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"Another Side" of Balinese Excoticism: Local Wisdom of the Muslim Community in Gelgel Village, Klungkung Regency, for Preserving Harmony between Religious Communities in Bali

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Abstract
Bali is one of the most popular destinations chosen by foreign tourists for their visits to Indonesia. Accordingly, Bali often is the primary basis by which foreigners assess the entire nation. Tourist attention is drawn to Bali's natural beauty and its cultural exoticism. They show various perspectives on Balinese religious and cultural life, those that are generally closely related to Hinduism and tourism. Through qualitative approach, this study aims to analysis the religious life of the Muslim communities in Bali for completing the various viewpoints while revealing another side of Balinese exoticism. The Gelgel village of Klungkung regency is a long-established village inhabited by Muslims in the midst of strong influences of Hinduism. This village is of interest as the oldest Muslim village in Bali to be accorded designation as a banjar dinas, and even while having a slim territory. Notably, the people in the village are generally able to live peaceably side-by-side with adherents of other religions. This is enabled through local wisdoms that have allowed and encouraged harmony with castle, temple, and Balinese customs.

Keywords: Gelgel Muslim village, Ngejot, Knots of togetherness, Balinese Exoticism.
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Introduction

Being an archipelagic country, Indonesia is composed entirely of thousands of islands, extending from Sabang to Merauke. Furthermore, Indonesia is referred to as "Nusantara", or "archipelago in between", since it stretches between two continents and lies within two oceans. One of the best-known Indonesian islands, popular among citizens and visitors alike, is Bali. Having both an exotic culture and abundant natural resources, Bali is commonly called "pulau dewata", the Island of God. This term shows the distinct characteristics and magnetic attraction of Bali that has been acknowledged widely and even a branding strategy to demonstrate a variety of tremendous potential and to enhance the effectiveness of the existing resources (Agustini Karta, et.al., 2021) in order to conjure up a positive image on the beauty of nature, culture, tourism either at national or international level. On top of that, Bali is one of the most popular iconic features and described as a favorite destination with its comfort, safety, and satisfaction.

The Balinese are widely considered to be exotic due to their cultural aspects and their island's natural splendors, both of which have helped to make Bali a leading tourist destination in Indonesia for quite a long time. Many names are applied to denote Bali as a fascinating and mystical locale, such as Paradise Island, Island of God, and Mystical Island (Burhanuddin, 2008). The overall view is that Bali is notably an exotic, harmonious, and apolitical region of Indonesia (Zuhro R.S. et. al, 2009). This image of peace, security, and serenity is especially useful for promoting tourism. And the economic benefits of tourism for the Balinese have reciprocally induced a sort of local ideology around the aspects of harmony (Burhanuddin, 2008). Exotic and rich culture certainly have no more meaning when peace and harmony cannot bring a peaceful and stable order to society in Bali in which they are re-established, maintained and promoted.

Internal troubles could negatively affect tourism and thus be detrimental to economic conditions in Bali. Understandably, the Balinese have generally been quick to reject anything that could interfere with their mutually shared interest in evincing a harmonious society. Nonetheless, from the perspective of gender differentials,

there is feminist criticism of the Balinese patriarchal stance that positions men as the primary figures in their social system (Rahmawati, 2016). There is also criticism of the caste system that had generated and still maintains the social stratification of the population, affecting each past and present generation of Balinese (Udasmoro, 2017). These outward cultural markers of long-standing sociological traits and ideological distinctions, while now being debated, are nonetheless acknowledged as having been historically integral to the perceptions and functional aspects of Balinese exoticism. A research of I Made Pageh et al., (2013) concluded that integrative factors can still exist while harmony and peace are maintained, as with the Hindu and Muslim interactions within the multi-ethnic society in Bali.

Indonesia has long been regarded as one of the most notably pluralistic countries in the world and as a country with longtime experience in accommodating diversity (Reid, 2015). This accommodation is exemplified in Bali. Visitors tend to infer that all Balinese are Hindu, based on seeing Hindu religious ritual processions, which naturally draw tourists' attention while enjoying these charming events. Indeed, the situation of Balinese Indonesians being a majority Hindu population has conferred uniqueness on the Island of Gods. According to Clifford Geertz (1992), the prevalent Balinese offerings and rituals act as a showcase for respect of the Hindu religion and dedication to its practices. Thus many visitors never realize that other Balinese people, both native-born and immigrant, are Muslim. In such a context, Bali can be usefully studied with regard to both the challenges and the solutions associated with accommodating religious diversity.

A few Indonesian studies focus on understanding the country's history and characteristics. Examples are studies of Clifford Geertz, Geoffrey Robinson, and Miquel Covarrubias, that have paid particular attention to patterns in the religious and cultural life of the Balinese. Such scholars present a variety of perspectives on Bali. Some focus on the benefits of Balinese exoticism, Hinduism, environmental beauty, and societal graces. Their views often contrast with the writers who emphasize the historical dynamics of Bali, which are known to have included tensions and conflicts. And there are other experts who view Balinese exoticism less as a long-stand-

ing cultural marker and more as a marker of the excesses generated by modernization (Atmadja, 2013). In short, many experts explored a various perspective to discuss Bali in their interest and expertise.

Academic experts' opinions take note of the effects engendered by Hinduism being both the original, and still the majority, religion in Bali. Such a history underlies the perceptions, perpetuation, and political effects of Balinese exoticism. Many of these views have arisen from researchers' field studies. The Bali Bombings of 2002 and 2005 notably led to renewed focus on the Balinese socio-cultural dynamic. Many people had already been reflecting on "the Lost Bali", and such reflection became more prevalent after the bombings. Some serious problems came to the fore, as stemming from socio-religious contrasts in Bali. This then served as impetus for the founding and subsequent growth of the now-massive *Ajeg Bali movement*, which intends to preserve Balinese culture at the individual level and to maintain it as an ongoing public topic. Within this overall concern, there are issues related to both mindset and behavior, including harms arising from instant-wealth wishful thinking, rapidly expanding consumerism, societal promiscuity, cultural westernization, and a rising tendency for verbal conflict and even physical violence.

