PROCEEDING

THE INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR

RELIGION IN CULTURAL DIVERSITY : HARMONIZATION OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

SEKOLAH TINGGI AGAMA HINDU NEGERI TAMPUNG PENYANG PALANGKA RAYA

PREFACE

Om Swastyastu,
Tabe Salamat Lingu Nalatai Salam Sujud Karendem Malempang,

Praise to *Ranying Hatalla Langit/ Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa* (the Almighty God) for all blessing given to the State Hindu College of Tampung Penyang (Sekolah Tinggi Agama Hindu Negeri Tampung Penyang) of Palangka Raya that has successfully organized the first International Seminar on "Religion in Cultural Diversity: the Harmonization of Religius life" held on Thursday, 22nd September 2016 in Palangka Raya, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia.

The aim of the International Seminar is to achieve the harmonization of the religious life in cultural diversity through the knowledge, thoughts, ideas and strategies to avoid the conflicts related to the heterogeneous of national elements (ethnics, religious, races, culture and political ideology). Therefore, there are some selected papers of the International Seminar published in this proceeding.

The State Hindu College (STAHN) of Tampung Penyang Palangka Raya congratulates the call for paper participants whose paper is finally published in this proceeding. Then, special thanks goes to Prof. Bernard T. Adeney-Risakotta, Ph.D, Dr. Samsul Maarif, MA and Kim Sang Hee, M.Th, the speakers of the International Seminar. Sincere thanks are extended to other speakers like: Prof. Drs. I Ketut Subagiasta, M.Si.,D.Phil, Mrs. Tiwi Etika, Mr. I Nyoman Yoga Segara, Mr. I Ketut Gunarta, Mrs. Farsijana Adeney-Risakotta, Mr. I Wayan Sukabawa, Mr. Mujiyono, Mr. I Putu Suarnaya, Mrs. Ervantia Restulita, Mr. Puspo Renan Joyo, Mr. I Wayan Salendra, Mrs. Ni Made Anggreni, Mr. I Wayan Wirata, Mrs. Ni Nyoman Sudiani, Mrs. Merilyn, Mr. Syahrun and Mr. Arman. Furthermore, special gratitude also expresses to the Directorate General of Hindu Counseling of Ministry of religion affairs of Republic of Indonesia for the financial contribution. Finally, special thanks are extended to the international seminar committee, all participants of the International Seminar and to all those who participated. May this proceeding give beneficial values and goodness for all.

Om Santih Santih Santih Om
Sahiy.

Palangka Raya, September 2016
The Chairman of State Hindu College
of Tampung Penyang Palangka Raya,

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Abstract

Plurality is a fact which cannot be avoided; however, as far as its constellation is concerned, it does not only lead to cooperation but also conflicts. This present study is concerned with the Hindu view of religious plurality and harmony. In particular, it attempts to elaborate plurality and harmony in the domains of idea, faith and action. Such an elaboration plays a significant role in stating that tolerance is very important in the religious atmosphere. In Hinduism it is believed that life is a universal brotherhood; therefore, conflicts are not dreamed of as they hurt us. Being aware that plurality is part of life (*widya*), the growth of the attitude of appreciating one another (*metri*), having no desire of despising others (*ahimsa*), and controlling the individual and collective fluctuation, being united in the desire of creating peace (*santi*) are the possible solutions to the challenge of plurality and harmony.

Keywords: Hindu concepts of plurality and harmony, Plurality in Hinduism, Hindu Plurality in historical record

I. Introduction

The structure of a society is characterized by two unique things. Horizontally, it is characterized by a fact that one social unity is different from another in regard to what ethnic groups they belong to, their religions, customs and traditions, and feelings of regionalism. Vertically, the structure of the Indonesian society is characterized by the sharp differences between those who belong to the upper class and those who belong to the lower class. It is frequently stated that such horizontal differences characterize the multicultural Indonesian society. Such a term was introduced by Furnivall and was used to describe the Indonesian society during the Dutch era (Nasikun, 1995:28).

