AKADEMIK E-ISSN 2774-8863
Jurnal Mahasiswa Humanis
Vol. 5, No. 2, Mei 2025

The Meaning of the Animated Music Video: *Luh Ayu Manik Mas* from the Perspective of Barthes' Semiology

Aprilia Trisya Devi[1], Cantika Proborini Sekar Hutami[2], Ronaldo Alexander Sompotan[3]
LSPR Institute of Communication and Bussiness, Indonesia
apriltrisya97@gmail.com[1], 23072190026@lspr.edu[2], ronaldosompotan@gmail.com[3]

Submitted: 11th February 2025 | **Edited**: 26th April 2025 | **Issued**: 01st May 2025

Cited on: Devi, A. T., Hutami, C. P. S., & Sompotan, R. A. (2025). The Meaning of the Animated Music Video: Luh Ayu Manik Mas from the Perspective of Barthes' Semiology. *AKADEMIK: Jurnal Mahasiswa Humanis, 5*(2), 815-829.

ABSTRACT

This study applies Roland Barthes' semiology theory to analyze semiotics in the animated film *Luh Ayu Manik Mas Full Animation New*. The film depicts a Balinese heroine striving to safeguard Bali's environment and cultural heritage from various threats. Through semiotic analysis, this research explores the denotative and connotative meanings embedded in the film's narrative and visual elements, including character representation, traditional Balinese attire, symbols, and rituals. The findings indicate that the stories within each scene highlight Balinese cultural values while promoting environmental conservation. Furthermore, the film reinforces Bali's indigenous identity by blending modern and traditional elements in its storytelling. The study's results are expected to contribute to media semiotics research, particularly regarding the cultural representation in contemporary animation.

Keywords: Animation, Balinese Culture, Luh Ayu Manik Mas, Roland Barthes, and Semiotics

INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-paced world, where technological advancements are rapidly evolving, the balance between human relationships, the environment, and religious harmony is often overlooked. Among the most evident consequences of these changes are environmental shifts, some of which become more apparent over time, such as the increasing frequency of flooding in certain areas during the rainy season. This situation has raised concerns, particularly among younger generations, who are becoming more aware of environmental issues, waste management, and efforts to minimize waste production at both individual and community levels.

Since human life is deeply interconnected with the environment, addressing environmental concerns is crucial Since human life is deeply interconnected with the environment, addressing environmental concerns is crucial (Purwanto & Nugroho,

2023; Santoso & Prabowo, 2021). This growing environmental awareness has inspired young people in various regions to form groups dedicated to environmental conservation. Initiatives such as Bye-Bye Plastic Bags, Malu Dong, Sungai Watch, Pandawara Group, and Basa Bali Wiki, among others, have emerged as part of this movement. These organizations raise awareness through diverse strategies, including social media campaigns, educational seminars, environmental education, collaborations with institutions and businesses, government partnerships, audiovisual campaigns, and book publications. This growing environmental awareness has inspired young people in various regions to form groups dedicated to environmental conservation. Initiatives such as Bye-Bye Plastic Bags, Malu Dong, Sungai Watch, Pandawara Group, and Basa Bali Wiki, among others, have emerged as part of this movement. These organizations raise awareness through diverse strategies, including social media campaigns, educational seminars, environmental education, collaborations with institutions and businesses, government partnerships, audiovisual campaigns, and book publications.

The concept of "environmental communication" refers to the strategies and approaches used in media and communication processes to facilitate public engagement, influence policymaking, and support the implementation of environmental policies (Sari & Wijaya, 2023; Kartika & Putra, 2021). As both a practical and constitutive tool, environmental communication helps people understand the relationship between humans, nature, and the environment as a whole. It serves as a symbolic mechanism for framing environmental issues and examining how different societies respond to them (Purnama & Rahayu, 2022).

Environmental communication serves two primary functions: (1) a pragmatic function, which involves informing, warning, influencing, and assisting in resolving environmental challenges; and (2) a constitutive function, which helps shape and reinforce narratives related to environmental issues and nature (Swarnawati, 2023). The main actors in environmental communication include government agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involved in environmental management.

