

Embers Of The Cross In Lost Heaven: Cultural Intimacy In The Balinese Catholic Community In Palasari Village In The 1930s

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Abstract. This paper examines the historical portrait of the Catholic community in Palasari. They are Balinese Hindus from southern Bali who migrated to Palasari for reasons of customary sanctions. They received the sanctions from the traditional institutions in southern Bali which did not allow the conversion of faith. Missie activity in southern Bali in the fourth decade of the twentieth century through health and education services led to massive religious conversion. The prohibition of religious conversion, on the other hand, the increase in the phenomenon of religious conversion has caused social conflict in the form of customary sanctions against anyone who converts from Hinduism to Catholicism. Such sanctions are, for example, in the form of revocation of rights to use Balinese cultural identities and attributes. Because the Catholic community in southern Bali, although they have changed their faith but still use Balinese traditions, in order to avoid the wider conflict, they finally chose to migrate to west Bali. Clearing the forest and establishing a village which is now known as Palasari village.

Keywords: Missie, Identity, Catholic, Hindu

1 Introduction

This research is motivated by one main problem, namely the dilemma of cultural identity in the Balinese Catholic Community within the structure of Balinese society. If the Balinese Muslim Community has a fairly calm, good and friendly pattern of interaction with Balinese Hindus, then the relationship between the Balinese Catholic Community and Balinese Hindus gives rise to more cultural sentiments which are deliberately maintained, preserved and ready to be burned at any time, potentially causing social friction in society [1]. The cultural identity dilemma contains two main elements amidst the ever-changing Balinese culture, namely cultural centripetal and cultural centrifugal. These two elements are present within the framework of the reinterpretation of the reification of Balinese culture which began from the beginning of the 20th century until now [2].

These two terms originate from the study of applied physics. Centripetal means apparent motion approaching the center that occurs when an object makes circular motion. On the other hand, centrifugal means apparent movement away from the center that occurs when an object makes circular motion. In the context of this research, the central point in question is that

Balinese culture must be imagined like a solar system with the sun as its center. The sun is surrounded by objects that move and attract each other. These objects can be imagined as parties that carry out centripetal motion and centrifugal motion. In the context of this research, objects that move and create false effects move away from the center or approach the Balinese Catholic Community. These two concepts will help explain the ambivalence of the relationship between Balinese Catholics and Balinese Hindus in positioning the dynamics of their cultural identity [3].

Furthermore, this research will explain the problematic relationship between Balinese Hindus and Balinese Catholics when both are faced with the phenomenon of local identity reification. Balinese Hindus consider Balinese Catholics to have double standards. Because even though they have abandoned their religion and converted themselves to a new religion, they still apply Balinese cultural practices. On the other hand, for Balinese Hindus, the cultural practices carried out by Balinese Catholics are imbued with Hinduism. As a result, the opinion emerged that Balinese Catholics did not respect Balinese culture [4].

2 Method

This research method uses historical research methods. To strengthen the narrative, this research uses three eclectic approaches. A historical approach helps understand the chronology of events, understanding changes and dynamics of Balinese culture so that the origins of migration and religious conversion are clearly recorded. Sociological and anthropological approaches help in understanding the cultural framework and the social structure within it [5].

Data collection techniques were carried out using observation, interviews and literature study. Observations were carried out by visiting the research location in the administrative area of Jembrana district. A variant of the observation method used is non-participatory, namely only looking at social phenomena that occur while documenting. The interview method was carried out by visiting informants who understood the research theme. The literature study method is carried out by collecting relevant literature such as articles, books, journals, research results and news on websites [6].

3 Result and Discussion

3.1 Background of the Migration

The majority of Palasari Village residents are Catholic. Administratively, it is part of Ekasari Village, Melaya District, Jembrana Regency. Palasari residents are migrants from Tuka Village. The Balinese Catholic Community was founded by I Made Bronong and I Wayan Dibloeg in 1935. At that time, two of them were selling spiritual books in Denpasar. By accident, they both met Yohanes Kersten SVD who was a Catholic missionary [7].

The meeting resulted in a discussion about Catholic sacraments. Yohanes Kersten SVD's explanation regarding Catholic faith and eschatology caused I Made Bronong and I Wayan Dibloeg to find the religious passion they had been looking for. They were both interested in the new teaching and asked Yohanes Kersten SVD to perform the baptism. However, the request was rejected because it clashed with Article 177 which contained technical regulations regarding

mission and zending whose activities were limited by the Dutch Colonial Government. After going through a complicated licensing process, on April 17 1936, I Made Bronong handed over his two children, I Wayan Regig and I Made Rai to be baptized, followed by I Made Bronong and I Wayan Dibloeg at the same time [8]. After the baptism of the early Catholic community in Bali, spearheaded by I Made Bronong and I Wayan Dibloeg, Yohanes Kersten SVD was invited to Tuka Village to heal a sick man named I Timpleng. After being baptized, I Timpleng recovered. The incident of I Timpleng's recovery immediately spread and caused a stir in the Tuka community.

In the midst of poor economic conditions, poverty and destitution as a result of the Malaise effect of 1929, the presence of Yohanes Kersten SVD who was able to heal the sick was considered a messiah. This stigma was also strengthened by the weak social role of local elites in providing alternatives, or at least producing a way out of social burdens, both carried out by the Dutch Colonial bureaucracy, as well as by custom and culture.

