streets at Galungan. This principle also occurs in other forms of Balinese arts and crafts, be it for a ritual purpose or not. Many authors have commented on the fact that the traditional way of learning from master teachers, by imitating their work, still continues today (Djelantik 1986:3; Kam 1993:70; Ramseyer 1977:13-15). With regard to the structure and meaning of the motifs, according to Ngurah Nala just as women learn about such matters when they learn to make offerings, they learn the cosmological principles inherent in the Hindu religion through participation in the numerous rituals structuring their daily life (2004:77).

*Lamak* makers not only learn to master the techniques in a technical sense, but by copying they also learn the style of their village. In this study I use the definition of style by Meyer Schapiro: “By style is meant the constant form – and sometimes the constant elements, qualities, and expression – in the art of an individual or a group” (Schapiro 1953:287). In other words: “style is a combination of formal characteristics bound to a time and a place” (Gerbrands 1967:16).<sup>25</sup>

There exists a wide range of variation in the actual form or styles of *lamak*, and it is not easy

to say very much about longer term developments in styles of palm leaf *lamak*. Because *lamak* are ephemeral, none have survived other than just a few made of *lontar* leaf. And unfortunately photographic records of them from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, or earlier, are scarce. However, among all the photographs Walter Spies and Beryl de Zoete made for their book *Dance and Drama in Bali*, some depict *lamak*. Walter Spies, a German musician and painter who lived from 1927 to 1940 in Ubud, was very knowledgeable about Balinese art. He was particularly fascinated by the wide range of *lamak* ornamentation, and appreciated their striking beauty.

His photographs are kept in the collection of the Horniman Museum in London and give an impression of some *lamak* in the 1930s (published in Hitchcock 1995:13, ill. 5 and 99). Comparing the photograph (fig. 5.19) taken by Spies in the 1930s, probably in Padangtegal, with one (fig. 5.20) taken in 1988, one sees not much difference. However, the former was probably just an “ordinary” *lamak* for Galungan, whereas the latter is a *lamak nganten*. A very special triple *lamak* in Ubud (fig. 5.77), in fact also in the style of Padangtegal, was photographed in early 1939 by the American Philip Hanson Hiss (Hiss 1941:41 and photograph 60).<sup>26</sup> Judging from just these very few examples from Padangtegal in the 1930s *lamak* for Galungan were larger and had more motifs than more recent ones.

Around 1930 Walter Spies collected many different *lamak* motifs, made drawings of them, and even planned to make a book on this subject. Unfortunately, the book was never finished and most of these drawings have been lost. Known to have survived are a collection of 42 paintings in the collection of the Weltmuseum in Vienna (Kraus 2010), and six others recently acquired by Museum

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25 According to Layton, “Style refers to the formal qualities of a work of art. A style is characterized by the range of subjects it depicts, by the regular shapes to which elements of these subjects are reduced, and by the manner that components of the art work are organized into a composition. [...] A style may be identified at many levels of generality: that of the individual artist, that of a particular school and, in still more comprehensive terms, figurative styles may be distinguished from abstract ones” (Layton 1991:150).

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26 It is uncertain whether this is a *lamak nganten* from that period. I have never seen such a triple *lamak*. The only other published photograph of a *lamak nganten* that I know of is in a little travel guide by Joanna Moore (1970:58), of which the caption reads: “A *lamak* at Ubud during the *galungan* festival, indicating a recent wedding.” The style of this *lamak nganten* is from Padangtegal.

Pasifika, in Nusa Dua in Bali.<sup>27</sup> These paintings were based on *lamak* motifs Spies ‘collected’ in Gianyar and Tabanan.

In 1985 I showed *tukang lamak* Pak Sadra in Padangtegal copies of some of the drawings by Walter Spies. He recognized the patterns and he commented that they were *polos*, simple, as it was in the old days. “Nowadays, they are decorated, so that they appear a little busier.”<sup>28</sup> However, if one compares for example drawings in figures 5.21a, 5.22a and 5.23a, of respectively the motifs *enjakan siap*, *kapu-kapu*, and *timbangan* made by Walter Spies in the 1930s and drawings in figures 5.21b, 5.22b and 5.23b of the same motifs, made by Gusti Putu Taman from Padangtegal and based on my photographs in the 1980s, there is almost no difference in degree of complexity.

As far as is known, the only photographs through which it is possible to compare *lamak*, suspended from the same shrine in the same temple over a long period, are those taken of the main shrine in Pura Agung in Intaran (Sanur),<sup>29</sup> during its temple anniversary in the early 1930’s (Fleischmann 2007:photogr. 84-85, also p. 244), 50 years later on 18 October 1982 (fig. 2.36) and again 30 years after that on 13 February 2012 (figs. 5.53-5.54). These show, rather than an increasing complexity, slightly less complexity, noticeable in the forms of the tree and geometrical motifs.

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27 These were sold at Christie’s Amsterdam, sale 3009, lot 131A, 4 September 2012 (originally owned by the Gotsch family as a gift from Spies). In the Van Wessem collection (Or. 25.188, VIII.1) in the Leiden University Library are 54 photocopies of *lamak* drawings by Walter Spies; whereabouts of originals are unknown.

28 *Sekarang: dihias, supaya agak ramai sedikit.*

29 See also Hauser-Schäublin (1997:167) for a photograph of this shrine, dedicated to the deity of Gunung Agung, and (1997:237-244) for more details of this temple. In an account of the temple festival (*odalan*) in Pura Agung, held on 17 April 1938, Jane Belo notes, “From the main shrine hung long palm-leaf panels cut out in intricate old Indonesian design” (Belo 1960:257).

#### 5.4.1 Regional variation

Travelling through Bali during the Galungan festival period, when there is a *lamak* hanging in front of almost every house, makes one aware of their enormous variety. Every region, every village and sometimes even every street shows its own preference not only for the use of different motifs but also of the style of each motif and of the colours of the motifs.

The *cili*, the female figure representing human life and fertility, shows this variation in its fullest extent. In the district of Tabanan, West Bali, for example, the *cili* differs considerably from the *cili* in Gianyar, Central Bali. The *cili* in Tabanan have rather elongated forms, with ornamented long skirts, long, upright hairstyles or headdresses, and arms which are bent upwards at the elbows (fig. 5.24). *Cili* on some examples of permanent, textile *lamak* from the Tabanan area, also the most modern varieties, show these features as well (figs. 4.64, 4.68 and 4.77).<sup>30</sup> In Gianyar the *cili* are somewhat shorter, their headdresses have the form of a half-circle, their arms are directed downward, often almost reaching the ground, and sometimes botanical elements sprout from their bodies (fig. 5.25). In Badung and Denpasar, between Tabanan and Gianyar, the style of the *cili* seems to combine the styles of the *cili* in these regions: their arms are bent upwards as in Tabanan, but their headdress in the form of a half-circle is more like their sisters in Gianyar (fig. 5.26).

Whereas the kind of leaves mostly used is largely dependent on ecological conditions (see Chapter 4), the regional differentiation of the palm leaf *lamak* is most visible in the range of motifs. In Karangasem and Klungkung, both in the eastern part of the island, the mountain is the most

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30 As discussed in Chapter 3, *cili* are not only found on *lamak*, but they are an essential part of many offerings, for instance in the form of figurines made from rice dough. In the offering *pulagembal* in Tabanan the head of a *cili* has a central position. This face also has an elongated, upright headdress, just as on the *lamak*. As discussed in Chapter 4, in the late 1970s in the district of Tabanan it was fashionable to make *lamak* out of brightly coloured plastic (fig. 4.76), and these too showed the traditional style of *cili* with long upright hair and arms upwards.



