

MANAGING THE ENVIRONMENT *
(Lesson From the Past , Learn for The Future)

By Made Merta**

I. Introduction

Bali is a small island a part of the Indonesian archipelago that has been famous as a leading tourist destination in South Pasific or even in the world for his exotic and natural beauty, vibrant art and culture and the hospitality of its people.

Balinese people mainly live by agriculture with rice as staple food, while the others such as coffe, coconut, cacao, vanilla etc. as non staple. Bali also known for many variety of fruit like salak (snake skined fruit), banana, mandarin, citrus, grave jack fruit etc.

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Along with the development of tourism small scale and home industry like handicraft has also been flourishing, offering job opportunity to the people. Since the Dutch colonialism, the uniqueness of its nature, people and culture have led foreigners to view the island as tourist destination. Although Bali is a small island, which one can travel within a single day, it has full geographical spectrum.

To travel across the island from the coast to the mountains is “...to travel through “the living theater”... of the ecology and the people which seems to continue seamlessly across the region. The Balinese heartbeat is never stopped in its continuation of traditional agriculture and Hindu ritual and customs...” (Bali The Inspiration, Diparda Bali,2003).

When some of other islands of the archipelago had become economic destination, Bali had become a destination for spiritual quests. The flora and fauna in tropical Bali provide the most beautiful scenery, which has inspired his people to take care of its natural resources. Although other islands have similar ecologies the harmonious relationship between nature, culture and human activities has made Bali a special place. This special feature of Bali has attracted the attention of artists, cultural observers, travelers from many countries (Putra, 2007)

The last two decades, Tourism in Bali has become the main sector and prima donna of the foreign exchange and device, because in the structure of its economy, it regional revenue it surpasses other sectors. Now Bali is one of the most interesting tourist destination in the world. Bali experienced great economic growth, and with

its ritual life and local culture has become even more significant destination tourism and culture being closely tied, making Bali a place of endless wonder for tourist.

However Bali has now been filled with conflict that is now becoming even more and more fierce due to competition in struggling for land that is now scarce. "The existence of fascinating panoramas of stretching terraced rice field along with the uniqueness of traditional organization handling irrigation in Bali: SUBAK, that provides the blend of nature's attraction, agrarian culture and ritual activities begin to be in danger due to tourism....." (Windia, 2007). Conversion of agricultural land takes place as though it is no longer controlled. A number of researches indicate that in the last ten years on average more than 1500 hectares of rice field in Bali undergoes a transfer of function into various tourism facilities. Due to such condition in Bali now, there have been provoked various arguments pro and cons, optimistic and pessimistic. The optimistic party tends to assume that tourism development in Bali bring positive impact to local culture. McKean mention that "... tourism is very much a part of modern tradition, but it is built on the foundation laid during the little and great traditions, without which would never been started and without which it will not flourish in the future..."

This paper begins with a big remarks that Bali has received influences from outside cultures. This could lead to the decline of its own indigenous culture if the challenge is not faced with a determined mind. The Balinese people have been making effort to sustain and further their understanding of the values of their history and culture while at the same time, keeping up with the

progress of time and technology in order to protect its spiritual charisma called **Taksu**.

Traditional Value

One of the human capabilities as cultural being is the capacity to create and understand the value. Value is a concept that is considered important and valuable that is used for life guidelines or human life pattern. Human action is organized by a set of values that prevail in the society.

Each community has a culture and a set of value. It is often considered important for certain communities and even on contrary for the other community. However, in many cases it is also found that some values of local culture are recognized to have universal qualities (Putra, 2007). Such cultural value are not only adaptive to the environment of a certain community. The value of local culture contains wisdoms that are not only beneficial for the life of its community but also for the entire life of world community.

Balinese culture is inspired by Hinduism through the existence of concept known as Tri Hita Karana, three causes of prosperity. Tri means three, Hita means prosperity and Karana is cause. There are three causes of happiness/prosperity such as spiritual environment called Parahyangan, social environment named Pawongan and territorial environment called Palemahan. All that constitute an unabridged oneness. Three basic elements are believed to bring power for human prosperity, both spiritual and material. The conducive environment in

Bali is supported by Tri Hita Karana (THK). THK dictates that happiness can only be achieved if there are harmonious relationships between human and God, among human and their community, and between human and nature/territorial (its surrounding) (Wiyana, 2007).

With regard to the efforts in maintaining and preserving the local culture, the government has decided to develop such tourism based in every aspect of local culture, which is harmoniously woven together with age-old tradition, inspired by Hinduism as major religion.