This study explores an environmental initiative by Basa Bali Wiki that aims to educate the public on environmental sustainability. The initiative features a comic book centered around a female superhero named Luh Ayu Manik Mas. Through this project, Basa Bali Wiki seeks to empower young people, particularly young women, by

encouraging them to engage with the government and the broader community on issues they find most significant. This engagement is facilitated through the use of local perspectives and language. Collaborating with the community and local artists, Basa Bali Wiki has developed the character of Luh Ayu Manik Mas, drawing inspiration from Indonesia's traditional *wayang kulit* (shadow puppet storytelling). The overarching goal is to inspire youth to take action in support of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The story follows Luh Ayu Manik, an eighth-grade student from Bali, who leads an ordinary life but transforms into Luh Ayu Manik Mas—an Indonesian superhero who utilizes social media to share traditional Balinese wisdom. She is portrayed as courageous, strong, agile, and quick, with a mission to empower local communities in preserving their cultural and environmental heritage.

Based on this context, the purpose of this study is to analyze the symbols and signs used in the Basa Bali Wiki campaign to uncover the intended messages conveyed by the initiative. Using semiotic analysis, the study examines how the Balinese community perceives environmental issues, as reflected in the key symbols identified within the animated music video. This approach enables a deeper understanding of the cultural background, the values embedded in these symbols, and their role in communicating the campaign's environmental conservation message. By deconstructing these elements, the study aims to provide insights into how the Balinese interpret Basa Bali Wiki's environmental efforts and how these symbolic representations contribute to raising awareness about sustainability.

LITERATURE REVIEW

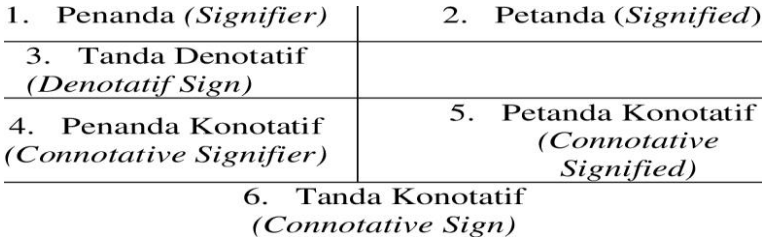
Barthes' Semiology Theory

Semiology is the study of language structure as a system of signs. One of the key figures in the development of this field was Ferdinand de Saussure, whose theories were later expanded upon by Roland Barthes. While Saussure analyzed signs from a structural perspective, Barthes approached them from a historical standpoint (Sutrisno & Rachman, 2023; Wijaya & Sari, 2022).

Barthes argued that the meaning of linguistic signs varies depending on the context in which they are used. He referred to these different expressions of meaning as

 E-ISSN 2774-8863

myths. According to Barthes, myths can be conveyed through various forms of media, including photography, film, video, painting, and music, all of which rely on cultural symbols and derive their meaning from specific historical contexts. In his framework, myths function as a second-order system of signs that shape how society constructs meaning (Saputra & Lestari, 2023; Prasetyo & Hidayat, 2022).



Picture 1. Roland Barthes' Semiology Theory

The image mentioned above illustrates Barthes' semiology theory, where the physical form of a sign—such as words, images, sounds, or objects—used to convey meaning is known as the *Signifier*. In semiotics, any visible or audible element is classified as a signifier. Meanwhile, the *Signified* represents the mental concept or meaning associated with the signifier, encompassing the idea or message being communicated.

At a fundamental level, the *Denotative Sign* refers to the direct relationship between the signifier and the signified, conveying a straightforward, literal meaning without requiring additional interpretation. Beyond this, the *Connotative Signifier* carries meanings that extend beyond its denotative function. These meanings are influenced by subjective perceptions, cultural contexts, and emotional associations. The additional layers of meaning attached to the connotative signifier are referred to as the *Connotative Signified*, which requires a more nuanced and context-based interpretation. To fully grasp these signs and their implications, a deep understanding of their contextual background is essential.

Video

A music video serves as an effective communication tool because it dynamically and visually conveys the creator's intended message (Sutrisno, 2022). As a form of moving image, a music video plays a crucial role in shaping communication systems by integrating sound and visuals to express specific ideas. Due to its ability to present messages in an engaging and easily comprehensible manner, music videos are widely utilized in various communication contexts (Pratama & Nugroho, 2023).