Bali had long been known as a safe, peaceful, and serene region. Now there are views of it as undergoing an unsettling, undesirable, and astonishing departure from its previously long-standing noble (*adiluhung*) culture. Some consider that there may be a dismaying possibility of incurring cultural collapse. In the context of Pilkada (Regional Elections), for instance, the issues of SARA – namely ethnicity, religion, race, and intergroup relations – are being raised in campaigns. Public awareness of Bali's historical respect for religious and cultural diversity has been decreasing. Public recognition of respectfulness as a cornerstone of the national spirit has been decreasing. National unity is waning amid an increasing focus on ideological distinctions and pragmatic interests. Prominence of SARA issues and SARA nuances has been accompanied by a rise of violence in certain regions (Jingga, 2018). Negative incidents affecting religious and community leaders do damage, both to the unity, integrity, and harmony of inhabitants and to the stability and integ-

rity of NKRI (Archipelagic State of The Indonesian Republic).

Violence is clearly not in line with the long-standing Balinese national spirit. The local wisdom of *Tri Hita Karana* guides humans to maintain a good relationship with God, with other human beings, and with nature (Zuhro R.S. et. al, 2009; Wastawa & Sudarsana, 2019). *Tri Hita Karana* refers to the three resources for prosperity to bring together into a harmonious relationship including *Parhyangan* (relationship of a person with God), *Pawongan* (relationship of a person with humanity), and *Palemahan* (relationship of a person with surroundings) (Wiwin, 2021; Wiratmaja, et. al., 2021). Furthermore, diversity in a community can be a beneficial aspect of pluralism, when it acts as a medium to bolster citizens' ability to address differences and solve disputes. Community groups, when they are able to accept diversity and to thereby achieve current and future benefits, become exemplars of wisdom, worthy of study. In a pluralistic society, the inhabitants can discover that they will do well by honoring a mosaic of their fellow citizens' individual experiences and traditions.

Elizabeth K. Nottingham (1997), an expert in the sociology of religion, argues that the social and psychological effects of religions are fundamental to the nature of a society. Similarly, it is acknowledged that religion is one of main factors influencing people's lives (McGuire, 1992) and their cultural traditions. Effects can be seen to continue even when one of several religions is considered as the most influential in the original conception of Indonesian Citizenship (Kelli A, 2017). Amid "modern" life, religion still retains an essential role in formal and informal interactions. Globalization has not necessarily taken religion away from its place in the public sphere, nor has it marginalized religion in society (Mujiburrahman, 2008). Socio-cultural diversity need not inculcate divisiveness. People can have harmonious living while valuing the wisdoms particular to local tradition, yet still allowing and respecting religious plurality. Variety in social interaction can be strength rather than weakness. Accordingly, empirical information about such issues is worth examining in order to recognize and recommend effective ways to maintain and enjoy harmony in a diverse religious community.

The Gelgel village in Klungkung Regency has a Muslim majority population (Sutama, et. al., 2015) and a sizeable indigenous Hindu subgroup. Gelgel village is notable as the oldest Muslim village in Bali, and therefore it obtained the privilege of being its own separate *banjar dinas* (social organization for governmental or administrative affairs) within the overall Gelgel Village. Both Muslim and Hindu groups of adherents have places of worship, and these are situated close to one another. And each group feels comfortably free to practice the teachings of their respective religion. This study proceeded according to three main issues for discussion, as follows. (1) What are the local wisdom and values that underpin the effort, implemented by the Muslim community in Gelgel village of Klungkung Regency, Bali Province, for building and maintaining togetherness amidst their religious differences? (2) How are local wisdom and values practiced in the interactions among villagers in order for them to build and maintain togetherness? (3) What are the most significant issues that have been encountered, or are still encountered, by the Muslim community of Gelgel village in actualizing the values that can stem from building togetherness among inter-religion adherents?

Literature Review

Studies on local wisdom and culture of the people in Nusantara (Archipelago) and Bali have been widely reported. In relation to this research, there are various studies of particular interest. The first is the book of Suprapto (2010) originally adapted from a dissertation on harmonious life in the Hindu minority community, amid the Muslim majority society, of Lombok. The two groups have different cultures and religions, but nonetheless are able to live peaceably side-by-side. Furthermore, the Hindu minority group is allowed full freedom to practice their own religious teachings. Values derived from local wisdom are noted by the study as being useful for building and maintaining a harmonious community for these people of different faiths, wherein the minority members do not feel excluded or limited by the majority; there is no longer a dominance in majority group and a subordinate group who lacks power in minority group.

The second is the study by Sabarudin and Mahmud Arif

(2019). This study describes the active role taken by the Muslim community, in the Balinese Loloan Village, for preserving good will between the adherents of differing religions. As one of the oldest Muslim communities in Bali, the Loloan Village has a long history of articulating Islam for its view of promoting harmony among diversities. The cooperative relationship between Islam and Hindu adherents, which has lasted long in this village, is seen as inseparable from local wisdom's constructive effect within the community. This wisdom is imparted and widely shared in order to anticipate and alleviate symptoms of intolerance and religious radicalism. Local wisdom is able to be a frame in settling conflict so that this will not lead to escalation of social friction which can shake a secure foundation of harmony lives.

The third is the study by Indriana Kartini (2011). This report comes from research conducted among Muslim minority communities in Bali, and it describes multiculturalism in Bali and its long history of Muslim minorities existing there. Unfortunately, this study has not received as much attention as other research about Bali. Nonetheless, it documents the mutual acculturation of Islam and Hinduism, and it discusses how Bali has gained a richness of culture and local wisdom that are not Hindu-centrist. Also, it finds that the acculturation in Bali of Islam and Hinduism is found not only among the Muslim minorities, but also among the Hindu majorities. Nonetheless, the study also observed that the generally harmonious dynamics in the relationship between Muslim and Hindus in Bali are, in some instances, affected by tensions and conflicts. These were found to variously arise from, or occur due to, the establishment of houses of worship, or the practices followed for funerals, or the various preaching activities in those communities.