The Indonesian society with its complex culture is a plural and heterogeneous society. As a contraposition of singularity, plurality indicates that there is a situation which is made up of plurality instead of singularity, meaning that the different sub societal groups, which can be found in Indonesia, cannot be grouped into one. Their cultures cannot be grouped into one either. In such a situation heterogeneity constitutes a contraposition of homogeneity, indicating the quality of a situation which maintains different elements. What is meant is that each subgroup and its culture are completely different from others (Kusumohamidjojo, 1999:45).

Indonesia is made up of 17,504 islands, 11,000 of which are occupied by 359 ethnic groups speaking 726 languages. Based on PNPS No. 1 of 1969, which has just been maintained by the Constitution Court, in Indonesia there were five religions. However, since the era of Abdurahman Wahid, Konghucu has been acknowledged as the sixth religion. However, each religion has its own social organizations and sub faiths. In Indonesia there are hundreds of faiths (Mubarok, 2010:33); they are all developing.

The Indonesian society is a heterogeneous one as it is made up of different religions. Such heterogeneity indicated by the diversity in religions tends to lead to conflicts as the identity of each religion is getting stronger. Therefore, a concept which regulates how people as the Indonesian citizens should live together should be created. Such a concept should bind all the members of the existing social groups with different religions to avoid possible conflicts from taking place. That is why the founding fathers declared that Indonesia is not a religion-based country and it is not a secular one either. Such a country is expected to accommodate all the people's aspirations when they perform their religious activities. Then *Pancasila* instead of a religion was chosen as the foundation of the state (Department Agama RI, 2007:12-15).

What is meant by plurality as a social fact is equal to singularity as a fact which cannot be ignored, meaning that "diversity" does not necessarily mean deleting "equality" as another fact. The reason is that plurality is made to be possible if there is singularity. What is stated to be different results from the fact that there are particular things which are the same for everybody. What is different and what is the same can be observed from the social dimensions. The social interaction among people leads to a number of differences and similarities, which then contribute to social groups starting from the smallest one (family) to the biggest (Nation). It is such similarities which are identified from such social groups are currently referred to as identities.

The plurality of identity in the public space does not grow perfectly. There are always frictions between one identity and another. Such frictions are triggered by power. The desire of having power cannot be avoided by man when he is present at the public space in general and when he represents a particular identity in particular. The identity he represents, according to him, has the right to determining the rule, causing it to marginalize another identity. The term 'politics of identity' was derived from this.

Politics of identity was initiated by the students' movement in the United States of America in 1960 as a reaction against the economic and racial oppressions. The students struggled for the rights of the economic and racial groups which were marginalized in general and the Afro-American people in particular. The objective was to find a solution to the way of making the second class of people have the same opportunity to appear in the public space as the other class. (Ma'arif, 2010).

In Indonesia, the democratic atmosphere was indicated and inspired by the era when the new order regime collapsed. It seemed that demonstration and mass conscription ethically featured how the people's will was voiced and such a view has not been a taboo any longer. As democracy was not maturely understood, the government was not well handed over, and the weak security and commitment of those who upheld the law, the politics of identity was used as a strategic locomotive for a group of people with a particular identity to have the desire of having power. Similarly, the social group with a religious identity has come to an end with conflicts for the sake of being in harmony, the difference in identity often appears with various conflicts, and even comes to an end with violence costing lives. It is the knowledge of artificial plurality which is not proportional to the desire of being in socially environmental harmony has been responsible for this.

The discourse on the issue of pluralism and the religious harmony has become very significant as the recent social condition shows that the religious harmony in several communities has become degraded. Such a situation can be concretely observed from the religious conflicts taking place in several parts of Indonesia.

Hindu, as part of the identity of plurality, pays attention to such a problem. This article is written in order to formulate the problems related to what was described above such as: what is

the Hindu concept of plurality and religious harmony like; is such a concept present at what is believed in by the Hindus; is such a concept actualized in what the Hindus do?

