

EDITORIAL

The World of Stigma

Escaping stigma is no easy thing, particularly when it is produced and reproduced behind the scenes by a powerful regime.

Theoretically, stigma is seen as something which bypasses fact. That is, it ignores original facts and acts to create its own reality — a “false” reality that gives the impression of being true. It creates its own legitimacy to ensure that it remains untouchable and to guarantee its existence and sustainability in the future.

In addition, stigma never leaves any room for clarification. Empirical evidence is no longer important as stigma uses only negative symbols and images. This is why it has such power, and is so difficult to counteract.

Perhaps the explanation above is somewhat dry and lacking as it deals with stigma only on a theoretical level, but try asking former 1965 political prisoners in Central Celebes who experienced firsthand just how confining stigma is. So hard it is to shake off that even in their old age these prisoners find that many of their efforts have been in vain.

These former 1965 prisoners experienced a bitter and tragic fate. They were tortured and forced to work during their incarceration, yet upon their release they continued to face negative stigma from society as they went about their everyday lives. In actual fact, according to available data, most were innocent victims, wrongly arrested by those in power at the time. But again, stigma does not know nor allows any room for clarification.[]

Editor

1965 POLITICAL PRISONERS’ CHAIN OF SLAVERY

By: Ewin Laudjeng

Today, particularly amongst youth, not many know that the magnificence of the Central Sulawesi city, Palu, was born out of the sweat and toil of the 1965 political prisoners.

Maid Halim (70), a former 1965 political prisoner, told Desantara of his bitter experience in Maesa prison, Palu, in 1966. For 12 years, he and his fellow prisoners were treated inhumanely by Indonesian military officers during their incarceration. “We were electrocuted or beaten, or forced to work on road construction,” he said. He told how Indonesian military forced the prisoners to work on construction sites without pay or food.

Every day after the morning prayer the military officers would line up the prisoners and march them to construction sites in the city, one of which was the Kalikoa dam site.

At the time, Maid Halim said, Palu was heavily flooded. The river was overflowing and had flooded peoples’ houses. “We were ordered to install a flood barricade to stop the water from flooding residential areas. We worked on it every day, from morning to afternoon. We were seldom given food,” Maid Halim said in sadness. The prisoners worked on this construction project, known as *Komando Kali Palu* (Palu River Command), from 1966 to 1967.

After completion of the project, the prisoners could not rest. Their slavery did not stop. They



JL. KESADARAN

were then ordered to work on other construction projects, such as construction of Kimaja, Haji Hayun, Gatot Subroto, and Soeprapto roads in East Palu.

When finished these projects, they were forced to build another road connecting Kaluku Bulu and Biromaru villages, located on the border of Palu and Sigi Biromaru regencies. This road now goes by the name *Karanja Lemba* road.

“Forced labour was ongoing. When one project was done, we were given the next one,” Maid Halim said. For example, Abdurahman Saleh road, the main road to Mutiara airport in Palu. “It was also build from the 1965 prisoners’ sweat and blood,” he said.

Bahrin (69), one of Maid Halim’s friends and also former chairman for the People’s Youth in

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Biomaru, shared a similar story. He told how the prisoners were treated inhumanely, like machines. They were forced to work on massive construction projects for long periods of time without being given enough food or rest. Worse, they were only given simple construction equipment such as shovels, crowbars and hoes. No heavy equipment was provided.

The 1965 prisoners were considered lost people who had taken a wrong turn. This was reflected in the name the Indonesian military gave to a road in Tatura, South Palu: *Jalan Kesadaran* (Awareness road). “The military chose this name in hope that the prisoners would return to the right path (renouncing communism),” said Bahrun, mimicking a military officer who named the road.

The negative stigma attached to the 1965 prisoners continues today. Although now free from prison, they are still viewed negatively by society and continue to be treated unjustly, both politically and socially. Soekapto, an ex-civil servant

and political prisoner, was denied his pension after being imprisoned in 1969. Data from the Solidarity for Human Rights Abuse Victims NGO (*Solidaritas Korban Pelanggaran HAM*, SKP-HAM) reveals that there are 512 former political prisoners in Palu, Central Sulawesi.

The stigma attached to the 1965 political prisoners is a heavy burden to carry, made worse by the fact that their prison experience was very bitter.

“Frankly, when I think of those times I realise that I was sentenced to death. Since 1966, we were arrested but our cases were not brought to court. We were captured like animals, put in prison for 12 years without knowing our crimes,” Bahrun said, inhaling deeply.

For Bahrun and some of his friends, this experience has caused long lasting trauma — trauma that can not be forgotten easily. “We hope that the 1965 political violence is uncovered and not just swept under the rug,” he whispered.[]

SUSUNAN REDAKSI

Penanggung Jawab:
M. Nurkhoiron

Pemimpin Redaksi:
Muhammad Kodim

Sekretaris:
Noviyana

Keuangan:
Darningsih

Redaktur Pelaksana:
Ingwuri H.