The interest of the people of Tuka village in Catholicism resulted in a large wave of religious conversions. This gave rise to conflict involving the Balinese Hindu community and the Catholic community. The customary punishment given to Balinese people who convert to Catholicism can be resolved by the King of Badung [9] Before Yohanes Kersten SVD went to Flores, he laid the first stone for the construction of the church on July 12 1936. He also brought in Simon Buis SVD on September 30 1936. The poor condition of Balinese Catholics in Tuka Village and the low social acceptance of Balinese Hindus, causing efforts to request land from the Dutch Government. The land is planned to be used as a new settlement for Balinese Catholics. The land is located in Palasari covering an area of 200 hectares.

3.2 Missie Activitie

I Timpleng's healing activities carried out by Yohanes Kersten SVD caused a stir in Tuka. This makes it attractive for the Balinese people to embrace Catholicism. Including Pan Dubleg who is a member of Tuka and his family. Their family converted to Catholicism and handed over the *Sangah Merajan* land to become a church. This offended Balinese Hindus. As a result, Balinese who converted to Catholicism were given customary punishments. Especially the conflict over burial grounds, there was tension in Tuka between Balinese Hindus and Balinese Catholics over burial grounds. But the problem was resolved peacefully by Badung King Cokorde Gambrong on July 12 1936 [10].

After the church was completed, it was named Gereja Katolik Tri Tunggal Mahakudus. On February 14, 1937 it was blessed by Msgr. Abraham from Michigan City, America. After that, there was an increasing wave of Catholics. It was recorded that on Easter Day in 1937, 50 people were baptized at the Tuka Church, 48 people received first communion and 12 bridal couples were blessed. Next, in June 1939 it was recorded that 251 people converted to Catholicism.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the factors influencing religious conversion in Tuka were caused by the leadership of I Made Bronong and I Wayan Dibloeg as the first Balinese Catholic pioneers. The decision to convert from Protestantism to Catholicism was also followed by his followers in Tuka and Gumbrih. In addition, the healing activities

carried out by Yohanes Kersten SVD to I Timpleng made the Balinese interested in embracing Catholicism [4].

3.3 Cultural Passion

After being given 200 hectares of land in the West Bali forest, precisely in Palasari, in September 1940 Simon Buis SVD together with 18 people departed from Tuka Village, and added 6 people from Gumbrih Village so that the total group of 24 people plus one spiritual leader departed for tramigration area in West Bali. Upon arrival at the destination area, the 24 people cleared the forest with simple equipment. A few days later, 18 people fled because they were unable to clear the forest. By Simon Buis SVD, the 18 people were chased and finally found. They were motivated again and as many as 12 people decided to return to Palasari. Six other people returned to their area of origin [3]

After opening, Palasari was visited by waves of immigrants in the following years. From early 1940 to 1942 approximately 84 people lived in Palasari. In 1942 Catholic Christians built houses on the land they obtained, although in a simple form. More immigrants living in Palasari make the old Palasari, which covers an area of 200 hectares, feel cramped. Moreover, the geographical conditions do not support it as a settlement because of the hilly soil texture. Simon Buis SVD asked the King of Jembrana for additional land for settlement. However, in mid 1924 Japan came to occupy Indonesia and all Dutch missionaries were arrested, including Simon Buis SVD who was detained in Makasar. In May 1946 Pastor Simon Buis, SVD returned to Palasari and again appealed to the King of State and was given land in Palasari now covering an area of 200 hectares [3]

After being given land in the current Palasari, Catholics began moving the goods in the old Palasari to the New Palasari. Quoted from Widastra. Each family in Palasari has just obtained a yard of 16-18 acres to be used as a place to build a house. The new Palasari began to be organized together with the people and spiritual leader Pastor Bernardus Blanken, SVD with the assistance of Brother Ignatius de Vrieze, SVD, including infrastructure, schools, polyclinics and especially those related to the spiritual life of the people, namely the church [7]

Even though the Balinese Catholics in Palasari Village have converted to religion, they still use Balinese cultural practices. The Balinese names used in Palasari indicate gender and birth order. Like the name of Mr. Elegius I Nyoman Sugiri, which indicates male gender seen from the letter I and birth order number three seen from the word Nyoman. The use of traditional Balinese clothing, traditional Balinese clothing is clothing worn by the Balinese Hindu community during Hindu religious holidays. So, in the Palasari community, this is what they still maintain as their identity, every time they celebrate holidays such as Easter, Petekosta and Christmas, the Palasari community wears traditional Balinese clothing to take part in the holiday procession at the church.

Apart from the things above, the use of the Balinese language cannot be underestimated. Language is a tool for communicating with others, apart from being a means of communication, language can also show the identity of those who speak one of them is Balinese. In Palasari the Balinese language is still used, because the people of Palasari were formerly Balinese, when communicating they used Balinese. The Balinese language has been used from

generation to generation, is used to this day, even during holidays when singing spiritual songs, some words are replaced with Balinese. This must be followed because it has become a customary agreement in Palasari [9].

4 Conclusion

The life of the Palasari community as a Balinese Catholic Community has a long history. The change of religion from Hinduism to Catholicism as a result of missionary activities in the 1930s, especially in southern Bali, resulted in vertical and horizontal conflicts. Customary sanctions received by Balinese Hindus who changed their religion to Catholicism made them migrate to Palasari on the basis of policies taken by the Dutch government. Even though they have changed beliefs and then migrated to Palasari, in practice, the Balinese Catholic community in Palasari still uses the Balinese cultural system. This can be seen from how they show their cultural, social and ecological identity. It is in this context that the assumption of double standards in Balinese Catholic identity emerges. This identity ambivalence produces two tendencies, namely cultural centripetal and cultural centrifugal. Each of them is present intertwined in every era depending on the interests to be achieved.

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