

## **UNDERSTANDING THE IDEOLOGY OF CULTURAL DUALISM IN THE CAR-SHAPE SHRINE ARCHITECTURE AT PALUANG TEMPLE, NUSA PENIDA, BALI**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study focuses on the ideology of cultural dualism in the VW Beetle and Jeep Jimny as two car-shape shrines at Pura Paluang Nusa Penida, Bali. These two worship altars are to worship Ida Ratu Gede Ngurah Sakti and Hyang Mami or called Shiva-Durga in the pantheon of the gods of Hinduism. The architectural design of the two car-shape shrines are unique and different from most mainstream Balinese Hinduism. This shows the existence of a collective view that has ideological nuances. This qualitative study with descriptive analysis, obtained data through observation, interviews, library research and documentary techniques. The informants were determined using the purposive and snowball technique. All the data were analyzed in order to draw conclusions. The result of the study shows that the dualism of cultural ideology has inspired the development of worship altars in the form of the car-shape shrine. Primarily representing the two poles of culture. East-traditional culture is the most intense-sacred, with the profane on the side of modern-western culture. The mimicry strategy and the hybrid mechanism are very dominant in shaping the ultimate architectural identity. Socially, it legitimizes the dominant political power, identity, belief, orientation of the collective action of the people of Nusa Penida.

*Keywords: ideology of cultural dualism, car-shape shrine, Paluang Temple Nusa Penida Bali.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The architecture of car-shape shrines at Paluang Temple, Karangdawa Nusa Penida Bali is a form of worship architecture that is different from mainstream worship architecture in the Bali region, which is generally in the form of a worship altar with traditional Balinese architecture. At Pura Paluang, there are two car-shape shrines, namely the iconic VW Beetle and Jeep Jimny. The two car-shape shrines are dedicated to worshipping Ida Ratu Gede Ngurah Sakti and Hyang Mami or called Shiva-Durga in the pantheon of the gods of Hinduism. The two car-shape shrines are dedicated as vehicles

for the two gods to protect, provide safety, bestow prosperity and happiness for the lives of the people of Nusa Penida and its surroundings.

Architecturally, it seems that the two poles of cultural power combine in one work of cult architecture. On the one hand, it represents the local tradition of sacred worship architecture, namely as the shrine, and on the other hand, the iconic modern form of the car which represents profane mass culture, namely land transportation. Such cultural compromise can only occur if supporters of a cultural product choose a strategy of mimicry or imitation or hybridity mechanisms in order to claim a new work, including architectural works as the identity of a particular ethnic group. Mimicry strategies and hybridity mechanisms generally develop in areas that have been colonized by other nations or post-colonial.

In other words, this phenomenon can be stated that there has been a cultural compromise with ideological nuances. Socially, an ideology can strengthen and stabilize the collective life of society. Cultural compromise in an ethnic community cannot be separated from the strong ideology of cultural dualism that develops in the community. How to understand the ideology of cultural dualism in the car-shape shrines architecture at Pura Paluang Nusa Penida, Bali? This study will elaborate.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The research method which was used to explore the architecture of car-shape shrines at Paluang Temple, Karangdawa Nusa Penida, Bali was the qualitative research method. The article which was written based on the result of scientific study was designed to be the study in the ideology of cultural dualism which is critically discussed from the perspective of cultural studies. The data were collected through observation, interviews, library research and documentation techniques. The informants were determined using the purposive sampling and snowball technique. The data/ information will be analyzed based on the concept of mimicry and hybrids from Homi K. Bhabha in the context of postcolonial culture (Lubis, 2016: 166). This is also inseparable from the Nusa Penida area as part of the Bali region which was once a colony of Dutch colonialism.

## **DISCUSSION**

Ideology is a way of life that is constructed from history, tradition, and cross-regional social relations. An ideology socially strengthens and stabilizes the collective life of society. The ideological view is thus identical with the collective view of the community which is built from reciprocal relationships. Socially, it legitimizes dominant political forces,

identities, beliefs, action orientations, and distorts systematic communication within the ideological domain of its society (Sumantri, 2001: 264).

This is also confirmed by the statement of Thomson (2003: 56) which states "...to study ideology is to study the ways in which meaning serves to establish and sustain relations of domination". Meaningful activities that produce certain meanings in accordance with the interests of domination are vital in the spread of ideology. The meaning referred to here is the meaning in symbolic forms that are in a social context and circulated in the social world. Symbolic forms appear in various speech and actions, non-linguistic images (images) combined with linguistic elements such as in advertisements and texts produced by individuals and understood by themselves and others as meaningful (Takwin, 2003: 125). Then, how to understand it in the context of the car-shape shrines at Pura Paluang?

