MENYAMA BRAYA:
A Local Yet Universal Value

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Abstract

"There is nothing eternal in this world, except the change itself". This is an undisputed fact. Change is a phenomenon that gives color to the historic times of every society, including Balinese society. This change occurs in the interaction of Balinese society with other ethnic groups, religions, and cultures. The change occurs because of the following. First, in a society, unsatisfactory feelings due to conflicts happen (theory of social change). Second, people in their interactions with others encounter various aspects which can be ethnocentric, thus yielding stereotypes about the outsiders (inter-cultural psychology). Third, there is a shift among religious people from to be into to have in practicing their religions (theology of religious pluralism). Fourth, it is deconstruction, an intensifying exposé of a standardized form. From these four theories, the researchers have conducted a research which focused on the cultural local wisdom of menyama braya. The aim of this research is to expose a diverse brotherhood existential living, thus creating a national integration and social harmony in Indonesia. To reach the aim, a participant-observation
method has been used, an observation which allows direct participatory involvement, interviews, library research, case and document studies. Keywords: Menyama braya, jelema, multiculturalism, pluralism, national integration, social relationships.

Introduction

1. Background problem

In the past, in Bali, there was a dichotomy between the outsiders and local people, designated by the terms nak Jawa and nak. At that time, these terms did not have any bearings on the people at all, except to differentiate localness from non-localness. However, today the designation of these terms nak Bali and nak Jawa has shifted and created a structural problem which has caused tensions in the relationship between the Balinese (local people) and the immigrants. Formerly, the Balinese used to call the Javanese by nyama Jawa (a brother/sister from Java), but today the term has been changed to jelema Jawa (Javanese). The difference is that nyama Jawa indicates closeness, while jelema Jawa indicates alienation. So with the terms nyama Selam (a Muslim brother/sister) which now has shifted to jelema Selam (the Muslims).

From various causes of change (theories of social change, social psychology and religious pluralism) within a given society, the researchers were interested in conducting a research on change of paradigm in Bali (nyama becomes jelema) based on local Balinese wisdom. The suggested local wisdom is the cultural characteristics of a society/nation resulting from their past experience.¹ These specific characteristics like the ability to survive against incoming cultures, to control and to direct the development of local culture, thus the function of the local wisdom becomes broader and diverse. One of the Balinese local wisdoms suggested here is

the culture of *menyama braya*. Local wisdom can mean the cultural form owned by the people in the society who live and grow and possess the ability to survive against outside cultures, to accommodate, integrate, and control the influences of outside cultures, and to be able to give directives for the growth of the existing culture.

2. The Aim of the Study

It cannot be denied that various conflicts have happened in the society in the name of religion, ethnicity, and interest groups. The lack of understanding on the part of the society on the meaning of “diversity”; the lack of tolerance among social groups or social strata in Indonesian societies; the strengthening of inter-religious, inter-ethnic and inter-group sentiments have threatened the national integration and social harmony; and the disappearance of a mutual trust among the members of the society.

The purpose of the study is to recognize the phenomenon of *menyama braya* in Bali in the social setting of Balinese-Muslims-Javanese-Bugis people. What is the manifest of this Balinese *menyama braya*? This is what the whole paper is about.

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2 Etymologically, *menyama braya* consists of two words, “nyama” and “braya”. “Nyama” means a brother/sister, then Later prefix “me” is added to it to become “menyama” meaning ‘becoming a brother/sister’. *Nyama* or *menyama* means sibling/a blood brother/sister (vertical). It also refers to the word *saudara* (“se” means one, “udara” means ‘stomach’). So *nyama/menyama* is a sibling coming from one ‘stomach’, the same blood offspring, a single *dadial* single *purusa* (sibling, *misan, mindon*). While “braya” means an immediate neighbor or someone in the neighborhood (horizontal). *Braya* is a neighbor or a fellow human being. In Balinese language, “braya” is also called “*semeton*” (“se” means one and “*meton*” means birth). So *braya* refers to all human beings because they come from one birth.
Menyama Braya, Pluralism, and National Integration: A Theoretical Study

1. Views on Religious Pluralism, Culture and National Integration

According to Manurung, religious, cultural, racial, linguistic, and traditional pluralities in Indonesia are an invaluable spiritual richness to be preserved in enlivening the social life of today. However, very often pluralism is justified as a hindrance for us to cooperate and share with those who are different from us. The argument of difference as a reality in daily life, by certain groups in the society is considered as a serious threat for their existence and life. Thus it is then not impossible that cultural violence against the group which is considered different may occur. Political violence and mass brutality on behalf of religion and culture which occur in this country is actually due to our inability to respect and to see how significant it is for the other to exist in our life.