Animation

The term *animation* originates from the Latin words *anima*, meaning "life," and *animare*, meaning "to breathe life into." Over time, its English definition has evolved to signify "giving life to" or creating the illusion of movement. In Indonesian, animation is commonly associated with the creation of animated films or cartoons. This illusion of motion is achieved by rapidly displaying a sequence of images, each showing slight changes in an object's position. When viewed in quick succession, the human eye perceives continuous movement rather than individual frames. This technique is commonly referred to as *stop-frame animation* (Aziz, 2019).

According to the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (2002:253), animation is defined as a television program consisting of a series of drawings or images that are mechanically altered to create the impression of movement on screen. There are various definitions of animation, and it is often categorized into three-dimensional (3D) animation, two-dimensional (2D) animation, and anime. However, animation is not limited to these classifications. While 3D animation is a modern technique that realistically represents objects from multiple angles, Japanese animator Nakami argues that it does not diminish the value of 2D animation. Although 3D animation excels in realistic representation, 2D animation offers greater artistic expression. Consequently, both 2D and 3D animation hold equal significance, each possessing unique advantages (Putra & Sari, 2023; Lestari & Wijaya, 2022).

METHOD

This study will analyze the animated music video Luh Ayu Manik Mas using a constructivist paradigm and a qualitative interpretative approach. This method allows for an in-depth exploration of the video's layered meanings by focusing on both the production process and how audiences interpret and construct meaning. The research adopts a constructivist perspective, which posits that reality is shaped by personal experiences and social interactions. This perspective helps in understanding how the animation’s narrative and visual elements create and convey specific messages (Sutrisno & Rachman, 2023; Prasetyo & Lestari, 2022).

The primary aim of this study is to examine how *Luh Ayu Manik Mas* influences cultural awareness and reflects the values it embodies. By analyzing the video's lyrics

and visual elements, the research seeks to uncover meanings and symbolism related to the environment and Balinese culture. The study will specifically investigate how these elements represent cultural values and environmental messages, offering a detailed interpretation of both the lyrical content and visual imagery.

To achieve this, the study will apply Barthes' semiology theory to examine the semiotic elements within the animated music video. This approach facilitates the identification and interpretation of the signs and symbols embedded in the lyrics and visuals. By analyzing both denotation and connotation, the research will explore how specific meanings are constructed and conveyed to the audience. The objective is to reveal deeper layers of meaning that may not be immediately apparent but are crucial in communicating messages about environmental conservation and Balinese cultural identity. Ultimately, this study aims to uncover the cultural and symbolic significance of the video through the lens of Barthes' semiotic framework.

RESULTS

Analysis

This section presents the findings of the semiotic analysis of the animated video *Luh Ayu Manik Mas* using Roland Barthes' theory. The study examines how myths, connotative meanings, and denotative signs are represented in the animated music video. By applying Barthes' semiotic approach, this research aims to uncover complex and often overlooked layers of meaning within *Luh Ayu Manik Mas*.

The song lyrics in *Luh Ayu Manik Mas* were originally written in Balinese and have been translated into both Indonesian and English. Since the younger generation is increasingly shifting away from the Balinese language, these lyrics serve as a means of preserving and promoting it. Additionally, by providing translations into Indonesian and English, the video ensures that audiences beyond Bali can also understand the environmental message that *Basa Bali Wiki* seeks to convey through the character of Luh Ayu Manik Mas.

 E-ISSN 2774-8863

Analysis of Selected Scene 1

<table>
<tr><td>Penanda (Signifier)</td><td>Petanda (Signified)</td></tr>
<tr><td>
</td><td>The lyrics heard during this scene are “Ngajaga Jagat Rahayu”, which translates to “Maintaining the harmony of the three realms”. This phrase reflects the Balinese philosophical concept of balance and harmony among nature, humanity, and the spiritual world.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Tanda Denotatif (Denotative Signs)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Traditional Balinese clothing, such as a sash and headpiece, is worn by the young female character, Luh Ayu Manik Mas. This outfit is an example of traditional Balinese attire that is frequently worn for cultural or ceremonial occasions. The word "ketentraman di tiga alam" or, in the original Balinese lyrics, "Ngajaga Jagat Rahayu" also appears in this scene's lyrics. It means "Maintaining harmony in the three realms."</td></tr>
<tr><td>Penanda Konotatif
(Conotative Signifier)</td><td>Petanda Konotatif
(Conotative Signified)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Wearing traditional Balinese clothing, the character Luh Ayu Manik Mas is portrayed similarly to a wayang (shadow puppet) figure. Additionally, the red, black, and white whip has a particular connotative connotation.