The theoretical framework proposed by Parson was used to analyze such problems. Based on the Theory of Functionalism, a society is a system which is functionally integrated into a form of balance. Talcott Parsons states that what is functionally required in such a system is the actualization of values and the adjustment to the environment which functionally requires a consequence. Such a functional requirement can be analyzed from the social structure and action. It is necessary to know that there are particular functions which should be fulfilled so that such a system can be preserved. Such functions are adaptation, the goal attainment, integration and latent condition. Such functional requirements are applicable to all the systems which are in existence. In relation to that, the four functionsare strongly imprinted to every foundation which is in existence in every level of organism of the level of the evolutionary development (http://id.wikipedia.org). What is meant is that the society should fulfill such four main functions to make the social structure maintained; they are 1) adaptation to the environment; 2) goal attainment; 3) integration (linking the institutions together); 4) latency (pattern maintenance of values from generation to generation) (Narwoko&Suyanto, 2006: 258). This is felt to be relevant to see how Hinduism synergizes with this theory, as far as the concept of plurality and religious harmony are concerned.

II. Discussion
2.1 The Hindu Concept of Plurality and Religious Harmony

The movement made by the Hindus can be divided into three relations (*tri hitakarana*); they are the relation between them and their God (*parahyangan*), the relation between them and their fellow beings (*pawongan*) and the relation between them and their environment (*palemahan*). Ideally, such three relations should be made in harmony and balanced. They become the important domains for seeing that the Hindu concepts of plurality and religious harmony are made to inspire every activity done by the Hindus. The Hindu concepts is described as follows.

a. The Concepts of Plurality and Religious Harmony

Ye yatha mam prapadyantetam stathaiva bhajamy aham
Mama vartmanuvartantema nusyah partha sarvasah
Bhagawad Gita 4.1
(Whatever way man takes to approach Me, I accept, hi Arjuna. Man follows my different ways. (Pudja, 1999:112).

As far as the different ways taken by man to approach his God is concerned, *Sivanda*in a book entitled *IntisariAjaran Hindu*'the Essence of Hindu Teaching'(2003:9-10) states that Hinduism is universal, free, tolerant, and flexible. This is a beautiful picture about Hinduism. A foreigner will feel surprised if he/she hears that there are many sects and faiths in Hinduism; however, actually, such differences are different types of thought and temperaments, leading to different faiths. This is the main teaching of Hinduism; the reason is that Hinduism welcomes every soul from the highest to the lowest for the sake of their growth.

Being aware of plurality cannot be separated from the man's religiosity to his God. Based on Hinduism, one has different potential, ability, quality and karma from another, making him choose a different way and different from another. This phenomenon is reasonable as far as the diversity in Hinduism is concerned. Spirituality is an affair which is more personal, as it has something to do with the relation between him and God. No claim for what is true made by individuals or groups to be generalized. What is true is unseen and man with its limitedness finds it difficult to understand it. The reason is that the only God who has the right over what is true. In relation to this, in Bhagavad Gita 7.3, it is stated "Among thousands of people, there may only be one who endeavors to attain perfectness, and among those who have attained perfectness, almost nobody really knows Me". (Prabhupada, 2006:364-365).

b. Concepts of Plurality and Social Harmony

Sahrdayam sam manasyam, awidwesam krnomi wah,
Anyo anyamabhi haryata, watsam jatam iwa dhnya
Atharwaweda 3.30.11

Oh man, I instruct you all to be in harmony in your heart, make full agreements in your mind and be free from hatred in what you do to solve your affairs. Everybody among you should love one another in everything as the cow loves the calf it has born. (Titib, 1998:426).
In accordance with Hinduism, life is a universal brotherhood (*vasudaivabutumbakam*). All the diversities in the universe are the personification of the one, meaning that one should not be considered being separated from others. Such a concept exceeds the boundaries of the man's body. It is this which is considered the important foundation of the Hindu ethics. Based on this ethics, other creatures are parts of ourselves. It is the foundation of love in Hinduism which exceeds the boundaries of the physical bodies, class, faith, employment and so forth (*tat twatasi*).

