

Vihara in the Middle of Thousand Temples (History, Process, and Implications of Religious Conversion from Hinduism to Buddhism in Alasangker Village, Buleleng District, Buleleng Regency-Bali)

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Abstract. This research aims to understand the existence and conversion processes from Hinduism to Buddhism in the Alasangker community. This research methodologically uses the qualitative technique determination of informant with sampling purposive and informant continue to be developed with the snowball technique. In data collection of researcher used: (1) circumstantial Interview by making guidance of interview; (2) observation participation. (3) study document. The result of this research indicates that background converts religion in Alasangker is caused by intern and extern factors.

Keyword: Conversion Religion, Process, history, Implication Conversion

1. Introduction

Humans as God's creatures have basic rights to themselves. This right is a gift from God to humans. Therefore, these rights cannot be separated from the human person. One of these rights is freedom of religion. Religious conversion is nothing new in Indonesian history. This can be seen from the development of Hindu and Buddhist religion and culture in Nusantara. Denys Lombard (1996:15) [1] and SupratiknoRaharjo (2011:32) [2] explain that the development of Hinduism and Buddhism cannot be separated from trade interactions with India. Asmito (1992) [3] asserted that since the beginning of century, Nusantara had established relations with India, Burma, and China. This commercial relationship also has an impact on the influence of Hindu culture in Indonesia.

Religious conversion in Balinese society is done by individually [4]. However, the phenomenon that occurred in Alasangker was carried out in groups. The social phenomenon of religious conversion, such as the case of Alasangker Village, is interesting to study, because religious conversion for the Balinese people will have implications for adat and the existence of a village government system in Bali.

According to Surpha (2006) [5], in Bali, there are two systems of government that

apply in one village, *pakraman* village and *dinas* village. The duties and authorities of pakraman village are to take care of matters of adat, religion, ceremonies, arts, and adat law. Dinas village takes care of issues such as education, village administration, economy, national law, security and village politics. Pakraman village has its own rules of etiquette and applies to all the people of pakraman village. Everything related to adat such as obligations, prohibitions that must be obeyed by villagers are arranged in the form of rules called *awig-awig* [6].

In addition, the inheritance factor is also an obstacle for people to change religions. People who convert will lose their inheritance rights. The act of changing religion is considered to have come out of the provisions of *hukum adat keluarga* called *sidhikara*. One part of the *sidhikara* is *sidhikara* inheritance, namely sharing inheritance including accepting the good and bad of each. These difficulties arise when boys change religions. Then the person concerned will not get an inheritance [7].

The right to inherit is balanced with obligations that must be carried out in the religious and social fields, both at the family, clan or relative level as well as at the village level. This shows that the kinship relationship shows the complexity of certain rights and obligations. Such rights include inheriting property, titles, heirlooms, symbols and occupying positions. Meanwhile, the obligation in question is to carry out cooperative and productive activities [8]. In contrast to Javanese adat, inheritance law does not question religious differences, nor does it question who was born first.

Balinese people are also bound by religious factors, the kinship is called *dadia*. It is a small clan consisting of a combination of broad families that come from a single ancestor according to a patrilineal line. People who come from one clan (singular *kawitan*, single *dadia*) have an equal position in adat and religion [9]. Although Alasangka people are bound by traditional villages, religion, temples, *dadia*, *kawitan*, and inheritance rights, there are also community members who have converted from Hinduism to Buddhism.

2. Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach, the technique of determining the informants by *purposive sampling* and *snowball*. Data collection was carried out by: (1) in-depth interviews by making interview guidelines; (2) Participation observation. (3) Document study. The documents reviewed included statistical data available at the village head office, pakraman Village, archives and books stored in vihara, photos of official village life and pakraman villages relevant to the research problem [10]. To ensure the validity of the data, data triangulation was carried out, while the data analysis technique used an interactive model which included data reduction, data presentation, data interpretation, and drawing conclusions and carried out roundtrip.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Internal Factor

The background of a group of people changing religions cannot be separated from political, socio-cultural and economic factors. The political incident was after G 30 S/PKI period. People who had been members of the PKI and Partindo experienced mental stress as a result of the incident. Finally, it was agreed to seek peace of mind through a discussion of

spiritual philosophy. Then a *geguritan/pesantian* group was formed. The chairman is Ketut Sri Madia. Its members include Ketut Prapta, Nengah Sukranada, Nyoman Wijana, Ketut Budiarta, Surja, Putu Merta, Nyoman Gelgel. This activity was carried out in *geguritan* groups by taking the topic of Sucita's *geguritan* and various marriages such as Ramayana, Arjuna Wiwaha, Bharata Yudha [11].

