

Masjid Agung Jami in Singaraja City and its Role in Religious Dynamics in North Bali

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Abstract. The purpose of writing this article is to understand the traces of Islamic acculturation in North Bali through the Jami Singaraja Mosque and its role in the religious dynamics in Bali. It should be noted that acculturation in North Bali is influenced by several factors, namely historical factors that state that acculturation occurred during the Dutch colonial period to establish Singaraja as an administrative center. Geographical factors also play a role, as North Bali is located in a coastal area with a port built to attract traders from various countries. The research method for this article uses a qualitative descriptive approach, with the research location in Singaraja. The data was obtained through field observations, interviews with informants, and document studies. The determination of informants used purposive sampling techniques. The results of this research indicate that Masjid Jami Singaraja serves not only as a place of worship, but also as an important symbol of cultural and religious acculturation in North Bali, as evidenced by the mosque's combination of Islamic and traditional Balinese elements. The role of the mosque demonstrates tolerance and harmony among religious communities, and the interaction between the Muslim community in Bali and the wider society is interconnected. The conclusion of this article is that the Jami Grand Mosque is an important mosque in North Bali, which introduces culture and tolerance between religious communities. This is evidenced by the various activities carried out around the mosque which is considered a social center.

Keywords: acculturation, history, culture, Jami Singaraja Mosque, religion

1 Introduction

As a large country, Indonesia has a heterogeneous and multidimensional population. Cultural diversity, ethnicity, religion, and language are treasures that must be preserved in "Bhineka Tunggal Ika" (Unity in Diversity). Indonesia has many different cultures and customs, making it a multicultural nation. This cultural diversity leads to varying customs in different places. This diversity results in interactions that complement and influence each other, giving rise to local culture or traditions. Cultural acculturation occurs when one culture meets or blends with another culture. The process of acculturation not only occurs between different cultures, but also between religions and cultures. On the other hand, when Islam entered Indonesia, it underwent interactions and acculturation processes in terms of language, culture, and behavior, which resulted in the distinctiveness of Islam in Indonesia compared to Islam in the Arab.

According to history, Islam arrived in various parts of the world under relatively peaceful conditions, with almost no conflict or tension. Although the society at that time practiced their own beliefs such as animism, dynamism, Hinduism, and Buddhism, Islam was easily accepted as a religion that brought peace. It is important to note that there are many manifestations of Islam in Indonesia. The spread of Islam was facilitated through various approaches, including through dance and music. In doctrinal terms, the Quran and Hadith are considered the primary sources of Islam. If applied in practice by society, the results will undoubtedly be the same, regardless of their ability to comprehend it. In the context of understanding and experience, this is often referred to as "*historical Islam*," "*sociological Islam*," "*factual Islam*," or "*cultural Islam*." In this regard, Islam has evolved into a cultural manifestation subject to social and cultural laws [1].

The history of the spread of Islam varies in each region. Before colonialism, the first traces of Islam were found in Kampung Sembiran in the northern part of Bali, which was predominantly inhabited by the Bali Aga or Bali Mula community, who practiced animistic beliefs of traditional Balinese religion. The rituals of the Kampung Sembiran community were not influenced by Islamic rituals, as they prepared offerings that did not include pork. History shows that Muslims came to Bali in the 14th century, precisely in the village of Gelgel. After the Makassar War in 1667, the influence of Islam in Bali grew stronger. Bugis traders and nobles from Makassar left their region to avoid the Dutch and landed in Badung, Buleleng, and Jembrana [2].

During the war in Blambangan, Panji Sakti was assisted by the Bugis-Mandar troops who resided in Teluk Prambang Blambangan. Additionally, the introduction of Islam to Jembrana occurred in two phases. Muslim communities from Bugis or Makassar arrived in 1653-1655 and 1660-1661, during the conflicts between Makassar and the VOC. They occupied areas that were part of the Jembrana kingdom, ruled by Arya Pancoran, and sought permission to settle and trade in the port. The Bugis people were the first to embrace Islam. Islamic traces can also be found throughout Bali, including Gianyar. Furthermore, there is a community in Keramas that was established before colonialism.

Buleleng itself is one of the regions in the northern part of Bali that has a significant Muslim population, such as in Pegayaman and Kampung Tinggi. Many Muslim individuals from Javanese, Madurese, Bugis, and other ethnic groups reside along the northern coast of Bali. Additionally, in daily life, there are no boundaries. This indicates that the spread of Islam in Buleleng has experienced positive development. The harmony between the Hindu and Muslim communities in Buleleng depends on the history of the arrival and development of Islam in the region. According to the translated Babad Buleleng, it is explained that three elephant handlers who had embraced Islam came to Buleleng in 1587, marking the entry of Islam into the city. Dalem Solo, a Mataram king, received the elephant as a gift in recognition of Gusti Ngurah Panji Sakti's victory in battle against the people of Blambangan [3]. Some historical remnants show how Islam emerged and developed in Buleleng until today, one of which is the Grand Mosque of Jami. This may be because not many historians have investigated the Islamic remnants in Buleleng. The Islamic remnants in Buleleng provide important lessons about the introduction and development of Islam. These Islamic remnants are also undeniable witnesses

or evidence. Even the Hindu community also participated in protecting and preserving the Islamic remnants in Buleleng.