The fourth is the study by I Gde Parimartha, *et. al.* (Dwipayana [ed.], 2012). This monograph reports field research analysis about the history of Islamic sub-villages, the renegotiation of Islamic sub-villages that are located in the midst of Hindu villages, the concomitant issues of tolerance, and the tensions manifested in diversity management. The focus was particularly on the Kusamba-Bali Sub-village. The monograph explains the identity issues of Muslims living in a Hindu setting, namely Bali, while also revealing

patterns of the Muslim-Hindu societal relationship. Notably, there are two community spaces owned by the Muslim minority in the Kusamba-Bali Sub-village, namely a Muslim sub-village and a *desa dinas* (administrative village). And two characteristics of this research distinguish it from other studies. It is the case that (1) the research was done in two villages that have different socio-historical settings, even though they are situated in an overall region considered to be a miniature portrait of diversity and a center of Balinese culture. And it is noted that (2) the setting of the community chosen for the study was quite "contextual," meaning that it has unique, dialectical, and socially meaningful characteristics.

The fifth is the study by Deni Miharja (2017). The paper elaborates the movement called *Ajeg Bali* as an articulation of efforts to preserve values and traditions of Balinese ancestors. This is seen as preserving a "local religion" by continuing the teachings about preservation of traditional values and protection of such values from influences of foreign cultures. Both the articulation and the application of this movement, among Balinese people, are observed to have tendencies to be selective, conservative, and in some cases exclusive. In this sense, *Ajeg Bali* movement aims to have a closed ideology which suspects all new values and cultures opposing to the Balinese culture and bring about a variety of social problem. This movement believes that Hinduism is a core value of the Balinese culture.

The sixth is the study by A. Muchaddam Fahham (2018). This is a review of the harmonious relationship, among religious people in Bali Province, that ranks in second place nationally. The high ranking, however, does not mean that the inter-religious relations on the Island of Gods are ideal. Naturally and realistically, there are varied patterns of interaction. The associative relationship pattern engenders cooperation, accommodation, and tolerance. The dissociative relationship pattern leads to competition and conflict. Descriptions in the article contribute to a fuller view of social traditions in Balinese Muslim groups that can correlate with recognizable instances of associative, and of dissociative, relationships. Associative and dissociative process constantly offer a wide variety of social interaction among religious community in

Bali so as to achieve the second rank in the religious harmony at national level which is of important to maintain.

Theoretical Framework

From the perspective of sociology, every society has three systems: social system, personality system, and cultural system (Sutrisno & H. Putranto (eds), 2014). The social system comprises patterns of interaction among the people of a society, such that interactions create results ranging from tension to harmony. The personality system is rooted in each individual's disposition to have his or her needs met, as with desires, preferences, and wishes. Fulfillment is attained through socialization processes and value systems that are needed to maintain social order. The cultural system consists of symbols and expectations that enable the people to communicate, coordinate, and cooperate. Also, the cultural system functions by means of three domains, namely cognitive symbols, expressive symbols, and moral norms. The trio of social, personality, and cultural systems underlie the dynamics of how members of a society establish social interactions, articulate their interests, and build consensus for shared goals.

A positive socio-cultural base has properties that can organize people's lives to in essence be a manifestation of local wisdom. In the perspective of local wisdom, the culture of a society is understood not as a generic construct, but rather as having its own differential framework (Abdullah, 2006). The differential culture is an articulation of situational culture in a particular context affected by the dynamics of relations and interests, and by factors such as politics, economy, and society. Therefore, in addition to have uniqueness in the communities, local wisdom contains dynamic features whereby it is possible to experience a significant change that go along with the development of social culture in society (Addiarrahman, 2019). Local wisdom includes habit, language, and social system rooted at culture in society and this is closely linked with social behavior (Mujahidin & Kim, 2021).

Social interaction patterns can be associative or dissociative. In terms of dynamic social relations between individuals, or between groups of people, the associative processes are those that bring

unity, or at least bring closer relationships. The dissociative processes are those that create distant or opposing relationships (Sumarti, 2015). Associative exemplars include cooperation, accommodation, and assimilation. Dissociative exemplars include competition, controversy, and conflict. In the context of inter-faith interactions, three strategic models may be applied by religious groups to deal with pluralistic situations (Mujiburrahman, 2008). The first is conquest or religious revolution, both of which try to pull diverse views into one overarching truth; the second is self-estrangement, which seeks to create defenses against being absorbed by pluralism; and the third is dialogue in order to share ideas and be open to interactions with other groups. By choosing strategies for the articulation of their understandings and for influencing the public space, socio-religious groups can become a forum for mass mobilization influenced by their values, by the surrounding socio-cultural context, and by such factors as can still preserve group continuity. Internal dynamics within each group will also affect its pattern of social relations, including cooperation and accommodation.

For dealing with complex socio-cultural problems, local wisdom is needed to (1) embody the identity markers of a community, (2) act as an inter-citizen cohesive element, (3) build inner awareness instead of using "force", (4) create togetherness in a community, (5) modify mindset and interactive relationships on the basis of common ground, and (6) motivate the processes of appreciation and participation while discouraging societal characteristics that are antithetical to social integration (Suprapto, 2010; Arif, 2015). Cultural studies in several regions of Indonesia, such as the *Badui* community of Banten and the people of Maluku, suggest that local wisdom is also useful for maintaining the balance of nature by means of managing natural resources in ways that do not damage the environment (Liliweri, 2014). Faisal Ismail (2000), in his paper, argues that strategic policies are essential in order to overcome communal conflict and promote harmony. These strategic policies can be realized by means of (1) functions of social institutions, (2) exploration of local wisdom, (3) expansion of participation in such goals by all members at all levels of society, and (4) development of new institutions that have missions intended to strengthen

harmonious life.