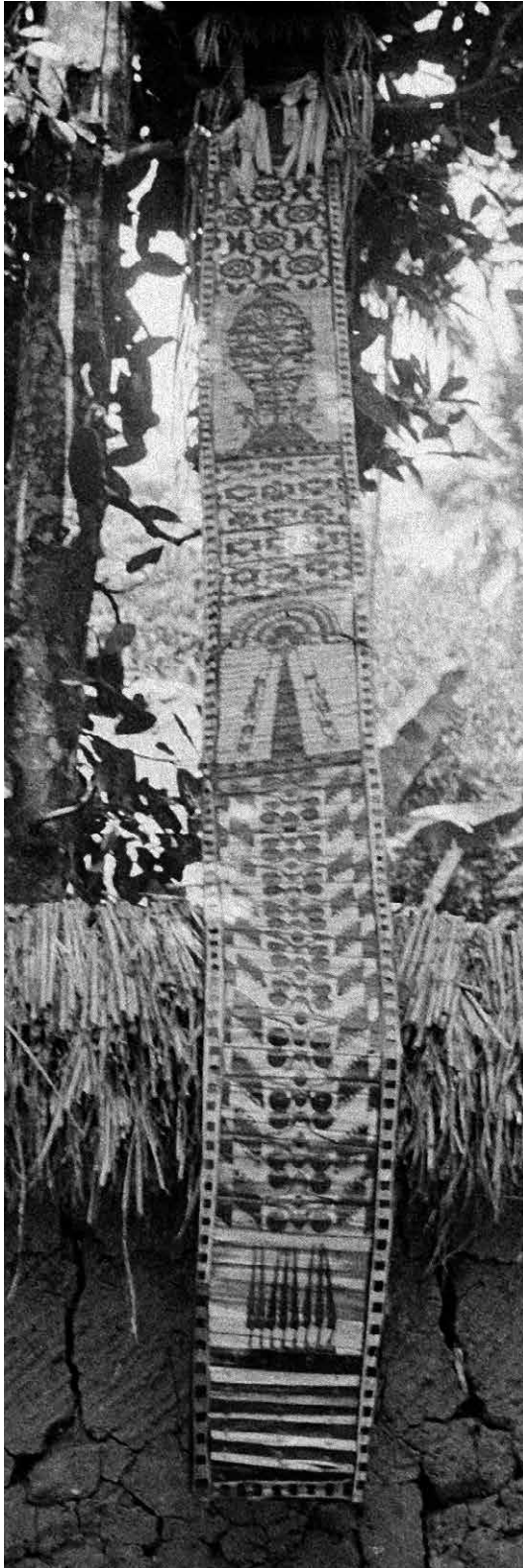


Figure 5.19 Lamak in Ubud area, 1930s, photograph taken by Walter Spies. Courtesy of Horniman Museum and Gardens, archive nr. 397-2276.



Figure 5.20: Lamak nganten, Banjar Padangtegal Kaja, Ubud, 13/5/1987.



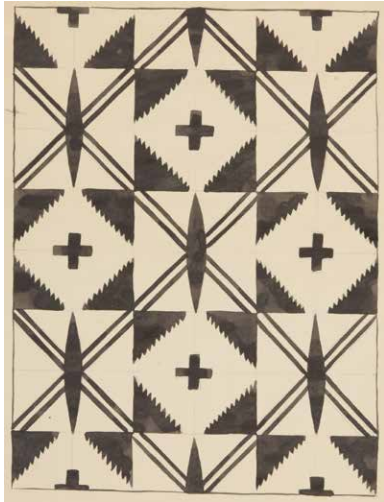


Figure 5.21a.

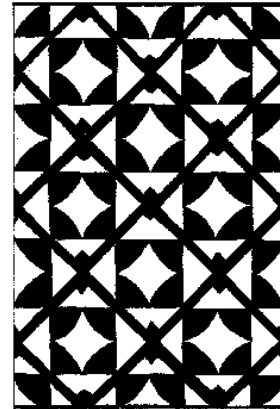


Figure 5.21b.

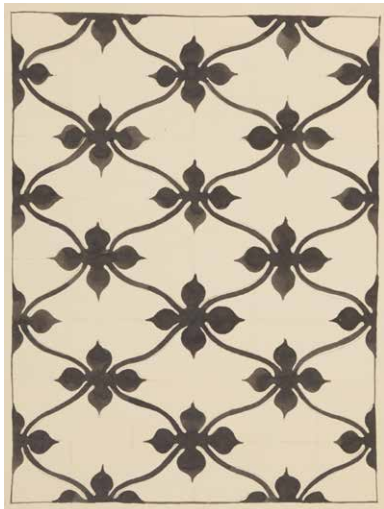


Figure 5.22a.

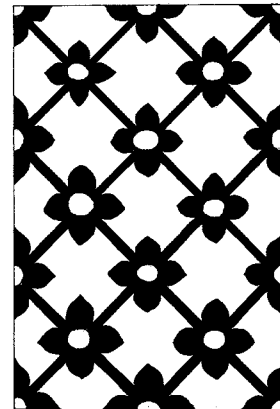


Figure 5.22b.



Figure 5.23a.

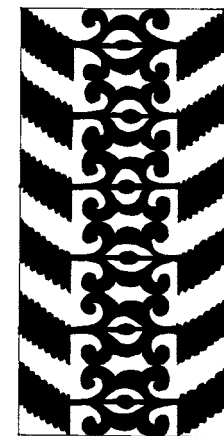


Figure 5.23b.

Figures 5.21-5.23: Drawings of the motifs *enjakan siap*, *kapu-kapu*, and *timpasan*, those on the left by Walter Spies around 1930 (courtesy Weltmuseum, Vienna, nos. WMW 130888; 130874; 130885), those on the right by I Gusti Putu Taman, sixty years later.

common motif.<sup>31</sup> Towards the west, in Bangli and parts of Gianyar, trees are often the main motif.<sup>32</sup> In Gianyar and Badung, more towards the southwest, human figures (*cili*) including the *cili nganten* (wedding *cili*) make their appearance, while the *cili* is the dominant motif in Tabanan, West Bali. In Jembrana in the far west and in the northern coastal region of Buleleng the motifs of the palm leaf *lamak* are often geometric, or depict flower motifs.

These regional differences in the motifs might have a deeper significance, but my Balinese informants did not consider them as parts of a meaningful encompassing structure or system.<sup>33</sup> But they often do know that in other areas other motifs are more dominant. For example both Sagung Putu Alit and Dayu Made Sapri from Kerambitan, Tabanan, said that in their region *lamak* only contained “*bentuk orang*”, human form, meaning *cili*, and almost no *kekayonan*. These were found “*di daerah timur*”, more in the east of Bali (pers. com. 26/9/1985).

Although these regional tendencies are still visible in Bali, they are becoming less clear. The different regions are less isolated than they used to be, and improved transport facilities enhance mutual influences. For example, *lontar* leaves originat-

31 Although in these areas this is still the case for *lamak* made of the leaves of the sugar palm, on small *lamak* made of *lontar* leaves usually only flower motifs are depicted.

32 As explained in Chapter 3, the motif of the tree (*kekayonan*) is often used on *lamak* because trees are thought of as a source of human existence. All parts of a tree can be used: wood, leaves, flowers, fruits. In Balinese cosmology, like the holy mountain, the tree functions both as cosmic axis, and also as a symbol of the unity and totality of all existing phenomena. On a large *lamak*, the tree is placed underneath the mountain motif.