In Hinduism concept, humans live in earth together with other God's creation such as plants and animal. Nevertheless as human being they can not do something freely, but have to do every thing wisely and better than others creatures created by the God. As human being who have sense dynamic control they have to respect each others. Humans live because of the nature and to sustain their human beings must look after and protect nature. This is the real grandeur of God.

Quite different this point of view, western culture lives against nature because they want to live easily and nicely and that is why human being have to conquer nature. Such way of human life has moved from looking for peace to a pursuit of pleasure.

Sad Kertih doctrine, guides humans to continue keeping their commitment and consistent to build individual and social life. That is why the Atma Kertih (1) strives for a permanent holy zone, holy place and its activities as a medium to build a spirit (called Atman). The reason for not changing holy zone, holy place and its

activities to other function is that holy habit is source of human reference in the world. In order not to destroy the environment humans must adopt a holly habit. Good sense (thought), will function. It will be better when our sense is well controlled by mind. Story thought should be under the mind consciousness. Mind consciousness illuminates strong mind. It has to be reflected in the routine of daily life which will therefore make the earth not greedily exploited for a short term goal of life (Wiyana,2007).

Samudera Kertih(2) is an effort to maintain sea conservation as a source of nature which has a wide function for human life. There are specific ceremonies in connection with the sea, which are all intended to motivate people to take care of the sea for its conservation. At present there are many bad activities which destroy (ruin) the environment such as discarding of waste products and chemicals to the sea. Damaging ridge of rock, poisoning fish or bombing should not be tolerated according to Samudra Kertih concept. The Samudra Kertih aims to prevent bad behavior which can destroy sea and the source of nature. By following Samudra Kertih, the next step is doing activity under strict precautions to prevent anybody from damaging and polluting the sea.

Wana Kertih (3) is an effort to keeps forest conservation. Generally various ceremonies or ritual activities are conducted to encourage people to make rules (regulations) on protecting the forest wisely. On Panca Wati book (Wiyana, 2007) there are 3 functions of forest:

- Maha Wana (forest conservation)
 - *Tapa Wana*
 - *Sri Wana*

Tapa wana is place for holy man to establish holy place for facilitate and concentrating such spiritual activities as c praying and learning spiritual. The function of Tapa Wana is reverberate strong spiritual to the follower for a better life.

Sri Wana is a forest for building an economics prosperity . This forest serves as producer forest, producing plants useful for people. Rice field and irrigated agricultural field categorized as *Sri Wana* a source of food stuff. If all of the 3 functions of the forest can be applied, harmonious *wana* (forest) could become a reality. In other words the forest will give prosperity to our life. During the reign of local King, sanction for forest disturber was a heavy fine by the King (Wiyana, 2007), which included e.g. sanction for cutting a tree in the form of bolding head for their generations.

Danu Kertih (4) is an effort to help/protect water resources in land such as lake, rivers, spring (well) etc. Various ceremonics are carried out to keep water resources well conserved. Hopefully by following these ceremonies there would be aroused the awareness to conserve water resources. Polluting the river is bad habit as mention in Manawa Dharmasastra IV.52 & 56.

*Pratyagnim pratisuuryam ca
pratisomodakah vijaan
pratigaan prativatamca prajnyaa*

nasyati mehatah

(Manawa Dharma Sastra , IV 52)

The meaning is : Intelligence of people will lose if urinating over fire, sun, moon, water stream, holyman, cows and against the wind blow..

Naapsu muutram purisam va

Sthiivanam va samutsrjet

Amedhia lipta menyadva lohitaam vaa visaani va

(Manawa Dharma Sastra, IV. 56)

The meaning is : That do not throw urine or faeces and saliva to the river and also do not say dirty words, rubbish, blood and some think poisonous.

It is clear that bad habits to destroy/pollute water including water resources. such as lake, spring (well) and river is strongly prohibited. Practicing this activity is very low interest.

Jagat Kertih(5) is an effort to conserve a production, dynamic harmonious relationship honestly. It also serves to reduce social gap and guarantee that every body can do anything according to their belief. To keep harmonious relationship between humans and God based on their belief amongst themselves relationship man and environment based on love divine. Hopefully this harmony can be formed and continuous to the right direction for a condition which is called by Balinese as *Jagadhita* . This concept is known as Tri Hita Karana (TIHK).