Tata Letak/Desain:
M. Isnaini “Amax”

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M. Nurkhoiron

Editor Bhs. Inggris:
Becca Taufiq

Penerjemah:
S. B. Setiawan

Staf Redaksi:
Frاندitya Utomo

Distributor:
Noviyana

Dokumentasi:
Rustam

Kontributor:

Jawa Barat: Abu Bakar, Isa Nur Zaman, Diphie. **Jawa Tengah:** Moh. Sobirin. **Jawa Timur:** Mashuri, Oryza Ardyansyah W., Ishomuddin, A'ak Abdullah Al-Kudus, Ahmad Rifa'i. **Bali:** Ni Komang Erviani. **NTB:** Muhammad Irfam. **Sulsel:** Mubarak Idrus, Hasmi Baharuddin. **Sulteng:** Ewin Laudjeng. **Sulbar:** Tamsil Kanang. **Kaltim:** Asman Azis, Abdullah Naim. **Kalbar:** Chatarina P. Istiyani. **Sumbar:** Ka'bat. **Sumut:** Farid Aulia. **Aceh:** Raihana.

Alamat Redaksi:

DESANTARA Foundation
Komplek Depok Lama Alam Permai Blok K3, Depok 16431
Website: www.desantara.org
Email Redaksi: mail@desantara.org, newsletter@desantara.org (DEPORT)
Tlp: +62 21 77201121
Fax: +62 21 77210247



9 771979 735446

THEY FIGHT AGAINST MINING

By: Oryza Ardyansyah Wirawan

The wet season is always a tense time for people of Curah Wungkal, Pace, Silo, Jember, East Java. In every wet season the village is flooded, dozens of houses are submerged, and many more are destroyed by landslides. Today, villagers are even more anxious after hearing that their area is to be explored for manganese mining. The permit for exploration was granted to Wahyu Sejahtera, allowing the company to mine five hectares of surrounding forest.

“If mining goes ahead, destruction will surely be even worse,” said Imam Haramain, a religious figure in Silo, and vice chairman of the Jember NU office. The destruction he mentions refers to deforestation which will increase the frequency of natural disasters.

In addition, Syaiful Isbar, a local public

figure, mentioned that locals reject the mining project, arguing that Silo remains agriculturally productive and that the mining site is too close to the village. Besides, “there is no mining project that brings prosperity to society. If there is, it should be exposed in the media,” he challenged.

Local residents and public figures were startled to find that the mining was approved. In fact, Haramain said, an officer from the Department of Trade and Industry had even approached one public figure and stated that the mining would not be authorized. Then out of the blue Wahyu Sejahtera sent a letter to police to ask them to guard their mining heavy equipment.

Syaiful Isbar, a public figure in the area, suspected that the manganese mining

project would signify the beginning of other mining projects in other locations. The forest in Silo has been known to contain potential mineral elements. Isbar was sure that the mining company was not actually looking for manganese. “They must be looking for gold,” he said.

The vice chairman of the Jember House of Representatives, Machmud Sardjuno, also suspected that there was ‘gold behind the manganese.’ “It’s not possible that they are looking for manganese. Surely they’re after gold. Jember has been aerial photographed, and the result showed that it contains a significant amount of gold,” he said. It’s likely that they took this approach because it is easier to obtain a permit for manganese exploration than for gold exploration. “If they did manipulate things this way, it could be dangerous,” he added.

Furthermore, the way the company obtained community approval was far from transparent. The community accused the company of obtaining their mining permit illegally. For instance, the company manipulated the locals’ signatures to make it appear as if they gave their approval. “Those signatures were used wrongly,” said Farid Mujib, one of the locals.

It was in August 2008 when a number of locals were invited to meet company representatives. The meeting was to discuss the mining. Those present signed the customary attendance list. They did not give their approval. “I suggested that the company gather community and religious leaders before they started their mining project in Pace, and that they should survey the mining site,” said Mujib. A few months later, however, the locals found out that their signatures from the attendance list had been used as proof of their approval. They were angered over being deceived.

They took action. Several community and religious leaders consolidated forces,



FOREST PINE

and their first step was to send an appeal to the Jember government to revoke the manganese mining permit. “For religious leaders, it’s more important to reject environmental destruction than to gain profit. The mining destroys the environment and only a few people will enjoy the profits,” said KH Muchit Arif, a prominent religious leader in Silo.

Although their umbrella organisation, Nahdlatul Ulama, did not provide institutional support, these religious leaders went ahead anyway. Later on, an environmental NGO, the Consortium of People’s Advocacy for Mining Matters (*Konsorsium Advokasi Rakyat Sekitar Tambang/KARST*) joined them. KARST stated that there were at least 48 potential mining sites for manganese, spread between Silo and Puger.

KARST coordinator Andi Sungkono said that the Jember government would do better to maximize natural resources for farming, agriculture and aquaculture to generate local income. “Mining is the final resort. And that’s only when we have safe and environmentally friendly technology,” he said.

The pressure increased when religious leaders voiced their opposition to the Jember regent, Muhammad Zainal Abidin Djalal, in a meeting between religious leaders and the government. The regent said that his government had never issued any permit for gold mining research let alone operations. “We did for manganese. But that was just for research. But because it has caused social unrest, I have instructed the chief of the Department for Trade and Industry to revoke it,” he said.[]

“For religious leaders, it’s more important to reject environmental destruction than to gain profit. The mining destroys the environment and only a few people will enjoy the profits,”

THE BANNING OF SAYYIDINA HUSEIN COMMEMORATION IN CIREBON

By: Abu Bakar



Cirebon police disrupted the commemoration of Sayyidina Husein's death in Kasepuhan Cirebon Palace on January 7, 2009. They asked the event committee to stop activities by 11 pm or to risk being dispersed immediately for security reasons.