In this respect, Derrida suggests that there is a significant relationship between the notion of universal ethic and violence against the other. According to Derrida, the effort to set up ethics which is universal in nature will eventually nullify the "otherness" and the differences. Violence erupts due to our way of viewing things which is hampered by our logo-centric attitude. One of the characteristics of this logo-centric way of thinking is an attempt on the part of the authorities to change religious and cultural diversity into forces used to regulate and unify differences so that our way of thinking is controlled by a dogmatic view that justifies itself as the Final Truth.

Religious pluralism helps us, with humility, to realize that superior attitude is useless to understand others better because God loves all without exception, and thus we have to be neighbors or friends for others of different faiths. Religious pluralism is not a mixture of religions or syncretism,

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because the uniqueness of each is preserved and can still be communicated; but not to be disputed. Such transparency yields peace and tolerance which gives no way to mutual blasphemy, blame, let alone killing.\(^4\)

Knitter’s pluralism model of multi-faith dialogue and global responsibility can be used to eradicate poverty and preserve ecology in our context. Religions must share in significant contributions to solve these two issues. This model encourages people to open dialogue because religious dialogue is not the monopoly of the religious elite. Natural catastrophes and hunger suffered by citizens of Indonesia can not be handled emergently and incidentally. Social Safety Net set up by the government is not effective and it wastes national budget. People have to be empowered to act sensitively and in solidarity with the suffering others from whatever religions and beliefs. To solidify sensitivity and solidarity for others is the very nature of the role of religions.

In this era of globalization, religion still plays an important role in national integration, thus the society is not carried away by fundamentalism and liberalism which do not recognize the existence of others. If religions are reluctant to engage in dialogue, violence on behalf of religions will jeopardize national unity and thus create fear among the people. In religious pluralism, dichotomy of majority-minority is no longer relevant because all religious adherents are potentially able to build up mutual and peaceful existence in the frame of unity in diversity (bhineka tunggal ika).

Plurality is an undeniable fact which has given certain colors to the life of the society. It is a natural consequence and a mandate of the basic human nature, and religious perspective as well.

Religious pluralism is not only a social reality, but also a theological phenomenon. That’s why on the one hand it is a wonderful and dynamic richness where each religion may preserve and develop its own religious identity. On the other hand, it is also a challenge because in itself it contains

a potential conflict, not only a conflict among religious followers, but also it is vulnerable to social conflict and national disintegration. In other words, pluralism can create crisis, on the one hand, and on the other hand this crisis can be an opportunity for each religion to enrich itself respectfully. This is due, not only because of the plurality of Indonesian society, for example, is a challenge and at the same time a rare opportunity in human history, especially in religious perspective. It is also not because religion plays an integral role and creates social harmony in the society, but it is also a destructive force that disintegrates.⁵

This is also true with social science and anthropological view that racial, ethnic and religious differences anywhere are conflict potential. Religious and cultural differences certainly create different views, one from the other. It is common that inter-ethnic, inter-cultural and inter-religious relationships in Indonesia possess competitive backgrounds. The competition brings about potential conflicts.⁶

Paulus Mujirian, however, states three things about religion: first, religion is a socialization of faith experienced in daily life.⁷ It is impossible that divine experience can be perceived wholly by religious facts of any religion. Each religion has its own uniqueness in very limited symbols. No one symbol can wholly reveal the divine fact nor able to solve everything. Second, there is a conviction that there is no absolute religious experience. Each has its own unique way of relating itself to the divine. Claim to absolute truth has never been a fact in its contextual expression. Truth is always expressed with human limitations. Therefore, religious truth should be de-absolute, because such truth is essentially influenced by historical, linguistic limitations and social superstructure factors. Third, living together with those of other religions is a forum of mutual learning and edification

of one from the other. As what is stated by Coward (1994: 185) about the main presumptions in today’s religious pluralism that: 1) in all religions there is a presumptive experience about a reality beyond human conception; 2) this reality is perceived through various ways by all religions and that the recognition of plurality is needed both to promote protection of religious freedom and to respect human limitations; 3) forms of religious plurality function as tools; 4) our limitations and, at the same time, our need for a commitment to a particular experience, though limited, will function wholly as criteria to legalize our religious experience; 5) through a critical dialogue with ourselves, we can perceive the transcendent reality (and maybe the transcendent realities of others as well). 8