Methods

This was qualitative field research or empirical study on the life of a pluralistic community, where the people were classified as individuals seeking to build harmony in the mixed Muslim and Hindu community of Gelgel village, Klungkung Regency, in the Bali Province. According to Bodgan and Biklen's qualitative research mapping, this research is considered to be a socio-cultural study because it employs a framework based on a theoretical assumption that "the world is not directly knowable" (Potter, 1996). Such investigation has an emotional approach and is dependent on the perspective of the researcher. As such, this study assumes that (1) all social relations are influenced by factors that need to be explained within a specific context, and (2) all studies are based within theoretical understanding. For such a reason, this study focuses on the generalization due to the unique context within which research is conducted.

Data were collected from such respondents as religious leaders, community leaders, and other adults in the Gelgel village. They served as research subjects and informants. Data collection was carried out by means of (1) interviews with the informants, (2) observations within the community, and (3) documentation conducted by means horizontal collaboration, which is internal collaboration with a research partner. The process of data analysis used the stages of recording field data, analyzing this data, and characterizing the results. To arrive at the stage of research findings joined with theoretical constructs, analytic induction was applied. This is the process of thoroughly examining research data or essential typological characteristics by "mutual sharpening between theory and primary data" and between field data and secondary source data, in order to gain useful meanings in interpreting the social-cultural reality in the field.

Results and Discussion

The Acculturation of Islam and Bali: An Overview

Bali has been widely known as one of the regions of Indonesia with Hindu adherents as a majority people. Balinese culture and

Hinduism are widely viewed as interrelated and inseparable entities. Hinduism indeed has strongly shaped the religio-cultural identity of the Balinese. Thus it is reasonable that some experts see Balinese culture as a religious culture primarily derived from the teachings of Hinduism (Suryawan, 2010). However, the historical reality shows that Muslims in Bali have lived side-by-side with Hindu people since the kingdom era. Muslims lived in enclave *nyama selam* distributed in areas all across Bali, including Loloan Nagara Jembrana, Kecicang Karangasem, Gelgel Klungkung, and Pegayaman Buleleng (Pageh, *et. al.*, 2014). The Muslim communities spreading in the many areas have strengthened a long history of the growth of Islam and Balinese culture interaction.

Evidence of the close connection between Bali and Hinduism is the belief of the Balinese that Mount Agung and Besakih Temple are the center of the Bali island (AAG. P. Agung, 2009). In addition, there are layers of society (caste system) in Bali based on the concept of *catur warna or catur warga* (four colors or four layers of society), which place Brahmans at the highest status, followed by Kshatriyas, then by Vaishyas, and finally by Shudras at lowest status. This caste system is further evidence of a close connection between Bali and Hinduism, formed through a long historical process. Bali had strong influence from the Majapahit Kingdom in Java. When Majapahit was at its peak, Bali became one of the essential areas being a center of power, and which later became the Gelgel Kingdom. This kingdom became increasingly stronger as Majapahit weakened. In this study's interview with Nasrulloh, one of the Muslims leaders of Gelgel village, he explained that,

> "The history of the formation of Gelgel Sub-village came from forty Muslim warriors from Majapahit who were assigned to escort King Gelgel. Then as a form of reward, King Gelgel gave them *perdikan* (tax-free) land with special autonomy and located not far from the King's castle." (M. Islam, 2017; *Interview*, October 4, 2019)

Indeed, this in-person interview aligns with the description of the history of the entry of Islam into Bali, which is inseparable from the role of warriors from Java (M. Islam, 2017).

Although the connection between Bali and Hindu is so strong historically, it is also the case that Bali never disallowed the presence of other communities. This is presumed to be one of the factors in Hinduism being still the main religion in Bali and yet never having been overtly "anti-Islam." And when Islamic kingdoms, after the collapse of Majapahit, did not consider Balinese Hinduism as an adversarial threat, then Bali had not needed to be subjugated. Furthermore, the Hindu kingdoms in Bali applied a "friendly" survival strategy through the establishment of Muslim community bases around the center of the kingdom, as seen in Puri Karangasem (castle), which is surrounded by Muslim villages (Pageh, *et. al.*, 2014). Informants interviewed from Karangasem Regency, Dinsyah, and from Klungkung Regency, Sahidin, said:

> "This was where a peaceful co-existence between the Muslim communities and the Hindus in Bali began. For Balinese Hindus, the Muslim communities are considered to be *nyama selam*, meaning Muslim brothers. This illustrates that there is a deep emotional bond between Hindus and Muslims. Therefore, they feel that they should respect each other, understand each other, and help each other." (*Interview*, October 4, 2019)

To maintain Balinese harmony, there is a *ngejot* tradition, whereby Muslims share food with Hindus, and vice versa, on certain holidays. This acts as social capital for building inter-ethnic and inter-faith solidarity (Atmadja, 2013).

There is an interesting analysis, from the perspective of both *Niskala* and *Sekala*, of why Bali still has Hinduism. The first perspective comes from a metaphysical aspect that Hindu figures such as *Danghyang Nirartha* made magical fortifications throughout the coast of Bali that could not be penetrated by invaders. This story was told by word of mouth and is still believed in some Balinese Hindu societies. The second perspective is rather more plausible and explains from a historical view that when Majapahit began to lose dominance, most of its territory experienced Islamization but remained with the maritime culture. Furthermore, unlike in Java, Bali did not have a major trading port. Spices were not significantly grown in Bali, and the people lived in an agrarian culture, so that the

Island was not included the "silk road" traversed by Muslim traders and preachers. In addition, the arrival of the Dutch in Indonesia caused attention of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom to be divided, both to confront the invaders and at the same time to overcome the threat of internal disintegration. Therefore, the Mataram Kingdom did not have time to expand its power to Bali.

The entry of Islam to Bali is unique, considering that in Balinese history the Muslim communities who came received special permission to live permanently. Some of them were even invited directly by the castle/palace of Balinese Hindu kingdoms. Thus, it is reasonable that, even when later inhabiting other areas, these Muslims still kept a close relationship with the castle and did not widely expand their influences and preaching activities. Gelgel Muslim village then became the main capital of the Muslim communities to be accepted by the Balinese Hindus. The spread of Islam subsequently developed only in certain areas. This phenomenon is called the "politics" of quarantine by the rulers in various Hindu kingdoms against the Muslim communities in Bali (Abraham, 2015). Politics of quarantine completely succeeds in fortifying and localizing the process of the spread of Islam in a region, accompanied with *Balinisasi* Islam or promoting Balinese culture in Islam.

