

The Cross Embers in the Land of Penjor : Ambivalence and the History of Turbulence of Balinese Christianity identity in Untal-Untal Badung Bali 1930s

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Abstract. This paper examines the turbulence of Balinese Christian subaltern identity and their ambivalent attitude in responding to the dynamics of local culture in the fourth decade of the twentieth century. The Balinese Christian community in Untal-Untal Badung are Balinese Hindus who have conducted religious conversions since the first zending activity was carried out in 1930. Amid the strict supervision and prohibition of zending and missie due to the realization of the baliseering policy, religious conversion has caused a cultural polemic. This study uses a qualitative research design with two approaches, namely, history and culture. The historical approach helps to observe the dynamics of zending in Bali in 1931-1935. The cultural approach helps explain the upheaval of values and norms in the structure of society due to conversion. This study yielded two important findings. First, the Christianization of Balinese Hindus is evidence of the double standard attitude of the Dutch Colonial Government. On the one hand, prohibiting Christianity in the name of baliseering, but on the other hand, allowing Christianity to take place. Second, the turbulence of cultural identity, between who deserves to be called Balinese, has placed the Untal-Untal Balinese Christian community as a subaltern group that requires a particular strategy to gain recognition..

Keywords: ambivalence, identity, sub-altern

1. Introduction

This research is motivated by two main things. First, the dilemmatic relationship between the Balinese Christian Community and Balinese Hindus in the past. The interaction of the two has resulted in a latent conflict in the present. The nuances of contradiction, prejudice, and suspicion and even stereotypes that lead to social disintegration have colored their relationship throughout the history of Balinese culture. The primordialism of religion and ethnicity which got its political stage at that time became the main catalyst for the birth of Balinese cultural reification [1]. The adage that says, "Hinduism is Balinese" and vice versa has become a common stereotype [2]. As a result, the Balinese Christian Community became one of the subaltern groups in discussing the dynamics of Balinese culture [3].

The dynamics of the interaction between the Balinese Christian Community and the Balinese Hindus contain two elements that help explain the origin of the conflict between the two. First, the religious conversion carried out by Balinese Christians in the 1930s has resulted in a dual identity. The division of identity was followed by the ideological division of the Dutch Christian church in response to Balinese Hindu customs and religion. The estuary is the ambivalent attitude shown by the Balinese Christian community in responding to the dynamics of Balinese culture. Second, the cultural polemic involving Balinese Hindus and Balinese

Christians resulted in two tendencies, namely centrifugalism and centripetalism. The cultural centrifugalism shown by the Balinese Christian Community begins with an ideological debate within the religious body about their position in carrying out the doctrine of the scriptures. Religious puritanism is the estuary of centrifugalism tendencies that cause the social distance between the Balinese Christian community and Balinese culture to widen [4].

On the other hand, the ideological struggle within the social body of the Balinese Christian Community gave birth to a tendency of cultural centripetalism which was marked by the adoption of elements of local Balinese culture into the religious practices of Balinese Christians. The motive, besides being caused by the strong influence of previous cultural practices, is also an effort to enculturate Christian teachings on the island so that it is easily accepted by residents and gains more followers [5].

The second background relates to the lack of Christian historiography in Bali. If there is, just mention it without doing more in-depth discussion. In fact, historically, the village of Untal-Untal which is the object of this research is the heart of Christianity on the island of Bali. The pioneers of the Balinese Christian Community first came to this place. Thus, this research positions itself as an alternative historiography that intends to close the gap of previous research [6]

2. Research Method

This paper uses the historical method. First step is heuristic stage which is carried out in three ways such as observation, interviews, and literature study. Participatory observation was carried out by attending Protestant community activities in Untal-Untal Village such as congregation, holy communion, or art performances. Non-participatory observations were carried out by conducting audio and visual documentation of the social activities of the Protestant community in Untal-Untal Village. Next, interviews were conducted with the second generation of the Protestant community in Untal-Untal. They are on average 60-70 years old and still retain social memories of evangelism in the area in the 1930's. A literature study was conducted to compare the memoirs of the first evangelist in the area, TSang To Hang, diaries of the early Protestant community in Untal-Untal, photos of baptisms, some notes from the Dutch colonial government regarding religious conflicts in the area.

