

The Strategy of Puri Agung Tabanan As A Cultural Center

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ABSTRACT

A Balinese culture is a form of culture in which every system of ideas, and social system to its physical manifestation in totality is based on values derived from Hinduism. *Puri* with its cultural resources still upholds the values of local wisdom of a region and represents the cultural and spiritual roots of Bali. In recent decades, *puri* as one of the elements of Balinese culture has been faced with various serious problems related to the existence of *puri* as a cultural center.

This research aims to examine the existence of Puri Agung Tabanan as a cultural center. Based on this, the researchers formulated three problems, namely: Why is Puri Agung Tabanan declared as a cultural center? What is the strategy of Puri Agung Tabanan as a cultural center? What are the implications of Puri Agung Tabanan as a cultural center for the existence of Balinese culture, the *puri*, and the surrounding community? This research uses a qualitative approach method, with descriptive analysis. Data collection techniques were observation, in-depth interviews, and document studies. Informants were collected through a purposive sampling technique. The research location is Puri Agung Tabanan located in Banjar Dinas Sakenan Baleran, Delod Peken Village, Tabanan District, precisely on Jalan Srigunting No. 3, Tabanan, Bali.

Formally, *puri* as the center of power is gone, but *puri* is symbolic. *Puri*'s strategy is to maintain its existence as a cultural center through acculturation or socialization strategy. The explanation model of Puri Agung Tabanan as a cultural center is a form of articulation that the function of the *puri* as the center of inheritance and preservation of Balinese culture remains relevant in the future. The existence of *puri* as a cultural center is a form of the birth of a new civilization milestone created by the current generation to represent the Balinese people, especially in Tabanan Regency in building a spirit based on a system of cultural values that already exists in the relationship of community life towards Bali New Era 100 years ahead (2025 to 2125).

Keywords: Strategy, Puri Agung Tabanan, Preservation, Cultural Center

I. Introduction

Indonesia became independent on August 17, 1945, under the name of the *Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia*, but before that in Indonesia, there were independent kingdoms. These kingdoms were also found on the island of Bali, which is one of the provinces in Indonesia with the capital city of Denpasar during the royal period divided into several royal territories (Eka Arimbawa, et al., 2021: 1).

Among those kingdoms was the Singasana Kingdom located in Tabanan

Regency. In the kingdoms of Bali, the palace as the center of power and the center of government where the king ruled was called *puri*. Puri Agung Tabanan is one of the *puri* in Tabanan Regency that has socio-historical and cultural resources that need to be preserved and passed on to future generations. Cultural resources are resources that come from the creation or work of humans, both in the form of objects and not in the form of objects (<http://brainly.co.id > tasks>), accessed on November 23, 2023. Culture is the result of human creative work produced and has

been used as part of the daily life system. A culture that is used and applied in life over a long period will affect the formation pattern of a society (Irham Fahmi, 2013: 110).

Strengthening Puri Agung Tabanan as a cultural center has a strategic role in maintaining the identity of the *puri* as a cultural center. Tjokorda Raka Kerthyasa, in Rachmat Budiahardjo, (2017: 1) expressed his opinion as follows; so important is the existence of the *puri* and the function and role of the *puri* can be described by a parable, “If there is no palace/ *puri* in the traditional Balinese community, it is like an animal without a head”.

This condition implies that *puri* as a cultural center must be able to survive (survival strategy). This requires *puri* to continue to play a role in maintaining its existence in globalization. About that, it is interesting to ask how the strategy pursued by Puri Agung Tabanan is as a cultural center. This paper tries to answer these problems through research.

II. Research Method

Based on the background description above, the researcher raised research on; the Puri Agung Tabanan Strategy as a Cultural Center. This research was conducted at Puri Agung Tabanan, which is located in Banjar Dinas Sakenan Baleran, Delod Peken Village, Tabanan District, precisely on Jalan Srigunting No. 3, Tabanan, Bali. The purpose of this research is to know, understand, and examine the strategy of Puri Agung Tabanan as a cultural center. The research method uses a qualitative descriptive approach. The qualitative method is used to identify Puri Agung Tabanan as a cultural center. The data collection used primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained by conducting field observations, interviews, and documentation. Secondary data was obtained through relevant books,

journals, and the Internet. After the primary data and secondary data were collected, they were analyzed and described qualitatively. The research findings are related to the reasons for Puri Agung Tabanan as a cultural center, the strategy of Puri Agung Tabanan, and the implications of the development of Puri Agung Tabanan as a cultural center. To realize the results of the research, it is expected that the participation of various elements and components of society in efforts to preserve the culture that exists in Puri Agung Tabanan.