c. Concepts of Pluralism and Environmental Harmony

Ahamsarwasyaprabhawomattahsarwamprawartate
Itimattwabhayante mam bhajantebhawasammanwitah
I am the origin of everything that is in existence, everything is born from me, knowing this the wise men worship me from their hearts. (Pudja, 2003:229)

The Hindu cosmology treats God in the main and first position as what is referred to as *causa prima*, the origin (*sangkanparaningdumadi*) of the universe, which differentiates it from the Western cosmology in general. The universe and what it contains come from God, are within God and return to God (Tim, 2003:27), meaning that the harmonious relation between the nature (*palemahan*) and man (*Bhùwana Alit*) can make what are referred to as *buta-hita* or *jagat-hita*, *sarwa-prani-hita* come true or in harmony which then contributes to the state of well-being to man and other creatures. (Augstia,2005:24).
The (Bali) Hindus follow such a teaching by performing a ritual referred to as *tumpekbubuh, tumpekpengarah*, *tumpekuduh*, or *tumpekwariga*. The offering 'sesaji' which is made for this ritual is offered to God 'Sang HyangWidhi' in His manifestation as *God Sangkara*, the god who takes care of plants. The meaning which such a ritual contains is maintaining the harmonious relation between man and the environment (the plants which bear fruit). Such plants

support his activities as they prepare fruit for him. In this way, the mutual relation between man and the environment can be maintained. Such a relation benefits each other.

The above *slokas* show that Hindus are highly aware, welcome and appreciate plurality as a consequence of life. Every creature, individual, collective identity, religious identity have the right over good treatment and appreciation. Plurality in life does not disturb the feeling of respect and is not discriminative. Such awareness does not suddenly appear as it cannot be separated from what is believed in Hinduism that life is an evolution which leads man to perfectness. Therefore, Hinduism never sees diversity as something which is surprising and strange; therefore, Hinduism never converts it or makes it disappear from earth.

Bahunamjanmanamantejnänavänmämprapadyate,
Väsudevahsarvamitisa mahatma su-durlabhah
Bhagawad Gita 7.19
After being born and dying repeatedly, those who really have knowledge will return to Me, by knowing Me as the cause of every cause and everything which is in existence. Such great souls are scarcely found. (Prabhupada, 2006:390-391)

The Hindu tolerance and appreciation of plurality was recognized by DR. HarunNasution, the former Rector of IAIN SyarifHidayatullah, Jakarta, who stated that if viewed from Hinduism as well, the experts who know a lot of religions and the history of religions state that the evidence of being intolerant in Hinduism cannot be found. Religious conflicts are seldom found and the religious conversion has taken place peacefully and has not led to conflicts in society. Hinduism is philosophical; therefore, it can see and appreciate what is true in the other religions. So, Hinduism is tolerant. Furthermore, it is stated that it is so tolerant that it welcomes the magical religions. (Nasution, 1995:274).

Hinduism perceives human pluralism with its potentials; it gives freedom in how to internalize and express *Sang AdiKodrati*. Therefore, in the practice of *yoga* (the way of approaching one's self to God) at least four ways are found; they are referred to as *Karma Yoga* for those who are active, *Bhakti Yoga* for those who love it, *Raja Yoga* for those who are very good at mysticism, and *Jnana Yoga* for the philosophers. Hinduism does not prepare one way, one true God, one Holy Book, one dogma for all human beings. The diversity in the ways which are prepared causes the forms of rituals to be diverse, depending on where, when and the atmosphere in which Hinduism develops. Such rituals should accommodate the local genius. (Madrasuta in Ghindwani, 2005:vi).

Hinduism does not eliminate one culture for another single culture from whatever religion it comes from. Furthermore, it maintains the local culture. Forcing one particular culture for all human beings wherever they live is what is referred to as the cultural imperialism, causing human beings to be uprooted from their cultural roots and to be isolated from their ancestors' homeland.

What has happened to the traditional religions in Black Africa where its traditional values and faiths were damaged and replaced by the Islamic and Christian values illustrate this. This has not caused the African people to be friendlier to the Western and Islamic worlds. On the contrary, this has caused the Black African countries to be isolated from their traditional values, making them uprooted from their cultural roots, bitter, and ready to fight against the oppressors. Nietzsche,2000:111).