The community groups enthusiastically held meetings day and night. They have been doing this activity since 1971. At that time, the average age of the group members was 20-25 years old. The teachings they practice are the teachings of Shiva Jati. Its main purpose is to uphold the teachings of Hinduism. In the teachings of Shiva Jati, it is explained that peace and happiness can only be achieved by practicing morality, decency and self-training in *samadhi*. Basically, they just want to simplify the ceremonies in the village which they consider not in accordance with the norms of Hinduism. For example, in religious ceremonies at temples that use excessive offerings and killing animals in large numbers. According to them, it is not in accordance with the teachings of *Ahimsa* which means not to kill living beings. Another element that encourages them to study religious knowledge through *megeguritan* activities is the similarity in socio-political position and the existence of the *Gestok* label. They want to prove to the public that they do not have the malicious intent as alleged. In fact, they are just joining in on politics. This fact is supported because the education is low, the average is graduated from elementary school (SD) [12].

For three years studying spiritual norms in *megeguritan* activities, causing belief in religious ceremonies to thin out. Wiana, (1995 : 22) [13] say that the issue of religion is still an individual problem that can only be felt by the person concerned. Likewise with religious ceremonies that are part of the *yadnya*. It is all actions based on *dharma* and done sincerely. The purpose of *yadnya* is that humans are ready to make sacrifices to achieve the goal of life, namely eternal happiness (*moksa*) and to create a world that is safe, peaceful, and prosperous (*jagadhita*).

Based on interviews, community groups who carried out religious conversions in the village of Alatkger could read very popular lontar and kekawin such as Barata Yudha, Ramayana, Sucita and others. They conclude that religious ceremonies do not guarantee salvation and holiness. They also do not believe in the benefits of Hindu religious ceremonies. This situation could not be separated from the religious conditions in the village of Alatkger in the 1970s. PHDI does not provide guidance at the village level. Hindu religious books are very difficult to obtain, so the religious group learns religion only through marriage. Limited resources cause a less thorough understanding of Hinduism. PHDI itself has just compiled religious guidance books, translated foreign language books, explored Hindu religious teachings, promoted Dharma Gita (religious songs), conducted education for candidates for *sulinggih*, *pinandita* and *banten/ceremonial* artisans at the Great Congregation in Denpasar, January 16-17, 1987 [14].

After the G 30 S/PKI (*Gestok*) rebellion, many PKI members and their sympathizers were killed as a result of the crackdown. This situation was also experienced by family members who were members of the *megeguritan* group, because they were members of the PKI and Partindo. They lost their parents, siblings, jobs which have implications for the social economy. They experienced a severe economic crisis even before the G30S/PKI incident and continued until the early 1970s [15].

According to Ketut Prapta, most of the PKI and Partindo members killed were ignorant people. they are farmers who work hoe and sickle every day. In terms of education, there were members of the PKI and Partindo who did not even receive formal education. So, they became party members only as part of it, in addition to the time before 1965 the

government gave them the freedom to choose or join one of the existing parties.

Based on these economic problems, community groups former members of the PKI and Partindo in the village, more emphasis is placed on ethics and philosophy. This is revealed from the perception of the Ngaben ceremony. They do not believe that cremation guarantees people enter heaven or attain a level of holiness. If someone is sick or suffering, it is not because of the influence of the bhutakala but because of his own human karma. People who first converted to Buddhism said they did not understand the meaning of Hindu ceremonies. They just want to live peacefully in a simple way through the teachings of the Buddha. They are interested in following Buddhism because the procedures and rituals in Buddhism are very simple, and they have faith in the teachings of the Buddha after hearing a sermon from a Buddhist monk at the Banjar Brahmaasrama Vihara [16].

3.2 External Factor

One of the most influential Buddhist figures is Ketut Sri Madia. He is a central figure who has many followers in several villages including Alasangker. He has the ability in the field of traditional medicine and has often healed diseases. However, he rarely asks his patients in return. In addition to being an expert in treating diseases, he also acts as a shaman who asks everything related to the supernatural (*nunas raos*). This led to his popularity as a marriage expert. Ketut Sri Madia is also a member of Partindo. He managed to survive the G 30 S/PKI incident because of his charisma. As a result, people hesitated to catch him. He spearheaded the establishment of Buddhism in three villages namely Petandakan, Alasangker, and Pengelatan. He never invites people to convert, but people come by themselves to learn Buddhism. He is open to anyone, this was proven when he received the arrival of teacher Nengah Windra from Munduk Village, Banjar District, a Buddhist during a liberation event (discussing spiritual philosophy).

Two other factors that are no less important that cause the interest of Hindus to convert to Buddhism are the similarities in teachings and the facilities provided. Bhante Girirakkhito Mahathera states that between Hinduism and Buddhism there are many similarities. In Hinduism taught about the law of karma nutmeg, punarbhawa, moksha. Likewise in Buddhism, it is also taught about the law of karma, punarbawa, and nibbana [17]

Religious facilities provided by Buddhists are when Hindus follow the teachings of meditation held by Buddhists. Meditation. In this activity, people of other religions are not required to leave their religion. Hindus who attend meditation programs also get books on the teachings of the Buddha which they get for free. The Buddhist books are published by the Buddhist publishing agency Arya Surya Candra. These books contain the teachings of the Buddha such as Catur Arya Satyani and Hasta Arya Magga, the law of karma. Tilakhana is the three general features consisting of Antya, Anatman and Dukkha, the Tri Ratna consisting of Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha and the law of linked cause and effect or Patika Sammupada. After reading the given scriptures gave rise to the seeds for studying Buddhism, even more so after reading the history of the life of the Buddha until he was fully enlightened [18].

