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## Bali Adnyana Versus Surya Kanta Balinese Culture Dynamics Perspective

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Luh Putu Sri Ariyani<sup>1\*</sup>, Tuty Maryati<sup>2</sup>, Nengah Bawa Atmadja<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1\*,2</sup>History, Sociology and Library Department, Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha,  
<sup>3</sup>STAHN Mpu Kuturan Singaraja Bali Indonesia

Email: <sup>2</sup>tuty.maryati@undiksha.ac.id,  
<sup>3</sup>nengahbawaatmaja@stahnmpukuturan.ac.id  
Corresponding Email: <sup>1\*</sup>putu.sri@undiksha.ac.id

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**Abstract:** *In the 1920s, the Surya Karta and Bali Adnyana Associations emerged in Bali. They represented modern versus traditional as outlined in the articles summarized in Surya Kanta and Bali Adnyana newspaper. The two did not reach common ground, so they continue to color the dynamics of Bali's history to this day. This study aims to find a meeting point for the teachings of the two associations as valuable lessons to build peace in Balinese society. This study was conducted through a literature study pertinent to the research topic and also used a social history approach model that was developed with a critical theory perspective as loved by those who pursue Cultural Studies. The object of the study is Surya Kanta and Bali Adnyana Association and the main data presented in this article is mostly taken from a book entitled Reform towards Perfect and Holistic Progress Surya Kanta Association's Ideas about Bali in the Future. The study shows that the ideas and actions of the Surya Kanta association are fundamental because they can function as moral schools for the Balinese today. The ideas expressed in their newspaper are very interesting from a cultural point of view. The conflict between Surya Kanta and Bali Adnyana is also related to caste in Bali, which continues today. If the Balinese could use this event as a moral school, then the Balinese would certainly not continuously keep repeating the same mistakes. Because we do not want to learn from history, the conflict between the nations continues.*

**Keywords:** Association, Surya Kanta, Bali Adnyana, Inter-Caste Conflict, Moral School.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Bali recognizes four castes in the level of society. The castes can be recognized by the name they use. For example, the Brahmin caste, whose names start with Ida Ayu, Ida Bagus, Ida Gede, and others. For the Kshatriya caste, it begins with the name Anak Agung, Gusti, Dewa, Desak, and others. While Vaisya or Wesya begins with the names Ngakan, Kompyang, Sang, and so on. The sudra caste is seen from the initial names of Wayan, Made, Nyoman, and others. When the Dutch began to colonize Bali, caste was used as a tool to strengthen its power. To stem the flow of anti-colonial understanding from Java, the Dutch re-appointed the Kings



of Bali in eight regions, which are currently eight districts. These kings led the puppet kingdom of the Netherlands. All Dutch policies were carried out by each King. And these policies are very miserable for the Balinese people. Such as forced labor, and high tax payments. As a result, instead of fighting against the colonial side, the Balinese people hated the royal party, including the high caste group who got privileges in every policy made by each kingdom.

In response to the preferential treatment of the high caste group (*Triwangsa*) by the royal and colonial parties, a group of educated youth of low caste (*Sudra*) organized themselves in an association called Surya Kanta in 1925 in Singaraja. The objective of this association is to voice the right equality of the Balinese people regardless of caste, by publishing a newspaper media which is also named Surya Kanta. The newspaper, edited by educated *Sudras*, was critical of the existence of caste differences and caste privileges and criticized the colonial government for supporting the system. This newspaper called on the colonial government to base the selection of government officials on the criteria of education and quality rather than caste. The paper also urges the simplification of religious ceremonies to ease the economic burden of ordinary Balinese and demands the demystification of religious knowledge to reduce excessive socio-religious power on the Pedanda. This newspaper also called for a relaxation in social relations, especially in language, dress, and cross-caste marriage rules.