The second stage is source criticism which aims to codify primary data and secondary data. In this study, the Dutch Colonial archives, oral history, old photos, diaries, church buildings as a site of memory will be included in the primary data. Meanwhile, information obtained through books, articles, magazines, and online media will be used as secondary data. The third stage, Interpretation, is the activity of interpreting the meaning between one fact and another. Data that has been codified into primary and secondary is analyzed, objectified and dialectical to get a rough idea of the results of the research carried out [7]. This stage is followed by the last stage, historiography, namely history writing.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Tsang To Hang, The First Evangelist in Bali



Fig 1 : Tsang To Hang

The Christianization in Untal-Untal Village Badung Bali in the 1930s was carried out by a Chinese, Tsang To Hang. His interest in Bali can be traced from the book he wrote himself, "Perintis Penginjilan di Bali" and published by Pastor. Hang was very interested in the island of Bali after reading the travel report from R.A.Jaffray who has visited the Dutch East Indies twice. He is the chairman of the CMA (Christian and Missionary Alliance) for Asia. In addition, he also pioneered the establishment of Evangelical Society in China which was named the *Chinese Foreign Missionary Union* (CFMU). According to him, Chinese evangelists are best suited to serve the people in Indonesia [8].

In Bali, Hang lives in Wangaya. His evangelistic activities were only intended for Chinese people who were wandering in Bali at that time. This is based on the Decree of the Governor (*Gouvernements bcsluit*) No. 16 in 1930. At the beginning of his ministry in Bali in 1931, Tsang To Hang succeeded in baptizing 4 people of Chinese descent through a long and complicated phase.

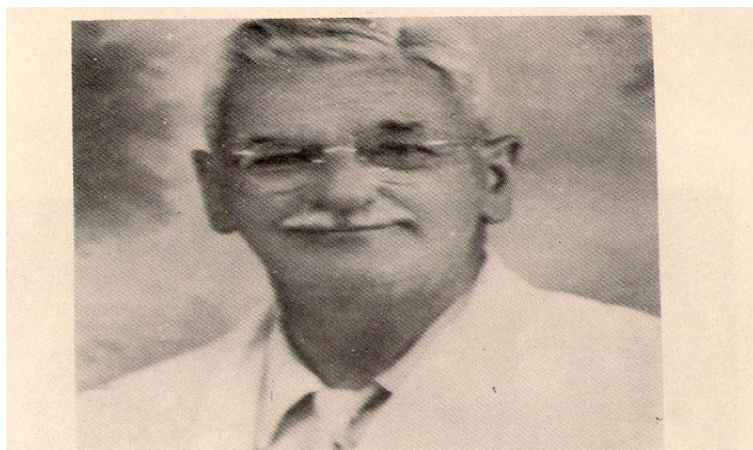


Fig 2 : Pastor R.A Jaffray

Seeing that the ministry among urban Chinese people was not progressing, Hang intended to violate the Governor's Permit from the Dutch East Indies Government regarding evangelistic activities. Next, Hang directs evangelistic activities to local people in rural Bali. In carrying out his mission, he was assisted by his friend, Ang Wei Chik, one of the four Chinese who were baptized in May 1931. He was a half-Balinese Chinese because his mother was Balinese and worked as a cinema keeper. It was from Ang Wei Chik that Hang was introduced to a friend named I Gusti Made Rinda who was the first Balinese to be successfully converted to Christianity [9]. I Gusti Made Rinda is the person who taught Hang Malay and Balinese

The first evangelistic fellowship was held at the home of I Made Rinda. A young man from Untal-Untal who a friend of Ang Wei Chik and I is also Gusti Made Rinda. In that house, evangelism is carried out regularly by inviting Hang as a speaker. Meanwhile, Ang Wei Chik and I Gusti Made Rinda oversaw gathering the congregation. During the service, Hang taught an evangelistic song whose translation was assisted by I Gusti Made Rinda.