These hues represent Tri Datu to Bali's Hindu population, which is connected to: Red, which stands for Dewa Brahma, the creator's (God's) manifestation. Black, in honor of the preserver Dewa Wisnu. White, standing in for the destroyer Dewa Siwa.</td><td>In the illustration of Luh Ayu Manik Mas, the red, black, and white whip has a specific meaning. Luh Ayu Manik Mas is presented in this way as a defender of the environment and the natural world. The hues of the whip itself give it a deeper meaning, highlighting how Luh Ayu Manik Mas follows Hindu teachings, which support the idea that the environment and natural balance must be preserved in harmony.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Tanda Konotatif (Conotative Sign)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Tri Datu is represented by Luh Ayu Manik Mas, who is clad in traditional Balinese garb and is brandishing a crimson, black, and white whip. It is implied by this whip that Luh Ayu Manik Mas aims to preserve natural equilibrium. She is shown as a Balinese woman who adamantly maintains that everyone in society has a shared obligation to maintain environmental harmony and balance.</td></tr>
</table>

Source : Research Data, 2025

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Analysis of Selected Scene 2

Penanda *(Signifier)*	Petanda *(Signified)*
	The phrases "Mangkin titiang ngayah Ring Pawongan, Palemahan, tur Hyang Widhi" are reflected in the images 1, 2, 3, and 4. Tri Hita Karana…," which emphasizes harmony between people, nature, and the divine, is a Balinese philosophical notion. The Tri Datu bracelet, which represents the three Hindu gods Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, is worn by a young female character. She is also decked with canang (offering platters), a sash (selendang), and a frangipani flower (bunga kamboja), all of which are customarily utilized in Balinese religious events. In Balinese Hindu traditions, these components stand for devotion, spirituality, and a strong cultural bond with the natural world and the divine.
Tanda Denotatif *(Denotative Signs)*	
A frangipani flower (bunga kamboja), a prominent component of Balinese Hindu prayer ceremonies, is displayed on the head of Luh Ayu Manik Mas, a Balinese adolescent with long black hair. She has Tri Datu bracelets on her left and right wrists, which stand for the three Hindu gods Shiva, Vishnu, and Brahma. An important component of Balinese Hindu rites is highlighted in image 2 by the canang, or Balinese offering trays. One of the urgent environmental problems in her immediate vicinity is depicted in Image 3, which shows a heap of rubbish. In contrast, image 4 shows Luh Ayu Manik Mas getting ready for a prayer ceremony. Her yellow sash and knotted hair symbolize her devotion and preparation. As expressed in the words, the Tri Hita Karana notion is graphically reinforced by these four images. This idea, which stresses harmonious interactions between people, the natural world, and the supernatural, fits in nicely with the animated video's themes of environmental awareness. This picture aptly illustrates how animation may function as a medium to communicate cultural and ecological ideas through both visual and symbolic storytelling, which is relevant to your study focus on semiotic analysis and environmental representation in media.	
Penanda Konotatif *(Conotative Signifier)*	Petanda Konotatif *(Conotative Signified)*

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In addition to being associated with tradition, Luh Ayu Manik Mas is shown as a teenage girl who actively participates in its practice. Her youthful identity is symbolized by her pink outfit and knotted hair, which further solidifies her status as a contemporary Balinese adolescent who respects traditional norms. The picture shows her and another person getting ready for a prayer ceremony, emphasizing the Balinese Hindu customs. The lyrics "Palemahan, Pawongan, Hyang Widhi" emphasize the significance of balancing relationships between nature (Palemahan), fellow humans (Pawongan), and the holy (Hyang Widhi). This scene visually reflects the Tri Hita Karana philosophy.	The representation of Luh Ayu Manik Mas through her pink clothing reveals her identity as a happy and energetic adolescent. Furthermore, the picture supports her adherence to the Tri Hita Karana concept, as evidenced by her dedication to protecting environmental equilibrium by upholding the harmonious link between: Palemahan, or the interaction between people and environment; Pawongan, or the relationship between people and society; and Parahyangan, or the relationship between people and God. In keeping with Balinese cultural norms, this portrayal emphasizes her function as a protector of harmony and balance while highlighting the significance of spiritual devotion and environmental preservation.
Tanda Konotatif *(Conotative Sign)*	
The fact that Luh Ayu Manik Mas is shown as a teenager dressed in pink represents her upbeat and impressionable personality. The picture demonstrates her dedication to implementing the Tri Hita Karana philosophy, which emphasizes group efforts to preserve environmental equilibrium. Her contribution to balancing the interactions between people, the natural world, and the divinity is emphasized in this portrayal, which upholds ecological consciousness and cultural values.	