Hans Küng, a brilliant yet “controversial” Catholic thinker, admits that very often religion involves itself or is involved in armed conflicts. However, to disregard the role of religion in conflict resolution is reckless. In other words, Hans Küng realizes how important it is for religion to have a role in human life and thus he suggests three hypotheses for the future of humankind, i.e.:

a. No survival without a world ethic.
b. No world peace without religious peace.
c. No religious peace without religious dialogue.

This very thought of Hans Küng was adopted by the Parliament of World Religions in Chicago in 1993 as one of its decisions. It has then become a commonplace among religions as an ethical tie to global interrelationship of all world religions. 9 From this global dialogue, religions are able to find basic faith expressions which are contained in the common human thoughts and desires. For example what is called “Golden Rule”.

For thousands of years there has been an adage among many religious traditions and human ethics, which says, “what you don’t like others to do unto you, don’t do it to others!”, or more positively, “What you

like to do unto you, do it to others!" Based on this common assertion, the basic paradigm of the declaration called Global Ethic is that all human beings must be treated humanely. The Global Ethic is intended to empower what is common among world religions of today, despite all the existing different behaviors, moral values and basic convictions in each tradition: In other words, Global Ethic is not meant to reduce religions to minimalism ethic, but rather to present the minimum ethical boundary which is commonly found in all world religions.

In this globalization era, religion still plays an important role in national integration so that the people are not swept away by individualism, fundamentalism and liberalism which do not recognize the existence of others. If religions are reluctant to engage in mutual-dialogue, violence in the name of religion can jeopardize national integration which, in turn, creates fear among the people in the society. Religious pluralism makes dichotomy of majority-minority no longer relevant, because all the people of faith are potentially able to build a peaceful life together in the frame-work of diversity. As a reality, religious plurality has to be responded effectively and relevantly and can be used as a common asset to carry out the common calling of solidifying prosperity by all and to all. Pluralism has a two-fold facet. On the one hand it does not deny the existing differences which should not only be accepted, but also be treated as an asset to be preserved and even developed. On the other hand, these differences should not hamper and overrule the courage to cooperate in togetherness and in an attempt to realize the common goals of developing an ideal human life: which is religious, just, peaceful, and prosperous. Thus religious plurality as a fact can be used as a common stepping-stone to realizing the functional integrative role of religion in creating social harmony in society.\(^\text{10}\)

\(^{10}\) Ibid., Clifford Geertz, 1960, p. 475.
2. Menyama Braya, National Integration, and Social Harmony

Etymologically, menyama braya consists of two words, i.e. "nyama" and "braya". "Nyama" means sibling, then plus prefix "me" becomes "menyama" means ‘to be sibling’. Nyama and even menyama meaning ‘sibling/to be sibling’ refers to offspring of the same parents (vertical). It also derives from the word saudara (“se” means one, "udara" means ‘stomach’. So nyama/ menyama means sibling because ‘coming out’ from one ‘stomach’, one blood offspring, one dadia/ single purusa (sibling, misan, mindon).

While "braya" means ‘immediate neighbor’ or ‘people around’ (horizontal). Braya is neighbor or fellow human being. In Balinese, "braya" is also called “semeton” (“se” means one and “meton”, “metu” means ‘being born’). Thus braya means that all are human beings because of one way to ‘being born’. However, etymologically menyama braya has another opposite meaning as explained above. "Nyama" derives from the word “nyam” meaning “yeh” (water) and yeh is “kama”, the ‘seed of life’. Then the word “kama” becomes ‘kamu’ (‘you’) and ‘kami’ (‘we’). ‘Kamu’ and ‘kami’ are both related as ‘sibling/to be sibling’, because they derive from “kama” or “yeh” (water). So “yama” or “menyama” meaning all human beings are ‘sibling/to be sibling’ because of ‘one seed’. Besides they also mean all human beings are ‘sibling/to be sibling’ referring to the meaning of the word ‘saudara’ (“se” means one, “udara” means ‘air/ wind’) because what gives us life is ‘air’. “Braya” is a change [in form] of the word “brayat” meaning ‘sibling’, “misan” and “mindon” (relatives) or people of the same clan which in Bali is known as ‘single purusa’, ‘single kawitan’, ‘single dadia’, ‘single sanggah’, ‘single sembah’ meaning ‘one ancestor’, ‘one place of worship’ or ‘one religion’.