Two popular evangelistic songs are entitled “*Tiang percaye*” and “*Ngutang Weci*” which explain that anyone who believes in the Lord Jesus will have their sins forgiven. Because Jesus himself sacrificed himself to atone for the sins of mankind. Over time the songs and all things related to learning about Christianity continued to be spread and shared by Tsang To Hang by holding services every week and he himself as the leader. The lyrics of the song read as follows [10]:

<p><i>Tiang Percaya</i> <i>Tiang Percaya Ring Hyang Yesus 3X</i> <i>Tuhan Yesus</i> <i>Ne Ngerahayang Tiang</i> <i>menyelamatkan saya</i> <i>Ida Ngembus anten tiang 3X</i> <i>saya</i> <i>Tiang kebebasan</i> <i>dibebaskan</i> <i>Dosan Tiang Keampureyang 3X</i> <i>Tiang Kerahayang</i> <i>diselamatkan</i> <i>Tiang mekidung haleluya 3X</i> <i>Tiang Kerahayang</i> <i>diselamatkan</i></p>	<p><i>Saya Percaya</i> <i>Saya Percaya kepada</i> <i>Yang</i> <i>Tuhan membuka rantai</i> <i>Saya</i> <i>Dosa saya diampuni</i> <i>Saya</i> <i>Saya bernyanyi haleluya</i> <i>saya</i></p>
<p><i>Ngutang Weci</i> <i>Sifat Negatif</i> <i>Ngutang weci sihing Yesus</i> <i>negatif dikasih Yesus</i> <i>Negen Salib ngiring Ida</i> <i>Ikut Tuhan</i> <i>Sengsaraja depang suba</i> <i>sengsara biarkan saja</i> <i>Mangda raga polih suwarga</i> <i>masuk Sorga</i></p>	<p><i>Membuang</i> <i>Buang sifat</i> <i>Pikul Salib</i> <i>Meskipun</i> <i>Supaya kita dapat</i></p>

Hang performs church services in a dialogical manner which usually lasts four hours. After delivering his sermon, Hang will give the congregation the opportunity to ask questions.

Through this dialogical process, Hang got a lot of information about people's complaints about social and cultural life. Furthermore, the information obtained becomes the basis for an evangelism strategy to local Balinese rural communities.

News of Hang's dialogical evangelism reached the ears of I Made Gepek or Pan Loting through I Gusti Made Rinda, who at that time returned to his village in Buduk. Pan Loting himself is the spiritual teacher of I Gusti Made Rinda. He is known to be powerful, therefore he is respected in Buduk Village. His social status and abilities made Pan Loting have many followers. I Made Risin and I Gusti Made Rinda told Pan Loting if there was someone who had the same knowledge as him. He teaches religion without using excessive means. The teacher was named Tsang To Hang.

Loting is curious and intends to complain about his supernatural powers with Hang. Loting deliberately followed Hang's regular service at Untal-Untal. After the service was over, Loting asked I Gusti Made Rinda to present the challenge to compete to Hang. Hang agreed and they met at a place witnessed by Loting's disciples who had become members of the congregation as well as other members of the congregation who were present at that time.

Loting's meeting with Hang showed a fierce debate. Loting tried various ways to beat Hang. He took out all the power and knowledge possessed. However, in the end Loting had to admit Hang's magic. In accordance with the spiritualist tradition, whoever loses in the matter of fighting mysticism, must submit to the winner. This means Loting must submit to Hang. This submission was shown by Loting by being willing to become a Christian.