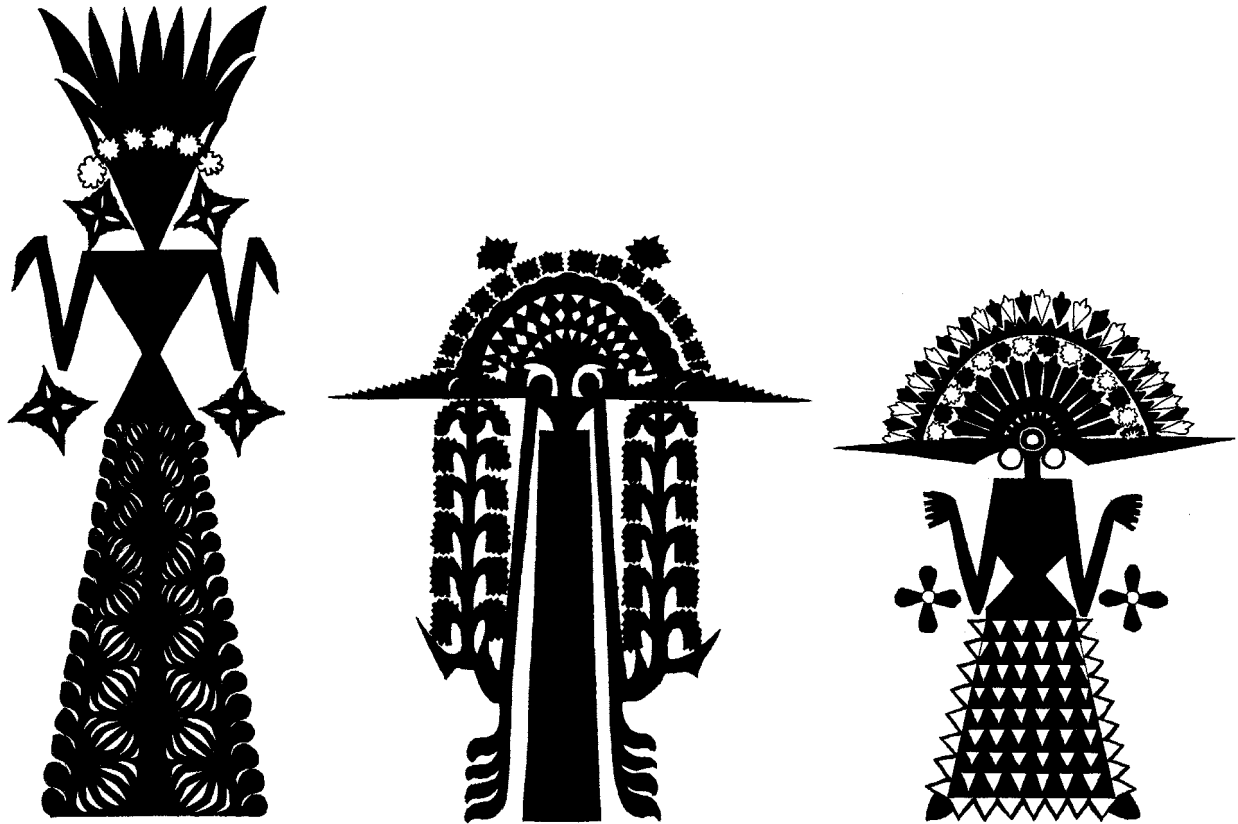
33 Symbolic meaning of regional differentiation is also discussed at length by Rens Heringa (1993:160-161; 1994; 2010). She analyses the manufacturing, formats, colours and motifs of textiles in a specific area in north-east Java as part of a meaningful structure or totality. An interpretation of the symbolic meaning of regional differences in materials, techniques, colours and motifs of *lamak* was published in Brinkgreve 1996 and Brinkgreve 2010a. In those publications I was of the opinion that “An examination of the variation of *lamak* motifs also suggests a correspondence with this topographical classification. The regional transformation from mountain motif via tree and human motifs to plant or “hipcloth” (geometric) motifs corresponds to a gradual descent from *kaja* to *kelod*, from the holy

ing from the dry Karangasem area are now often used in Denpasar and Tabanan (fig. 5.27) as well because of their durability, whereas the leaves of *ibung* or *busung* Sulawesi (fig. 5.29) are used all over Bali. Additional colours and materials, formerly more or less restricted to red in Badung and Gianyar (for example figs. 2.10, 2.14), and red and yellow in Tabanan (fig. 2.26), are now used all over Bali, and in a much wider range (including blue, purple and pink dyes and gold paper) than before (figs. 5.27-5.29). Various kinds of multi-coloured permanent *lamak* were formerly a specialty of the districts of Jembrana and Tabanan, but nowadays permanent *lamak* are fabricated in many other parts of the island and sold and used in regions other than where they have been made (fig. 5.30).

#### 5.4.2 Variation at village level

Within the different regions or districts, at the village level the styles of the different motifs also vary considerably. For instance, while in Pujung (north of Ubud) the *cili* are always very elongated, with small hairstyle (fig. 3.28), the *cili* in Peliatan (immediately southeast of Ubud) are shorter, but with a rather wide, elaborate fan-shaped headdress (fig. 5.25). However, immediately north of Pujung, in the village of Jasan, the *cili* are much shorter again, but with a wider radiating style headdress (fig. 3.30). Many other villages in Gianyar also have

mountain Gunung Agung via the fertile plains of central Bali towards the coastal areas. The greater the distance from the top of the sacred mountain, dwelling place of the deities, the more one is present in the world of human and vegetative life. This regional variation of motifs has, interestingly, the same vertical order as the motifs on one single large *lamak*, where often a mountain is depicted at the top, then a tree, in the middle a *cili* and at the bottom geometric, vegetative ornaments. Taken as a whole, it is possible to interpret the regional variation of the motifs of all the different *lamak* together in the same way as the ordering of the motifs on one *lamak*, being a connection, runner or ladder between the world of the deities and of human beings” (Brinkgreve 2010a:77). However, I changed my viewpoints in this regard, since there is no evidence that, taking the island as a whole, the East of Bali (because of its closeness to Gunung Agung) is considered more sacred than the areas closer to the sea especially in the West. The cosmic classifications *kaja-keod* and *hulu-teben* do not relate to specific geographical areas or regions.



Figures 5.24-5.26: *Cili* figures on *lamak* in the regions of respectively Tabanan (Jegu/Sigaran), Gianyar (Peliatan) and Denpasar (Sanur).

distinct styles of *cili* motifs, for example Bakbakan (fig. 5.31), Tegalsuci (fig. 5.32), Tegallalang (fig. 5.33), Silungan (fig. 5.34) and Tegallalang (Banjar Tengah) (fig. 5.35).

Not only the *cili* figures but also the styles of other motifs, especially the representational ones, show considerable variation among different villages, as the following examples from villages in Gianyar make clear. The drawings show the motif of the moon (*bulan*) in Tegallalang (fig. 5.36), Junjungan (fig. 5.37) and Jasan (fig. 5.38) and the tree (*kekayonan*) motif in Peliatan (fig. 5.39), Pujung Kaja (fig. 5.40) and Jasan (fig. 5.41).

Although the mountain or *gunung* motif occurs most frequently in the regions of Klungkung and Karangasem, I have occasionally seen this motif in other districts as well, usually in a rather simple triangular form, consisting of various small triangles (fig. 5.43). Exclusively in Padangtegal, the *gunung* motif seems to have been transformed into the mountain-shaped offering or *gebogan* motif (fig. 3.25), which is always

executed in the same, very detailed style as the *kekayonan* (see fig. 3.24). Only in Tegallalang have I seen a *banten gebogan* or offering actually carried by the *cili* on her head (fig. 5.33), and that only one time, so it can hardly be called a typical characteristic of the Tegallalang style of *lamak*. In contrast, I have seen the *gebogan* of Padangtegal numerous times.

By comparing several examples of the various motifs that appear on the *lamak* of a particular village with similar motifs on *lamak* in other villages, it is possible to identify a number of style characteristics of each village. Although the drawings were made from a photograph of one particular *lamak*, each drawing represents the style of that specific motif in that particular village. The style of a particular village can also be recognized in certain characteristics that occur in several representational motifs. For example, the moon and tree motifs in Jasan (figs. 5.38 and 5.41) share the kind of 'spiky' characteristics of the *cili* figures in this village (fig. 3.30).





Figure 5.27: Lamak and gantung-gantungan made of coloured lontar leaves for Galungan. Canggu, Badung, 13/5/2010.



Figure 5.28: Ceniga and capah made of coloured lontar leaves for Galungan. Macang, Karangasem, 2/2/2012.



Figure 5.29: Lamak and tamiang made of coloured ibung leaves for Kuningan. Jegu, Tabanan, 2/11/2013.



Figure 5.30: Cloth and kepeng lamak with a palm leaf ceniga on top, for Galungan. Tihingtali, Karangasem, 1/2/2012.