Though etymologically different where one understands “nyama” much narrower and the other much wider, and so with “braya”, they contain similar essence and basic principle, that “nyama braya” is one phrase and one terminology to express ‘brotherhood among fellow human beings’. And “menyama braya” is a way of life which recognizes all human beings as ‘sibling’ or treats others as one’s ‘own sibling’. 
There is no recording data as to when and in whose time menyama braya began to be recognized in Bali. According to Ketut Suda Sugira, Menyama braya has been there since 500 years ago, when Bali was under the administration of Gelgel kingdom with Dalem Waturenggong as the ruler. It is Dalem Waturenggong who spread Menyama braya way of life all over Bali and even as far as Sumbawa and Lombok. This way of life is meant to preserve harmony within the society, especially between Bali (read: Hindu) and Islam and Buddha. Later from menyama braya the terms like nyama Bali (Balinese relative), nyama China (Chinese relative), nyama slam (Muslim relative), nyama Buda (Buddhist relative) and later nyama Kristen (Christian relative) derive. Nyoman Wijana states that in the concept of religious festivals in Bali there are terms like Galungan Cina, to celebrate Chinese new year Imlek, Galungan Slam, to celebrate Idul Fitri.

In other words, the term nyama (China, Islam, Bali, Buddha, and Christianity) which is used in social interactions in Bali is an evidence that since the beginning the society has been aware that nyama or braya is not understood in a limited sense of “tunggal darah” or ‘one clan’, but they believe that, though they are not “tunggal darah” or belonging to the same clan and different in their faiths, they truly are ‘to be sibling’. All these differences (religion, conviction, ethnicity, language, skin color) do not destroy the ties that bind them in brotherhood. It is exactly the menyama braya which functions as protection frame to ward-off conflicts and separation.

In Bali, there is a saying, “How many earths are there: one. How many people: many, how many religions: many, and how many Gods: One”. This adage suggests that the one God creates many people and religions with the intention that they mutually edifying and struggle together on earth in creating harmony and peace as well as justice.

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11 Interview, February 17, 2005 in Damayana, 2005, p. 4.
Based on this principle, Balinese people understands menyama braya in a number of ways. First, menyama braya (brotherhood) is the main treasure, not money, status, and women. An adage which has been rooted in Balinese culture has it, “being rich is not important without ‘menyama braya’”. Second, menyama braya is the way to reach happiness and harmony in life (dharma santi).

Menyama braya as a way to reach happiness and prosperity is the actualization of the life principle Tri Hita Karana (three causes of happiness, and one of them is in harmony with others), is also expressed in several local songs which are quite popular among the Balinese, like, Kembang Jempiring (the motto of Denpasar City) and Bungan Sandat, Kidung Leleuhur in ‘ginanti’ melody which contain a lot of moral teachings. These three songs express how important menyama braya is. The following is an example from the song bungan sandat:

“Yen gumanti bajang
Tan bina ye pucuk nedengkembang
Di suba ye layu, tan ada ngerunguang
Ngemasin mekutang
Becik melaksana
De gumanti dadi kembang bintang
Mentik di rurunge, mekejang mengempok
Raris keentungang

Refrain:
To ibangun sandat selayu-layune miik
To nyandang tulad seuripe melaksana becik
Para teruna-teruni mangda saling asah asih asuh
Menyama braya to kukuhin rahayu kepanggih”.

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Free translation:
"Young age
Like a flower blooming
When withers, it becomes useless
And finally thrown away
Do good
Don’t be like a star flower
Grow by the road and all people pick
And then thrown away

Refrain:
Look at sandat flower, though it withers, it is still fragrant
Take it as an example in life and do good
Young people, live to mutually teach one another
Strengthen Menyama braya and harmony will be realized". 16

The lyrics suggest that this life is meaningful and harmonious if universal the human values of “asah” (mutual learning/teaching), “asih” (mutual loving), and “asuh” (mutual nourishing) which are found in menyama braya are strengthened.

