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The Hindu Theology Of Ngerebeg At Desa Adat Tegal Darmasaba, Badung, Bali

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ABSTRACT

The religious practices of Hindus in Bali cannot be separated from the local tradition. This can be seen, among others, at the daily ritual service of the people called *yajña*. One of the kinds is named *Ngerebeg*, a ritual held by the villagers of Desa Adat Tegal Darmasaba. Although it is an old tradition, the theological content of the ritual is still unknown these days.

The ritual of *Ngerebeg* uses several means. Among them are leaf, fruit, cattle, fire, and water. It is held once a year during the local calendar of Wrehaspati Pon Wuku Langkir, led by *Jro Mangku* in the Dalem temple of the village. It starts with preparing all of the tools and other equipments needed for the ritual. Its peak is filled with procession around the village area. The ritual is believed to 1) have theological meaning as it is found in the worship of *Saguna Brahman* and *Nirguna Brahman*, 2) bring harmony to the village people, and 3) teach some aesthetical values.

Key Words: Theology, Hindu, Ngerebeg, and Desa Adat.

I. Introduction

The name of “Island with Thousand Temples” or “Island of Gods” for Bali should be associated with the unique local Hindu tradition of the Balinese people. The Balinese Hindu tradition has various local rituals. Based on the Hindu scriptures, ritual or *Acara*, is part

of the “Three Basic Foundations” or *Tri Kerangka Dasar Agama Hindu*, in addition to *Tattwa* and *Susila*. According to Sanjaya (2010:39) *Tattwa* teaches the truth of God as well as material and non material ones. Whereas *Susila* refers to the ways of life of the saints that should be followed. Thus, *tattwa*, *susila*,

and Upacara can take an analogy of an egg, in which *tattwa* is the yolk, *susila* is the white part, and *upacara* is the shell. This is the reason why the three foundations are seen as one and all the rituals of Balinese Hindus cannot be far from it.

The meanings of the foundations can be observed in the old traditional rituals that are held until now as they reflect the *bhakti* and *sraddha* to the Almighty God. The universally spiritual values within the rituals are combined with the local cultures to become contextual, actual, which show that Hindu is a religion with complete dimensions (Wiana, 2004: 22).

Ngerebeg, held by the Hindus of Desa Adat Tegal, is one of many rituals that keep the interface between self-less service or *yajna* and tradition. It is in accordance with the concept of *desa* (place), *kala* (time), and *patra* (pattern) and carried out once for every six months on *Wrhaspati Pon Wuku Langkir* (the Balinese calendar days), at the temple of Dalem, Desa Adat Tegal Darmasaba. Despite the spirit in holding the ritual, there are people of the village who have no idea about the theological meaning of the tradition, which is actually important for keeping their faith or *sraddha*. This study, entitled “the Hindu Theology of Ngerebeg at Desa Adat Tegal Darmasaba, Badung, Bali” discusses the problem.

The problem was studied by relating the problems to the theory of symbol. The data were collected through observation, interview, documentation, library research, as well as purposive sampling for having the informants, before they were described, analyzed, and presented qualitatively.

II. Results and Discussion

2.1 Theory of Symbol

Etymologically, the word “symbol” was derived from the Greek word “*simballo*” (*sumballein*) which means ‘interview’; ‘contemplation’; ‘comparison’; ‘encounter’;

‘throwing’; ‘become one’; ‘unite’. Thus, the word suggests ‘the unity of two things’ (Dibyasuharda in Triguna, 2000: 7-8). It may also suggest that with the thing one knows something and concludes it, especially when it is immaterial, abstract, ideal, objective, qualitative, and be in a process.

Tuner (1990:18) explains that a symbol comes from an agreement so that it represents the thing with its reality analogical quality. *Tuner* further theorized three dimensions of symbol, i.e. (1). *Exigetic*, which is the dimension of a symbol presented directly by the informant to the researcher, in this context of study, by the local villagers to the researcher, (2). *Operational*, a symbol that can be seen from its verbal meaning besides experienced through the eyes, (3). *Positional*, a symbol that can be understood when combined with others.