Police felt that they had been conned by the event committee. The committee had asked police to issue a permit to celebrate the Islamic new year whereas in fact they were commemorating the death of Sayyidina Husein, Muhammad's grandson. Police also argued that all police action was supported by Prince Nasfudin from the Cirebon palace, who had issued a letter confirming that Prince Pra Arief Natadiningrat did not know that the event was actually for Sayyidina Husein's death commemoration and not the Islamic new year.

The event organizers refused to cooperate with police. Aan Anwarudin, the chairman of the event and also a board member of the Cirebon PMII (The Muslim University Students' Movement), argued that he could not stop the event as KH Said Aqil Siradj was giving a sermon. "We can't do that, especially only because we made a mistake in stating that the event was for celebrating Muharram (the Islamic new year)," he said.

The event was organized by PMII and the Muslim Communication Forum (*Forum Komunikasi Muslim/FKM*) and was to be held at the Cirebon Islamic Center (ICC) on Kartini Road. The keynote speaker was KH Said Agil Siradj (Head of the executive branch of NU) and KH. Mahfud Bachrie (head of the Cirebon Indonesian Council of *Ulema/MUI*) was set to give the welcoming speech.

However, just four days before the event, ICC management refused to accept the final payment for the hire of the hall. The event organizers were confused. They requested a written explanation for ICC's actions. ICC refused to do so. Because of this and as time was running out, the event was then moved to the Cirebon Kasepuhan Palace.

At the same time, ICC released a statement confirming the cancellation of the event. They mentioned that their decision was based on suggestions from some groups within the Muslim community in Cirebon who opposed the event. These groups expressed their disapproval through text messages, phone calls and formal letters to the Cirebon MUI and ICC. They reasoned that the event was liturgically controversial and Shiite oriented, thus it was against the principles of *Ahlussunnah Waljamaah*

(Muslims who follow the Sunna and Qur'an) and was a threat to Muslim unity and belief.

Besides these two reasons, ICC argued that they did not receive a written itinerary. ICC's statement also included announcements from various Islamic social organisations, such as the Mosque Committee Board (*Dewan Kemakmuran Masjid*), and the Islamic Education Institute (*Lembaga Pendidikan Islam*), in which they expressed their disapproval.

Pressure from these groups forced police to intervene even though FKM had submitted a permit request form to police on January 1, 2009. Pressure from ICC caused police to send a letter to the event organizers informing them that the event failed to meet necessary requirements because ICC did not issue FKM with a letter of recommendation and did not give permission for their hire of ICC's hall. Consequently, the permit was denied and FKM was warned that the event could not be moved to any other location in Cirebon. Police admitted that their decision was based on pressure from ICC management and Cirebon MUI.

Response to the Banning

In response, the *nahdliyin* (NU community) in Cirebon asked ICC to withdraw their statement. The NU community warned ICC not to instigate sectarianism which could potentially disintegrate the nation. As an institution representing Muslim community, ICC was supposed to accept differences in theological concepts and liturgical practices within the community.

The NU community also requested police to act more professionally and fairly in dealing with community issues. This request was voiced to encourage all parties to respect religious traditions in order to create religious harmony and to avoid judging and accusing others of being deviant.[]

It is no easy thing to be a former political prisoner of the September 30, 1965 communist coup d'état. There is still much negative stigma. Consequently, these former prisoners face many obstacles in the social, political and economic realms. This is, at least, the case with former 1965 political prisoners in Central Sulawesi who were released from jail in 1978 and 1980.

Look at the experiences of Maid Halim (70) or Bahrún (69). Both are now village

the villagers, because they also lived under pressure at the time," Bahrún said in an effort to calm his thoughts.

"It would be a big problem if the villagers who associated with me were found out by the military apparatus. It's possible they would have shared the same fate as us," he added.

Under the repressive New Order policies Bahrún could do nothing. He could only



BAHRUN

THE DIFFICULTY IN ESCAPING FROM STIGMA

By: Ewin Laudjeng

farmers and continue to live under the poverty line. They were jailed under the New Order regime for 12 and 14 years respectively, without their cases ever going to court.

"At the time, we were accused of being involved in the communist coup on September 30. But we never even knew what it was," Bahrún said to DEPORT early last January in his house in North Sibalaya, Sigi Biromaru, Central Sulawesi.

Bahrún's confusion makes sense because in reality the majority of the 1965 victims were wrongly arrested. "I didn't know anything, why was I arrested?" he asked.

Prisoners only knew about the September 30 coup after their imprisonment in the Maesa Palu prison cells in 1966. About 200 or so prisoners were detained there, and were eventually released in 1978 and 1980.

According to Bahrún, after being released in 1980, the local community discriminated against him. No one wanted to be associated with him. He felt excluded and cast out from his own community. He feels the same even today.

"There was no work for us to do at the time. All doors were closed to us. I can't blame

reflect and try to convince himself that one day the system would change. "Fast or slow, Suharto's authoritarian government would surely fall," he said.

He waited quite some time for it to happen, and started to feel lonely and isolated. He tried to live off the small piece of land he had left. While planting vegetables, he worked hard to gain acceptance once again from the community.