Jana Kertih (6) is an effort to bailed condusive social environment. Unification of spirit environment, harmonious nature environment and cool, with condusive social environment as a place to bailed an ideal people individually as well as in group as the result of six efforts. Group consist of ideal individual, who has wisdom. In keeping life environment, local genius has formulated three frame work : firstly *tatwa* aspect which is a philosophy arrangement, science and knowledge. Second aspect which is ethics in the daily life of Balinese people and the third the ceremony aspect which could be seen in various ceremonies.

ii.Tri Hita Karana Implementation and Referential Teaching

Anthropologists say that Tri Hita Karana is a local genius or local wisdom that has become a cultural identity. Local genius can be made equal to cultural identity since it can accommodate and integrate the external cultural elements into an indigenous culture. Tri Hita Karana not only accommodates and integrates external culture, but also becomes the substructure of life order of Balinese community in various sectors. Tri Hita Karana is universal and has totality characteristics comprising macrocosms, but it does not become smaller for an island, village, a house, a building or even for the human self.

In Bali a set of traditional faith that constitute an integral part of faith system of Hinduism is also proved to provide positive benefit for sustainability and preservation of ecological system. The community of

customary village of Sangeh, Kukuh and Padang Tegal in Ubud and some others, always maintain the existence of local forest territory along with its contents because it is believed to be the abode of their gods that protect their life. The surrounding community is prohibited to disturb the existence of flora, fauna and other natural resources within the forest area because they believe that the gods supervise all the time and will give punishment to whoever dares to tease the existence of such forest.

Recognized or not such faith has been proved to give ecological benefits and even economic one for the local community. Ecological benefits mean the sustaining of forest ecosystem preservation and its monkeys, while economics benefit is the of foreign exchange revenue obtained through the management of forest area along with its monkeys inside as a tourist object.

Local wisdom is also reflected in the zoning concept that establish mountains as *hulu or luan zone* (meaning head or upland area, upstream) that has holly or sacred value. Based on such conception mountain ranges that stretched in central Bali is considered sacred and constitute *ulu or hulu or head* both for Northern and Southern Bali. Along this area lies sacred places in the form of prominent temples like Besakih, Batukaru, Ulun Danu Batur, Pucak Mangu, Pucak Tedung, Pulaki, Petali etc. The existence of such temples constitute holiness and coincidentally forms ecological wisdom that has great advantages for the sustaining and preservation on natural resources. (Bagus 2002 , Puja A. 2005)

In terms of environment conservation context, we should be grateful because of the mountain ranges, Bali has four lakes that are surrounded by protection forests that function importantly in maintaining the water supply for its inhabitants. However, on the other hand, Bali as renowned tourist destination in the world, being felt or not, is currently facing various environmental problems such as riverbanks, lakes or beach pollution, the decrease of water absorption areas, transfer of rice field function, deforestation and so forth. The Tri Hita Karana concept that puts forward the principles of togetherness and harmony just as the value contained in the Swastika (symbol of balance) is right to be made into reference. It's found right because the environmental management that is pursuant to the mandate Tri Hita Karana and Swastika cover four principles namely spirituality, an unabridged oneness of ecosystem, togetherness and dynamic sustainability. Physically, at the vertical level there is *Tri angga* concept (head, body and foot) and horizontally, there are Tri mandala and Sanga mandala (utama, madia and nista mandala). Tri (three) mandala (zone/territory) means zonal division into three, namely utama mandala (the most sacred zone), for houses of worship and madya mandala (intermediate zone) for residential building, for the economic activities. Nista mandala (outermost zone) for villages association zones, or animal facilities. Based on Sanga mandala concept signifies that minimally $1/9$ (one ninth) should be use as a sacred zone, maximally $5/9$ (five ninth) for residential or building zones and the rest, minimally $3/9$ (three ninth) for green open zone. The descriptive words minimally and maximally mean that only the activity

zones can be decreased by reducing that allotment of building zone (Ashrama, 2005)

iii. Remark

Conservation strategy is partly intended to protect local wisdom in managing the environment. The Tri Hita Karana and the Sad Kertih concepts was revealed to earth by the God to lead humans to happy life. Therefore, human should be active as central element the teaching of Tri Hita Karana and Sad Kertih. In Hinduism there are three directions named *Tri Para Artha* (*Tri* =three, *para* = get out from, *artha*=goal). Tri Para Artha consists of *bhakti* (to continue to improve faith of human to God), *punia* (to do merits to follow humans) and *asih* (love devine).

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