The particular style of a village is often recognized and commented upon, especially by women who married into a different village. They were usually of the opinion that the style of their own village was the best or most complete or beautiful. For example Dayu Sayang, a woman of Brahmana descent who came from Tegallalang but married into Sanur, said that she liked the *cili* from the village of her parents (fig. 5.35) more than the ones in Sanur (fig. 5.26), although she found it difficult to explain why that was the case, since the meaning was the same (pers. com. 28/4/1994).

*Tukang lamak* themselves were sometimes rather critical about the work of *tukang* from other villages. *Tukang lamak* I Gusti Putu Nonderan thinks that the *lamak* in Padangtegal are more beautiful than elsewhere, because the motifs are comparable to motifs used in woodcarvings. This is especially the case with floral motifs, such as the *candigara*, but also with representational motifs. And so the *kekayonan* may be compared with a carving motif called *patra punggel* and the *gebogan* with motifs that appear on palace and temple gateways (*candi bentar*). Like woodcarving, making *lamak* is in Padangtegal mainly a man's craft.

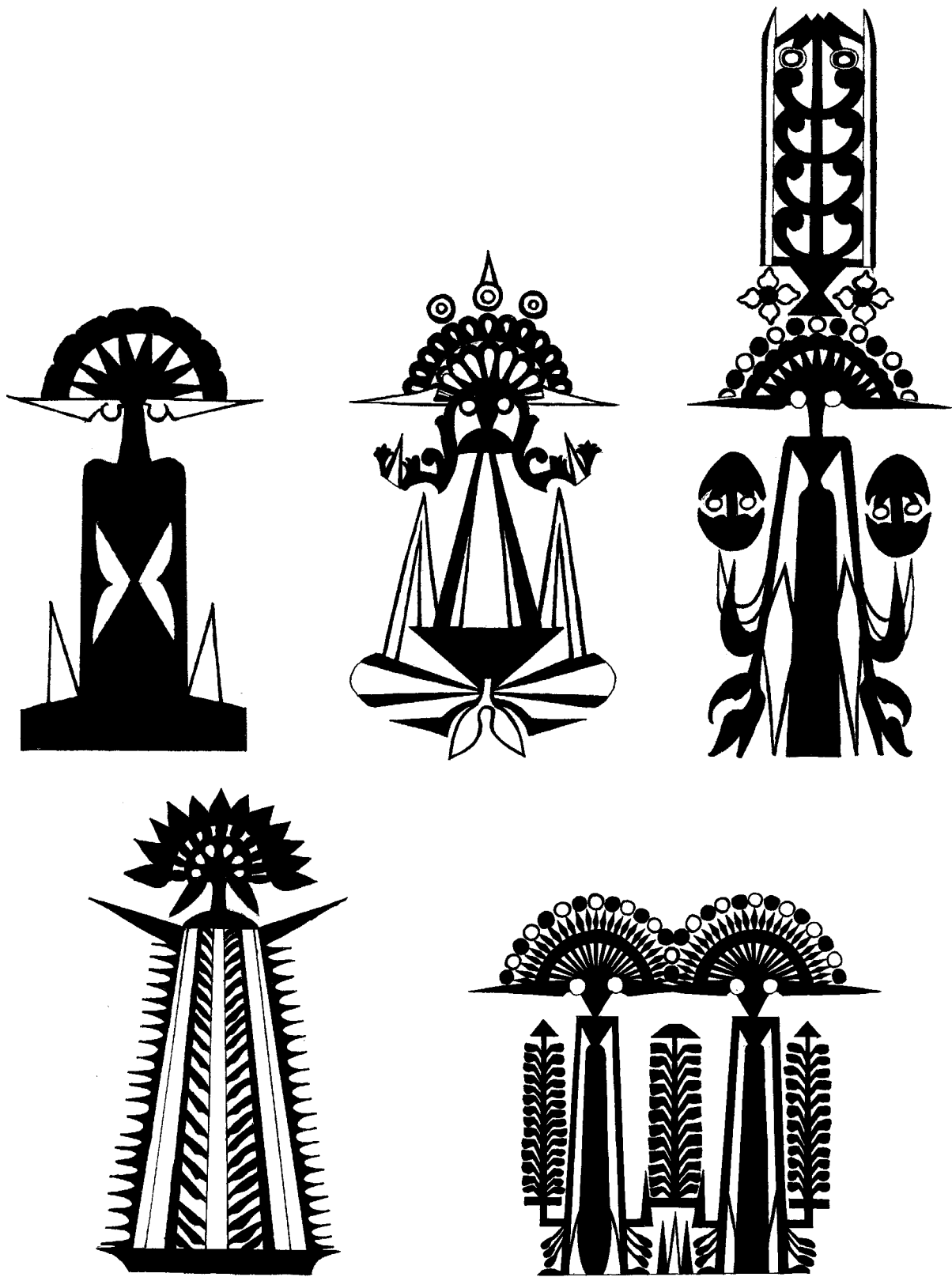
Although most of the data for this chapter were collected and most of the figures and photographs were made between 1982 and 1994, during visits to Bali between 2010 and 2016, when I attended Galungan three times (2010, 2012 and 2013), I was able to compare some recent village styles of *lamak* with the earlier ones. I found that despite all the changes that had taken place, the same style characteristics could still be recognized. To give just a few examples, in Pujung (fig. 5.42, 2010) and Ngis (fig. 5.43, 2012), I found the same styles of *lamak*, with respectively the dominant motifs of sun and moon and *gunung* (mountain) as in the 1980s and 1990s. Also the same colour scheme was used as before: in Ngis only the traditional light and dark green of the sugar palm leaves, and in Pujung only red as additional colour. The typical Tabanan *cili* with long, upright hairstyle or headdress, and arms bent upwards at the elbows, that I noticed in 1989 in the villages Jegu and Buruan (on the road to Penebel) were still present in 2013 (figs. 5.44-5.48). As regards additional colours, formerly in these villages only red was used but recent examples show the addition of purple and blue as well.

As for *lamak nganten*, on Galungan 2010 I saw in the district of Gianyar *lamak nganten* in more or less the same style as in the 1980s and 1990s. For example in Ubud was a *lamak nganten* in the distinctive Junjungan style (fig. 2.6). However, usually there were some changes, as can be seen on the photographs of two *lamak nganten* from the village of Lodtunduh. In 2010 (fig. 5.49) only the bottom half was similar to the ones Ni Ketut Pilik used to make (such as fig. 5.50, 6/7/1988), with from bottom to top, the *ringgitan* pattern, then *tingkang katak* and typical Lodtunduh *cili* with a kind of very long thumbnail. Instead of the *bulan tunjuk* motif, the moon as plant with sprouting flowers at the bottom, this *lamak* had a bowl or pot with sprouting flowers. Instead of two similar *cili nganten* above this pattern, on the new *lamak* two different *cili nganten*, the left one male and the right one female, were depicted. And above them, instead of a *gunung* motif, a new symbol in the form of a swastika appeared. As regards the use of additional colours, in Lodtunduh in former times the use of red was an exception (Ni Ketut Pilik only used some red paper in her *ibu* motifs), whereas in 2010 red dyed leaves were also used in other motifs.