The discourse that was advertised to dismantle caste hegemony had indeed captured the attention of the Dutch and high-caste officials. In response to Surya Kanta's new discourse, the *Triwangsa* caste group published a rival newspaper called Bali Adnyana, which clearly stated that to uphold the concept of caste as the principle foundation of Balinese society. Since then, the discussion about Bali Adnyana versus Surya Kanta requires us to look back while turning to the pages of the history of Bali in the 1920s. At this time there was a fierce debate between the Bali Adnyana Association (BAA) versus the Surya Kanta Association (SKA). They argue about, many basic things related to Hinduism and Balinese culture. This debate is very interesting, not only because of the excitement of how they discuss issues of Balinese religion and culture but also interestingly, from a contemporary perspective, the content of their debate has high relevance in the context of identity politics that is currently developing in Bali, namely *Ajeg Bali*. This paper tries to explore various historical values that can be learned from the emergence of the *Sudra* caste social movement in Bali and the moral lessons that can be learned from this event.

## **2. METHOD**

This study was conducted through a literature study pertinent to the research topic and observation through the newspaper of BAA and SKA stored in the Gedong Kirtya Manuscript Library. The issues debated by BAA and SKA, especially from the SKA version, have been studied in depth by [6] using a social history approach model, in a book entitled "*Reformasi ke Arah Kejamuan yang Sempurna dan Holistik Gagasan Perkumpulan Surya Kanta tentang Bali di Masa Depan*"; English: "Reformation towards a Perfect and Holistic Progress of The Surya Kanta Association's Ideas about Bali in the Future" This data research was mostly taken from the book, which was developed with a critical theory perspective as loved by those who pursue Cultural Studies.

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In the nineteenth century, North Bali was ruled by the Dutch. By using North Bali as a base or steppingstone, Bali was controlled by the Dutch, with the center of power in the city of Singaraja [2], [3]. Simultaneously, the Dutch East Indies government made a change in the direction of political policy, namely no longer applying a harsh exploitation system, but implementing a more subtle exploitation system, namely liberalization which continued with the application of Ethical Politics [7]. In relation to the colonized countries, the Dutch Government, represented by the Government of the Netherlands Indies/Governor-General based in Batavia (Jakarta) or at the local level of Bali, was represented by the Residents of Bali and Lombok who were domiciled in the city of Singaraja. Westernization was carried out through political engineering, namely bringing progress in state life through the appointment of white people as Residents of Bali and Lombok or as political elites who controlled the traditional elite, namely the local Balinese kings (Tabanan, Buleleng, Gianyar, Bangli, Badung, Klungkung, and Karangasem). Westernization in the economic field is carried out by incorporating Bali into a series of global capitalism systems, which are based in Singapore, among others. Westernization in the field of education was carried out by establishing various forms and types of Western-style schools, starting from the elementary level to the top level of education centered in the royal capital. Westernization in the field of religion is carried out through the spread of Christianity as seen in the Badung area, for example, the villages of Buduk, Abian Base, etc. If we look closely, whatever form of westernization was applied by the Dutch East Indies government, in essence, it was related to globalization, namely the process of making Indonesia and Bali culturally citizens of world culture, and economically related to the world economic system, especially Europe. Starting from this fact, it can be stated that along with westernization, globalization is getting more intense in Indonesia and Bali. As mentioned by [10], [14], and [30] westernization/globalization, is not a gift but is related to dependency creation. In a sense, the desired future hope is Indonesia/Bali which is advanced, but still dependent on the colonizers, both socio-culturally, economically, and politically.

In relation to the Dutch strategy of controlling and or advancing the economic system of the Balinese people, the Dutch East Indies government used intermediaries, namely ethnic Chinese. Ethnic Chinese occupy the position of the middle class or as lowly capitalism. They functioned as a link connecting the indigenous people, namely the *Triwangsa* and *Jaba* or *Sudra*, with Dutch businessmen (white people) who were domiciled as supporters of the high capitalism system. The Chinese as the middle class are automatically westernized, both in the context of strengthening their position as middlemen traders, as well as to strengthen their ties with the *Balanda* people who rule Indonesia/Bali – they have the same culture as their masters.