Hinduism calls for the actions which are oriented towards the public interests rather than the individual or group's identity. In Bhagavad-Gita it is stated that, based on what people do,

people can be classified into two; they are those who are clever and those are stupid. It is stated that what the stupid people do is always bound to their individual interests, and that what the clever people dois always bound to and for the public interests; in other words, what they do is for the world's prosperity and the interests of the world. It is stated in Bhagavad-Gita 3.25 that the stupid peopleare always bound to their works and the clever people are always bound to the people's prosperity and the maintenance of the social order. (Pudja, 1999:93).

2.2. The Existence of the Concepts of Pluralism and Religious Harmony in the Hindus' Faith

It is affirmed in Hinduism that diversity is part of life which needs to be always appreciated and maintained. We should behave towards ourselves (Atharvaveda XII.1.4.5). Religious plurality is regarded as something which is reasonable, as we are aware that we are different in regard to our languages, complexions or appetites, meaning that differences are defined as two troops which are ready to fight against each other; differences should be defined as two trees of flowers that are ready to enrich the garden in front of the house. As far as the context of religious harmony is concerned, plurality means respecting and appreciating the religions chosen by the others. Such awareness constitutes the actualization of the first value of what is referred to as the "Hindu plurality", namely *Vidya*, which, in this context, is defined as knowledge, understanding and awareness when considering that plurality is a fact and part of life.

Knowledge correlates with what man does. Whether what he does is good or bad, valuable and invaluable is determined by the knowledge he has, as stated by Sri Krisna:

Sarva-dväresudehe 'sminprakäsaupajäyate
Jnänamyadävidyädvivrddhamsattvamityuta
Bhagawad Gita 14.11
The realization of goodness can be experienced if the gate of the body is illuminated by knowledge (Prabhupada, 2006:687)

Aprakäso 'pravrttiscapramädomohaevaca
Tamasyetänijäyantevivrddhekuru-nandana
Bhagawad Gita 14.13
If stupidity increases, darkness, laziness, madness and imagination will appear, hi the Kuru's son (Prabhupada, 2006:688-689).

It is expected that knowledge can lead to the correct actions. Knowledge allows us to know others. We can love others wholeheartedly. The blooming love does not separate us from them; it views others as ourselves. It is this which is the essence of love, namely understanding and identifying others as ourselves. In *mahawakya*, Upanisad refers to it as "*Tat TvamAsi*" (that is you).

It is the blooming love which is referred to as the second value of "plurality" in Hinduism, namely *Metri*, which is defined as sincere love for other creatures (people). As far as the context of religious diversity is concerned, *Metri*meansrespecting and appreciating the faith and choice of others. In Yajur Veda 36.18 it is also stated that:

dratedrmha ma mitrasya ma caksusasarwanibhutanisamiksantam,
mitrasya 'ham caksusasarwanibhutanisamikse
mitrasyacaksusasamiksamahe
(O God! As the repellent of stupidity, it is hoped that I'll be made to be established (in my faith) so that every living creature can see me using the eye of a friend. It is hoped that we look one another (always) using the eye of a friend). (Sudharta, 2010: 207).

There is an interesting story related to *Metri*(love). The story is as follows. One day *YoganandaParamahansa* was teaching in New York and walking on a street. Three robbers approached him and threatened him with weapons for money. Yogananda, who always smiled and loved others, took his wallet and gave the money he had to the robbers. At the same time, he showed his affection to them. In his mind he said, "I hope that you will be full of peace and happiness". After that, something which was strange happened. The three robbers decided not to take the wallet. They put their weapons and said, "We apologize, we cannot take your money". Finally, they turned and ran away (Titib, 2004:98).

It is such a love which stimulates the other great attitudes, which then becomes the third value of the "plurality in Hinduism", namely *Ahimsa* meaning that the desire of harming or killing other creatures (people) becomes disappeared. As far as the context of religious diversity is concerned, what is meant by *Ahimsa* is the absence of harassing, insulting, and debasing what is believed in by others.

