

**The Crescent Moon on the Island of Gods, Traces of Muslim Village  
Kusamba-Bali** (Edited by AAGN Ari Dwipayana)

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“Finding Peace in the Diversity of Residents on the Island of Gods”

Who does not know Bali, a beautiful island that fascinates many tourists from around the world, with a religious identity as it is commonly referred to as the Island of Gods. Despite being well-known as the Land of the Hindus, Bali has a Muslim village, where Muslim residents live side by side with the Hindu Balinese. When one recalls the Bali bombing incident in 2002 and 2005 in Kuta, Jimbaran, certainly they will express an opinion on the social and religious tension between these two religious groups. The tragedy has in fact left a change in attitudes i.e. the strengthening of the Balinese identity, which is presented in the book entitled *Bulan Sabit di Pulau Dewata: Jejak Kampung Islam Kusamba-Bali* (The Crescent Moon on the Island of Gods, Traces of Muslim Village Kusamba-Bali).

I Gde Parimartha, Ida Bagus Gde Putra, and Luh Pt.Kusuma Ririen are the authors of a series of books on the Monograph of the Pluralism Practice. The book was edited by AAGN Ari Dwipayana, published in June 2012 by the Center for Religious and Cross-cultural Studies / CRCS, Graduate School, University of Gadjah Mada. It is the result of research on the residents in Kusumba that provided a description of Hindu-Muslim relations in Bali. The relationship was established through kinship ties in Kusumba, creating identification with a claim as a Muslim Balinese rather than a migrant. The typical Hindu Balinese names such as Wayan, Ketut, or Nengah are also used by Muslims.

In Kusumba village, Muslims are spared from the Balinese identity politics. They have a Bali ID card, living in the Muslim community which has a system of their own administration. In contrast to Muslim immigrants who have to deal tightening of the rules of residence, such as sweeping and *KIPEM* due to their identity as seasonal migrants. In Kusumba village, Muslims made special rules for immigrants, for example if one does not participate in Friday

prayers three times in a row without any hindrance, he will be expelled from the village. The perception that migrants often create problems is also very common among the people of Kusamba because they (migrants) do not participate community work or mingle with the local culture. It shows that the Muslims who live in Muslim Village love the Balinese local culture.

The conclusions presented in this 98 page book are as follows: 1) amid strong ethnicizing of local politics, Muslims minorities were given space to actualize their political aspirations in a communal place called *Kampung* in Bali; 2) The village can survive because Bali has long been applying double administration systems: the traditional village and administrative village. The administrative village is one that provides administrative services to all citizens regardless of their religious backgrounds. 3) Muslim people's life in Bali provides a valuable lesson especially regarding how to manage space in a multicultural society

The initial conclusions provided another opinion when completing four big parts in this book. In the first part, it discusses Islam in Hindu villages. This section covered the community institutions in Bali which are collectivistic-pluralistic as the terms were used by Clifford Geertz, that is working in cooperation, while dividing group loyalty on its components. This is reflected in the traditional institutions in Bali, such as *dadia*, *desa adat*, *subak*, *sekaa* dan *pemaksan*. Also in this section, the Hindu Village and the Administrative Village were given description of both its political history and administration as well as characteristics. In addition, the reasons Kusamba became the focus of discussion is also presented. One of the reasons is that Kusamba is a traditional village that has become a place of settlement of Muslims for centuries.

The existence of Muslims in Bali certainly raises the question, when and why Muslims came to live in Bali? Regarding the Muslim village in Bali, one will find the history of the existence of Muslims with different opinions and evidence. In fact, the history of Loloan village provided information that on the 17<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> century, the *Puri* (palace) harbored political refugees from Pontianak named Syarif Abdullah bin Yahya al-Qadry with his men from the tribes of Bugis Malay and Arabic.

Sharif Abdullah gave a new nuances the government system in Bali. He established a settlement that later became a Muslim administrative village, built the Fatimah Fortress, turned warships into a merchant vessels that carried out commercial activities to Singapore and the Malay land. Another expertise of the Sharif Abdullah's group was treatment of various diseases. This skill was the origin of the name *Kampung Loloan* (Loloan Village). The Balinese who asked for medicine from the Muslim healer always called him by the name *lolah* and this name was pinned to the migrants who inhabited the area of Ijo

Gading River, then it became the name of the village: Loloan Village.

The Muslim village in Kusamba is found in the third part. This section is interesting because it can be a guide for other writers who wish to write the history and description of the village or community there. Still in the same part, the authors provided an explanation on the history of the village, mosaic of the residents' life, economic life: from the a fisherman to a merchant, recognition of village government, citizenship services, redistribution of development, dynamics of the residents: integration of religion and tension.

The relationship between the Muslim and the Hindu community is an important part of the book and therefore it is presented in four parts. The bond that exists between the two communities showed mutual respect between the two. The ties of kinship, language, community activities called *metetulung* and *ngejot* i.e. the tradition of sending food to each other on a special days of the Muslims and Hindus. Tolerance in providing *halal* food by the Balinese as well as the participation of Muslims in not leaving the house during Hindu *brata penyepian* are evidence of a good relationship between the two groups in Bali. Until the Bali bombing happened, the relationship between the Muslim community living in the village and the Hindus in the traditional village remained good. In the concluding remarks it is stated that the Hindu-Muslim relations have to deal with the dynamics that occur outside the village related to strengthening Balinese identity as a result of the tragedy of the Bali bombing. The change of perception might be inevitable and can have an affect the relations between the two villages in the future.

The prediction of future perception is a concern, but this book shows that the Hindu-Muslim relations in Bali will stay good as it has been so for centuries. The Bali bombing tragedy became evident that the (Muslim) village and the Hindu village can exist side by side despite the tragedy. Both villages still exist today, the kinship is still strong, the good relations in the midst of religious differences have become a fortress. The traces of the Muslim village on the island have served as a guide to take lessons from. Peace in the diversity of the people in Bali definitely makes the island more beautiful.