Symbols play important role for Balinese Hinduism as they could grow the faith. They are various in forms and meanings. Theory on symbols here is used to be the foundation for answering the problem on the theological meaning of the *Ngerebeg* tradition.

2.2 Ngerebeg Tradition

The word *tradition* refers to ‘custom’; ‘habit’ that is passed down from one generation to another in a society and often regarded as the right one to do (*Tim Penyusun*, 2008:325). In Hindu, a tradition in a society is supposed to be preserved as long as it does not violate the teaching of the Veda. In Bali, the tradition is tightly associated with the philosophical concepts of “*desa*, *kala*, and *patra*”, that essentially suggest ‘to suit the contexts’.

Whereas the name *Ngerebeg* was derived from the Old Javanese, i.e. from the word “*grebeg*” that could mean ‘grouping’; ‘loud sound’; ‘noisy’. Sanjaya (2010: 11) suggested that the word was derived from the root “*gerebeg*” which means ‘ransack’. The word may also refer to ‘a big ritual’ that later on in

Balinese given “*anusuara*” to become *ngerebeg*. Thus, basically the meaning of the word reflects ‘collective action that causes loud noise’. Based on that, the tradition called *Ngerebeg* is referred to a ceremony, which is big, as it is done or joined by a lot of people with spirit and loud noise, as found to be part of the tradition related to the *Pura Dalem Desa Adat Tegal Darmasaba, Kecamatan Abiansemal, Kabupaten Badung*.

2.3 Pura Dalem Desa Adat Tegal Darmasaba

The word *pura* was derived from the *Sanskrit*, i.e. the word “*pur*” which means ‘kota’; ‘benteng’, to mean further ‘an area surrounded with fortress used for contacting holy spirit’ In Bali, a *pura* is a holy temple in which the Hindus pray to *Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa*, His manifestation, as well as ancestors (Sanjaya, 2010:5). The word *dalem* was derived from (the same wordform) *dalem*, which means ‘deep’. In this context, the word should mean ‘to bury all evil and negativities deeply’ before the ceremony. In addition to this, Pura Dalem, as one of the *Khayangan Tiga*, is also considered to be the shrine of Civa as the Dissolver with His Cakti, Parvati or Durgha.

2.4 Perspective of the Hindu Theology

According to Donder (2006:112) the Hindu theology cannot be separated from *Panca Sraddha*, which is the foundation of the Hindu faith or belief: a) belief in God or *Brahman*; b) belief in the soul or *Atman*; c) belief in the law of *Karma Phala*; d) belief in *Punarbhawa* or *reincarnation*; e) belief in *Moksa* or liberation or to be one with God. As the five foundations cannot be separated from one another, they become part of the *Brahma Vidya*

Based on that, the Hindu theology is essentially the study of God in Hinduism or also named *Brahma Vidya*. By studying it with the *Panca Sraddha* the goal of life should be

reached. The tradition of *Ngerebeg* should be studied for its theological significances as they can be used to understand the problems related to it.

2.5 The Procession of Ngerebeg at Pura Dalem, Desa Adat Tegal, Darmasaba

The procession of *Ngerebeg* starts with offering *yingan* or *cane* at the temple of Dalem Desa Adat Tegal Darmasaba. The so-called *cane* is a small place, decorated with *seriokan* in which placed the banana pole to which offering is attached. Around it there are *bija*, *air cendana*, and *buratwangi*, each is put on a small bowl or *takir*. It is also completed with four *kojong* filled with tobacco, areca nut, betel vine, lime, and gambier that are all tied. Sometimes they are also added with cigarettes and a match. Flowers are placed around the top with some coconut leaves decoration. *Cane* is especially made for the ritual of *melasti*, carried on the heads before *pratima* or *daksina palinggih*. After the ritual, it is going to be “*dilebar*”, i.e. distributed it with water of sandalwood, rice, flowers, and others.

The ritual symbolized the expression of gratitude to the God for His blessings for which the remains can be enjoyed as can be read in *Bhagavadgita IV. 3.1* as below.

*Yajña-ùitâmâta-bhujo yânti Brahman
sanâtanam,
Nâyây loko'sty ayajñasya kuto'nyaa
kuru-sattama.*

Translation:

Those who eat after offering to God as *amrta* will reach the eternal Brahman, and this world and others are not for those who do not do this, Arjuna (Pudja, 2010:125).