The westernization carried out by the government was aimed at the *Triwangsa* castes. In the field of education, for example, the *Triwangsa* (royal family) are given the privilege of enjoying education, because it is related to the principle of mutualistic social and political symbiosis. In a sense, their high social status could be used as a tool to support Dutch rule over Bali. Apart from the *Triwangsa*, the *Jaba* also experienced westernization. Many *Jaba* people took the opportunity of westernization, by sending their children, especially to teacher schools, so that the intellectuals of the *Jaba* caste teachers were born. Teacher schools are very popular, because, first, the cost of education is cheap – it can be scholarships. Second, the output of teacher schools must work, because the teacher is very much needed by the state. Third, the teacher's income is quite good. Fourth, at the same time, they experience vertical social

mobility, namely from farmers to small aristocrats. Fifth, they not only get economic rewards in the form of salary, but also social rewards in the form of social respect.

However, the implementation of two different social stratification systems, namely an open social stratification system on the basis of education (intellectual capital) obtained through struggle (achieved status), and a closed social stratification system on the basis of dynasties which relies on the ownership of cultural capital which is standardized through tradition. which is obtained automatically by birth (ascribed status), poses a problem for the intellectuals of the teachers of the *Jaba* caste. Because, along with the upward vertical social mobility they experience, they also demand social rewards in the form of social respect. However, what they hoped for was not fulfilled optimally, especially if they were dealing with the *Triwangsa*. This is because the traditions that apply to the Balinese people actually require them to give social respect to the *Triwangsa*, among others through the use of Smooth Balinese language and or body language. This indicates that their social status is lower than the *Triwangsa*. This phenomenon can lead to contradictions, considering that in terms of socio-economic status and aspects of modernization, teachers of the *Jaba* caste have higher social status than those of the *Triwangsa*. In fact, their students at school who come from the *Triwangsa* group can also invite problems, because they can speak Rude Balinese to their teachers because it is traditionally legal. On the other hand, from a modern social status perspective, the teacher Wanga *Jaba* would consider it rude, because students must respect their teachers. Moreover, this is related to the teachings of *Tri Guru*, where teachers in schools, called recitation teachers, are obliged to get social respect from their students, both through verbal language and body language.

The teachers of the *Jaba* caste were not only low in status in relation to the *Triwangsa*, but also low in relation to the Chinese and the Dutch. So, structurally those who received the most pressure were those from the *Triwangsa*, the Chinese, and the Whites. This is not only in the form of structural pressure, but as stated by [25], the pressure can turn into structural violence, language violence, or symbolic violence.

These various forms of violence cause them to experience relative deprivation, namely a mismatch between expectations and reality so that they are entangled in social frustration [1]. What's even more amazing is that, based on the cognitive excursions they did through reading various texts about other countries, namely Europe, Japan, and others, they knew that these countries were more advanced than the Balinese people, both in terms of education, social, cultural as well as mastery of science and technology. Similarly, how other religions develop reforms – for example, Islam in Java with its Muhammadiyah movement, has convinced the *Jaba* people that Bali needs to improve itself. In short, the socio-cultural conditions of the Bal people are felt to be very backward, so the need to make changes is something urgent.

In order to overcome this problem, they carried out deconstruction. Deconstruction is an intellectual activity in the form of dismantling the ideological and power assumptions behind the text [5], [9], [20], [23], [24], [26]. All of this cannot be separated from the narrative that applies to Balinese society. Narratives that apply to Balinese people can be based on written texts, such as lontar, and oral texts, such as values, traditions, or customs that are based on religion and/or myths. This text is contained in the form of a social text, namely social action in Balinese society. The ideological and power assumptions behind narratives and social texts are often not realized by actors [4], [36]. Even more importantly, power and the ideology that underlies it are fluid and ubiquitous [12], [13], [29]. The various forms of narrative are institutionalized by various socialization agents, namely family, community, school,





playmates, mass media, etc. The Dutch helped strengthen it because he got a lot of benefits from the narrative that existed in Balinese society.