However, escaping the stigma was no easy thing. He persisted and persisted, with an enormous amount of patience. "So that eventually the villagers could accept him again," his wife said.

The fall of Suharto's regime in May 1998 brought change to the village. One by one, they gradually found the courage to approach Bahrún's house to discuss village matters. Little by little, the stigma began to fade.

"From then on I began to regain my confidence," he said.

Although he is old, his determination and fighting spirit remains strong when it comes to issues within the village. In 2000 he confirmed that he met with several activists from the NGO Awam Green to discuss the

land acquisition system in the village.

At the moment, he said, the system is largely controlled by A Huang, a middleman in the village. Many farmers had lost their land due to A Huang's system.

In addition, he continued, villagers' access to the local forests had decreased significantly after the Lore Lindu National Park border was determined in 1993. Consequently they could no longer meet their daily requirements.

Previously, society had protested the park border, but they stopped after they were accused of being new communist members. Bahrún explained that the government always used this kind of dirty campaigning to eliminate any movements challenging government interests.

"We must change this. How will the farmers' economy improve if they don't have control over production sources?" Bahrún questioned.

Consequently, he suggested, any Indonesian leader must address contemporary village issues. If not, he predicted, the economic system would collapse.[]

TENGANAN, PRESERVING TRADITIONS IN THE MIDST OF MODERNISATION

By: Ni Komang Erviani



At a glance there is nothing special about Tenganan Pegringsingan, a traditional village in Manggis, Karangasem, Bali. The village's main gate is simple, no more than one meter wide, and features traditional architecture.

Behind the gate, however, ancient buildings of wood and stone, covered in fungus, stand firm. Buffalo wander around the people going about their daily activities. The beautiful sound of *selonding* - ancient and traditional Balinese music - can be heard from far away. "This is a sacral musical instrument that can't just be played at anytime. It should be played only during big ceremonies," said I Nengah Timur, Tenganan Pegringsingan's traditional leader.

That afternoon, in the beginning of February 2009, Tenganan villagers gathered in *Bale Agung*, the Tenganan community hall. Males wore black and white checkered sarongs, traditional head coverings, but no shirts. Older females wore traditional sarongs and wore the hair in buns. The young girls dressed up in traditional woven sarongs particular to Tenganan, with golden flowers tucked behind their ears.

"Today we celebrate *Usabha Kasa*," Timur said. *Usabha Kasa* is a traditional new year's celebration in Tenganan. Tenganan Pegringsingan is one of several ancient villages in Bali which maintains a way of life that reflects traditional *Bali*

Aga customs and culture (pre-Hindu). Tenganan has its own calendar that applies only to Tenganan. This explains why this year the Tenganan new year fell at the beginning of last February while the Balinese new year was in March.

Tenganan villagers believe that their ancestors come from India, a belief supported by genetic research. In 1978 a team of Indonesian and Swiss scientists tested the blood of 18 Tenganan villagers and found that they shared one enzyme with people from Calcutta, India. This is further reinforced by similarities in rituals between Tenganan villagers and Indians. For instance, the ritual *geret pandan*, an annual war ritual using thorny *pandan* leaves to respect warrior gods, is also held in India. There are also similarities between Tenganan's traditional woven sarongs and those of India.



Dealing with Modernization

To accept modernization, but to maintain tradition. This is the stance the 600 or so members of the Tenganan community choose to take.

They do not entirely avoid influences of modernization, especially given the rapid development of tourism in the area due to Tenganan's reputation as an ancient village. It is not surprising that amongst Tenganan's ancient buildings,

there are some modified houses sporting ceramic floors and asbestos roofs. Several houses that have been converted into art shops display signs reading "weaving demonstration". The roar of motor bikes can be heard amidst the sounds of wandering buffalo. Only four wheeled vehicles are absent, kept out only because the terraced road construction makes it impossible to drive through the village.

The development of Tenganan tourism over the last 50 years has also changed the community's economic structure. Agriculture is now no longer their main livelihood. Labors and not Tenganan villagers are now working in farming areas. These labors are paid with a share of the crops. Meanwhile, Tenganan villagers' main source of income is from tourism activities such as making traditional woven sarong and handicrafts, creating artifacts and working as tour guides.

In the midst of the glamour of modernization, they still preserve their traditional values, which become an anchor so that they are not swept away by the forces of modernization. This is reflected in their preservation of *awig-awig* (traditional customs) and which have become highly-respected life principles.

Tenganan customs respect equal rights of men and women, and give equal rights of inheritance to both. Tenganan people also have equal housing rights. This is why houses in Tenganan are exactly the same size and are lined up in a neat row. Tenganan also provides housing for newly married couples.

Customs also clearly regulate the use of land in Tenganan. People are not allowed to sell or hire their land to outsiders. As a result, the land in Tenganan has stayed the same size since the eleventh century — 917 hectares.

All these customs enable the people in Tenganan to preserve their traditions. "We definitely can't avoid influences from outside, especially because we interact with the outside world through tourists that come here. We don't mind those influences so long as they don't destroy our traditional values," said Timur.[]



I Mangku Widia:

WE CONTINUE TO PRESERVE TRADITIONAL VALUES

By: Ni Komang Erviani

The development of tourism in Tenganan did not initially worry I Mangku Widia, a retired Tenganan leader. However, one day in 1999 a group tourists visited Tenganan and left rubbish in the forest. Widia and several Tenganan youth and the Wisnu Foundation - a foundation working on community empowerment - were challenged to develop ecological tourism. These efforts intended to protect the environment and preserve Tenganan ancestors' traditional values.