Third, menyama braya is one of the local wisdoms in Bali, which is widely believed and understood as a wisdom which is quite effective to preserve social integration. Integration here is understood as controlling conflicts and social deviations in a certain social system. Such is needed so that the society is still integrated though they face various challenges, physical as well socio-cultural conflicts.

The concept of menyama braya contains pluralistic values which regard others as brothers/sisters, equal to his/her-self and thus they are interdependent in establishing social relationships. Laning states four factors yang encourage people to establish social relationships: 17

17 Dwi Vina Laning, Sosiologi (Klaten: Penerbit Intan Pariwara, 2007), p. 44.
a. An instinct to look for a soul-mate. Every human being, men and women, has the instinctive desire to look for a soul-mate. Biologically, a man needs a woman and vice versa. This is merely drawn by biological needs and later due to religious values, this relationship is then further developed into a marital relationship in the form of a family.

b. The inherent weakness in human beings drives them to search for strength together. To meet their needs, they can not work alone individually. The ever increasing needs force them to establish individual as well as social relationships with others. This is how a group or association is formed. Each individual in the group or society wants to meet their need. By becoming a member of the society, they feel protected, safe, and not alone.

c. Basically human beings are social creatures who always like to live together with others. Aristoteles said that human beings are Zoon Politicon, meaning wherever they are, they need the existence of others. They like to live together rather than alone.

d. The differences among human beings such as their nature, status, characteristics, and needs encourage them to live together. They are able to sense the reality of life if they are aware that they are different. They then understand how valuable it is to be tolerant and united.

In relation to menyama braya, the above four factors are relevant and the Balinese are quite conscious about themselves and their environment. They try to see others as they see themselves. This view of life in social relationship dimension which is plural and multi-cultural, promotes mutual respect and assistance. Thus social integration is made possible and as a result, national integration and social harmony in diversity, in turn, will take place.

On the other hand, there are internal and external factors as well that help promote social relationship. Internal factors are promoting factors from within the society itself, inter alia: the growing or the reducing number of residents, new findings, social conflicts, and revolution. External factors
are promoting factors from without, such as: natural environment, wars, and cultural influences from other societies.\textsuperscript{18}

Further, it is undeniable that a social relationship as a social process in the society brings impact to social growth and change. The change is not always progressive in nature (progress). It can also be regressive (decline). The change in society involves all aspects of social life itself, such as life style and way of thinking, culture, values and norms, behavioral patterns. Like what Gillin and Gillin say that social changes as a variation of the existing life styles, both due to changes in geographical condition, materialism, citizens composition, ideology, as well diffusion or new findings in the society. Time wise, this condition also occurs in Balinese society. \textit{Menyama braya} in its development has changed into \textit{jelema} because of various factors.

\section*{Bali and its Dynamics: Pluralistic Bali}

\subsection*{1. General Description of Bali}

Historically, Bali and its dynamics was pluralistic in its identities as \textit{Bali Mula} or \textit{Bali Aga} (Original Balinese) and Bali Majapahit (people from Majapahit). This began around 1350 C.E., when Sri Kresna Kepakisan from Kediri was governing Bali on behalf of Majapahit. He affirmed wong Majapahit (people from Majapahit) as another new identity. This was used to differentiate local Balinese called \textit{Bali Aga} or \textit{Bali Mula} from others.\textsuperscript{19}

These identities functioned as the first differentiating factor in all walks of life (cultural, religious and political). Geo-culturally, Balinese of Majapahit descent occupied lowland areas, whereas the \textit{Bali Aga} people inhabited rural mountainous areas.

In relation to the ruling power of Majapahit dynasty in Bali and the migration of people from Java to Bali, the second differentiating factor of

\textsuperscript{18} Khairul Hidayati, et al., \textit{Sosiologi} (Jakarta: Penerbit Erlangga, 2007), p. 35.