In Hinduism, *Ahimsa* (non-violence) is the peak of every virtue and spirituality (*Ahimsa Paramo Dharma*). MaharsiPatanjali considered non-violence as the starting point before going to the highest peak in yoga, namely meditation 'samadhi'. Non-violence is undertaken in what is thought about, what is said and what is done. It is not cowardice or weakness. It is the highest heroism. Its actualization requires great patience, abstinence and durability, unlimited spiritual strength and great will (Siswananda, 2003:47).

In Sarasamuccaya 136, it is stated:

Apanikangwwangkahatrihuripnya, apanimittanikapanghilangakenprana ring ikatatanharimbawaktaya, ikangsanukhanaryawaknya, ya ta angenageenya, ring len
(if one loves one's life, why one wishes to eliminate others; one does not measure one's self, everything which can make one happy, that is what should be dreamed of occurring to others). (Kajeng, 1999:112).

The awareness of not harming other creatures can effectively lead to peace. *Ahimsa* is an elegant way in which harmony can be created from one's self. It is a way of controlling one's self not to harm other people. It is this non-violence which leads to tranquility, beauty, andshelterfor every creature. It is this situation which becomes the spirit and fourth value of "plurality in Hinduism", namely *santi*, which is defined as peace. Such a peaceful message is implied in Atharda Veda 19.19.1 as follows:
Santa dyauhsantaprthiwisantamidamurwaantariksam,
Santa udanwatirapah, santa nah santwosadish
(It is hoped that sky will be full of peace, it is hoped that the world is free from any disturbance, it is hoped that the atmosphere which is extraordinarily spacious is tranquilized; it is hoped that all the plants, herbs and spices are proved to be useful to us). (Sudharta, 2010:237).

As far as the context of religious harmony is concerned, *santi* means an attitude which always shows peace, brotherhood in the interaction of diversity leading to the religious harmony.

Latent pattern maintenance and tension in the theory of management proposed by Parson is defined as something which refers to the society's need for clear guidance and clusters of goals of actions. The institutions in this subsystem are supposed to produce cultural values, maintain solidarity, and socialize values. Churches, schools and families are included in this subsystem.

The concepts of plurality and religious diversity finally develop in such a way that they will become the conceptswhich are believed in by man, become relevant to what is proposed by Parson with his term *Latent Pattern*, which contains the production of values which are highly meaningful to the maintenance of the stability of the social system, or social structure. In this context, the Hindu concepts become values for the Hindus' faiths such as *vidya*, *matri*, *ahimsa* and *santi*. They play important roles in maintaining the Hindu society's social system both in the micro level (the Hindu social system in its environment) and in the macro level (the Hindu social system within the context of the interaction with the social systems of the other religions).

2.3. Plurality and Religious Diversity: Historical Note

The recognition for and appreciation of plurality given by Hindu, as a religion, is not only theoretically and normatively stated, but it can also be seen from the historical journey of the existence of the Hindu kingdoms when they were side by side with the other religions.

In Bali, Islamic villages can be seen in several regencies, such as Pegayaman village in Singaraja, Loloan village in Negara, Kepaon village in Denpasar, NyuhKuning village in Karangasem. Such Islamic villages have been in existence since the 15th century and the Majapahit kingdom collapsed in Java. The Muslims which initially occupied Bali which was mostly occupied by Hindus came from different regions. Those who lived at Pegayaman village came from Java and were carried by the King of Buleleng (Singaraja), those who stayed at Kepaon village came from Madura as the soldiers of the Badung kingdom, those who stayed at NyuhKuning came from Sasak, Lombok, as the soldiers of the Karangasem kingdom, and those who established the Loloan Islamic village belonged to the Bugis ethnic group who escaped from the Dutch government in Sulawesi. They were all protected by the kings. The kings gave them land where they could build mosques and Islamic boarding schools 'pesatren'. In addition, the kings also gave them funds for those who intended to go to Mecca for pilgrimage.