In order to research more about this ecological tourism, DEPORT contributor in Bali, Ni Komang Erviana, visited I Mangku Widia. His warm welcome made the interview friendly. The following details the interview:

Has the development of tourism affected the life of Tenganan locals?

It sure has. We have to admit that. It does improve the economy of our community. Unfortunately, it has also brought negative impacts, especially when there are tourists who do not pay attention to the environment. There were once tourists who left rubbish in our forest. For us the forest is a place that needs to be protected. Therefore, we need to make efforts to manage tourism in Tenganan to make it environmentally friendly.

What have you done to do that?

We are working on ecological tourism in the village. It is a kind of tourism that emphasizes ecological aspects. That way the environment is more protected. We are working on this ecological tourism together with the Wisnu Foundation. We don't want Tenganan to get destroyed only for the sake of tourism.

Do you think Tenganan traditional values are endangered by tourism?

We continue to preserve our traditional values. We don't want tourism to destroy them.

Can you give me an example of a value that you still hold on to?

For instance when *selonding* (a sacred traditional musical instrument) is being played, we ask tourists not to record it using handycams or tape recorders. We believe that *selonding* is a sacred musical instrument. It should only be played on certain occasions, it must not fall to the ground, and it shouldn't be touched by non-Tenganan people. If these rules are violated, *selonding* should be purified through a special ritual.

How does Tenganan view equal rights between men and women?

The system here is a lot better. We view men and women equally. They both are given equal inheritance rights. The smallest child inherits the house. Once they are married, they have to choose a vacant lot and build a new house. In short, there is no difference between men and women. Therefore, our village leaders

should be a complete couple — husband and wife. If one of them dies, the other has to step down from their position of leadership. If their children are married, they also have to step down. If they practice polygamy, likewise. In this case, we view spouse relationships as a being in a state of balance.

Are the traditional customs strong enough to suppress modernization?

Surely they are. We have very strict traditional customs. For instance, we

we view spouse relationships as a being in a state of balance.

have rules that strictly regulate land management. Rice paddies should stay as they are, so too with forest and housing areas. No land is allowed to be sold. So we continue to protect our environment. Another example is the rule that bans cutting down the trees in the village. People in Tenganan are not allowed to cut down trees freely. Even if a tree falls down, it belongs to the village and it should be used for building public facilities in the village.

Are people worried that Tenganan traditions will be wiped out by modernization?

We are not worried at all because all Tenganan people know their individual duties and responsibilities.[]

Degung Santi Karma (Anthropologist),

ROMANTICISM VIOLATES HUMAN RIGHTS

By: Ni Komang Erviani



Romanticism is what comes to mind when we think of people in Tenganan. I think that the Balinese and people outside of Bali are surprised when they see Tenganan., and realise that the Tenganan community is no longer one with nature, that they have become commercialized, and so on. I think the romantic ideas they have are dangerous, very dangerous. For me, romanticism is equivalent to human rights violations.

Why do I equate this with human rights violations? Because we deny the reality. There is a paradigm of denial that Tenganan villagers are also human like us, who are conflicted, who are commercial, who also want money, and who have specific interests and motives.



Without changing this paradigm, I think we reinforce and reproduce the same images. If we do not immediately correct what outsiders think of Tenganan I think we will continue to be trapped within this repetitive cycle. It does not actually address the true reality in Tenganan.

When I myself look at the people of Tenganan, I think they are just the same as other Balinese. I think the issues they face are not to different from those faced by Balinese in general – how to maintain customs, how to survive.

The issue now is, when the people of Tenganan start dealing with the business world, why are we startled all of a sudden? Is it only because they are from Tenganan? I think not. It is because we have an exotic and romantic idea of what Tenganan is. We

see Tenganan people and are startled to find oh, this is commercial, and oh, there's a TV here.

Is this not a violation of human rights? Why do they have to be different from us? Maybe this is a flaw in the social sciences when we study other communities. In social sciences studied in school, we are still spoon fed with this kind of romantic thinking. I think societies everywhere are full of contradictions. They are full of intricacies, of gossip, and rumors. Yet interpretation is perhaps a little different. For instance, they might actually have ways of resolving this kind of conflict based on community agreement.

People's ideas that Tenganan is better, I think, are only romanticism. I think we're all the same.[]

I Made Suarnatha, Director of Wisnu Foundation:

WISDOM: A TRADITIONAL SYSTEM

By: Ni Komang Erviani

The massive impact of modernity does not affect Tenganan culture. The seductive powers of capitalism do not tempt Tenganan villagers. The intensity of Tenganan's interaction with outside cultures actually reinforces the traditional values to which they adhere. The following details I Made Suarnatha's opinion on Tenganan culture:

If one compares Tenganan with other traditional villages, Tenganan is still able to preserve its culture and rituals, even though the villagers frequently interact with other cultures due to the development of the tourism industry. They are able to adapt to new cultures.

The social, political and economic realms remain united as a single customary arrangement which provides prosperity for Tenganan villagers. If we were to examine other places, we would find drastic change

had taken place as a result of tourism. Land shortages and poverty occur, perhaps because the system does not protect against these things. As a result, Tenganan is considered better, more sustainable. For instance, its forests have been preserved from the 11th century until today, even though they have been used for maximum benefit. As for wellbeing or prosperity, rituals, and other needs, Tenganan provides them too.