As a tradition the unique ritual means the gratitude. The offerings during the ritual of *maprani*, consist of fruits, traditional cakes, rice, and meat. It is followed with a ritual for *Ida Patapakan* of Desa Adat Tegal Darmasaba.

There are different kinds of offerings for God, *Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa*, however, basically all of them refers to work so that to gain the fruit from the *yajna* as it is stated in *Bhagavadgita IV.32* as quoted below.

*Evây bahu-vidhâ yajòà vitatâ
brahmasya mukhe,
Karma-jân viddhi tân sarvân evây
jòâtvâ vimokùyase*

Translation:

There are various kinds of *yajòà bhakti* to *Brahman*, that are essentially derived from working. Knowing this, you can attain *moksa* (Pudja, 2010:25).

This *sloka* teaches that there are different ways to do *yajòà* or *bhakti*. However, all of them should be based on pure heart. And this is what the villagers of *Desa Adat Tegal Darmasaba* do with the ritual.

The tradition of *Ngerebeg* is marked with a ritual of offering *kucit butuhan* or ‘uncastrated suckling pig’. The pig is a form of holy *caru*, which is a symbol of sacrificed material or self-desires. The ritual is a reminder of uprighting the divinity and other holy spirits as well as controlling minds. It also functions as a way to balance the microcosm (*bhuana alit*), the men, and *macrocosm* (*bhuana agung*), the universe, *penyupatan* (*pengeruat*), as a neutralizer or normalizer of the relationship between human beings, nature, and *Ida Sang Hyang Widhi*, the God. The ritual is followed with the ceremony of *nedunang Pralingga Ida Bhatarâ* in all *gedong pasimpenan* which is done in the afternoon. The ritual is often found in other kinds of Balinese Hindu *bhuta yajòà* ceremonies, such as *caru balik sumpah*, *banten makelem*, and *banten penyamlehan*.

The uses of symbols (*Nyasa*) are regarded to be able to represent the goals of the ritual. They also represent the ‘communication’ between the concrete entity, the nature, and the abstract one, especially the God or *Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa* in all of His manifestation

prabawa-Nya. In the *Ngerebeg* ceremony, besides the ‘uncastrated suckling pig’, the concept of *pralina* is also symbolized. As a symbol, it has several forms, although most of them are animals, usually male symbolizing *purusa*, the essence of natural components regarded as the means or *linggastana* of the gods. The symbols are called *unen-unen* or *ancangan*. *Pralingga palawatan Ratu Ngurah Sakti* and believed to be protectors. After this ritual of offering or *segehan*, the *patapakan* return to their yoga ‘homes’. Regarding the village people, the ritual represents their *bhakti* and love to the gods, which is a higher realization than the common one.

2.6 The Meanings of Hindu Theology in *Ngerebeg* at *Pura Dalem Desa Adat Tegal Darmasaba*

1) Godness

All of the Hindu *yajòas* mean *sraddha* and *bhakti* towards *Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa*. According to the theory of symbol proposed by *Tuner* (1990:80), *yajna* is a form as well as the meaning itself. The ritual then has its theological teachings.

Etymologically, the word *theology* is derived from the Greek word *theo* means ‘God’ and *logos* means ‘knowledge’. Based on this, the word *theology* means ‘the knowledge about God’ (Titib, 2003:1). *Sura* (2005:25) explains that God is One ‘*Esa*’ but has various names.. God is within all and all are within Him. He is Omnipresent or *wyapi-wyapaka*. Hindu teaches that God is the source of all. This has been stated in all texts written in Sanskrit, Old Javanese, and Balinese.