3.3 Impact of Religious Conversion

The religious conversion carried out by the population groups in Alasangker village from Hinduism to Buddhism led to conflicts with the community of Alasangker Village. Religious conversions can also cause turmoil in the family. For example, people who change religions do not inherit. The actions of such family members have been considered outside

the rules of customary law called Sidhikara. This incident was also experienced by Nengah Sukranada that he had been in trouble with the religious court because the inheritance that should have been his share was taken by a family member, the reason used so that his inheritance was taken over was because he was no longer Hindu and had been expelled from his dadia membership. But in the end the court won the lawsuit. Similar cases were also experienced by other Buddhist religious figures such as Nyoman Wijana, Ketut Budiarta, Ketut Rena, Surja, but in the end they still got the inheritance rights with the wisdom of their relatives.

After a conflict with the family occurs, the family member who converts to Buddhism is removed from the dadia membership and is no longer allowed to carry out activities related to Hindu religious teachings, be it Dewa Yadna, Rsi Yadnya, Pitra Yadnya, Yadnya humans, and Bhuta Yadnya. Relations with indigenous village communities also led to conflict, the Hindu community to limit social, cultural, and economic interactions. For example, people who are Buddhists are not spoken to or the term is *puik*, so if there is a traditional ceremony they are not invited or if Buddhists have religious activities those who are Hindus do not visit it. In their economic activities, those who have a trading economy business, Hindus do not want to buy goods from Buddhist traders. This fact is contrary to the reality in social life where the environment has an important role because neighbors or communities are closest to us and are the first to aid in every activity [8].

Sanctions from traditional villages are only in the socio-cultural and economic fields but also in terms of the construction of houses of worship [9]. After the self-declaration process took place and the coercive conditions caused by the sanctions imposed on them, the Buddhists began to actively hold meetings to realize the construction of a monastery. The process of establishing a monastery experienced many obstacles such as problems of place and financing. After going through a long process, the impasse was resolved that a monastery would be built in the village of Alasangker on the land of Ketut Supala and Ketut Budiarta adjacent to the highway. Preliminary meetings resulted in an agreement that the monastery was built in 1974/1975, to realize the plan a meeting was held at the village hall of Alasangker by inviting Bhikku Girirakkhito and the village head of Alasangker (Made Sedana). During the meeting, Bhikku Girirakkhito made a request that Buddhists be given proper attention. However, with a reaction from the traditional village which stated that the land used as a road to the temple was considered to belong to the customary village, the plan to build the monastery was cancelled.

The conversion of religion also has implications for the imposition of customary sanctions on those who change religion and occupy their yards without piling (customary village land). Their efforts received a response from the Regent of Buleleng at that time, Mr. Hartawan Mataram, who gave advice so that the sanctions imposed on Buddhists could be eased. so, since 1975 Buddhists must pay land rent to traditional villages of 1 kilogram of rice for every one acre of land. However, there are still members of the public who do not accept the existence of Buddhists by holding actions that lead to the destruction of Buddhist houses, the action has been suppressed by the police.

4. Conclusion

The background of the religious conversion in the village of Alasangker is caused by internal factors: 1). to improve their self-image, this was because people who converted to religion during the Old Order were members of the PKI and Partindo, so that all their activities were suspected by the village community. 2). lack of understanding of Hindu religious teachings, since the source of religious teachings only came from lontar, and Hindu

religious books were difficult to obtain in the early 1970s plus the PHDI did not provide guidance to villages about Hinduism. 3). The factor of poverty, poverty is caused by the loss of their parents and relatives who are the backbone of the family. While external factors are the influence of the teachings of Buddhist religious figures who have expertise and charisma, similarities in Hindu and Buddhist teachings such as the teachings of the law of karma, punarbawa, and the goal of the religion of human life, the facilities provided by Buddhist institutions such as the gift of books. -books for free.

The process of religious conversion begins with religious activities and listening to enlightenment under the guidance of a monk so that faith in Buddhist teachings grows, plus the desire to find inner peace through meditation teachings. Initially there was no desire to change religion, the people who were members of the megeguritan group wanted to simplify religious ceremonies and ceremonies and put more emphasis on the implementation of precepts.

The implication of religious conversion from Hinduism to Buddhism is the imposition of sanctions by the traditional village by paying the rent of one kilogram of land without piling per acre, expelling from the traditional village, expelling from the dadia membership, not being allowed to use village facilities such as temples, banjar halls, and graves.

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