So, how does Suarnatha view the concept of Tenganan Culture? As I understand it, Tenganan translates the philosophical concept of total equilibrium. In the sense of its spacial setting, art, leadership. Total equilibrium. For example, if males and females were not paired, there would be imbalance. In Tenganan, in terms of structural power, the village leader is a pair, male and female. Their right to make decisions is equal. In terms of inheritance, it is also the same. Women have rights to land

inheritance, males too.

What is interesting is that as a small village Tenganan has a lesson of wisdom for us all. They do not see people in black and white. Every violation of customary law is dealt with firmly but full of meaning. For example, those who do wrong are not immediately evicted from the village, but the case is carefully considered first. Wisdom thus becomes a tradition.

Suarnatha rejects the suggestion that Tenganan customs are harsh. Tenganan is not harsh. If it were a republic, it would know its rules and regulations very well. For instance with males and females, their rights are made very clear. Rights to resources in the village are also crystal clear. All these regulations are publicized to even the youngest members of society. The senior members supervise to ensure they learn the ritual conceptions correctly.[]

EQUALITY IN TENGANAN CULTURE

By: Ni Komang Erviani

In her fifth month as wife of Ketut Widana (36), Ni Wayan Sumartini (27) found she had difficulties upholding customs in her village in Tenganan Pegrisingan, Manggis, Karangasem, Bali. “It’s pretty difficult. I’m kind of surprised, because I rarely stayed at home. I have to learn from the beginning, and this is like training,” she said.

Practicing customs is a new thing for Sumartini. Sumartini, who wanted to be a tour guide, moved around places for quite sometime. During high school, she chose to study at a school in Amlapura — a town 12km from Tenganan. After finishing high school, she moved to Badung — a region 75km from Tenganan, to study at Bali Tourism Polytechnique, where she got her diploma in tourism. Here, Sumartini stayed with her uncle in Karangasem and only visited her hometown once a month. After finishing her studies, she decided to move to and work in Denpasar.

However, Sumartini’s desire to pursue her career in the city was almost futile. The village’s strict customs forced her to keep returning to the village. “Every month there were traditional ceremonies. I had to attend them,” said Sumartini, who has not worked since being married. Today she even has to adjust her appearance. “I’m not allowed to have my hair cut because I’ll be warned by the village leaders if I do. Now I’m really like an ancient Balinese woman,” she said.

Sumartini was not alone, her husband also has to uphold customs. Since his wedding, Ketut Widana, who works at a architect design company, had to leave work to attend traditional ceremonies. “Married men have to *makemit* (stay a night in the temple) once every three day. So he can’t go to Denpasar,” Sumartini said.

The intensity of traditional ceremonies

is a way for the Tenganan community to preserve and protect their traditions in the midst of modernization’s temptations. It is not surprising that traditional ceremonies in the village occur all year long. “There is always a ceremony every month,” Sumartini said.

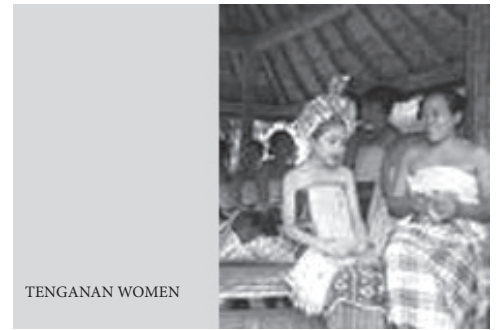
I Mangku Widia, a traditional leader in Tenganan said that a married couple are seen as an integrated entity. Marriage is



considered the highest level of perfection when it comes to traditional ceremonies.

Tenganan has a custom (*awig-awig*) that regulates the relationship between men and women. Tenganan men are obliged to marry Tenganan women only and vice versa. If a Tenganan man marries a woman from another village, he will be cast out from Tenganan and will have to move to an area called Banjar Pande. If a Tenganan woman marries a man from another village, she has to follow her husband and leave Tenganan, and her parents have to pay a customary fine of about IDR 18,500.

Tenganan Pegrisingan consists of three areas — Banjar Kauh, Banjar Tengah and Banjar Pande. Banjar Pande is an area provided for the people who were born with disabilities and for those who violate



TENGANAN WOMEN

customary law — e.g. a man marrying a woman from another village.

Although these people live separately from the community, they still have equal rights in traditional ceremonies. Equal rights between men and women are integrated parts in Tenganan traditional customs. Tenganan customs give equal inheritance rights to sons and daughters. This is different from the customs of Balinese Hindus that give greater rights to men.

Mangku Widia said that these equal rights show that the customary system in Tenganan Pegrisingan is better than in other societies. “That’s why Tenganan people who work in other places finally come back to Tenganan,” he explained.

Tenganan traditional custom also forbids polygamy. If a *krama desa* (village leader) practices polygamy, he will be demoted from his position and become an ordinary community member. There are three social classes in Tenganan — *krama desa* (village leaders), *karma gumi* (ordinary community members) and *karma gumi pulangan* (retired village leaders, whose retirement is caused by the death of his spouse or the marriage of his children). “If a village leader practices polygamy, he will be demoted and become an ordinary member,” said Widia.