The main issue in this research is regarding the cultural and historical acculturation of Masjid Agung Jami Singaraja, tolerance and harmony between religious communities symbolized through the mosque and its role in the religious dynamics in Bali. The Jami Singaraja Grand Mosque as a place of worship for Muslims is very important because it is located in the middle of the city and densely populated settlements which shows an increase in the number of Muslims and among the majority of Hindus [4]. This study differs from others because it focuses on Masjid Agung Jami Singaraja as the research object, where the mosque represents one of the Islamic legacies in Buleleng that has left traces of Islamic acculturation in Bali and there is a uniqueness of the mosque itself and the object is not widely known by others, particularly in Buleleng.

2 Methods

This article is composed using a qualitative descriptive approach that emphasizes historical research methods, including heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography. The data obtained in this article includes field observations in Singaraja, interviews with informants regarding the history of acculturation and the role of Masjid Agung Jami, and document studies. In addition, the author also draws from various online scholarly journals related to the discussed material and elaborates using their own language.

3 Result And Discussion

The mosques in Buleleng reflect a long history of the relationship between Islam and local culture. The first mosques in Buleleng were established when Muslim traders and scholars from Java, Madura, and Bugis arrived in the 14th century. They played a significant role in constructing places of worship and spreading Islamic teachings. Initially, the mosques in Buleleng were built using natural materials such as wood and bamboo.

Over time, those mosques have been renovated and rebuilt using more durable materials. It is known that mosques are not only used for worship, but also serve as centers for social, educational, and cultural activities for the Muslim community. The mosques in Buleleng enrich the cultural diversity of Bali and demonstrate tolerance and harmony among different religious communities. The construction and role of mosques in Buleleng highlight the adaptation and integration of Islam within the unique local cultural context.

Muslims in Bali, especially in Buleleng, demonstrate remarkable adaptability to their environment, which consists predominantly of Hindu communities deeply familiar with their local traditions and culture. This adaptation is achieved through various means, such as integrating Islamic principles in accordance with Balinese customs and actively participating in local social and cultural activities. Muslims in Buleleng often take part in traditional ceremonies and community events, showcasing tolerance and respect for local traditions. Furthermore, they organize religious events openly for the general public, allowing interaction between religions and strengthening social relationships. Religious education in Buleleng is tailored to the local

context, emphasizing universal Islamic values that align with Balinese culture. This adaptive approach not only preserves the religious identity of Muslims but also enhances tolerance and harmony amidst Bali's diversity [5].

The development of the Muslim community in Buleleng, which began with the arrival of Muslim traders from various regions, has led to the formation of small Muslim communities around mosques. These communities have gradually and significantly adapted and acculturated with the local culture, which is predominantly Hindu. One of the proofs of success in this regard is the active participation of Muslims in various social and cultural activities in Buleleng, resulting in religious harmony and tolerance.

The Muslim community in Buleleng continues to grow and significantly contribute to the local social, economic, and cultural life up to the present time. They assist in running the local economy through their businesses in various fields, from trade to education. This proves that the development of the Muslim society in Buleleng can undergo acculturation while maintaining their religious identity and helping to create a more peaceful and inclusive community.

3.1 History of Masjid Agung Jami Singaraja

In 1846, Masjid Agung Jami was established during the reign of King Buleleng A.A Ngurah Ketut Jelantik Polong, the son of A.A Panji Sakti, King of Buleleng I. As he was a follower of Balinese Hinduism, his Muslim brothers, A.A Ngurah Ketut Jelantik Celagi and Abdullah Maskati, were responsible for the implementation and management of Masjid Agung Jami.



Figure 1. Main Door of Masjid Agung Jami Singaraja

According to information from the informant (Muhammad Adil), the increasing population has led to the inadequate capacity of Masjid Keramat or Masjid Kuno. With the agreement of the community at that time, the leaders of the three villages requested Raja Buleleng, Anak Agung Ngurah Ketut Jelantik Polong, to provide land for the construction of a more representative mosque. Raja Buleleng happily granted a piece of land on Jalan Imam Bonjol Singaraja, where the current mosque is located. Not long after, in the year 1830 AD, King Buleleng led the construction of a new mosque desired by the Muslim community. Considering that he was a Hindu, Gusti Ngurah Ketut Jelantik Celagi, who had converted to

Islam, was entrusted to represent the king, along with several local people, including Abdullah Maskati. In 1854, when the Buleleng Harbor was still active and frequently used as a transit point by traders from Java, Kalimantan, Madura, and others, this mosque was often used as a stopping place for prayer and rest.