III. Result and Discussion

Puri Agung Tabanan has a historical background as the center of government (palace) during the royal era in Bali. *Puri* is the house or residence of a king or a king’s relative from the *ksatria* (knight) caste who is generally the leader/ruler in a certain regional kingdom (Gelebet, 1982: 36). In his writing, Munandar mentions that *puri* is a sacred building that has a difference with a temple which is a sacred building to perform prayers for the gods during religious ceremonies (Munandar, 2005: XXI).

Puri during the royal period was established as the center of the kingdom, to regulate the lives of its people, both in the fields of administration, government, economy, socio-culture, religious customs, arts, and others. In this study, three aspects need to be considered, namely why Puri Agung Tabanan is declared as a cultural center, how the development strategy of Puri Agung Tabanan as a cultural center, what the implications of Puri Agung Tabanan as a cultural center for the temple and the surrounding community. For more details, these three aspects can be described as follows:

3.1 Reasons for Puri Agung Tabanan as a Cultural Center

In the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (Large Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI)) the meaning of the word *pusat* (center), is the base or the leader in various affairs, things, and so on. *Pusat* (the center) is a place in the middle or at one point that becomes a benchmark (KBBI, 2017).

The word *budaya* (culture) comes from Sanskrit, namely *buddhayah* which is the plural form of *budhi*. This word is often pronounced in Indonesian *budi* which means things related to the human mind and reason (Sandi Suwardi Hasan, 2016: 14).

In the Large Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), *budaya* (culture) is the mind, intellect, something that has become a habit and is difficult to change, as well as the overall knowledge of humans as social creatures used to understand the environment and their experiences and which guides their behavior (KBBI, 2008: 214). *Budaya* (culture) is closely related to society. According to Koentjaraningrat *budaya* (culture) means all ideas and human works that must be familiarized with learning and the whole of ethics, while A.L Kroeber and C. Kluckhohn in their book *Culture, a Critical Review of Concepts and Definition* (1952) say that culture is the manifestation or incarnation of human soul work in the broadest sense (M.M. Supartono, 2004; 33).

From the above opinion, a cultural center is a place that is the center/core of all activities in a complex manner, which contains knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and other abilities and habits acquired by humans as members of a society <http://e-journal.uajy.ac.id>>, accessed on November 23, 2023.

Next, it will describe some of the reasons and cultural potential of Puri Agung Tabanan as a cultural center, namely:

- a) **Religious reasons**, where *puri* has a magical religious function and is the cosmic center or the center of the universe with the King as the

descendant of the gods in the world.

- b) **Cultural reasons**; in addition to its religious and social functions, Puri Agung Tabanan has also emerged as a center of cultural development. This is inseparable from its former role as the center of government which has various socio-cultural traditions that are preserved until now.
- c) **Political reasons**; *puri* was formed during the conquest of the Bedahulu Kingdom by Majapahit in the 14th century. The social role persists today. Puri Agung Tabanan can be said to have strong traditional roots in the political system in Bali, especially in Tabanan Regency. The *puri*'s political role is directing certain figures and/or participating in local government through general elections or regional head elections. This is reflected in the interaction of the community when there is an event at Puri Agung Tabanan. Puri Agung Tabanan is also a place that unites all elements of society because it returns to the past, as the center of government that brings together various ethnicities, races, and religions.
- d) **Economic reasons**; some traditions still survive and thrive in Puri Agung Tabanan. One of the traditions related to the local economy of the community is the tradition of “*Nangluk Merana Ceremony*” [http://:sim.ihdn.ac.id>repo](http://sim.ihdn.ac.id>repo). accessed on November 23, 2023. The strengthening of this tradition can survive and is very helpful in maintaining food security and the rice barn of Tabanan district, as well as the power relations between the *puri* and the community.

While the cultural potential of Puri Agung Tabanan can be mentioned as follows:

a) The Cultural Artifacts Potential in Puri Agung Tabanan

Artifacts are objects of human work (Koentjaraningrat, 1974:15). The artifacts found in Puri Agung Tabanan consist of the structure of the *puri* building, furniture, paintings, and other objects. Other artifacts are living objects (tools and equipment) in the *puri*. These items will greatly enrich the potential of Puri Agung Tabanan as a living museum.

b) The Cultural Idea-facts Potential at Puri Agung Tabanan

During the royal period, Puri Agung Tabanan was the center of power and the center of government. The idea of reviving the culture that they had developed gave spirit to the existence of the *puri*.

c) The Sociofacultural Potential of Puri Agung Tabanan

The Puri would not exist without the social life around it, so it is also an integral part of the *puri*. Likewise, in Puri Agung Tabanan, the pattern of life of the community gave rise to the creativity of cultural arts related to their lives.