#### 5.4.3 Individual variation

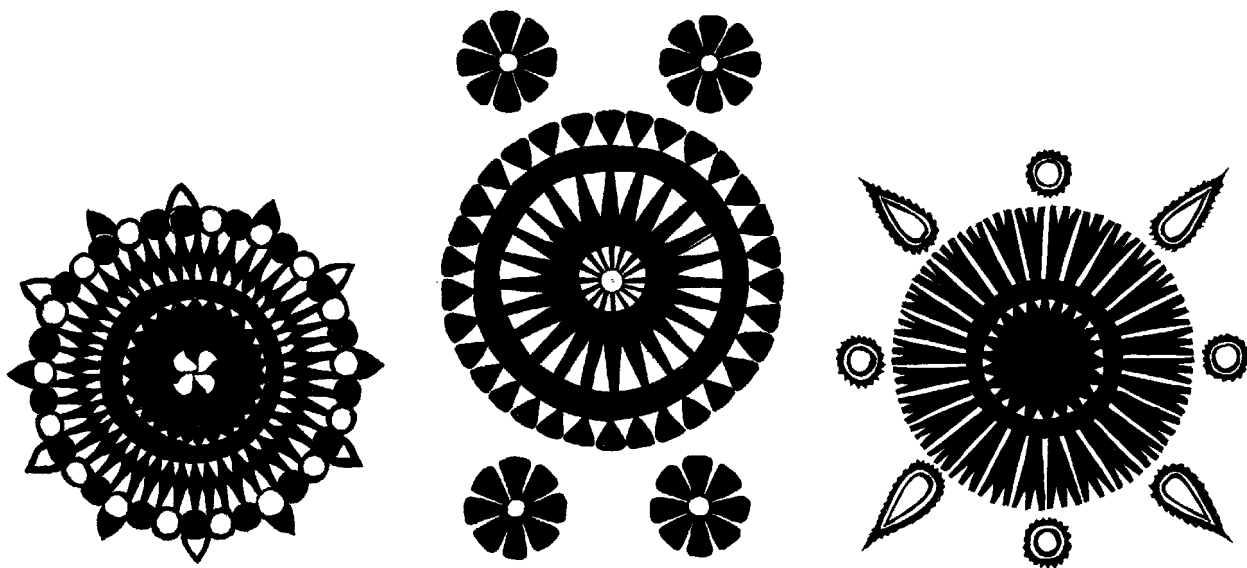
Within the style of any particular village, a range of variation on the level of the individual makers of *lamak* exists as well. As Gerbrands pointed out, "Even in the most conservative societies the margin of freedom which is allowed the individual in practice is much greater than ethnological theory was formerly willing to accept" (Gerbrands 1968:16).<sup>34</sup> Whereas already in 1927 Franz Boas wrote that "We have to turn our attention first of all to the artist

34 In the words of Biebuyck: "Undoubtedly, whatever the stringencies and conventions of style, purpose and expectation, the individual element is a powerful factor in explaining differences. Artists necessarily differ in training, in skill and technical proficiency, in maturity and social position, and in personality. Society can impose upon its artists a certain objective subject matter and style, but the artist himself has his own personal conception of the subject matter, a particular feeling for style, and a certain technique in executing the form" (Biebuyck 1969:6).

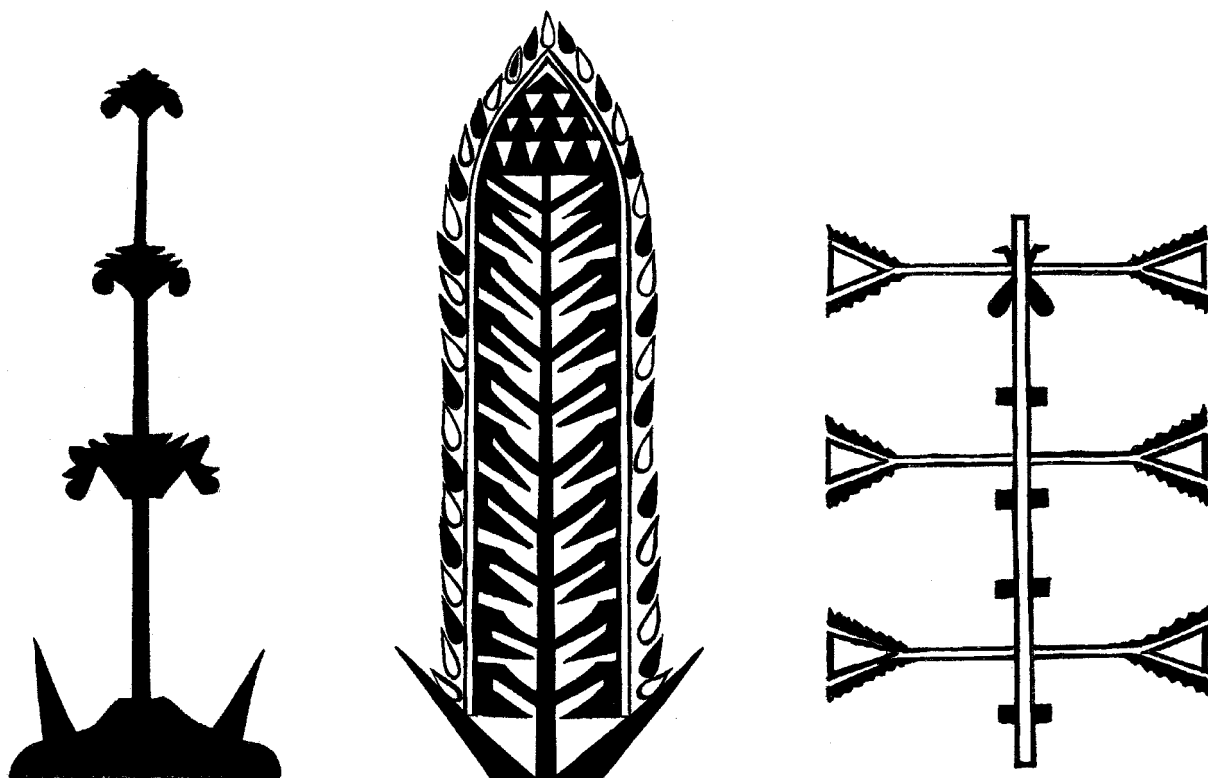


Figures 5.31-5.35: Cili figures on lamak in different villages in Gianyar, respectively Bakkaban, Tegalsuci, Tegallalang, Silungan and Tegallalang (Banjar Tengah).





Figures 5.36-5.38: The motif of the moon (bulan) in Tegallalang (fig. 5.36), Junjungan (fig. 5.37) and Jasan (fig. 5.38).



Figures 5.39-5.41: The tree (kekayonan) motif in Peliatan (fig. 5.39), Pujung Kaja (fig. 5.40) and Jasan (fig. 5.41).



Figure 5.42: Lamak for Galungan, Pujung (Sebatu), 12/5/2010.



Figure 5.43: Lamak for Galungan, Ngis (Manggis), 1/2/2012.





Figures 5.44-5.45: Lamak for Galungan, Jegu (Tabanan), respectively 30/8/1989 and 2/11/2013.



Figures 5.46-5.48: Cili on lamak for Galungan, all from villages on the road to Penebel (Tabanan), 2/11/2013.





Figures 5.49-5.50: Two lamak nganten made in Lottunduh for Galungan, respectively in 2010 and in 1988. The latter was made by Ni Ketut Pilik.



himself” (1955:155),<sup>35</sup> Gerbrands (1967) was one of the first anthropologists who studied individual woodcarvers (in the Asmat village of Amanamkai) and their individual, personal styles, which appeared to be “as characteristic as anybody’s handwriting” (Gerbrands 1969:58). In the village where Gerbrands worked, the woodcarvers and their art were certainly not anonymous. And likewise the making of *lamak* is not an anonymous creation, notwithstanding the remarks by Covarrubias: “The artist is in Bali essentially a craftsman and at the same time an amateur, casual and anonymous, who uses his talent knowing that no one will care to record his name for posterity” (1937:163).

Individual variation in the styles of *lamak* largely depends on the interest and skills of those who make the *lamak*, but also on factors like costs, availability of materials and time. These factors of course can vary as well for each *lamak* maker at different times and circumstances. For example in Jasan I was told by a woman that for the *sanggar penjor* at Galungan she usually makes two *lamak*, each with one *cili*, but when there is less material, one *lamak* with two *cili* is also acceptable and with even less material one *lamak* with only one *cili* would be sufficient (pers. com. 27/2/1988). For *tukang lamak* an important factor affecting variety is the number of ordered metres, and as a consequence which motifs are added to the basic ones, if a longer than average *lamak nganten* is ordered.