According to the *Jaba* intellectuals, it is this narrative that must be deconstructed, not only to make the *Jaba* people aware of it but more importantly to emancipate themselves. In this regard, they intensify deconstruction, and at the same time practice it at the level of social texts. For this reason, *Jaba* intellectuals, who mostly work as teachers, established a forum, namely the Surya Kanta Association (SKA) in 1925. Its founders included Ketut Nasa, Ketut Sandi, etc. In order to spread its ideas which at the same time mean making socio-cultural changes in Balinese society, SKA publishes the Surya Kanta Newspaper (SKN). Thus, SKA does not only deconstruct the narrative that applies to Balinese society but also disseminates it through cultural communication media, namely SKN. Surya Kanta Newspaper is very rich in SKA's ideas about ideas regarding the progress of Bali as discussed at length by [6].

The deconstruction carried out by SKA is very comprehensive and related to various dimensions of humanity, namely *homo religious*, *homo socius*, *homo economicus*, *homo faber*, *homo ethics*, *homo sapiens*, *homo demens*, and others. In this regard, it is not surprising that [6] stated that SKA's goal is to reform the socio-cultural system of Balinese society in the future, namely towards perfect and holistic progress. This concerns progress in the economic, social, cultural, scientific, and technological fields. In order to realize this target, many programs have been initiated by SKA, for example increasing agricultural production through the use of agricultural technology (biological, chemical), developing a movement to love domestic production in order to counter the flood of imported goods, such as cloth, advancing the people's economy through cooperatives, preserving the environment. especially forests through reforestation and environmental awareness development, reducing population pressure through transmigration, improving health through environmental sanitation and the use of modern health technology, etc.

Socio-cultural progress idealized by SKA is oriented towards Western culture because the West is indeed more advanced than the East. Rationality led the West to become modern and far away from the East [17], [20], [34]. Although SKA is oriented to the West, it does not mean that Bali has to become West. This idea is in line with the basic principle adopted by SKA, which is not westernization, but modernization. Or, to borrow the idea of [32] idealized by SKA is glocalization, namely how to localize global culture, or to borrow the idea of [22], it can also be called localization of Western culture. In other words, it can also be argued that the development of Balinese culture was idealized. SKA is a local genius. Local genius can be interpreted as the ability to absorb while holding active selection and processing of foreign cultural influences until a new creation that is unique and does not exist in the territory of the nation that carries its cultural influence. In short, the progress idealized by SKA is modernization that relies on localization, glocalization, or local genius so that an advanced Balinese socio-cultural system is formed, without losing its Balinese identity.

Modernization that leads to the process of local genius or localization, must balance the four components of human nature, namely: first, moral perfection or character. The second is the perfection of science/technology. Third, physical perfection/health. Fourth, is the perfection of feeling/aesthetics. The four must be balanced and sweet, in the sense, continue to be developed, in accordance with the dynamics of the times which are also constantly changing. In this way, the ideal Balinese person will be realized, namely modern, healthy, virtuous, aesthetic, and not uprooted from his cultural roots. In this context, progress through education, including the emancipation of women in enjoying education, is highly emphasized by SKA.



This idea is reasonable because education is an important means of human civilization. In this regard, modernization aimed at the Balinese people automatically cannot be separated from education.