The cultural spread of Islam was also carried out by the Islamic saints in Bali. These were known as *Walipitu*, the Seven Saints. One was Syaikh Chamdoen Khairussoleh, or Prince Mas Sepuh, the son of king Mengwi VII (Cokorda I). His mother was from Blambangan or Banyuwangi and his tomb is on Seseh Badung beach in Bali. The other six were Habib Umar bin Maulana Yusuf al-Maghribi, whose tomb is located on one of the hills in Bedugul Tabanan; Habib Ali bin Abu Bakr al-Hamid, who spread Islam in Klungkung and was appointed as translator and royal linguist of Gelgel; Syaikh Maulana Yusuf al-Maghribi, who spread Islam in Karangasem; Syaikh Abdul Qodir Muhammad who spread Islam in Buleleng and was said to be one of the disciples of Sunan Gunungjati; and Habib Ali bin Umar Bafaqih who spread Islam in Loloan Jembrana. Some of them were migrants carrying out Islamic teachings in Bali, and the rest were natives of Bali who had embraced Islam and who then also carried

out da'wah (preaching) in Bali.

Local Wisdom of the Muslim Community in Gelgel village for Building Social Harmony

Peaceful co-existence in a pluralistic society is not a static situation. Interactions among individuals in pursuit of various interests, as well as dynamics arising from external conditions, can still cause dissociative interactions to arise. In such cases, the relationships among people can become negatively influenced by misunderstandings, suspicions, personal conflict, or even violence. As a result, the social conditions in a previously long-lasting peaceful and harmonious situation can change into tensions and turmoil, in which social conflicts arise and then persist if solutions are not soon forthcoming. The tendency for such occurrences in a pluralistic society can usually be attributed to three noteworthy characteristics, namely (1) lack of consensus among community members regarding basic values, (2) inter-group conflicts, and (3) social integration that is forced due to population growth (Nasikun, 2012).

As one of the oldest Muslim communities in Bali, the Gelgel Muslim village has witnessed extensive Islamic historical development. This community grew among dynamic interactions with Hindus and Balinese culture. Gelgel Muslim village (hamlet) was formed more than four hundred years ago and still exists in present day (Sarlan, 2009). That village is located within Gelgel Village, Klungkung Regency, in which the majority population is Hindu. Other contrasts between Gelgel Muslim village and Gelgel Village were noted by Sahidin, the chief of the village, who in an interview explained:

> "The population of Gelgel Muslim village is around 1129 people, who occupy a small area, as compared to Gelgel village. However, due to the history of its privilege, Gelgel village is designated to have its government system be a *Banjar Dina* or *kelurahan* (administrative village)." (Interview, October 5, 2019)

So, unusually, the Gelgel Muslim village (hamlet) has the privilege of being recognized by the local government, by the *puri* (castle) family, by the pura (temple) leaders, and by the Hindus as a

main community in Klungkung region. And the Muslim community of Gelgel village maintains a good relationship with both castle and temple.

Geographically, the borders of Gelgel Muslim village are clear and were determined based on the Decree of the Regent of Klungkung (*Interview*, October 5, 2019). Notably, there is a temple within Gelgel Muslim village, which is located not far from Nurul Huda Mosque, from Dang Kahyangan temple, and from Dasa Bhuwana temple. It is said that the Gelgel Muslim village temple has existed since the formation of the village. Even now, it is still routinely used for worship ceremonies by Hindus around the village. During those ceremonies, the Muslim community plays an active role, to handle the parking for visitors of the temple, along with the village *pecalang* (security officers). The Muslim community even prepares the parking area at the edge of the village so that the worship procession can better be carried out solemnly.

There are two interesting aspects regarding the mutual actions embodied in the phenomena above. The first is the seriousness of the village community in maintaining historical knots of togetherness among religious people through the acknowledgment of the village borders and the recognition of the existence of the Hindu temple in a Muslim area. The second is the active tolerance exhibited by the people by means of their willingness to cooperate in mutually respectful ways amid their religious diversity. The historical knots of togetherness have served to maintain harmony amid plurality. In the context of the life of the nation and state, Pancasila is an example of the history of togetherness evinced by founders of the nation as a form of noble agreement for the creation of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI). Therefore, rejecting Pancasila intends to avoid giving a commitment and agreement on consensus national of the founding fathers in establishing NKRI.

However, there are misunderstandings and religious movements which try to reject Pancasila as a wise model and which are symptomatic of the potential loss of historical knots of togetherness. Such rejections and symptoms, if continued, could become factors in potential national disintegration. To deal with

that, it is necessary to strengthen the awareness of Indonesian citizens' self-identity and the adoption of the ideology of Pancasila, and then to build tolerant and even cooperative awareness of varied identity bases and religions (Sarwono, 2012). As a national identity, Pancasila is an agreement among people to unify the diversity of tribe, religion, and language (Dewantara, et.al., 2019). Therefore, through education, Pancasila is certainly required to appreciate, promote and embrace in a such way to produce people who are enthusiastic to follow Pancasila values (*Pancasilais*).

The historical knots of togetherness that have proven to be effective for building social harmony, and that have positively been accepted as a cultural heritage of local communities, are a source of the formation of local wisdom. These historical knots continue to be needed in order to (1) be an identity marker of a community, (2) be an inter-citizen adhesive element, (3) build individual inner tolerance instead of outward force, (4) create togetherness in the community, and (6) enhance appreciation and participation of community, while reducing characteristics that damage social integration (Suprapto, 2010). The results of cultural studies in several other regions of Indonesia, such as the Badui community in Banten and the people of Maluku, have even shown that local wisdom also proves to be useful for maintaining the balance of nature, so that natural resource management prevents damage to the environment (Liliweri, 2014).