But even when all influencing factors are more or less equal, still no *lamak* is exactly the same, in each *lamak* a touch of individuality is visible, each motif shows in one way or another the hand of the maker. When for a temple festival different people are making *lamak*, usually a slight difference is seen between the different motifs, although they are executed according to the prevailing village style.

An example is given by the photographs of four *lamak* with a tree motif, made for two different temple festivals (*odalan*) in Intaran (Sanur) in 1988 (figs. 5.51-5.52) and 2012 (figs. 5.53-5.54). These *lamak* also illustrate that although there is individual variation noticeable, the specific village style of motifs and colours has not changed in 24 years.

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35 This quotation was often used by Gerbrands (1967:12; 1968:19; 1969:63).

The widest range of individual variation can be seen at times of Galungan, when *lamak* are visible in front of almost every house, in every street, in every village. It is mainly in details of the representational motifs that individual styles are visible within a village style. For example, the two *lamak* in figures 3.7 and 3.8 were made by the wife of Mangku Gede, *bendesa adat* of Lodtunduh (see Chapter 3), for Galungan on 10 December 1987 and 7 July 1988. Her own style is visible in the way she depicted a tree on a small hill and two half-moons with six stars. In 1987 she also depicted the *mangong* motif, but in 1988 she moved this motif to a separate small *lamak*, hanging directly from the *penjor*. There was no special reason for that, she just felt like doing it this way, she said. As in this example of Lodtunduh, I was able to identify different individual styles within the village style by comparing and photographing ‘ordinary’ *lamak* suspended from *penjor* in front of the same address during two or three Galungan periods between 1985 and 1988, in Tegallalang (Banjar Tengah, figs. 5.55-56), Pujung Kelod (figs. 5.57-5.59), Ubud, Jasan and Padangtegal.

In the same way, I ‘collected’ *lamak nganten* made by various *tukang lamak*. I was able to identify their styles by comparing different *lamak nganten* made by a particular *tukang*, for different people during the same Galungan and/or different Galungan periods. Because a *tukang lamak* always works within the style characteristics of the village where he or she lives, but often receive orders from people from a different village, one can see for instance a Junjungan style *lamak nganten* in Peliatan, or a Padangtegal style *lamak nganten* in Ubud. But within the style of their own village, *tukang lamak* often have their own personal style, mainly visible in the details of the motifs. But although *tukang lamak* were certainly not anonymous, for the people who had to make a choice when ordering *lamak nganten* the details of the individual style of particular *tukang* was often less important than their price per metre, or if their *lamak* were regarded as being ‘complete’ (*lengkap*).

I have been able to compare different *lamak nganten* made over the years or for different people in the same year, by several *tukang lamak*, among whom I give as examples Ni Ketut Pilik (Lodtunduh) (figs. 3.6 and 5.50), I Made Sadra



Figures 5.51-5.52: Two lamak with tree motif for an odalan in Pura Kahyangan, Intaran (Sanur), 18/6/1988.



Figures 5.53-5.54: Two lamak with tree motif for an odalan in Pura Agung, Intaran (Sanur), 13/2/2012.

(Padangtegal) (figs. 2.23, 3.2, 5.60-5.62), Ni Wayan Klepon (Junjungan) (figs. 2.22 and 3.4), Ni Wayan Jenjen (Kutri) (fig. 3.5) and Ni Ketut Resep (Peliatan) (figs. 5.63-5.64). Of these *tukang*, I have seen more examples of the work of I Made Sadra than of any other.<sup>36</sup>

When he had more than one order, he often cut the motifs for different *lamak* together at the same time (as was discussed in Chapter 4), and thus these *lamak* were usually identical (for example for Galungan 6 July 1988, fig. 5.61). But the *lamak nganten* he made for Galungan in previous years (figs. 5.60 (21/8/1985) and 5.62 (13/5/1987)) are very similar to the later ones. Pak Sadra differs from Pak Nonderan, for example, in the sense that for Pak Nonderan the *cili nganten* are very important, whereas Pak Sadra adds instead the *mas-masan* motif (fig. 3.35) when his *lamak* has to be more than 5 metres. Also the details of their *cili* differ: figure 5.66 is a *cili* from Pak Nonderan, and figure 5.65 from Pak Sadra. In both *cili* figures however one can recognize the style of the village of these *tukang lamak*, Padangtegal. Similarly, the distinctive style of the *cili* of Ni Ketut Pilik (fig. 5.67) and Ibu Merta (fig. 5.68) can be related to the style of their respective villages, Lodtunduh and Tegallalang (Banjar Penusuan).

To take another example, one can recognize a *lamak nganten* made by Ni Ketut Resep from Peliatan (figs. 5.63-5.64) by the umbrella above the heads of the *cili nganten*. In the village of Junjungan, the village style characterized by many flowers as part of the representational motifs was used by all *tukang lamak*. However, although they lived very close to one another, their work differed considerably. Ni Wayan Klepon never used the motif of the single *cili* in her *lamak nganten*, only the double *cili nganten* (fig. 5.69). In contrast, Ni Made Paji and Ni Nyoman Damping did use the single *cili* motif, and this *cili* always had a fan in each hand (fig. 5.70).

#### 5.4.4 Creativity

According to Biebuyck, “In judging the significance of self-expression and of creativity one cannot apply the term ‘artist’ indiscriminately to the makers

36 Between 1983 and 1994, I have seen his *lamak nganten* for seven different Galungan periods.

of all the objects produced. [...] Moreover, [...] there are beginning artists and mature ones [...]. Obviously the creative capacities of these various individuals differ radically” (Biebuyck 1969:22).

As discussed in the beginning of this section, already in the 1930s Walter Spies was fascinated by the beauty of the *lamak* and the enormous variety of their decorative elements. Like Walter Spies, I am impressed by the beauty of *lamak*, and I am intrigued by their astonishing variety. But even though over the years I have seen and ‘collected’ thousands of *lamak*, through photographs and slides and identification of museum collections, once in a while I came across a striking expression of individual creativity, a new pattern or a beautiful new design of an old motif. For example four long and special *lamak* hanging from the *bale kulkul* of the Pura Puseh/Desa in Sibang Gede (26 April 1994, figs. 5.71-5.73) had unusual *cili* figures and beautiful detailed shrine motifs which I had never seen before.

In such examples one can almost feel the pleasure of the maker, when he or she is trying out new forms. In my ‘western’ eyes, these are the moments where skillfull craft becomes creative art, even more impressive because this art is not made to last, but only to function for a few days. In the words of Gerbrands, “Individual artistry does not express itself solely in the creation of new forms, however. [...] Only a master artist has succeeded in providing himself with the freedom within the framework of tradition that is essential for a unique achievement” (1967:17).

Figures 5.74-5.75 show two of my favourite *lamak*, from different areas in different years. *Lamak* figure 5.74 is from Amlapura (Galungan 2012) and shows a rather modern way of integrating a stylized face into the *lamak* as a whole. *Lamak* figure 5.75, made of durable, partly dyed *lontar* leaves, I saw at Galungan on 24 October 1990 in the village of Ngis in Karangasem. It was a unique *lamak*, the only one of this kind in the whole village, where otherwise only traditional two-coloured palm leaf *lamak* with mountain motifs were visible. The *lamak* was made by Ni Luh KOMPIANG METRI (pers. com. 25/11/1990), who had inherited from her grandmother Ni Nyoman Sasak the interest in experimenting with new materials and motifs. On Galungan 23 years later I revisited her house in





Figures 5.55-5.56: Lamak for Galungan, Banjar Sapat, Tegallalang, 7/7/1988 and 31/8/1989.





Figures 5.57-5.59: Lamak for Galungan, Banjar Pujung Kelod, Sebatu, 13/5/1987, 9/12/1987 and 7/7/1988.