SKA realizes that achieving the goal of perfect and holistic progress, as well as how to promote education in Balinese society is not easy, because many obstacles come from written/oral texts as reflected in social actions that apply to Balinese people. SKA conveys many traditions to the Balinese people which instead of encouraging progress, but hindering progress. The problem is complicated because the prevailing tradition is often integrated with Hinduism, so its resistance is very strong. Each renewal can cause problems because it is considered to touch the core of religion, namely the sacredness and existence of supernatural beings. SKA believes that advancing Bali absolutely requires the deconstruction of tradition in order to find the ideology and power behind it that hinders progress.

In this regard, many things have been deconstructed by SKA. For example, the *ajawera* principle must be abolished, because it hinders mass religious learning. *Adat* or custom must continue to be contextually deconstructed so that Bali progresses sustainably. Rituals need to be textually adjusted, for example, cremation or *ngaben*, which is often used as an arena for displaying wealth, leading to impoverishment. Likewise, the *wangsa* system must be deconstructed, because it is not in accordance with Hindu religious texts and human values – injustice, is seen in the *asupundung* and *Alangkahi Karanghulu* customs. The *wangsa* system also did not give the Balinese an incentive to pursue progress, because, they already felt proud of their high social status - descendant/traditional aristocrats. Whereas for progress, what is needed is humans who master science and technology or intellectual/mind/modern nobility. The caste system must be returned to religious texts, not to traditional texts in order to create an egalitarian or equal social order, the same taste, and the same happiness. SKA also denounced the consumption pattern of the Balinese people, which prioritizes symbolic value over use-value, and cannot distinguish between needs and wants, so waste is unavoidable.

Surya Kanta Association also deconstructed the role of ethnic Chinese in the economy. According to SKA, this is very sad, because ethnic Chinese are strong in the economic field. This problem is related to the weakness of the Balinese, namely not having entrepreneurship, and instead is more directed towards a consumption society. Under these conditions, the Chinese always benefit, because they are the ones who supply the goods consumed by the natives. Although SKA deconstructed the position of the Chinese, they were very careful with the Dutch authorities. They are afraid of the authorities because they can be fired as teachers if they are considered to disturb public security and order. This is certainly not desirable, because, being fired as a teacher means they lose everything – the economic and social rewards.

SKA's deconstruction of tradition, especially the *wangsa* or caste, resulted in SKA dealing with the *Triwangsa*. Their social status, which is legitimized by tradition, is shaken by SKA so that they feel disturbed, even uncomfortable. This is what causes them to carry out resistance, by establishing a separate forum, namely the Bali Adnyana Association (BAA). They also founded a newspaper, namely the Bali Adnyana Newspaper (BAN). The figure who played an important role in BAA was I.G. Tjakratenaja and I.G. Ketut Putra. The BAA idea is not as complex as SKA wants it to be, as reflected in the BAN it has issued.

If we compare the ideas of SKA and BAA in the context of the development of Balinese culture and the renewal of Hinduism, structurally it can be said to be dichotomous. Cultural dualism or modernist versus traditionalist causes SKA and BAA to fight ideologically and narratively. This struggle is not only at the level of text but also in social texts in the form of

conflicts in various regions. This phenomenon can be observed in the conflict between *Soroh Pande* and the Brahmins in Mengwi in 1928. The reason was that *Soroh Pande* refused to wear tirtha from the Brahmins. The same incident occurred in the village of Kalapaksa. The reason is that the *Jaba* harassed *Wesya*'s people who took the same job as herding cattle. This job was considered unsuitable for the *Wesya*. Similar incidents, coupled with political reasons, such as the PKI (Indonesian Communist Party) rebellion against the Dutch East Indies government in Java, followed by the PNI (Indonesian Nasional Party) under the leadership of Soekarno and his colleagues, resulted in the Dutch East Indies government monitoring SKA closely. Moreover, BAA continues to corner SKA, so that SKA's position continues to be squeezed. In this regard, it is not surprising that SKA eventually dies slowly.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The explanation above is part of the history of Bali. History does not only mean events that occurred in the past that have passed forever, but can also mean the knowledge of the past. History as a science, he tries to explain and/or narrate the past in a representative, retrospective, and methodological way (following the rules of historical genres) so as to give birth to a narrative that can be accounted for academically [15], [27]. Writing history is editing and bound to the goal, namely as a means of learning for humans, especially in the school system.