During the construction and completion of the mosque, there were always challenges faced by the Muslim community at that time. This was especially true when the Friday prayer location was shifted from Masjid Keramat to the new mosque. This situation caught the attention of King I Gusti Anglurah Ketut Jelantik VIII, who decided to help address the issues faced by the Muslim community. He summoned I Gusti Ngurah Ketut Jelantik Celagi and several local residents to meet with him at Puri [6]. Gradually, through discussions, the differences of opinion were resolved. Ultimately, based on the wisdom gained from this experience, to increase the sense of bond and ukhuwah among fellow people, the mosque was named "Masjid Jami," which means a mosque for coming together.

Since the beginning of the arrival of Islam to the island of Bali until now, the Jami Singaraja Grand Mosque has been a silent witness of the extraordinary religious tolerance on the Island of the Gods. Until now, the book of Al-Quran written by A.A, Ngurah Ketut Jelantik Celagi is still stored in the Great Mosque of Jami Singaraja. In addition, his descendants still use the name Gusti even though they are Muslims [7].

3.2 The Existence of the Handwritten Al-Quran of Gusti Ketut Jelantik Celagi in the Masjid Agung Jami Singaraja

One of the family members of King Panji Sakti VI, I Gusti Ngurah Ketut Jelantik Celagi, is the handwritten author of an ancient *Al-Quran* that is currently stored in the Masjid Agung Jami. He withdrew from public life after the Civil War in Puri Buleleng. Ketut Tjelagie sought refuge in a mosque when turmoil struck Puri Buleleng. Haji Muhammad Yusuf Saleh, the mosque's imam, warmly welcomed him. To write this *Al-Quran*, Ketut Celagi used paper imported from Europe. He wrote seventy-five verses of the *Al-Quran* using natural dyes sourced from local leaves. Additionally, the decoration of the *Al-Quran* features Balinese ornaments.



Figure 2. Cover the Handwritten Al-Quran by I Gusti Ngurah Ketut Jelantik Celagi in the Masjid Agung Jami Singaraja

The handwritten *Al-Quran* by Gusti Ketut Jelantik Celagi is stored in a glass container. This is done to prevent it from being easily damaged by termites. This handwritten *Al-Quran* by Gusti Ketut Jelantik Celagi is often used for tadarus during the month of Ramadan. Additionally, there are many other handwritten *Al-Qurans* still present in the Masjid Agung Jami, and to this day, the author of these *Al-Qurans* remains unknown. One unique aspect of this *Al-Quran* is its number of surahs. While most *Al-Qurans* have 114 surahs and 30 juz, this particular *Al-Quran* only has 113 surahs, meaning that one surah is missing. The surah in this *Al-Quran* is known as surah *Al-Ikhlās*, because it consists of only 4 short verses and is considered the first surah that Gusti Ketut Jelantik Celagi memorized.

According to the information provided by Mr. Saipudin, who is a 9th descendant of Gusti Ketut Jelantik Celagi, Gusti Ketut Jelantik Celagi wrote the *Al-Quran* when he was a student of Haji Muhammad Yusuf. He also studied religion and learned to recite the *Al-Quran* from his teacher at the Kuna mosque. Until now, the descendants of Gusti Ketut Jelantik Celagi include both Hindus and Muslims. This is demonstrated by the Hindu community, who are descendants of Raja Ketut Jelantik, continuing to invite their Muslim relatives to visit Puri.

The Masjid Agung Jami, which houses the ancient handwritten *Al-Quran* by Gusti Ketut Jelantik Celagi, is an important historical relic that demonstrates evidence of religious tolerance in Balinese society. This handwritten Quran serves as a symbol of enduring awareness and tolerance among different religious communities up to the present day. According to Aris, with the results of an interview with Mr. H. Alawy, the administrator of the mosque. Takmir in his book said that actually this mosque used to have quite a large collection of Quranic manuscripts, but these manuscripts now do not exist because they were burned.

3.3 Evidence of Acculturation of the Masjid Agung Jami Singaraja

Besides the handwritten Al-Quran by Gusti Ketut Jelantik Celagi, the cultural acculturation at Masjid Agung Jami Singaraja is also evident in the entrance door located on the east side, which leads to the mosque courtyard. This door was a gift from the king of Buleleng. The pyramidal roof of this door was originally the gate of the Buleleng royal palace. Each corner of the door features six carved *cungkup* motifs, resembling vines. Additionally, the door has two leaves made of iron grilles. In the middle of the main hall, there are two coconut tree columns (*soko guru*) that have been cemented. The square-shaped base of the columns has flat, slanted, and flat folds. Above the folds, there are square flat surfaces, slanted folds, flat folds, and rectangular flat surfaces.