Source : Research Data, 2025

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Analysis of Selected Scene 3

Penanda *(Signifier)*	Petanda *(Signified)*
   	The lyrics, "Atur titiang antuk manah ring desa," are graphically represented by the artwork. The theme of "ring kala patra Kerahayuan tri buana semesta" is one of harmony and balance in the cosmos. The community is shown in Image 1 participating in a prayer service close to the shore, signifying their commitment to harmony and their spiritual bond with the natural world. Image 2 highlights the environmental problems plaguing the area and shows the detrimental effects of improperly handled garbage. The angry sea giant in Image 3 stands out against a raging ocean, maybe signifying the effects of human activity on marine ecosystems and nature's response to environmental damage. The interaction between Luh Ayu Manik Mas and a glowing divine figure in the ocean in Image 4 represents a spiritual conversation or divine guidance, highlighting the value of environmental care, wisdom, and balance in Balinese culture.
Tanda Denotatif *(Denotative Signs)*	
Hindus in Bali have traditionally practiced the prayer ritual by the shore, which is carried out by Luh Ayu Manik Mas through the offering of sesajen (offerings). Devotion and appreciation for the natural world and the holy are reflected in this activity. A fundamental virtue ingrained in human relationships, the surroundings, and the surrounding nature is the	

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<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">spirit of mutual collaboration (gotong royong), which is portrayed in Image 2. The picture highlights the detrimental effects of human carelessness with regard to environmental preservation by showing a group of individuals who are horrified to find a turtle with plastic debris lodged in its nostril. The fight with the sea monster represents the fury of nature when it is injured and functions as both a plot point and a major conflict. This conflict emphasizes how urgent it is to safeguard the ecosystem in order to avoid negative outcomes. A moment of introspection and a request for heavenly protection are symbolized by the dialogue between Luh Ayu Manik Mas and the glowing divine figure in the ocean. This image emphasizes the spiritual aspect of environmental conservation, reaffirming that, according to Balinese Hindu beliefs, protecting nature is both a physical and a religious duty.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Penanda Konotatif
(Conotative Signifier)</td><td>Petanda Konotatif
(Conotative Signified)</td></tr>
<tr><td>An photograph of Luh Ayu Manik Mas performing a prayer ceremony with canang gifts near the beach serves as an illustration of her identity as a Balinese Hindu. A key component of Balinese Hindu customs, this scene highlights her spiritual commitment and reverence for the natural world. The following image illustrates the community's concern when they see a turtle suffering from plastic garbage, signifying the harm that human carelessness does to the ecosystem. This embodies the fundamental principles of Tri Hita Karana, especially the significance of preserving peace between people and the natural world. The sea monster is shown as a challenge to humanity, highlighting our shared obligation to preserve and reestablish the natural equilibrium. As a protector of the natural world, it also symbolizes Luh Ayu Manik Mas's courage in facing environmental dangers. The deity that emits golden light is a symbol of the Supreme Being's protection and direction throughout difficult times. The scene in which Luh Ayu Manik Mas is shown conversing with the divine figure represents the relationship between people and God (Parahyangan), reaffirming the need of maintaining spiritual equilibrium as a fundamental component of Tri Hita Karana philosophy.</td><td>As a vital component of maintaining equilibrium in life, spiritual communication between people and God is reflected in the prayer ritual by the sea, which represents harmony between humans and nature. This deed reinforces the significance of preserving equilibrium by serving as a reminder of the connection between the natural and spiritual realms. The need for environmental education is highlighted by the community's care for the environment, which is shown through gotong royong, or mutual collaboration, which ensures that awareness and responsibility are passed down from one generation to the next. This supports the notion that protecting the environment is a shared responsibility that calls for teamwork. The sea monster is a metaphor for the effects of human activity on the natural world and stands for the dangers posed by environmental imbalance. Luh Ayu Manik Mas, the story's heroine, urges society to accept</td></tr>
</table>