Another example of historical knots of togetherness being preserved is the tradition of *ngejot*. During religious holidays, such as *Eid al-Fitr* for Muslims and the *Galungan* holiday for Hindus, participants deliver gifts of prepared food, or of fruits, to relatives and to closest neighbors of different religions. This tradition holds that the festivities of holidays can be enjoyed not only by those who directly celebrate the holidays, but also by people of other traditions, amid an atmosphere of harmony and brotherhood. For example, as a form of Hindu and Muslim community wisdom for sharing, there is an unwritten agreement that the gifts delivered are to be "halal" (lawful foods), as deemed by the recipients. Accordingly, the Hindus give fruit, instead of dishes with chicken or other meats, so that their Muslim neighbors will find these gifts suitable to eat. That is an illustration of wisdom in which the program of food share

highlights the action of beneficence and benevolence.

Routinely and annually, when the Muslims in Gelgel village hold their end-of-fasting event at the conclusion of Ramadhan, they invite Hindu leaders and communities and the local government officials to join them (*Interview*, October 4, 2019). Thus "breaking the fast" is shared both for kinship with fellow Muslims and for maintaining harmony with surrounding communities, different religious adherents and leaders, and the local officials. By sharing this event, the Muslims avoid an impression of being exclusive, which could otherwise arise because Muslims must use their time during the month-long Ramadhan for increased activities in mosques and prayer rooms, and for religious studies. Accordingly, during that time, there is less interaction with the other religious communities, and the social ties amid the community's inter-faith regard might otherwise weaken.

The *ngejot* tradition and break-fast activities are implementations of reciprocal principles in social relations. There is wisdom in being aware of the existence of mutual influence and interdependence, and of the importance of give-and-take between communities. Social harmony would become difficult to attain, if social elements neglected to meet the expectations for social roles. The *ngejot* tradition and sharing of break-fasting create "social capital" as a valuable basis for keeping harmony amid plurality, as guided by local wisdom. Internal cohesion, in each religious community separately, and external cohesion, by means of mutual respect, are honored and thereby foster and reinforce interfaith harmony. These traditions have developed over time, whereby community members indicate their serious commitment to mutually deal with differences in order to maintain harmony with each other.

Actualization of Local Wisdom in the Life of Gelgel Village

For people living in a small community, diversity could become a source of disputes, misunderstandings, or other conflict. These problems are most notably ideological or political (Nasikun, 2012). Ideological conflict arises when societal groups manifest value systems with incompatible objectives and then become triggered into fights over truth claims. Political conflict arises due to groups having

interests that require power in order to dominate behaviors, arrange societal structure, and gain access to capital. Theological issues are often used to justify a political conflict so as to appear social tension and violence with religious nuances that has colored the history of lives in Indonesia (Kusuma & Susilo, 2020). To anticipate and ameliorate the emergence of social conflict, it is necessary to find a right attitude toward diversity and develop an ability to manage it properly. Like a double-edged sword, diversity on the one hand may cut the knots of social ties, tear apart unity, and scatter togetherness. Alternatively, diversity can overcome selfishness within individuals, lessen counterproductive actions of groups, and thus foster social solidarity.

Diversity is a social reality that cannot be denied, so it must be addressed wisely. And it could be even seen as a colorful rainbow that builds the beauty of life. The Gelgel village has a long history, and its founding notably marked the emergence of diversity in Gelgel. One of the informants, Nasrulloh, said:

> "The ancestors of Gelgel village were the servants of the castle (palace) who served as guards in the palace. They were noted as meritorious by the King and deserving of a reward. Thus the historical formation of Gelgel Muslim village was motivated by devotion and respect." (*Interview*, October 4, 2019)

Although these ancestors were Muslim, they still showed loyalty in carrying out their duties for, and maintaining the trust of, the Hindu king. So the King gave them a reward in the form of "perdikan land" (tax-free land) where their houses could be built. This included having special autonomy and privileges to inhabit, manage, and utilize the *perdikan* land resources.

Perseverance in adhering to Islamic teachings did not prevent them from continuing to serve the Hindu kingdom, mingling with the community, and taking part in fostering the harmony of life. This attitude made the castle (palace, kingdom) and the temple show deference and give high respect. The aura of being *nyame slam* (Islamic brothers) prevailed and was used by Hindus to refer to their Muslim neighbors. This brotherly verbiage showed a strong social bond between the Hindus and the Muslims. In the context of

social interactions, it carried psychological and sociological impact. The psychological effect was derived by the term originating from the mystical atmosphere of the Hindu community feeling, and then becoming a mutual affinity with the Muslim community, without prejudice or hatred. The sociological content was embodied in the fact that even though the Muslims were the minority, they gained an equal position with the Hindus in the community, without any discrimination or segregation.

The existence of the Muslim community in Gelgel village has acculturated its inhabitants to the Balinese culture, such that they are called 'natives' of Bali. And this has made Balinese culture become more colorful by having both Hinduism and Islam in the cultural mosaic of Bali without diminishing the authenticity of each group. The process of acculturation has used selective integration, so that the Muslim community adapts to the local culture of Bali and mingles in its social life without compromising its principles and beliefs, while also upholding pluralism and building togetherness. Through this selective integration, the Muslim community of Gelgel village is able to distinguish between Bali and Hinduism, and between cultural and religious matters. In so doing, they have not needed to create boundaries to separate Islam and Bali. Bali maintains its predominately Hindu traditions, while the Muslim community of Gelgel village accommodates local Balinese culture but at the same time preserves its own local Islamic patterns.

The vernacularization of Islam in the Balinese context has been a wise step for articulating Islam with the "local language." The difference is that the acculturation is related to the ability to absorb and process, while the Islamic vernacularization is related to the ability to adapt to local culture as a medium for articulating Islam, so that message of the teachings does not sound strange but rather is worthy of being part of the original culture. The willingness of the Muslim community of Gelgel village to wear *udeng* (Balinese headband), white shirts, and *Kamen* (cloth like a sarong) has served as a form of clothing vernacularization that fits Balinese customs. By means of such similarity of clothing, Islam and Bali more easily coexist and need not be contrasted. For the Muslims, dressing in such a way has a dual function: affirming their Balinese customs while

also presenting Islam in a tradition mutually shared by Muslims and non-Muslims.