Then with the fall of Gelgel as the central power of Bali Kingdom in 17th century followed by the coup d'état by Patih Agung Maruti, Bali underwent continuous internal conflicts, disputes among fellow Balinese. Bali then was disintegrated into several kingdoms and each tended to use the Muslims as their main supporters and their shields to protect them from enemy attacks. With the king's role in involving Muslim community, the Hindu people of Bali began to befriend the Muslims. The Muslim living quarters in cities prove the existence of their identity, such as Kepao in Denpasar, Kecicang in Karangasem, Pegayaman in Buleleng. The coming of the Dutch colonial rule in 1908, though it never directly supported the missionaries who came and worked in Bali, was the pioneer of Christian identity in the 1930's. Blimbing Sari and Palasari are the two Christian villages as evidence of that identity. In the village of Kepao-Pemogan, southern Denpasar, there is a Muslim community who has been there for many years. They identify themselves as Balinese. There is a mosque on the main road of Pemogan village. In Pemogan village plurality is respected, and thus among the village executives there are some Muslims as well. They are accepted as a part of being Balinese. The picture attached shows one of the respondents for this research named Nasrudin, a typically Javanese-Muslim name. He is among the executives of the village in charge security.

Normatively, in post-colonial era where Bali is part of the United Republic of Indonesia, Bali and its dynamics has become more and more pluralistic, especially as the result of the change in economic and political configuration due to tourist capitalism. With the growth of tourism industry in Bali, more and more immigrants have come from outside Bali, like Java, Sumatera, Lombok, and Sulawesi and also international immigrants of foreigners who are doing business in Bali. The immigrants from outer islands who live there because of economic rationality, to survive.

22 Ibid.
2. Bali, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity

Everybody thinks that they “belong” to Bali. This sense of belonging makes Bali not stereotypically Hindu. According to respondents, the concept of pluralistic Bali has been there since the olden times. They have recognized the term menyama braya in harmony with others. Its context is daily sociocultural relations among members of the society in the form of gifts to “sibling” on religious festivals of Muslim, Hindu and Christian. There are many examples of the proof of menyama braya in Bali. The Ngejot tradition, for instance, exercised by Muslims during Ramadhan. It is a form of acculturation between Bali and Islam. The food passed on to others at Ngejot is no different from that of Hindu Balinese. It consists of jaja uli, fruits, rengginang, dodol, and the like. They give out this food both their Muslim and Hindu brothers/sisters. Ngejot is practiced by almost all Muslims in Bali. Another example of acculturation and plurality is the name given. Many Muslim Balinese use the name Wayan, Nengah, Nyoman, and Ketut. However their last names are usually Arabic. For example Ketut Asghor Ali, Nengah Maghfiroh, Nengah Azmi, and so on.

Another tradition in Balinese Muslim region is Muludan, Prophet Muhammad birthday celebration. They rally around the village performing hadrah, pencak silat (martial art), drum band, and ogoh-ogoh (a big giant statue), also sokok (an ornament of eggs and flowers). Wet Sokok is made of flowers and taluh Sokok is made of eggs. This Sokok is similar to a display used in Balinese Hindu festivals. Sokok, of eggs and flowers on bamboo wrapped with bright colored papers, is carried around the village and finish in front of the mosque. At the mosque they read Al-Barzanji, the story of the birth of Muhammad, followed by a short sermon. Then the sokok is distributed to children. It is almost like Grebeg Suro festival in Solo or Jogyakarta where apem cakes are given away to the crowd.

Ogoh-ogoh during the Muludan festival is similar to that carried around prior to Nyepi in Balinese tradition. So with Sekaa Zikir, the chanting of prophetic writings by way of makidung, i.e. how the Hindus utter their prayers. Whereas hadrah is singing accompanied by traditional rebana (tambourine). The singers are dressed in traditional Balinese costume with
udeng (head band), kamen (sarong), and traditional outfit. The lyrics express the story of Muhammad.

The Balinese culture not only influences rituals and worship activities, but also agriculture system like Subak, both in irrigation and planting system which has become cultural. Most of the people work as rice, coffee, and clove farmers. As Subak members, they also perform rituals, especially when planting rice fields and harvesting. The difference is that these rituals are performed by chanting Qur’an verses in small mosques close to water springs or rice fields. After harvest, the farmers do Abda’u tradition, a thanksgiving by making beef shish kebab and ketupat (rice wrapped in weaved coconut leaves), then sing Arabic songs before they eat.

These acculturation ties between Balinese or Hindu tradition and that of Islam are due to religious values which are mutually preserved without any attempt to ignore them, as long as they do not alter the very essence of each faith. If this situation is honored by all, acculturation and plurality in Bali can be preserved and enriched.