The word *tattwa* is derived from the Sanskrit ‘*tat*’ which means ‘that’ or ‘God’ (*Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa*). Thus, *tattwa* means ‘the essence of the truth’. In everyday life, the word *tattwa* is understood as the knowledge of God, which is considered the

same as theology. However, in Sanskrit it would be close to *Brahma Widya* or the knowledge about *Brahman*. The word *tattwa* is also often used in words that express godlike natures, such as *Siwatattwa*, *Mayatattwa* dan sebagainya (Sumawa, 1995:2). In the *Lontar Wrhaspati Tattwa* there is mentioned as quoted below:

Inutanira ikang sarwa tattwa, muta ngaranya, winyapakanira, kadi angganing minak ngkaneng susu, nda tan katon, ya ta smangguh uta ngaranya mani sutrawat, kadi angganing mangkadesa gatinya, ika tang uta prota, ya ta wibhu sakti ngaranya, sira gumawe ikang rat kabeh, prabu sakti ngaranya ta tan kabanda dening rat kabeh

Translation:

He makes the *tattwa* a secret, insert it like oil in milk that it does not show. Protta, or bright, is it like. It is this bright thing that is called *Wibhu Sakti* or the uncomparable in the world (Mirasha, 1995:23).

The name *Sang Hyang Paramâtma* or *Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa* has a very deep meaning. The word *parama* means ‘to be in a highest position that it is beyond the reach of men’s mind’. The teaching of *ketattwaan* exists to understand this although actually He is beyond the mind or *Parama Acintya*. Yet He thinks about His creation, wherever they are. This attribute of the God is called *Dura Sarwajnana* or *Dura Darsana* (Mirasha, 1995:25). The teaching of *ketattwaan* is actually within the ritual. This means that when doing the ritual the teaching may not be apparent. In order to understand it, *Itihasa* and *Purana* are important to learn. Rituals without understanding them are useless. The three teachings are one.

In Punyatmaja (1993:40-41) it is described that in *Bhuana Kosa*:

Ciwa sarwa gatasukksmah bhucanam antarikswat, Acincyam mahagrhyante narinariyam pariprhyate.

Translation:

Bhatara Siwa is everywhere, like the sky, and unthinkable, beyond the senses.

The lines suggest that *Hyang Widhi* is transcendent, beyond the mind, and attribute less or called *Nirguna Brahman*. But he is also immanent, which means that He suits the way men think about Him or also named *Saguna Brahman* (Sastra, 1994:38).

Theology is one with faith since the foundation of religion is faith. The Hindu theology is different from the theology of other religions. In other religions God is one and not described as manifesting Himself. In Hindu theology, there are two, i.e. *Nirguna Brahman* and *Saguna Brahman*.

a) *Nirguna Brahman*

Nirguna Brahman means ‘nothing alike’ or ‘not affected’. According to this concept, God is not manifested. He is extremely hard to reach, therefore only understood by yogis and those who totally realize immaterial world, which is the highest kind of realization. Donder (2010:33) claims that there is no religion or spiritual discipline that can ‘enter’ this area of theology. However, that there is only one God, still should be believed as it is put in *Atharwa Veda XIII. 4. 15-16*, quoted below:

*Ya etam eka v^ota deva, na dvimyo na triyâscanermha nayuæcyate
Ya etam devay eka v^otam deva*

Translation:

Please know, that God is one, not two, three, or four. Just believe it. (Maswinara, 1999:135).

The traditional ritual of *Ngerebeg* adopts *Panca Sembah*, with the following mantras:

*Om Dewa Suksma Paramâ Cintyâ Ya
Namah Swâha
Om Sântih, Sântih, Sântih Om*

Translation:

Oh God, we pray to You, who is beyond the mind.

Oh God, grant me peace (Djendra, 2003:18).

The mantras suggest that during the ritual of *Ngerebeg* the villagers pray to the *Nirguna Brahman*. In addition to the mantra cited during the ritual, the *padmasana* or the shrine before which the villagers pray, also suggests the belief in *Nirguna Brahman* because in it the God is called *Sang Hyang Acintya*, which means ‘the Unthinkable’.

b) *Saguna Brahman*

Saguna Brahman refers to the God that may be described in different forms, such as gods or goddesses. *Saguna Brahman* helps to grow the belief that God has manifestation, including also His reincarnation or *atarva*. This is the reason why the sages have a lot of names for Him, as it is said in *Rg Veda, I. 164.46* quoted below:

*Indrayâmitrayâvaruóam agnim âhur atho
divyaá sa suparóo garutmân,
Ekaý sad viprâ bahudrâ wadanty agniý
yamaý mâtariúvanam âhuá*

Translation:

They call Him the Sun, the Brightest or *Indra* (maha cemerlang), the Seeker or *Mitra*, the Honorable or *Varuna*, the Highest or *Agni*, and the Greatest or *Garutman*, the Heavenly, the One with Beautiful Wings, the Regulator or *Yama*, and the Cosmic and the Air *Matarisvan* (Maswinara, 1999:383).