Figure 3. Main door carving details of the Masjid Agung Jami Singaraja

Then the evidence of acculturation is also seen in the pulpit of Masjid Agung Jami Singaraja, which has a tower shape with a recessed entrance and a layered roof. Behind the pulpit, there is a special room for storing prayer tools, and the pulpit floor is multi-leveled. With green, white, and golden colors, the shape of this pulpit depicts the fusion, characteristic of Bugis Islamic architecture. This pulpit is used as a place where the imam leads prayers and is adorned with decorations that show the acculturation between Islamic and Balinese cultures.

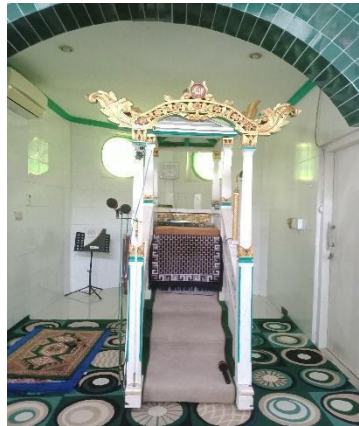


Figure 4. Pulpit of the Masjid Agung Jami Singaraja

Acculturation in terms of society can be seen through the use of language, where interactions among people involve a mix of Balinese, Arabic, and Sudanese languages. This language usage is only applicable in coastal areas, while Muslim communities in inland regions no longer use these three languages. In terms of food, the community around the Grand Mosque of Jami Singaraja during the month of Ramadan prepares Arab dishes and Indian porridge, incorporating Bali's unique spices known as "*base genep*" to cater to the local palate. This food is then called "*Bubur Kajanan*," which is distributed for free during iftar. Additionally, there is a special coconut-based treat called "*Jaje Sogok*," which is specifically enjoyed during the celebration of the Maulid Nabi.

In terms of social aspects, the village community of Kajanan has been taught to tolerate and coexist with people of different religions from an early age. If Hindus follow the teachings of Tri Hita Karana, then Muslims follow the teachings of *Hablum Minallah* and *Hablum Minannas*. This also demonstrates the fusion of Islamic culture with Balinese culture.

3.4 The Role of the Masjid Agung Jami Singaraja in Religious Dynamics in North Bali

The Masjid Agung Jami Singaraja plays an important role in the religious dynamics of North Bali, reflecting the cultural fusion and religious harmony among the people in the region. Besides serving as a place of worship, this mosque also functions as an educational center for the Muslim community, providing Madrasah and TPQ (Taman Pendidikan Al-Quran) for children and teenagers to learn how to read the Quran and understand Islamic teachings. Additionally, the mosque organizes study classes and religious lectures for all segments of society, which can assist the Muslim community in studying and comprehending Islamic teachings.

This mosque serves as a venue for social events such as bazaars, free healthcare services, and assistance to the poor. These activities benefit the community around the mosque as a whole. It reflects the Islamic values of compassion and sharing. In a broader context, the mosque also serves as a place for discussions and interactions among people of different religions, promoting understanding, tolerance, and harmony among various religious groups in Bali.

The Masjid Agung Jami Singaraja symbolizes religious harmony and tolerance in North Bali. This mosque is an important part of the local community, even amidst a majority Hindu population. The harmonious relationship between Muslims and Hindus demonstrates that interfaith harmony can be achieved through mutual respect and cooperation. The surrounding community also strives to strengthen solidarity among various religious communities through their interfaith activities.

4 Conclusion

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that Masjid Keramat cannot meet the population growth, which leads to the need for a more representative mosque. Raja Buleleng, Anak Agung Ngurah Jelantik Polong, was assigned to build the mosque. In the year 1830 AD, he initiated the construction of a new mosque, which later became known as "Masjid Jami" due to the communal spirit and the presence of local residents. Besides the handwritten Quran by Gusti Ketut Celagi, there are several pieces of evidence showing cultural acculturation in Masjid Agung Jami Singaraja, such as carvings on the mosque entrance and decorations on the pulpit that reflect the characteristics of the fusion of Islamic and Balinese culture. Cultural diversity within the community can be influenced by the use of language in interactions among fellow religious believers around the mosque.

The Masjid Agung Jami of Singaraja is an important mosque in North Bali, which introduces Islamic culture and promotes tolerance among different religious communities. The mosque serves as an educational and support center for children and teenagers. It also functions as a social hub, providing free healthcare services and assistance to those in need. This symbolizes the harmony between Hindu and Islamic communities that can be achieved through

cooperation and solidarity among various religious communities. Concrete steps are needed to preserve this mosque, namely increasing public awareness of the importance of cultural heritage, working with the government, local communities, and related parties to manage the mosque properly, and taking the initiative to document and digitize the history and activities of the mosque.

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