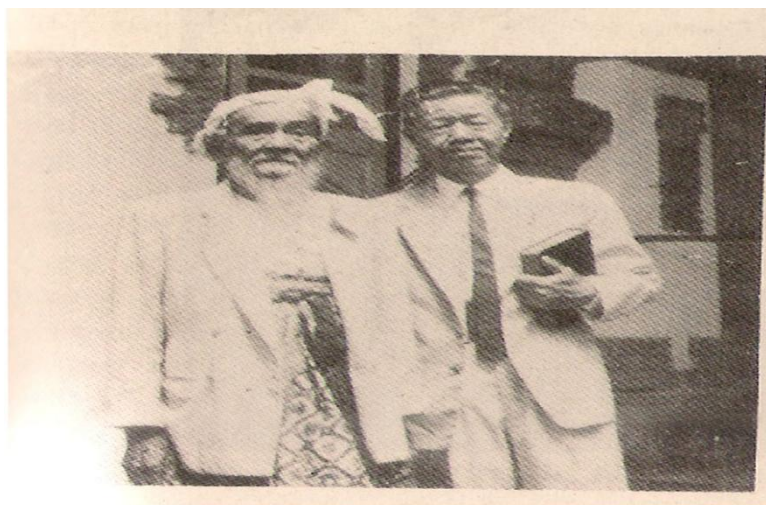


Fig 3 : Hang and Loting in the Front of Bethlehem Church Badung Bali

News of the defeat of Pan Loting from Tsang To Hang, to becoming a Christian, reached the ears of his followers from Untal-Untal, Buduk and other villages. Pan Loting's footsteps of converting to Christianity were soon followed by his other disciples. Apart from being driven by curiosity about the new religion, he also saw the traces of Pan Loting as a powerful human from Buduk Village. The first baptism took place at Tukad Yeh Poh in Banjar Untal-Untal. A total of 12 people were baptized and 6 people came from Untal-Untal [11].

There was one of the twelve people who were baptized in Tukad Yeh Poh who a colleague of Pan Loting was, namely I Wayan Geroet. He was a farmer and an expert in

medicine. He was respected for his ability to treat sick people such as scabies, scabies, smallpox, and other types of diseases. He pursued the science of herbal medicine and was very skilled in the field of banquets and concoction of herbal ingredients to treat various diseases.

I Wayan Geroet has a wife named Ni Wayan Moenoeng. They have an only child named Ni Wayan Supreg. Ni Wayan Supreg married a man named I Nyoman Kayun. They have six children namely I Made Timothius, Ni Nyoman Rutiningsih, I Ketut Pandu, Ni Luh Penglipur, I Made Bingar, I Nyoman Raharja.



Fig 4 : Ni Wayan Supreg and her husband, I Wayan Kayun

3.2 Centrifugal and Centripetal

Rapid change, especially regarding the religious system, has the potential to cause conflict. In the context of Christianization in Untal-Untal, religious conversion from Hinduism to Christianity has given birth to a new social layer in the structure of society. It is more appropriate to call it a sub-culture that shows double standards in responding to Balinese culture. This attitude then gave birth to two tendencies, namely the centrifugal tendency and the centripetal tendency [12].

The centrifugal tendency occurs when the new social layer provides social distance from the culture they previously adhered to. This, for example, can be seen in the demolition of an ancestral shrine or what is known as "*nguwug sanggah*". This is triggered by a question that is "*seken sakti Tuhan Allah ?, Bani Nguwug Sanggah ?*". This centrifugal attitude cannot be separated from the Christian purification by Tsang To Hang. Hang advised early Christians in Untal-Untal not to apply Balinese culture anymore. The reason is that their religion has changed, so there is no need to carry out traditional obligations.

Hang's idea, which was widely accepted by early Christians in Untal-Untal, caused the rice fields managed by Christians to not be given water and the dead were not given burial ground. An incident like this happened to I Wayan Geroet, he experienced a situation where he had to leave all the previous old teachings, including to dismantle the place of worship.