In the beginning phase of spiritual learning, symbols are needed. It is impossible to focus

or meditate on abstract and borderless form (Donder, 2004:115) as it is said in *Bhagavadgîtâ, XII.5*:

*Kleáo 'dhikataras tecâm avyaktâsaktâ-
cetasâm,
Avyaktâ hi gatir du%khaA dehavadbhir
avâpyate.*

Translation:

For those who put the minds on abstract God the difficulties are huge because it is indeed hard for their physical conditions (Pudja, 2010:311).

To see God everywhere or have Him here and there is not possible for ordinary people. That is why pictures, symbols, or means, e.g. *Pratima* are needed. Titib (2003:73) explains that those symbols used in rituals are not ordinary things, but they are holy and alive, because they have spiritual energy that help the users to hold their sincere *sraddhâ* and *bhakti*.

The *Ngerebeg* ritual is carried out to express as well as improve the *bhakti* towards *Ida Bhatara Dalem*, the manifestation of *Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa*. *Bhakti* is one of the ways to be close to the God. It means ‘surrender’ with *jnana* and *karma*. As a process the surrender takes the form of offering *banten*. The offerings may also be regarded as symbols of the fruit of *karma* in order to reach the perfectness. The tradition is then rooted from the faith of the people in the meanings and the positive effects of the ritual.

Spiritually, the ritual functions as the way to absorb the ethics and religiousness that exist before the men that manifest into tradition and ritual procession with which the goal is to grow the divinity or *kedewataan* and to bury the evils or *kedewataan* within. This is because it is believed that originally men come from the Divine.

The belief related to the tradition is in accordance with the view of Koenjraningrat (2010:48), which says that villagers commonly see their environment and the universe in three

perspectives: a) the metaphysical world, b) the natural and physical world, c) the social world. The three perspectives will form one holistic view. In this case, the metaphysics will be above the two others.

There are two different ways in approaching the God, i.e. the one is for those with low level of realization (*ajnyani*) and the other is for those with high level of realization (*jnyani*). The first group of people need symbols and means to approach God and this way is in fact approved with the concept of *Saguna Brahman*. Every ritual has its theology and every religion has its theology. Theology cannot be disconnected from the faith. In everyday rituals the concept of *Saguna Brahman* can be seen to be implemented into the honors towards the symbols of God, such as *Barong*, *Arca*, *Pratima*, and *upakara*. In the tradition of *Ngerebeg*, the symbols complete the *yajña*. Thus, the offerings in the ritual are not meaningless. They are taken from the nature and symbolize the heartfelt worship as well as the love of God. The stick incense or *dupa*, symbolizes the God of fire or *Dewa Agni*. It is the witness of the act. The *Ngerebeg* ritual even uses *pasepan*, which suggests the power to destroy all negativities within men and in the nature to balance the microcosm and macrocosm. The offering of *canang caru* or *daksina* also has deep symbolization. Wiana (2002:22) puts it that there is no Hindu rituals in Bali without this kind of offering. *Daksina* is considered as the symbol of the throne or *sthana* of *Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa* with its *bebedongan*, the symbol of the earth, and reflection of *Sang Hyang Ibu Perthiwi*. It is marked with *tampak* or the *svastika* that symbolizes the control of the world. It is filled with rice that symbolizes *Sang Hyang Bayu*, *pangi* symbolizing *sarwa pala bungkah*, leaves or *pepeselan* symbolizing *Sang Hyang Sangkara*, seeds or *gegantusan/bija ratus* symbolizing the universe and the souls or *jiwatman*, *tingkih* symbolizing stars or *nada*

reflecting *Sang Hyang Parama Siwa*, eggs symbolizing the moon or *ardha candra* and *Sang Hyang Siwa*, coconut symbolizing the sun or *Dewa Wisnu* and *Sang Hyang Sadha Siwa*, holed coin symbolizing *Wisnu sunia*, white thread symbolizing the cloud, *porosan* symbolizing *silih asih* and reflecting *Sang Hyang Semarajaya*, *Semara Ratih*, *canang sari* symbolizing *Asta Aiswarya* or *Dewata Nawa Sanga*.