This is an example of "the most perfect" manifestation of the mosaic of *Islam Nusantara* (Islam of the Archipelago) as found in Indonesian Islam (Sahal & Aziz, 2016). The vernacularization of Islam in the Archipelago, as undertaken by Muslim members of the Gelgel village, exemplifies the *Wasathiyah* (moderate) values of Islam as being inclusive, accommodating, and tolerant. Moderate Islam (Islam *wasathiyah*) encourages Muslims to appreciate local cultures and behave more tolerant to other believers in the frame of the rightness and balance that enable them to adapt, identify and behave appropriately (Nasir & Rijal, 2021). The Muslims of this community practice Islam in ways that help them beneficially live side-by-side with adherents of other religions. Accordingly, Islam and Bali are seen in a perspective by which a culture of respect for local wisdom sources is part of Islamic down-to-earth and harmonious life.

Problems in Building Interreligious Harmony in Gelgel Village

Identity is one of the main issues in a pluralistic society. Inevitably, there is usage of symbols intended to strengthen the internal solidarity of identity groups and to convey messages about their existence to external parties. Such symbols are found in many public spaces. Each individual has an inherent tendency to classify their subgroup as "us" in order to have a social meaning for their identity. This satisfies the personal need for belonging and for distinguishing one's own subgroup from "them" (Wirutomo [ed.], 2012). Sociologically, many factors can constitute one's identity. The factors may stem from religion, profession, ethnicity, caste, political party, and so forth. The shared identity creates *in-group* awareness by means of social actions to exhibit and affirm loyalty and solidarity with the members of their specific in-group. Conversely, identity differences between subgroups provide a basis for *out-group* awareness, and such contrasts may lead to social actions that exhibit antipathy, prejudice, or hostility toward other groups (Narwoko & Suyanto, 2006).

There is also a way of thinking called binary opposition,

or *Rwa Bhineda*, which is widely embraced by the Balinese as the essence of identity (Atmadja, 2013). In this view, identity is no longer understood as a mild group marker, but instead as a rigid basis for demanding total loyalty to the group. In such a context of strict identity symbols, as in the case of *"Pembulelengan"*, there exists a serious threat to achieving harmony between people of different group identities. The political case of *"Pembulelengan"* is a massive *"peng-Golkar-an"* movement (to gain voters for the Golkar/ Functional-Groups Party) against the PDIP (Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle) loyalist community base. This situation of political opposition triggered a bloody clash on October 26, 2003, in Petandakan Buleleng Village, when PDIP supporters attacked and massacred Golkar supporters, resulting in many victims (Suryawan, 2010). Similar clashes were found in other regions, such as Badung, Karangasem, Gianyar, Denpasar, and Jembrana (Suryawan, 2010).

Another notable tension has arisen much more recently between the Muslim community of Gelgel Sub-village and the Hindu community of Gelgel Village. The situation highlighted the importance of addressing and attenuating identity issues in a pluralistic society. One of this study's respondents, Sahidin, recounted:

> "The mass tension was triggered by a project to build a multi-story dormitory for the Diponegoro Islamic boarding school on broad land adjacent to the Hindu cemetery complex and the associated Gelgel temple. Several well-built people came to the project site and forced the workers not to continue building the boarding school." (*Interview & Observation*, October 5, 2019)

The Hindu community of Gelgel Village felt that their identity was threatened by the existence of the project, which they viewed as an assertion of identity supremacy by the Muslim community of Gelgel village. Jurisdictionally, the Muslim community could not be blamed for wanting to build a boarding school in their own area and through their own village funds and self-help budget. However, given that the location was adjacent to the Hindu cemetery complex, *Gelgel Dalem Prajurit Br. Minggir*, objections from the Hindus emerged. Several meetings were held to discuss the issue in order to

find solution and agreement, but it was hard to reach a consensus, and the discussions were very heated. Notably, this deliberation process was carried out at the district level by the request of the Klungkung Regent.

To resolve the conflict, the Muslim community of Gelgel village drafted an initiative to change the plan to be a single-story social dormitory that would function as a place for homeless villagers. This initiative succeeded in ending the deadlock and the tensions that had flared up. The new plan became a win-win solution, without anyone on either side feeling defeated or humiliated. The original plan for construction of a multi-story boarding-school dormitory, if it had been successful, would certainly have been prestigious for the Muslims of Gelgel village. However, a prestigious project that stoked "the fire of conflict" would have lost its power, of having social meaning for the harmony of life, if it concomitantly negated the identity of *liyan* (others). Substantively, a noble goal could still be achieved through construction of a social dormitory for the poor. This was a concrete step by the Muslims to alleviate conflict of interest with the neighboring Hindus, and the project itself thereby paid attention to the principles of brotherhood, equality, and justice.

A very important issue faced by Muslim communities in Bali is the occurrence of violence in the name of their religion. Although the violent actors are not Balinese Muslims, the incidents have changed the perception by Balinese Hindus concerning Muslims, especially due to the use of Islam elsewhere to justify actions of terror and destruction as missions of jihad. The Hindu dismay is shown, for instance, by replacing *nyame slam* ("Muslim brothers") with *jalma slam* ("Muslim people") (Atmadja, 2013), and in some cases showing cold faces without any friendly expressions, when communicating and interacting with Muslims. Furthermore, the Bali Bombing I (2002) and the Bali Bombing II (2005) impacted societal cohesion. These events were a series of vicious acts of terror, violence, and widespread destruction. The bitter experiences were explained by Sahidin, one of the informants from Gelgel Muslim village:

"Although those cases had not resulted in destruction of the

> tourism industries, many Muslim migrants had to experience mass exoduses from Bali. Those have damaged the knots of harmony between Muslims and Hindus in Bali. When now they see each other at the market, the Hindus view the Muslims coldly and suspiciously", (*Interview*, October 7, 2019).