The relation between such Islamic communities and the royal families are still maintained until now. The relation between them and the Hindus have been good for centuries. The Muslims also participate in the *subak* organization (irrigation organization). The relation by marriage between the two ethnic groups is still maintained. The Muslims living at Pegayaman village, Singaraja, have the Balinese names in their Islamic terms of address as illustrated by the terms of address such as KetutSuhrawadi Abbas, Wayan Ibrahim and so forth. They still perform the tradition which is referred to as *mejotan* (sharing the foods they have when they celebrate their religious activities). When the Hindus celebrate their religious holydays, they share the foods they have with their Islamic relatives. The foods which they share are certainly the rightful 'hallal'foods. Similarly, when the Muslims celebrate their religious holidays, they also share the foods they have with their Hindu neighbors. The Balinese people refer to the Muslims as *nyameSelam*. In the Balinese language, *nyame* means relatives from the same ancestors; the relatives that worship the same ancestor. It is pointed out that such a tie and the Balinese

awareness which avoided the horizontal conflict from taking place when Bali was bombed twice by the terrorists on 12 October 2002 and 1 October 2005.

A long time before that, when the *Majapahit*Hindu kingdom controlled the whole Archipelago, there was an Islamic community close to the kingdom's capital, which was estimated to be around Trowulan, East Java. Even King Brawijaya had a wife who was a Muslim. However, she was still a Muslim and did not convert into a Hindu. Her children who were Muslims were appointed the Regents of Demak and Terung. Land was also provided to those who spread Islam where they could establish 'pesantren' (Islamic boarding school). In addition, they were also allowed to spread Islam provided that they did not spread it by force.

Before Islam was introduced, Hinduism in Java and Bali met Buddhism again, which was starting to decrease in India. A religious poet 'kawi' MpuTantular in his work entitled Sutasoma described that the two different religions had the same goal, namely seeking after the truth. He described such a thing as *Bhinnekatunggalika, tan hana dharma mangrwa*, meaning in spite of being different there is only one truth.

The situation in India was the same. The Jewish people who were oppressed in their home land went to India as refugees since 2000 years before. The Persians who followed Zoroaster ran to India when Persia (currently referred to as Iran) was occupied by the Islamic Arab conquerors. All the "foreign" religions were side by side peacefully with the Hindu majority and the original Indian religions such as Jain, Buddhist, and Sikh. (Morales, 2006:272-274).

Swami Vevekananda in his speech in the World Parliament of Religions which was held in Chicago, the United States of America in September 1893, stated to the world that Hinduism was so tolerant and appreciated plurality in its interaction with the other religions. What he stated was as follows:

"Saya bangga menganut sebuah agama yang Mengajari dunia tentang toleransi dan universalisme. Kami meyakini tidak hanya toleransi universal, tetapi juga menerima bahwa semua agama adalah benar. Saya berasal dari bangsa yang telah melindungi pengungsi dan pelarian dari semua agama dan bangsa di dunia ini. Saya bangga menggambarkan kepada anda bahwa kami telah merangkul sisa-sisa kaum Israelit yang paling murni, yang dating ke Indi bagian selatan dan mencari perlindungan di tempat kami padasaat kuil suci mereka dihancurkan oleh tiran dari Roma. Saya bangga menganut agama yang telah melindungi dan masih memelihara sisa-sisa bangsa Zoroaster yang besar. Saudara-saudaraku, saya akan mengutip beberapa baris sebuah tembang dari masa kecil yang masih saya ingat "seperti banyak sungai yang bersumber dari banyak hulu semuanya menyatukan airnya di laut, sumber dari berbagai kecendrungan, walaupun Nampak berbeda, lurus atau bengkok, akan menuju kepada-Mu". Pertemuan ini merupakan salahsatu yang terbesar di dunia, dengan sendirinya adalah deklarasi kepada dunia tentang doktrin dari Gita". (Vivekananda, 2005:4)

[I am proud of adhering to a religion which teaches the world's tolerance and universalism. We are ascertained that it does not only teach tolerance and universalism but also accepts that all the religions are true. I am proud of coming from a country which protects refugees and the refugees coming from all the religions and nations of the world. I am proud of telling you that we have embraced the pure rest of the Israel people who came to South India and sought after protection when their holy temple was destroyed by

the tyrant of Rome. I am proud of adhering to a religion which has protected and still maintains the great rest of the Zoroaster nation.