In Bali there are two types of village, namely desa dinas (a village which is formed based on central government decree) and desa adat (a village which is formed based on local government decree). Pemagon is desa dinas, in which all villagers are included notwithstanding their different religious backgrounds. Whereas pekraman is desa adat, in which all the villagers are Hindu followers and the village head is called Bendesa Adat or Kelian Adat. All villagers are included in desa dinas. However, not all villagers belong to desa adat. Desa dinas is responsible to the local government authorities, while desa adat is not.

In Muslim village of Kepaon there is mengibung, a Balinese Hindu tradition of eating together in a prow. This tradition in Kepaon has been going on since its first inception hundreds of years ago, and it is observed every ten

days during the month of Ramadhan, on the tenth, the twentieth, and the thirtieth days.

*Mengibung* is exercised after the Muslims chant the holy verses of Qur’an every ten days. Within the ten days, the whole Qur’an is chanted by members in turn. It is a Balinese tradition to express togetherness – it is expected that eating with friends on a prow can improve brotherhood among the Muslim adherents. The food prepared at the mosques varies, but generally they are Balinese in taste, with complete ingredients.

**Menyama Braya in Reality**

The beauty of the isle of Paradise and the hospitality of the Balinese enchant many foreign as well as domestic tourists. That and many more can be found in Bali. For example its art, culture and religious atmosphere are presented in a so amazing way that people are attracted to come and come again, and even some come to work there.

The immigrants who came to Bali brought along with them their religions and civilizations which have now made the rainbow over the Isle of Paradise more beautiful. Bali which used to be identified with Hinduism is now no more characteristically Hindu. Besides Hinduism, Christianity and Islam have brought a new nuance to the people in Bali. The immigrants who still preserve their identities, eventually have more or less influence the local people in a number of ways. In the field of economy, due to the growing number of immigrants, work opportunity for the local Balinese is diminished.

In the field of land ownership, the Balinese sell their lands to immigrants and thus reduce their ownership on land. In the field of religion, Bali which used to be quiet and serene with only the *pedande* voice chanting their words of worship to *Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa*, is different now with the toll of church bells in the morning and the call of the minaret at dusk. As if these sounds disturb the serenity, on the one hand, and awaken the Balinese from their sleep with the fragrance of incense. They are made conscious that there are others present in their ancestor land. They are
even more shocked with the deafening sounds of fire crackers. Food and fruit sacrifices have been altered to sacrifice of human serenity. Bali has been devastated by the existence of immigrants.

Gradually but certainly, this situation changes the attitude of Balinese towards the immigrants. Smiling and greetings are now turned to swearing and abusing. Open heart is now closed. Formerly, the Balinese used to refer to those from Java as “nak Jawa” or “nyama Jawa” meaning brothers/sisters from Java. But now the reference has been shifted to “jelema Jawa” meaning Javanese. The shift from nyama to jelema indicates the change of attitude and recognition of Balinese towards Javanese. Nyama indicates a close relationship, while jelema a distant relationship. This shows that Balinese have been fully aware of the social strata, and it is mostly due to the feeling of being threatened from outside.

The change of attitude of Balinese towards the immigrants, directly or indirectly impacts their relationship with outsiders, and this gives way to the long-forgotten concept of ajeg Bali to return.

Ajeg Bali consists of two words, ajeg and Bali. The word ajeg is equal to the word jejeg (Javanese) meaning straight up or unchanged. For example in the expression ajeging awig-awig desane which means ‘enforce village regulations’. While the word “Bali”, so far there has been no research as to what the origin of the word is. However, according to Kutha Ratna, it may be possible that the word has something to do with linguistic aspect where the phoneme “w” is changed to “b”, thus the word Bali comes from the word “wali”. In this context “wali” means a ‘foster parent’, someone is considered as ‘older and thus wiser’ in the community. So ajeg Bali means Bali which is strong and unchanged.24