The offering called *Banten Prayascita* functions to symbolize purification and cleansing of the higher world or *Swah Loka* and the soul. This offering is made of everything white to symbolize *Dewa Iswara*. The offering called *Banten Durmanggala* is made of everything green that function as a symbol of purification of the middle world *Bwah Loka*.

The offering *Banten Bayekaonan* or *Byakala* symbolizes purification of physical world. Whereas *sesayut* is a symbol of lingga *Asta Dewata*. *Peras* is a symbol of *Sang Hyang Guna sakti*. In all they suggest that in offering *yajña* there should be balance between *rajas* and *tamas* with which *sattwam* functions as the controller. *Penyeneng* is the symbol of long life, and always accompanying all other offerings of *yajña*.

Realizing the limitation, all of the symbols in the ritual of *Ngerebeg* play important roles. They are called *segehan* and materializes the devotion or *bhakti* to God and His manifestations. Hindu people in Bali pray to the God through these offerings as symbols that have spiritual energy. Despite being considered as the smallest level of *Bhuta Yajña* ceremony, the offerings in the ritual are symbols with lots of meanings. For example, the holy water *tirtha* symbolizes *Saguna Brahman* as Wiana (1992:82) said that it is the beginning and closing of the prayer. It begins the purification of the offerings, e.g. *canang*, *kwangen*, flower, and the bodies. In the middle it leads the praying and called *tirtha wangsuhpada*, sprinkled to the heads, drunk, and washed onto the faces.

It symbolizing the grace that preserves the life of people praying. *Cane* is a symbol of positive and negative energy that always accompany the life and the ritual is done to minimize the negative one, i.e. *bhuta kala*, that can be found in the microcosm and macrocosm.

The offerings found in the tradition of *Ngerebeg* symbolizes *Saguna Brahman*. The core, which is the procession around the village area, symbolizing the chasing of negative energies, which is symbolized by *Rangda*, and asking for the safety and prosperity from the God, which is symbolized by the *Barong*. This means that the theology of *Saguna Brahman* in the tradition is clearly reflected through the means and offerings in the ritual, i.e. *banten*, *api*, *tirtha*, *gong* and *cane*, as well as in the procession.

2) Harmony

In the ritual of *Ngerebeg*, the harmony can be found starting from the preparation of *banten* in which the good relationship between people, and between people and their surroundings are maintained through the gathering of the materials for the offerings or *upakara*.

According to Wiana (2009:10), rituals can indirectly affect the harmony of life, i.e. between men with God, with nature, and among the men themselves. The three relations are named *Tri Hita Karana*. According to Atmaja (2010:39) the harmony should be made between so-called *parhyangan*, *pawongan* and *palemahan*. In addition to this, Hindu also teaches the concept of *Rwa Bhineda*, that the life is born with the interaction between two powers, which are on one hand contrasting, on the other hand completing each other, e.g. *sekala* and *niskala*. As a consequence, *tattwa* should be also accompanied with *susila* and *upacara*. Everything is through these two aspects, i.e. *sekala* and *niskala*, which is one of the so-called *pratiyaksa*.

Banten or *upakara* can be seen as an expression of the unity between *bayu*, *sabda* and *idep*, or the mind, words, and action, for the purpose of noble life and the prosperity of nature. In this case, it should be done with love and devotion. It also symbolizes the neutralization or *nyomya* of all darkness or *assuri sampad* that disturb or destruct the macrocosm or *bhuana agung* and the microcosm or *bhuana alit*, in order to reach *bhuta hita jagadhita*. To sum up the meanings of the offering elements are a) *ngiu/ngiru* means the universe; b) *daksina* means the God's power; c) eleven *segehan* refer to the eleven *pengider-ider* (the nine compasses plus two: and up and down) or the number of the holes in the human body: two eyes, two ears, two in nose, one mouth, one ass, 2 sex, one belly button or *cakra*; d) white wine symbolizing *Isvara* and means purity, red wine symbolizing *Brahma* and means emotion, *tuak*, which is yellow, symbolizing *Mahadewa* means jealousy, black *berem* symbolizing *Wisnu* means greediness, and water symbolizing *Siwa*; e) chick means greediness or *loba*, pride, and others that may be found in a rooster; f) fire or *takep*, symbolizing *Dewa Agni* who destroys negative effect, and the 'plus' + or *tapak dara* means the neutralizer.