Although they are busy with traditional ceremonies, Tenganan women are proud of their positions as Tenganan community members. Sumartini feels so. “I’m certainly proud of being a Tenganan woman because I’m respected,” she said.

“I’m proud of being a Tenganan woman. In Tenganan women are also given inheritance rights. This means that we are equal to men,” Ni Komang Andayani (40) said, supporting Sumartini.[]

AS AN INFORMAL RELIGION, BAHÁ'Í CONTINUES TO FACE DISCRIMINATION

By: Nimas D. Deliah

Adherents of main religions in Indonesia rarely face problems with administrative matters. However, this is not the case with Baha'i followers. To obtain documents such as national ID cards, marriage certificates and birth certificates, they face complicated procedures and bureaucracy which often means that they fail to obtain the documents.

For instance, Adi (not his real name) is a Baha'i follower in Garuda, Andir, Bandung. When he made his national ID card, he had difficulty with his religion because the computerized form for the ID card did not provide a space for his 'informal' religion, but only for the five formal religions acknowledged by the Indonesian government. There was a space entitled "Other Religions" and the village officer advised Adi instead to complete this space.

Adi did not give up. He tried to get his religion written on his ID card. He asked the officer if he could put his religion on the ID card manually. The officer said in an unfriendly tone, "No, you can't. The system has been set that way and you can't change it." The officer also said if Adi manually wrote his religion on the ID card, his ID card would not be legalized at the district level.

All efforts to get his religion acknowledged were in vain. In the end, Adi had to half-heartedly choose Islam as his formal religion on his ID card — a choice that contradicted both his conscience and his true religious identity.

The discriminative treatment did not stop there. The civil registry office in Bandung was not willing to issue him a marriage certificate. Adi and his wife, who were married in 2001, had to go through a long process.



They unsuccessfully went to the civil registry office to get their marriage certificate. The officer would only issue the certificate with the condition that Adi and his wife convert to one of the formal state-acknowledged religions. Adi refused to do so. To him, his belief was irreplaceable. He and his wife were determined to get married with their true religious identities.

Their persistence influenced the civil registry officer. He recommended Adi to submit an appeal to the local Bandung court, and to hold a session with the members of the local House of Representatives.

Adi did not trust the local court so he went straight to the local House of Representatives. Sadly, some of the members asked them to repent and convert to Islam instead. This request hurt Adi. He explained that Baha'i was an independent religion, not a sect or cult of another religion. Despite this, the members were unwilling to endorse his request.

Things only got worse. Several years later, after the birth of his first child, his past failure to obtain a marriage certificate meant that no birth certificate could be issued for his child because Adi could not produce legal proof of marriage. Adi was concerned because of the effect this would have on his child's future. He did

not give up, instead he focused on finding more information and lobbying relevant parties. Eventually, with help from a friend he got a birth certificate from the Cianjur government.

For a moment, Adi could relax, but not for long. Further problems arose with his second child's birth certificate. Again, the Civil Registry Office refused to issue his child with a birth certificate. The Office made an inhumane offer, that a certificate would be issued but would note that the child was born from an extra-marital relationship, and was without father. This was clearly unacceptable to Adi.

Adi is by no means alone, other Baha'i followers in Banjaran district, Bandung experience even worse treatment. The Banjaran government office will not even allow them to have an Indonesian ID card unless they convert to one of the formal religions (Islam). The reason? Simply because they are Baha'i.[]

THE MYTHOLOGY OF MEGALITHICAL SITE OF GUNUNG PADANG

By: Ingwuri H.

Film Title: GUNUNG PADANG: Sejarah atau Prasejarah
 (Mount Padang: History or Pre-History)
 Director: Yogi Margana and Ervin Ruhlelana

The 114 minute documentary film seemed very long. Most of the viewers watching *Gunung Padang: Sejarah atau Prasejarah* waited impatiently for the film to end. It is no surprise that many of them did not seem to enjoy it, and some even fell asleep during the film.

The boredom did not stop there. It continued to the next session. When the film finished and a discussion was opened, only 40 people remained at the screening location in the Centre Culturel Français de Bandung (CCF Bandung) on Friday, January 23, 2009. There had been more than 150 people at the beginning of the film.

However, although less than two third of the initial audience remained, the discussion was warm and friendly. The amount of time allocated for the discussion ended up being insufficient as participants, who come from various academic backgrounds, failed to reach an agreement.

They showed off their skills and knowledge as prominent academicians, movie makers and researchers.

The cool weather in Bandung failed to cool down the debate. It became heated when participants argued over when the biggest megalithic site in Southeast Asia was built. Each stuck to their arguments and as a result they did not reach an agreement. Even worse, one architect and alumni of Bandung Institute of Technology left in the middle of the discussion even though others wanted to challenge his argument.

It was interesting to observe the discussion. Some people thought that the older the site was, the older the civilization of this nation. However, history is a continual accumulation of events that never stop. One participant



PADANG MOUNTAIN

asked, “Why do we categorize periods into history and pre-history? Why were they so clearly stated in the title of the film?”

The Mount Padang site itself was discovered in 1878 by Sukma, Endik and Abidin in Karya Mukti, Campaka, Cianjur.

Ervin, the narrator and producer of the film, acknowledged that the film was too long. He said he wanted change Indonesian documentary films so they place less emphasis on length.