Pura Paluang has two car-shape shrines that resembles the iconic VW Beetle and Jeep Jimny. These two car-shape shrines are to worship Ida Ratu Gede Ngurah Sakti and Hyang Mami or called Siwa-Durga (Jro Mangku I Wayan Suar, interview 2019). It seems that the existence of the two car-shape shrines iconic is very strongly based on the ideology of cultural dualism. The ideology of cultural dualism, in this case, is understood as the compromising thinking of agents and related structures in the sign construction process of the car-shape shrine at Pura Paluang. The two car-shape shrines (iconic VW Beetle and Jimny) are the result of a compromise of binary opposition components, namely between Western and Eastern cultures. Western culture is represented by the shape of a car as a result of Western industrial production and Eastern culture is represented by the design of the worship altar in the form of the shrine form composed of *pepalihan* or architectural parts in the tradition of worship architecture buildings, as well as ornamental decorations as Balinese local content.



Figure 1. Car-Shaped Shrines at Paluang Temple

Source: I PG Suyoga, 2020

The process of imitating or borrowing the image of a car as the *bungan palinggih* or main part of a car-shape shrine shows the root of the concept of mimicry in Homi K. Bhabha's thought is very strong in its post-colonial cultural context, as can also be understood from the explanation of Lubis (2016: 166). Although on the one hand it is not known for sure and no historical evidence has been found (manuscript or inscription) since when the car-shape shrine design was made to confirm the traces of its history, however on the other hand the essence of the study of Cultural Studies is not to trace when a cultural product was originally made, but rather to the structure its meaning in the present, its connection to power (relation of power-knowledge-discourse-truth), and refers to connectivity with the closest historical sources.

This is also inseparable from the view of Foucault (1971) who posits ideology as the result of power relations that are spread everywhere through the mechanism of discourse. He further asserts that discourse assumes the truth of each truth or regime of truth, so there is no single truth (Takwin, 2003: 128; Eagleton, 1991). So, to understand the process of *mimicry* the shape of a car, we can refer to the closest period namely the Dutch colonial era. It was the first time that the cars of international health workers passed on Nusa Penida Island on a medical mission that touched the human side of the people of Nusa Penida during the Dutch colonial period.

These international red cross officers drove a jeep to be present in remote rural areas on the hills of Nusa Penida on a humanitarian mission, namely to help treat diseases of the skin, ears, nose, throat, and eyes. Several types of these diseases were reported to be the most suffered by the people of Nusa Penida at that time, due to limited access to clean water for daily living needs. Apparently the moment of the international humanitarian mission was like a "helping god" for the suffering and epidemics to the people of Nusa Penida. This phenomenon is very strongly pervading the inner nature of the people of Nusa Penida, even internalizing its connection with the "object of purpose" of religious emotion.

Martono (2016: 126) reveals that the concept of mimicry is used by Bhabha to describe the process of imitating or borrowing various cultural elements. This concept of mimicry then gave birth to hybridity which became a trend in postcolonial discourse (imitation of the colonizer's culture by the colonized nation). Postcoloniality, apart from giving birth to hybridity, also creates new forms of resistance and negotiations between actors. Hybrid, which describes the merging of two forms, brings out certain characteristics of each form and at the same time negates certain characteristics

possessed by both (Sutrisno and Putranto, 2008). The car-shape shrine as a hybrid architecture in the realm of worship architecture, placing the form of compromise as a space for negotiating cultural identity that was born as cultural diversity and cultural differences, to borrow the terminology of Martono (2016: 127) referred to as a product of colonial construction between the colonizers and the colonized nation.

Based on the thought that is binary opposition, the symbolic sign in the form of architectural design is the most advanced in displaying a dialogue sign of compromise between the image of Western Culture and the image of Balinese Culture. In this context, the idea of a car shape is imaged as a modern figure representing the progress of the Western world (colonial property), so that it requires a “touch” with a traditional nuance to be accepted as a medium of worship in the traditions of the Balinese Hindu community (the Karangdawa region of Nusa Penida in particular). In connection with this, the car-shape shrines at Paluang Temple is loaded with ideas from elements of Balinese culture, namely from the physical side of the building with traditional architectural elements, as well as the construction of oral stories with mystical or myth nuances. In addition to the process of sacralization which is a religious ideology in the form of belief as well as the collective strength of the people who support the culture. All of this is closely related to efforts to mystify the iconic car as a symbol of the worship of the new model. The shrine architectural work which simultaneously means cultural diversity and cultural differentiation, thus has the ideology of cultural dualism.

Broadly speaking, the knowledge of the ideology of cultural dualism is quite firmly rooted in the people of Nusa Penida, even to the idea of changing the supernatural form for the mystical aspirants of *kebalian*. Information in daily gossip among the Nusa Penida community and in rural Bali in general, oral stories related to the ability to change form (creatures or imitations) as one of the manifestations of mastery of the left level of knowledge or *pengiwa* (black magic) is the ability to change one’s form become one of the consumer products with modern technology, such as radio (era 1970s), motorcycles (era 1980s) and cars (era 1990s) (Ida Pandita Dukuh Celagi Dhaksa Dharma Kirti, interview 14 June 2020).