On the other hand, the diametrical conflict as a result of the centrifugal attitude initiated by Tsang To Hang caused the Untal-Untal Christian community to become a sub-altern

in the social structure of Balinese society at that time. To avoid a wider conflict, Hang is advised to leave and no longer do zending activities. After all, Hang was declared to have committed illegal acts for violating the Besluit governor number 16 regarding the spread of Christianity. The Dutch colonial government intervened to resolve the conflict.

After accepting the Bible and giving up old beliefs, Balinese Christians feel free from tradition. They see no need to bear the burden of a lot of customs. However, this freedom becomes a boomerang because if you leave Hinduism, you will automatically leave the traditional village membership. This means that they are considered not to have the right to use the graves. In Balinese Hindu belief, there is only one burial ground in one village, there cannot be two. They are considered to have not carried out their obligations such as "ngayah desa" and taking care of the existence of setra, as well as all ceremonial purposes (piodalan), therefore their traditional rights are considered lost.

With more and more Balinese converting to Christianity, more and more people are leaving the practice of customs and Hinduism. Especially in Untal-Untal in 1931-1933 when Tsang To Hang was still providing his services in Bali, in Banjar Untal-Untal there was a congregation who suddenly died wanted to be buried by the local congregation at the cemetery in Dalung village but was not accepted by the local community. Tsang To Hang complained about this matter to the Government of the Netherlands Indie, namely to the assistant resident of Bali Lombok, Mr. H.J. Jantzen, a Christian who supports evangelistic efforts in Bali. The resident assistant decided that the bodies of the Christians who died should be buried in the Dutch cemetery in Denpasar. As a result of this incident the Balinese Christians were said to be Dutch, the body was forced to lie at home for several days and emitted a foul smell. Due to public unrest, the Dutch East Indies government gave permission to bury him in a cemetery for foreigners in Denpasar [13]

In 1934, right in July, the Raad van Kerta (Court) Council decided that the inheritance that should be received by a child would be lost if he became a Christian. The reason is, because the inheritance must be used to carry out the "ngaben" ceremony (burning corpses) and other ceremonies related to ancestor worship, the decision was approved by the regent (Nengah Ripa, et al, 2012: 226). This explains and confirms that children who have come out of "purusa" in Hinduism do not get their rights. Because he has left his ancestors and "rebutted". This case is enough to cause an internal commotion between families [14].

The centripetal attitude as the antithesis of the centrifugal attitude was motivated by the colonial government which offered to allow the Christian community to accommodate the ideas of R.A Jafray, a zending figure before Tsang. According to him, the infiltration of a radical religious system will cause tension in society. Therefore, first, the adoption of local cultural values into new religious practices must be carried out. The goal is to get a lot of followers from the local community and conflict can be avoided [15].

This idea has caused division within the Untal-Untal Christian community. Some refuse, some accept. Those who refused were since they could not forgive the harsh treatment received from the Balinese Hindu community. While those who received reasoned to avoid conflict. This idea was later adopted by the missies that occurred later in the region.

4. Conclusion

The religious conversion from Hinduism to Christianity carried out by zending in rural areas of Bali, although prohibited by the Dutch Colonial Government, has created ideological polemics whose impact at this time cannot be considered small. Balinese Christians, who for social, cultural and economic reasons have converted their religion on the one hand, are

confronted with the reification of Balinese culture generated through the Baliseering project in the early twentieth century. The process of identifying Balinese culture naturally produces a single identity for kebalian. This single identity includes the adage that to be called Bali, one must be Hindu. At this point, the cultural identity of Balinese Christians appears to be in a dilemma and is forced to adapt to become a hybrid. Because on the one hand, they still practice Balinese culture, but on the other hand their religion has changed. So that the nuances of the conflict do not grow, centrifugal as well as cultural centripetal is promoted by Balinese Christians, solely so that they remain part of the dynamics of Balinese culture that is adaptive and continues to change according to the times.

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