The meanings found in all of these symbols reflect the belief of the people in the presence of metaphysical beings and powers (*Bhuta Kala*). They are also the motivators which help the people solve problems in life. The ritual itself is then executed to avoid the negative effects that might be around the village area so that the harmony of *sekala* and *niskala* is there with the villagers.

3) Aesthetics

Aesthetics is the science of art and beauty. Beauty is very close to emotion or feeling and the philosophical thoughts about it (Djlantik, 2004:7). As a matter of fact, art in its wide

scope, is the use of thought to entertain or please the soul (Gie, 2004:13). It is the manifestation of love, creation, and work of men and their life. The Tegal villagers express their aesthetics to God through the rituals of *yajña*. This is even true for all Balinese Hindus since the religion they hold is soul of their culture with which the art becomes one. The identical concepts are named *satyam*, *sivam*, *sundaram*, which means the truth or *satyam* without the righteousness or *sivam*, and the beauty or *sundaram* will be dead. The righteousness or *sivam* without beauty or *sundaram* and truth *satyam* will be only 'hysteria'. Only beauty or *sundaram*, without the truth or *satyam* and righteousness or *sivam* is useless (Pendit, 1993:119-120).

The truth or *satyam* covers all kinds of sincerity and honesty. Hindu teaches *yajña* should be based on them. It should be expressed through the preparation of the ritual offerings or *upakara*.

The righteousness or *sivam* should follow the process of purification along the ritual, namely when the offerings or *banten* is made before it and the holy water or *tirtha* is sprinkled to the villagers during the procession. It is also there during the monks or *pemangku* lead the praying that is accompanied with hymne or *kidung*.

The beauty or *sundaram* is found in the art of making the offerings. It is found in the forms of the arrangement of the *tetutasan* of the coconut leaves, fruits, flowers, cakes. It is also in the motion of the dance of *pendet* performed for the ritual. According to Prasetya (2004:75) beauty is identical with truth. There is nothing beautiful without truth. Both are eternal and enchanting.

Offerings or *banten* is an expression of sincerity. It is religious because to hold a religion means an act of art. However, either by buying or making the offerings for the ritual, both should not erase the importance of sacrificing or *yajña* (Puspa, 2014:11).

It is also a visual form of the harmony, between men and God through *bhakti*, men and men through *punia*, and men with the nature based on *asih*. The three are the implementation of the *Tri Hita Karana* teaching, which is reflected in the philosophy of *suksmaning banten*. The *lontar yajña prakerti* mentions that *banten* symbolizes self, God, and universe or *bhuwâna* (Wiana, 2007:45).

Thus, the tradition of *Ngerebeg* is closely related to *satyam*, *sivam*, *sundaram* that teaches the balance between the truth, righteousness, and beauty found in the art of the offerings, dances, and the hymes. They can be also found in the line of the villagers or *karma* during the procession. Their enthusiasm and spirit in preserving the ritual are also symbols of these all.

III. Conclusion

The theology in the tradition of *Ngerebeg* is one of the manifestations of religious emotion which holds the belief in the grant of the God or *Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa/Tuhan Yang Maha Esa*. It can be divided into two kinds, namely the *Nirguna Brahman* theology and the *Saguna Brahman* one. It is found in the uses of the symbols: *pratima*, *sesuhunan*, *banten*, *api*, *tirtha*, and *cane* for the ritual through symbolization during the preparation, execution, and the finalization. The ritual also expresses the *sraddha* and *bhakti* of the men to the God and His manifestations. It is the act of aesthetical creativity and of trying to establish harmony by approaching the God.

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