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	responsibility and actively participate in nature protection, symbolizing the necessity for tangible measures to counter such environmental challenges. Furthermore, religion is important for preserving society and the environment. It acts as a manual for humanity, instructing people on how to engage with one another and the environment in a way that promotes sustainability, harmony, and respect.
Tanda Konotatif *(Conotative Sign)*	
All things considered, these four pictures highlight how crucial it is to preserve harmony between the natural world, people, and religion. Through a variety of activities—such as prayer rites, group cleaning campaigns, and facing serious dangers—the message is that maintaining a balance between nature and human life depends on honoring customs, having the guts to face difficulties, and receiving divine protection from the Almighty. These scenes embody the idea of harmony in the Tri Hita Karana philosophy. It emphasizes the idea that sustainability and balance are crucial for the welfare of the environment and society by including the harmonious relationships that exist between people and God, nature, and one other.	

Source : Research Data, 2025

 E-ISSN 2774-8863

Analysis of Selected Scene 4

Penanda *(Signifier)*	Petanda *(Signified)*
 	Luh Ayu Manik Mas is shown conversing with a group of individuals wearing traditional Balinese clothing in Image 1. This picture highlights the value of communication and community involvement in tackling social and ecological challenges, symbolizing her role as a leader and advocate for cultural and environmental understanding. A group of people, including little children and old women, are seen cleaning the beach and gathering debris into big trash bags in Image 2. The virtues of gotong royong (mutual collaboration) in Balinese culture are reinforced by this picture, which emphasizes the sense of environmental preservation and group responsibility.
Tanda Denotatif *(Denotative Signs)*	
Luh Ayu Manik Mas is depicted in the picture as a cultural and environmental steward who actively teaches the public about environmental preservation. She is shown as a well-respected someone who represents leadership and influence in raising awareness and fostering constructive change. In addition to promoting education, Luh Ayu Manik Mas invites everyone in the community to take part in a beach clean-up. The idea that environmental responsibility is a common duty that necessitates cooperation across all generations and social groups is reinforced by this, which embodies the spirit of gotong royong (mutual cooperation). A powerful message of solidarity, environmental consciousness, and cultural value preservation is conveyed by this portrayal.	

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Penanda Konotatif *(Conotative Signifier)*	Petanda Konotatif *(Conotative Signified)*
Wearing traditional Balinese clothing, Luh Ayu Manik Mas represents power and wisdom. She actively participates in physical action as a leader and mentors the next generation on cultural preservation and environmental conservation. Collective principles that are strongly ingrained in Balinese society, where everyone takes responsibility for conserving the environment, are reflected in the gotong royong (mutual cooperation) activity. Assuring that the dedication to protecting nature is transmitted from one generation to the next, the involvement of all generations emphasizes the idea that environmental stewardship is an intergenerational responsibility.	As a cultural ambassador for Bali, Luh Ayu Manik Mas expresses herself by dressing in traditional Balinese clothing. People revere her because she represents strength and protection for the environment and the welfare of the community. The Tri Hita Karana philosophy, which promotes a healthy interaction between humans and nature for communal well-being, is in line with the collective beach cleanup as an example of social and ecological balance. This image emphasizes the significance of everyone's active involvement in protecting the environment and supports the notion that environmental responsibility is a shared duty.
Tanda Konotatif *(Conotative Sign)*	
All things considered, the examination of these two pictures emphasizes how important the community is to preserving the harmony between nature and people. Younger generations are inspired to take decisive action to preserve the environment by Luh Ayu Manik Mas, a revered emblem of environmental conservation. Through the intergenerational practice of gotong royong (mutual cooperation), which reflects the traditional values and beliefs of Balinese culture, these paintings effectively convey a message. In keeping with Balinese traditions and spiritual teachings, the image reaffirms that all members of society have a shared responsibility to preserve natural harmony.	

Source : Research Data, 2025

CONCLUSION

Applying Barthes' semiology theory, the semiotic analysis of the music video *Luh Ayu Manik Mas Full Animation New* uncovered both denotative and connotative meanings that emphasize themes of female leadership, courage, and resilience in addressing environmental issues. The video also embodies Balinese cultural values, particularly in relation to indigenous knowledge and environmental conservation. Moreover, it effectively integrates traditional and contemporary elements within its narrative, delivering a compelling moral message about the importance of maintaining harmony between humans and nature.

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