The Bali Bombings have lingered in memory and thereby are still triggers for social prejudice by Balinese Hindus toward the Balinese Muslims and migrants (Atmadja, 2013) (Suryawan, 2010). These two destructive experiences intensified the *Ajeg Bali* movement, which has been interpreted in a variety of ways, including having a conservative-romantic perspective that is much influenced by Balinese Indology.

When the Hindu-Balinese faced a terrorist threat from Islamic fundamentalism, the exclusion movement asserted the idea that Hinduism is a religious identity in Bali, which is much justified by Balinese Indology. Furthermore, since the Balinese Hindus historically had experienced threats, now the past trauma and reflections on the trauma have formed powerful and indelible memories (Atmadja, 2010). Hence many people view the movement of *Ajeg Bali* as reinforcing the ideology of ethnic religion, which for the Balinese is Hinduism. The *Ajeg Bali* was thereby interpreted as being an *Ajeg Hindu*, which insists that Bali return to its previously long-standing tradition of Dresta. As situations changes have occurred recently, the integrity of Balinese culture has come under a serious threat to its continuation (Suryawan, 2010). The emergence of *Ajeg Bali* eventually promoted exclusive inclination as a consequence of *Ajeg Hindu* that was triggered by external and internal factors, as seen in the phenomena of religious radicalism (Hidayatulloh & Nurhidayati, 2019). In addition to *Ajeg Bali*, Glocalization come out as a lengthy process to preserve the local culture in responding to globalization (Mulyawan, 2017).

The Regional Regulation (Perda) Number 3 of 2001, for example, has replace the *Adat* village (customary village) designation with a *Pakraman* village (village with religious bonding) designation. Such changes have led to increasing support for the "Ajeg Hindu." Through regulation of *Pakraman* villages, the Balinese can obtain

special privileges, such as a disbursement of special funds, from the Regional Government, as additions to the state village funds. The formation of, or designation as, a *Pakraman* village requires three aspects: (1) the presence of a *Parahyangan* temple (a holy place for Hindus), (2) the inclusion of *Pawongan* (Hindu Communities), and (3) the setting being as a *Palemahan* (village area) (Suryawan, 2010). With these requirements, it is thus difficult or impossible for Muslims who already inhabit certain areas, including Gelgel Muslim village, to establish themselves as a *Pakraman* village.

The policy and regulations regarding *Pakraman* village status are seen as the recognition of Hinduism as not only the major religion of the Balinese but also as a "first-class" religion entitled to privileges. After the Bali Bombings, the regulations and policy regarding *Pakraman* villages were considered reasonable, especially since they are seen as the strongholds and the central actors in guarding Bali from terrorist attacks and from migrant violence (Suryawan, 2010). But for Balinese Muslims, such regulations and policies have created a psychological atmosphere in which they are noted as a minority group and are regarded as being second-class citizens within the social hierarchy in Bali (*Interview*, October 7, 2019). This psychological aura is clearly not ideal for harmony between people of different religions, nor for a framework of equality. At the same time, it can happen that long-term maturity in, and security of, citizenship can encourage Balinese Muslim communities not to perceive the situation as being a form of social discrimination or injustice.

Conclusion

The exoticism of Bali is found not only in its natural beauty and the richness of Hindu rituals and traditions, but also in its history and accommodation of Balinese Islamic minorities. This cultural diversity is both an historical and a current component of Balinese exoticism. Gelgel village provides evidence of personal and official acculturation and accommodation within one of the oldest Muslim communities in Bali. Its history includes local wisdom and cultural treasures existing amid a context of inter-faith issues. And as a leading tourist destination, Bali is always interesting to visit. As a site of sociological interest, Bali is worthy of study, especially

for the relationship between Islam and Hinduism, as influencing Balinese cultural identity. This topic has not been deeply studied by academics, who heretofore have been most interested in Balinese tourism issues. Consequently, the wider public tends to identify Bali, or even idealize Bali, as an exemplar of harmonious exoticism, especially for tourism.

Notably, Islam is not a migrant religion, even though there are many Muslim migrants in Bali. The history and status of the Gelgel Muslim village, existing amid a majority Hindu locale in Bali, shows that Islam has nonetheless been adopted by many native Balinese. As a long-established and well-known tourist destination, Bali has attracted many migrants, including Muslims, from varied regions to live and make a living there. In fact, the long history of Islamization in Bali coincided with the process of Islamization in Java overall and in other regions of the Indonesian Archipelago. Islamization on the Island of Gods encouraged and it strengthened the development of Islam in certain areas, commonly called Muslim Sub-villages. One of them is the Gelgel village of Klungkung Regency. This Muslim village was formed hundreds of years ago, so it is well understood that the Muslims there consider themselves as native Balinese. Surrounded by Hindus as the religious majority, the Muslim community in the village nonetheless has succeeded in showing its vitality, and it ability to adapt dynamically, absorb selectively, and create productively. Because of its somewhat limited agricultural land, most of the Muslims in Gelgel village are entrepreneurs in the field of fashion. From the success of their businesses, it is also understood that they are relatively wealthy.

The Muslims of Gelgel village are aware that their position of being a "special" village has long historical roots in having a harmonious relationship between Islam and the *puri* (castle) and *pura* (temple). This awareness encourages them not to behave like *kacang lupa kulit* (people who forget where they came from) by wrongly denying the historical knots of togetherness. This harmonious relationship is based on historical knots of togetherness and on value of continuously preserving local wisdom through social traditions such as *ngejot* (sharing food), break-fasting, and *bebersih desa* (cleaning the village together) around the temples.

Thus, the Muslim community of the Gelgel village has been able to have the castle and the temple, as well as Hinduism and Bali culture, serve as contexts within which a well-grounded historical Islamic articulation was maintained. Here, the Muslim community of Gelgel village considers its people as natives of Bali and *nyame* (brothers) of Hindu. As explored in this study, it has meant that the Balinese Muslims and Balinese Hindus acknowledge their interrelated identity and a mutual affinity of togetherness as beneficial for both groups of faithful adherents.

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