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In its development, ajeg Bali has undergone a change in meaning and is used in social life environment context in Bali, particularly in relation to the recent condition after the suicide bombings in Legian and Kuta. For the Balinese these two tragic incidents are both painful and embarrassing, and at the same time as a wakening call for them. Through those incidents, their primordial ties are strengthened that Bali does not belong to immigrants! Ajeg Bali has to be enforced! Ngurah Suryawan asserts that ajeg Bali has become an hegemonic ideology that differentiates “Balinese” from “non-Balinese”. Other impacts of the enforcement of ajeg Bali are, inter alia: First, in the legal administration of citizens. The beauty of Bali has attracted many tourists and thus strengthened economic growth so that many people have come to try their fortune there and attempted to permanently live there. To avoid illegal immigrants who will take away work opportunity for, otherwise, the Balinese, there should be limitation and restriction to every visitor. In 2003, an MOU between the governor and all the regents and mayors was signed regulating citizen’s legal administration by issuing different ID cards for those who are permanent resident immigrants (KIPP) and those who are non permanent or migrants workers (KIPEM). In its implementation, the municipal government works in cooperation with desa adat and religious authorities to decide who gets KIPP or KIPEM. One of the requirements to get either one is a letter of recommendation from the village head of either desa adat or desa dinas. To secure this regulation, the government works in cooperation with pecalang.

a. Menyama braya as understood by Balinese in the past. According to Mrs. Made menyama braya is a concept used to keep harmony in society. This used to be exercised in religious rituals and ‘cleaning the village’ activities. Many people from all walks of life and social strata were involved in religious rituals. The involvement of all people

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26 Those who come from outside Bali.
27 Pecalang is the village security officer in relation to mores/customs and religion. A pecalang is assigned and resigned by village general consensus.
created a strong Balinese primordial identity. Then there were only a few people from outside Bali, thus the understanding of menyama braya was limited to Balinese only.

b. *Menyama braya* in today's Balinese view.

Since Bali became famous and attracted people from outside, a gradual but certain change has occurred. The change is due to the immigrants who came and lived as Balinese residents and they brought with them their own primordial identities – ethnic, religious, and cultural. This of course has colored and influenced Balinese established culture. For instance, in Bali now there are Muslim communities, where Islam is the major religion with mosques and everything (see the picture). Likewise are the Christians who have come to Bali, established Christian communities and built churches. Religious festivals now vary with Christmas and Idul Fitri.

c. The social, cultural, and religious diversities, affect the understanding of menyama braya among the Balinese. Formerly the concept was limited to Balinese people only, but now it has expanded beyond Balinese society, culture, and religion. Menyama braya is now understood as tolerance or social togetherness in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious society.

In one location in Bali, there are five worship centers – Muslim, Christian, Catholic, Hindu and Buddhist. This is a reflection of how Balinese want to relate themselves and live harmoniously with others based on menyama braya values.

**Closing Remarks**

*Menyama braya* has been a local wisdom since a long time ago. This local wisdom suggests that others are brothers/sisters of one family. Thus they are treated as family members. Others do have plurality or differences, thus menyama braya has a plural meaning of respecting differences and treating others as family members. This is materialized in
various forms like ‘working together’, ‘neighborhood watch’ together, mutual giving, paying respect to different religious festivals, naming children and involvement in the common social organizations. Menyama braya values, therefore, are reflected concretely in various social activities and relationships within the Balinese society. If others are considered brothers/sisters and belong to the same family, the national integration is made possible.

In this research, the significance of menyama braya concept has been deeply studied in the setting of Islam-Jawa-Bugis living quarters. It is proved that in this context, menyama braya is also recognized, believed and practiced. In the Muslim village of Kepaon there is mengibung tradition, a Bali-Hinduism tradition of eating together in a prow which is exercised once every ten days during the month of Ramadhan on the tenth, twentieth and thirtieth days. This is the practice of menyama braya between Muslim Balinese and Hindu Balinese.

Mnyama braya is also seen in the use of Balinese language in daily interactions and social relations among Balinese, both the Hindu and non-Hindu. It is also seen in the names given such as Putu, Kadek, Komang, and Ketut among people in the Bali-Islam-Jawa-Bugis context.

The residents of Kepaon also have Ngejot tradition of giving out food to one another, which is another real practice of menyama braya. This practice is a form of appreciation and recognition towards others of different religions and ethnicities. Various Balinese traditions which are recognized among the people in the Muslim living quarters of Kepaon is closely connected to the history of the village which has earned banjar status (a group of traditional Balinese) in the village of Pemogan in southern Denpasar.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