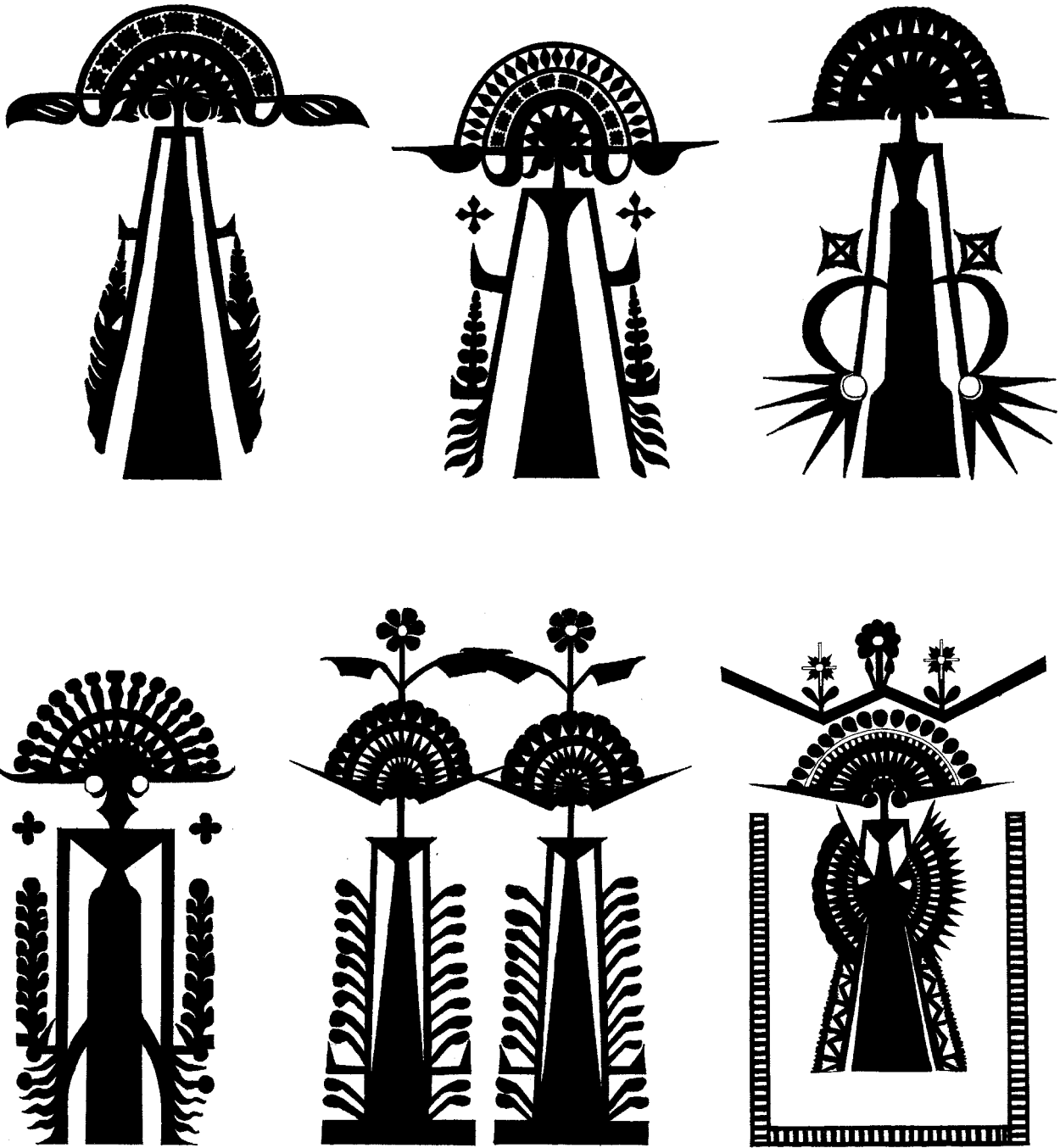


Figures 5.60-5.62: Three lamak nganten made by I Made Sadra (Padangtegal). Ubud, 21/8/1985; Puri Kelodan, Ubud, 6/7/1988; and Banjar Padangtegal Kaja, Ubud, 13/5/1987.





Figures 5.63-5.64: Two lamak nganten made by Ni Ketut Resep, Peliatan, 9/12/1987 and 6/7/1988.



Figures 5.65-5.70: Cili figures, in the style of: I Made Sadra, I Gusti Putu Nonderan, Ni Ketut Pilik, Ibu Merta, Ni Wayan Klepon, and Ni Made Paji respectively.

Ngis. The *lamak* hanging from the shrine on the *penjor* in front of her house was now similar to the other *lamak* in the same street, with the traditional Karangasem mountain motifs. From her relatives I learned that she had moved to San Francisco, after having married an American (pers. com. 23/10/2013).

Many of the more impressive permanent *lamak* in private and museum collections, for example the special blue-white woven *lamak* discussed in Chapter 4, which were said to have been made by one person (Men Nis from Kesiman), were also probably the result of individual creativity. The beauty of the *lamak* has inspired creativity in many an artist, from village craftspeople to a professional foreign artist like Walter Spies.

Comparing creativity at Galungan in 2010, 2012 and 2013 with the 1980s, the main difference was noticeable not so much in the *lamak* but much more so in many of the *penjor*. Not only in Gianyar, but also in Tabanan and Karangasem, a new style has developed, inspired or influenced by other forms of ritual art, such as cremation towers and large offerings. Especially the crowned serpent, *naga*, and the bird Garuda have made their appearance, often crafted of gold and other coloured paper, polystyrene or foam plastic, wood and cloth, but also purely decorative elements, made of palm leaf, have become very elaborate. Often these palm leaf decorations are now made entirely from the more durable *lontar* leaves (fig. 5.76). Such entire *penjor* are also for sale, and in 2010 I was told that according to a newspaper article the most expensive *penjor* could be as much as 1.5 million rupiah (approximately €150). In these cases, other factors than creativity play a role, as Widiastini (2013) has noted. According to her, “*Penjor* has become a means to reveal one’s personal status in society. [...] Balinese Hindu’s show their lifestyle as well as social status through luxurious *penjor*, and their costs are expensive” (Widiastini 2013:238-239).

Some of my informants said that they had bought the special *lontar* leaf *penjor* decorations in Gianyar, the area best known for its artistic developments, but they are nowadays also for sale in the various *toko yadnya* and *lontar jejaitan* workshops in other parts of Bali, like the one in Bebandem where Wayan Suartini worked. In the 1980s only *sampian penjor* were for sale, and the *penjors* them-

selves were made with the help of neighbours and family, in the spirit of *gotong royong*.

The big, spherical-shaped decorations at the lower end of a *penjor* which nowadays can be seen everywhere in Bali, were in Karangasem called *janur*. This word is Indonesian (and Javanese) for young coconut palm leaf, what is called *busung* in Bali. These forms would seem to be related to Javanese wedding decorations made from young coconut leaf. It is uncertain just how this influence spread, possibly through Balinese returning from Java or Javanese migrating to Bali, or possibly taken from various booklets which show how to make Javanese wedding decorations from *janur*, with titles such as “*Cara merangkai janur*”. Those tree-like wedding decorations look very much like the new *penjor* decorations in Bali.

In 2016 in the area of Ubud I noticed a new development of the *penjor* which were still visible along the roads after the previous Galungan. Some of the *sanggar penjor* were made of wood, and the roofs were decorated with depictions of Indian deities, like Ganesha and Kresna. These representations are similar to the posters of these figures which are nowadays for sale in many shops for ritual paraphernalia.

These kinds of ever-changing ‘fashion’ and ‘conspicuous consumption’ and rivalry that occurs in the case of *penjor* does not have an equivalent in the field of *lamak*. One might say that the display at temple ceremonies of relatively expensive *kepeng lamak*, especially the ones made of the ‘*panca datu*’ (consisting of five metals) coins, points in that direction. It should be noted that these permanent *lamak* are usually partly covered with a palm leaf *lamak*.

## 5.5 Conclusion

As ritual objects, *lamak* play a role within a network of invisible and visible beings. *lamak* make the offerings work, but it is the Balinese who create the *lamak*, time and again, owing to the ephemerality of their natural materials.

A *lamak* is almost never an individual product, related to one person only. Behind each *lamak* there exists a social network, because no-one ever makes a *lamak* just for oneself. He or she makes *lamak* because it is part of temple duties or of an old





*Figures 5.71-5.73: Lamak on bale kulkul, Pura Puseh/Desa, Sibang Gede, 26/4/1994.*





Figure 5.72.