Shariati gives a high appreciation of history in the context of how a society or a country develops itself into a better future. History contains many valuable lessons related to cultural, spiritual, material, and structural aspects [33]. By borrowing [16], it can also be said that history is a bank that stores various models of (cognitive aspects) and models (evaluative aspects) for human actions in social and state life in the present context. It includes how to "... change his backward state, his mental and spiritual decadence, into a dynamic state in building and creating and into a state full of moral, spiritual, and social creativity [33]. This idea is related to the fact that "... history has two opposite faces: civilized and savage, creates and destroys, breeds and kills" [21]. Likewise, [18] states that history can not only be seen as a stage of violence, but is also a stage for community happiness, state policy, and individual wisdom.

If humans can decide themselves with the past, in a sense, they do not imitate the model of and the model which contains errors for upholding human values, then the opportunity for the creation of a civilized state is very large. Thus, Kartodirdjo's idea is right that "... Historia magistra vitae – history is the teacher of life" [19]. Likewise, according to [11], history is "... a school of morals and political virtue". As [31], points out that the function of history is to make people wiser.

The idea that history can make people wiser can be linked to Confucius' view in [35] about how to be a wise man, namely "... If a knife is sharpened with a stone, then humans are sharpened by other humans" [35]. Learning by honing ourselves with others, does not only mean that we learn from people who live in our contemporaries but can also mean the opposite, namely that we learn, have dialogue or hone ourselves with people who lived in the same past, with various forms of social action, they perform. In this regard, [35] is right, that "... it is not future humans who are utopian idols" [35], but humans who live in the past with their various actions on the historical stage, both those that are positive and negative. Whatever their actions in the past is basically a model of and a model for human actions in the present context.

What is man's goal in terms of honing himself with history or the actions of past generations? The answer to this question can be returned to Confucius' idea of the silver rule,



namely "do not do to others what you do not want to be done to you". This idea is very important because it is the principle that drives the game of historical actors, considering that various historical events related to conflict and peace can be returned to the silver rule. Conflict occurs because humans ignore the silver rule, on the contrary peace is realized because humans obey the silver rule. In this regard, the human goal in honing himself with history is to appreciate the silver rule that is behind historical events, and use it as a recipe for action in the present context, so that humans do not fall into the same mistakes over and over again. More generally it can be stated that the mission of history as a moral school is humanization, namely honing humans to become human beings, not self-centered or selfish humans, but fully human self-realization humans [35]. With reference to [28], this is reflected in their actions, namely not adhering to the subconscious mind, but emphasizing the conscious mind and the superconscious mind.

Starting from the historical meaning, as well as observing the ideas and actions (written texts and social texts) of SKA, is very important because it can function as a moral school or *Historia Magistra Vitae* for Balinese today. Their ideas, especially what was put forward by SKA, are very interesting from the point of view of Balinese culture and the struggle for thinking about contemporary Hindu religious reform. Likewise, the conflict between *Triwangsa* and *Jaba*, which often appears today, is an old story that dates back to the 1920s, as reflected in the conflict between SKA and BAA. If the Balinese can use this incident as a moral school, then the Balinese will certainly not repeat the same mistakes over and over again. Because we don't want to learn from history, the inter-*wangsa* conflict continues.

The current *Ajeg Bali* movement, in response to the Balinese people's response to the identity crisis faced by ethnic Balinese, partly due to globalization [8], seems to have the same spirit, spirit, or spirit as what was voiced by PKS in the 1920s. In this regard, the discourse on *Ajeg Bali* which is so intense at this time, it is better to learn from what was stated by SKA. The idea of SKA could be a good moral school for the *Ajeg Bali* movement.

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