Ladies and gentlemen, I will quote several lines of a song from my childhood which I still remember "as many rivers which come from different headwaters and unite their waters in the sea, the source of different tendencies; they look different, straight or bent, and come to Me". This meeting is one of the biggest in the world; therefore, it declares the beautiful doctrine of Gita to the world].

Such a fact affirms that the Hindu attitude towards plurality has been tested. There are no distortion and disposition of attitude in the theoretical and practical discourse. According to Hinduism, adhering to a religion is what is referred as *sadhana*. The highest virtue and spirituality in Hinduism are that there is neither hatred nor violenceand that nobody can hurt another (*Ahimsa Paramo Dharma*). In addition, love should be made to grow in the heart. *Loka-sangraham*is the obligation of every Hindu; they should create harmony (social plurality) in their lives. In relation to the Hindu tolerance, Siwananda (2003:10) stated that there was no religion which was not as flexible as Hinduism. It views the basic things strictly and distinctively; however, it flexibly adjusts to what is external and not basic. Therefore, it has been successfully in existence for ages. Its foundation has been made of stones and the spiritual truth.

The ability of Hinduism to survive during its so long history proves that the extent to which it has interacted with and adapted to every culture it has gone through has been tested. It has been able to interact with its environment, has the ability to organize its future goal and make appropriate decisions (goal attainment). Harmonization of all the aspects of the social system, after a general agreement concerning the values or norms of the society such as cultures, norms and so forth are maintained, can be seen from the process of how it has been processed, and its relation to the fact that the Indonesian society is plural and the attempts made to increase the religious harmony with the concepts of *vidya, metri, ahimsa* and *santi*.

III. Closing

Plurality is a social fact which cannot be avoided. Hinduism is aware that plurality cannot be prevented from our life. The reason is that every creature and human being carries plurality with them. Therefore, as far as the sociological studies are concerned, human beings are also referred to as individuals, as the unique characteristic which someone has is not exactly the same as that which another has. As human beings, we are different from one another. Existentially, the root of diversity is that human beings have limitations in themselves. Such limitations are as follows 1) their five senses are limited; 2) their intelligence is limited; and 3) their languages are limited. Religiously, such diversity results from 1) *guna* (knowledge, skill); and 2) *karma* (deeds, karmic *wasana*). Based on such phenomena, Hinduism appreciates and respects plurality within the religious context, and this is a human and logical situation. The reason is that every human being has different knowledge and understanding of the Creator.

Historically, Hinduism has shown its attitude as to how to create harmonious life in its interaction with the other religions. That Hinduism firmly supports harmony is not only textually and theoretically stated but synergically in its praxis as well. Hinduism is

highly motivated to voice tolerance to the world as what was stated by Swami Vivekananda in the World Parliement of Religions in Chicago in September 1893. The attitude of being tolerant is very important in the context of religious plurality. The reason is that it is the way in which respect and appreciation are realized. Tolerance within the context of plurality means respecting and appreciating the other religious faiths, and avoiding one's self from humiliating and debasing others.

Therefore, attempts or concrete attitudes are needed to consummate tolerance. Such attempts or concrete attitudes are 1) *Widya*, which, as far as the context of plurality and religious diversity are concerned, are defined as knowledge, understanding, awareness and comprehension of viewing diversity as a fact and part of life; 2) *Metri*, which is defined as the sincere love to the other creatures (people). Within this context *Metri* means the attitude of respecting and appreciating the faiths chosen by others; 3) *Ahimsa*, which is defined as the absence of the desire of hurting or killing other creatures (people). As far as the context of religious diversity is concerned, *Ahimsa*is the absence of the desire of humiliating, harassing, and debasing the other faiths or religions; and 4) *Santi*, which is defined as peace. Within this context, *santi* is defined as the attitude of always showing peace and brotherhood in the religious interaction through which religious harmony can be created.

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