Apparently the ability to imitate (mimicry) changes in form to resemble modern objects follows the development of the times. If in the era of agrarian traditions it became public knowledge on sacred nights before certain holy days (*mapag kajeng kliwon*, *sasih kenem*, *kasanga*, or other sacred days) many saw or met supernatural figures common in the world of agriculture or landscaping, such as goats, cows, chickens, dogs, monkeys, a palm tree cut off the top, *bade* (a tower building for carrying bodies at a death

ceremony), *sampian mas* (a type of gold decoration), *munyin gongseng* or *krincingan* (the sound of small bells ringing), and others (Ida Bhagawan Sari Putra Sogata Samyoga, interview 29 June 2020).

So, nowadays the imitation supernatural figure also adapts to modern tools, so that someone can meet a radio lying in the bushes and speak to himself with the news that repeats itself, that's all, just about to be picked up suddenly disappears. There is also a story about the figure of a Honda Win motorbike that became an official vehicle for village heads in Nusa Penida around the 80s, suddenly there and running on its own. Another popular story mentions the existence of a bemo (passenger) car that is often found in the dark village streets, and disappears when fish traders want to ride it, who walk in the early hours to the market or to the port (Jro Mangku I Wayan Wahyudi, interview 28 June 2020).

The description above in Boudieu's perspective shows the increasing knowledge that represents the habitus, cultural capital, and symbolic capital of the people of Nusa Penida. The mechanism of compromise dialogue in the depths of the ideology of cultural dualism in the people of Nusa Penida. Some of these folklores show how strong the compromising thinking from both sides of the binary opposition is into a new form of product knowledge. This statement can be expressed in other words, that using the word "compromise" is an attempt to soften or dilute the binary opposition that is confrontational and contradicts the concept of Cultural Studies thought. In the critical study approach of Cultural Studies, the dichotomous concept is "delayed", so that there is no distinction between high culture and low culture, noble culture (mainstream) with low/ local culture including Eastern culture with Western culture.

This compromise can be understood from the cultural dimension which is closely related to the context of social change, either due to cultural innovation, diffusion, or integration. Lubis (2016: 154), asserts that cultural innovation is an internal component that creates changes in society. The emergence of new technology for example, can have an effect on change or even foster a new culture (behavior) in society. Similarly, through the mechanism of diffusion. Diffusion is an external component that is able to drive social change. Culture from outside influences the elements of a local culture so that changes occur.

Cultural change can also be through integration, which is a process of cultural change that is more subtle than diffusion. In integration, there is a unification of cultural elements among social groups that meet each other and give birth to a new culture, namely a hybrid, as is the case with the car-shape shrine. This is reinforced by the

statement of Martono (2016: 127), that hybridity and mimicry then give birth to cultural diversity and cultural differences.

The ideology of cultural dualism through the mechanism of hybridity shows the creation of a new transculture in the Nusa Penida area. The result of the unification of Western culture is in the form of objects resulting from modern technology with Eastern culture on the other hand, namely the local architectural culture. This also includes local expertise in the form of inner strength, high-level knowledge skills in the field of literacy, and on the other hand, the adherents also seem to have been overwhelmed with consumptive patterns due to the development of market ideology.

## **CONCLUSION**

The two of car-shape shrines of a VW Beetle and Jeep Jimny at Paluang Nusa Penida Temple, Bali are works of Hindu worship architecture whose unique designs have different identities from the most persistent architectural designs of mainstream Balinese Hinduism. The form of the car is dedicated as the imaginary vehicle of Ida Ratu Gede Ngurah Sakti and Hyang Mami, in protecting and bestowing prosperity and happiness in life for the people of Nusa Penida and its surroundings.

Architecturally, it seems that the two poles of cultural power combine in one work of cult architecture. On the one hand, it represents the local tradition of sacred cult architecture, namely as shrine shape, and on the other hand the modern form with the iconic car represents mass culture which is profane, namely land transportation. Such cultural compromises are common in areas of former colonialism. This phenomenon can occur if supporters of a cultural product choose a strategy of mimicry or imitation or hybridity mechanisms in order to claim a new work is theirs, including the worship architectural works as their ethnic identity.

The ideology of cultural dualism through mimicry and hybridity strategies then gave birth to cultural diversity and cultural differences. The ideology of cultural dualism through the mechanism of mimicry and hybridity shows the creation of a new transculture in the Nusa Penida area. The result of the unification of Western culture is in the form of objects resulting from modern technology with Eastern culture on the other hand, namely the local architectural culture. The two most advanced architectural forms of the car have become a form of architectural work based on the ideology of cultural dualism.

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