Figure 5.73.





Figure 5.74: Lamak for Galungan, Bebandem, 1/2/2012.



Figure 5.75: Lamak for Galungan, made by Ni Luh Kompiang Metri, Ngis (Manggis), 24/10/1990.





Figure 5.76: Penjor for Galungan, Payangan, 3/11/2013.

relationship with a court, or of mutual help in the *banjar* or within family. He or she represents his or her own family, a temple congregation, a *banjar*, or any other social organization he or she is a member of, and on behalf of which the *lamak* plays its mediating role. The blessings ‘coming down’ the *lamak* in return for the offerings on top of it are not intended for the maker of the *lamak* only, but for the social group he or she is representing. The creation of a *lamak* is not only done for other persons, but also often together with other persons. Many *lamak* makers help others with less skills or time, or are helped by family members, on the basis of reciprocity.

If people do not have the natural materials available for making *lamak* themselves, they at least buy the leaves from somebody else, usually at the market. But if they also do not have time or interest to make *lamak*, they buy or order them from Balinese who are professionally involved in their making. Not only do women buy more *lamak* at markets, or families order *lamak nganten* from outsiders, but also new more economic ways of making *lamak* are invented. The economic network of professional makers and sellers and the transactions with *tukang lamak*, entrepreneurs and shopkeepers support the social network of the actual users of *lamak*. This commercialization of *lamak*, which was already increasing in the 1980s, is an acceptable and accepted solution for the Balinese who are not able (or willing) to make their own *lamak*, but still want to use them.

In the second part of this chapter I investigated some aspects of the stylistic diversity of *lamak* and probable changes over time. Although regional variation of the materials used was in the past partly a result of ecological conditions, due to much better transport systems the leaves of the *lontar* palm, for example, which grows mainly in the dry coastal areas in the east and the north, are now available all over Bali. Also all kinds of colourful plastic decorative elements are imported from and influenced by the latest ‘fashion’ in the ‘artistic’ region, Gianyar.

The wide variation of motifs is also a result of a social process, since the way of learning is by imitating the village style, the work of other people, in combination with individual creativity of the makers who add their personal touch in the details. Even though palm leaf *lamak* are ephemeral

and they wither away after a few days, many *lamak* makers do their best to make the motifs as beautiful as possible.

They do this not only to please deities and ancestors, but also because their work is visible to other people. *Lamak* are seen in front of every house at Galungan festivals, so perhaps a certain competition between *lamak* makers may play a role as well. Also when groups of women make *lamak* in preparation for a temple festival, the women with the most talent are those who make the more elaborate ones. But even when a longer *lamak* is communal work, as often is the case, the hand of the person who has cut the motifs is recognizable. His or her individual style is visible. In particular, *lamak nganten* can be identified not only as being made in a particular village, but even as the work of a particular *tukang lamak*, even if this ‘artwork’ is not signed by the maker.

Despite growing commercialization compared with 30 years ago, traditional criteria still prevail. The majority of *lamak* is still made from natural materials, has a vertical, generally three-part structure and is decorated with motifs of life which show almost no change. The commercialization of *lamak* takes place only within the context of Balinese ritual. Unlike woodcarving and painting, this form of Balinese art has not developed into tourist or airport art, and is not part of the general commodification of Balinese culture.<sup>37</sup> Only a number of permanent *lamak* have found their way into private or museum collections, and this on account of the special interest that *lamak* have for certain collectors.

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37 See the work of Picard (1996) on ‘cultural tourism’. In the 1970s when the growth of tourism had just started, palm leaf *lamak* were used as decorations in hotels. However, according to I Gusti Agung Mas Putra (1975b), these decorative *lamak* should not be accompanied by the *gantung-gantungan* with *porosan* (small betel quid) which has religious connotations, as discussed in Chapter 2.



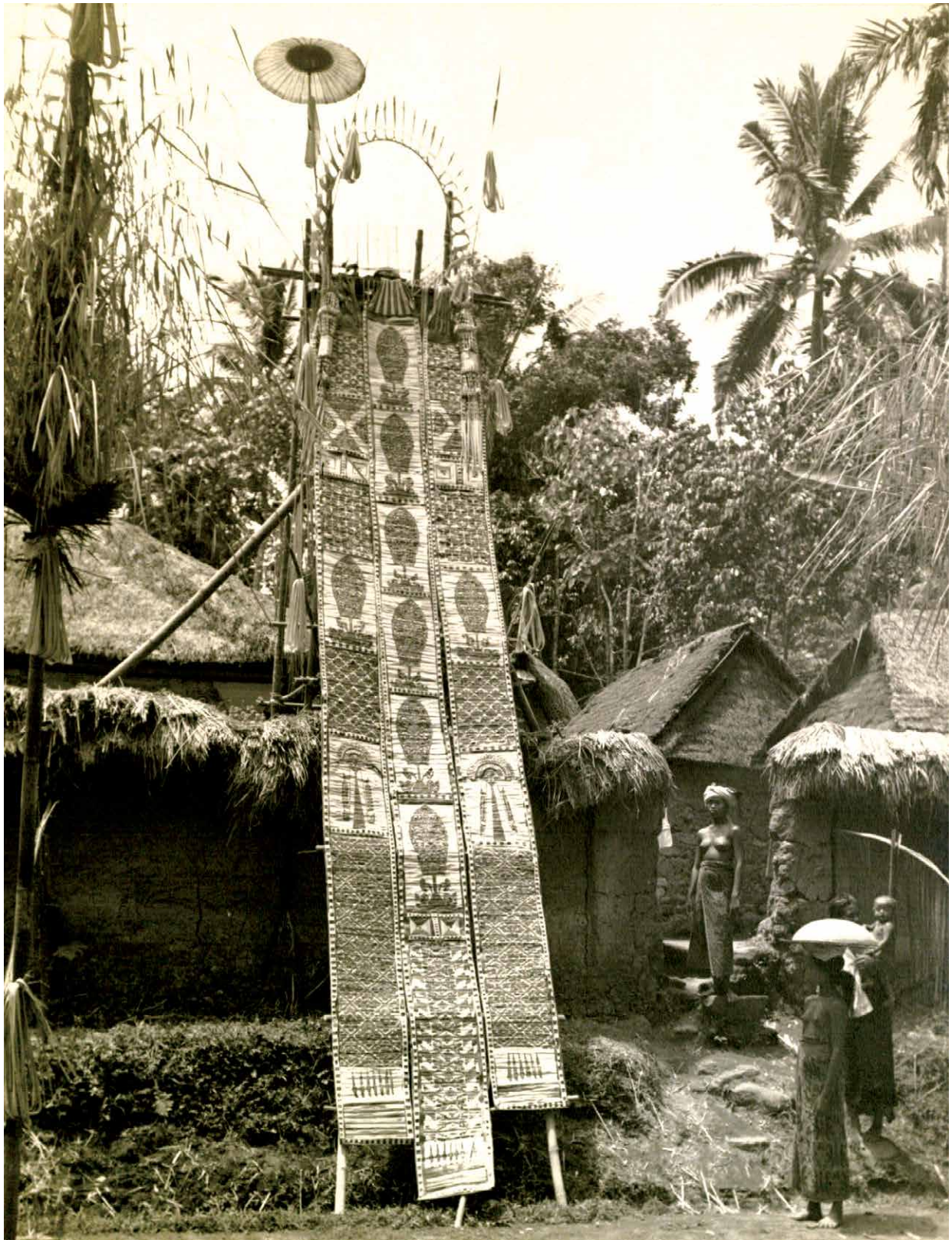


Figure 5.77: A unique triple lamak for Galungan in Ubud, photographed in 1939 by Philip Hanson Hiss (Image PPC.H57, Box 8, American Museum of Natural History Library).





Figure 6.1: Lamak with spectacular cili figure at Galungan. Pemuguban (Tabanan), 30/8/1989.