Mount Padang in Film

The film began with the question: why was the site built on Mount Padang? The narrator added another question: what kind of civilization was once there?

The film continued to describe the road access to the location and the width of the site — including information on the layout of the site based on remaining stone structures.

In the film, as in the map issued by the West Java tourism department, the site was said to have five rooms made from stones that weigh from 100kg to 600kg.

Researchers stated that these stones came from a place far from the site as such stones could not be found near the site location. In light of this, Prof. Dr. Sampurno, a professor at the ITB Geology Department, said, “Those pre-historic people were civilized and modern in their time, maybe more than us.”

Bambang Setiawan, an architect interviewed by DEPORT, said that these five rooms were separated by stones, and the higher the level, the more special they were.

Outside academic discourse, other aspects of the site need to be investigated. Non-academic mythology of the site continues to be reproduced. For instance, the site is believed to be a resort of Prabu Siliwangi (a West Java king).

In front of the site there is a well called Kahuripan. The locals believe that if people wash their face or take a shower there, they would find their soul mate. For this reason, the well was also known as “*Sumur Cinta*” (the love well).

The stairs leading up to the main part of the site also has a myth. When different people count the number of steps, they will come up with different results. Today, the place is still used as a prayer site.[]

EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO THE JANUARY 22 INCIDENT IN KEDUMULYO

By: Muhammad Kodim

Locals had long protested against and rejected plans to construct a Semen Gresik (Ltd) cement factory in Sukolilo, Pati, Central Java. The issue is now much more complex, following the violent incident involving a Pati riot police (Brimob) unit on Thursday, January 22, 2009 in Kedumulyo, Sukolilo, Pati, Central Java. The incident ended with nine locals being arrested and detained, and later tortured.

In response, from January 27-29 DESANTARA Foundation and several Jakarta-based organisations grouped within the Advocacy Network Against Semen Gresik in Sukolilo embarked on a 'Roadshow' and visited several of the parties involved. Six women from Pati who were victims of the violence also went along. The following details the Roadshow's agenda:

Tuesday, 27 January 2009: 11.30, locals accompanied by the Advocacy Network went to the local military police office. They reported the lack of discipline, abuse of power and misconduct of the riot police. The report was recorded as No. Pol:

STPL/13/I/2009/YANDUAN.

13.40, the locals approached the National Police Commission office with the same report and were told the National Police Commission office would coordinate with the military police, the National Commission on Human Rights and the National Commission on Violence Against Women over the matter.

15.00, the locals approached the Ombudsman's office. They were informed a small team (consisting of the Alliance Against Cement and the Ombudman) would be formed research follow up actions. The Ombudsman would also summon and warn the local governments involved.

Wednesday, 28 January 2009: 11.00, the locals and the advocacy team approached the National Commission on Violence Against Women's office. They agreed to coordinate with the National Commission on Human Rights and place pressure on the Central Java police.

13.00, the locals approached the National Commission on Human Rights, who

confirmed that they would start acting that week; would approach the Pati and Central Java police; would question the military police over the violence; would push for reinvestigation into the nine locals who were arrested; and would check up on the health of those abused and the legal access available to those families involved and the legal aid team.

16.00, the locals approached the local NU executive branch and reported the case to KH Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur). Gus Dur felt that the issue would not be resolved at the local level, but that they had to act at the national level. Consequently, he confirmed that he would act to impede Semen Gresik at the national level.

Thursday, 29 January 2009: 11.00, the locals approached the Ministry of Environment. They were told that on January 5 the ministry had sent a letter to the State Environment Agency in Central Java asking for re-analysis of the environmental impact of the Semen Gresik factory and emphasising that construction should be stopped until analysis was provided. The Ministry of Environment has still to receive further news on the analysis.

The Roadshow in Jakarta ended with a demonstration in front of Indorama, where Semen Gresik's headquarters are located on the 17th floor.[]

READING SRINTHIL IN A CIREBON PESANTREN VILLAGE

By: Franditya Utomo

For eight years now, the *Srinthil* semi-journal has been made available to readers (mostly female) in an attempt to increase their knowledge of ideas about multicultural females, and to situate these ideas within the vast array of pre-existing references. In this instance, *Srinthil* management wanted to discover what their female readers thought in the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) they held on February 21 in the *pesantren* (traditional Islamic boarding school) village of Babakan-Ciwaringin, Cirebon, West Java.

The forum was to address a number of

issues concerning the journal, from its cover, adjustment of the cover design to match the contents, the topics covered, the gender of authors – who are still mostly male, to relatively small font sizes. Interest in discussing the most recent editions (14, 15 and 16) came from the general perception that “*Srinthil* has always only ever discussed female issues related to traditional arts”.

“I liked the edition on Acehnese Women's Steps in Negotiation because it fits the history there. In the past women were leaders, even war commanders,” one participant commented.

The FGD ran from morning to afternoon, and it soon became apparent that female readers from this *pesantren* village understood quite well that *Srinthil* was trying to address the dilemma of multicultural women in various bodies of knowledge and social contexts. *Srinthil* wants to be more down to earth when it comes to diversity and pluralism, wants their voice to be heard when dominant groups dictate over minorities, wants to be critical of exclusive interpretations about society and culture, and wants to be simple in presentation.[]