3.2 Strategy of Puri Agung Tabanan as a Cultural Center

To maintain the existence of Puri Agung Tabanan as a cultural center, preservation and development efforts have been implemented through strategies. Strategy can be understood as a plan that is shown to achieve the desired goal <http://repository.uin.suska.ac.id>, accessed on November 23, 2023.

The strategy of Puri Agung Tabanan as a cultural center is done through socialization or acculturation.

Strategy through socialization is an effective way to strengthen the character of Balinese culture, in the form of planting Balinese cultural values among the *puri* and in the joints of community life.

3.3 Strategic Implications of Puri Agung Tabanan as a Cultural Center

Implication is literally defined as involvement, or the state of being involved, but not clearly stated (KBBI, 1994: 374). Implication is also understood as an effect or result obtained when an object is given a treatment intentionally or unintentionally (www.seputar-pengetahuan.co.id/2021/05/implication-adalah.html), accessed on November 23, 2023. Referring to this understanding, it can be said that the implication in this study leads to the effect or involvement caused by the strategy of Puri Agung Tabanan as a cultural center in Tabanan Regency.

a) Implications for Economic Aspects

The implications of Puri Agung Tabanan's strategy as a cultural center for the economic aspects of the *puri* and the surrounding community cannot be separated from the economic system that is currently developing. The economic system referred to in this study is more emphasizes the livelihood system of the community, which according to Koentjaraningrat (1980: 2) is one part of the seven universal elements of culture. The seven elements referred to include: (1) religious system and religious ceremonies; (2) social system and organization; (3) knowledge system; (4) language; (5) art; (6) livelihood system; (7) technology and equipment system.

To understand more about the economic system of the Tabanan people, we can see the development of the population in Tabanan Regency. Tabanan Regency as an agricultural area of *puri* has an important role in supporting the local economy through strengthening the

relationship with the farming community through the institution of *subak*, as well as supporting the local trade sector with the existence of traditional markets located around Puri Agung Tabanan.

In the context of the development of *puri* as a cultural center, the existence of the *puri* cannot be separated from tourism. Tourism is so “revered” because it can improve the economy, dynamize socio-cultural life, and strengthen Balinese culture (Pitana, 1999: 6).

b) Implications of Puri Agung Tabanan’s Strategy on Socio Cultural Aspects.

At this time the existence of Puri Agung Tabanan has changed. One of these changes is a change in the social sphere, which is related to the pattern of social relations between Puri Agung Tabanan and the community. Changes in the pattern of community relations that occurred in Puri Agung Tabanan were already apparent when *puri* began to lose influence and power over its people. This is seen with the leadership or regional heads in Tabanan Regency after the reformation who were elected not from the *puri*, but came from the *jaba wangsa* (ordinary people).

Another change in the social sphere can be seen in the form of the *ngayah* (cooperation) tradition. This *ngayah* tradition is a form of community or folk (*kawula*) devotion to the Puri Agung Tabanan (*Gusti*). This tradition began to weaken when each individual or community began to have a perspective as a more independent individual.

c). Implications of Puri Agung Tabanan’s Strategy on the Religious System

Religious systems in the perspective of anthropology are defined as a series of beliefs in supernatural powers, namely forces that come from outside human control. The source of supernatural power varies, it can come from God, gods, objects, natural forces, and so on (Wiranata, 2002).

In the context of the implications of Puri Agung Tabanan’s strategy on the religious system, it shows that the religious system is religiously magical, and binding, namely regulating human relations with God, regulating human relations with humans, and regulating human relations with the natural environment.

IV. Conclusions

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that:

- a) Puri Agung Tabanan is declared as a cultural center because it has several reasons, namely, religious, cultural, political, and economic reasons, while the cultural potential is in the form of; cultural artifact potential, cultural idea-fact potential, and socio-cultural potential;
- b) The strategy of Puri Agung Tabanan as a cultural center is carried out through socialization strategies and spiritual strengthening of the relationship between *puri*, *pura*, and *purohito* through the implementation of religious traditions and rituals, as well as strengthening power relations with farmers through *subak* institutions;
- c) The implications of Puri Agung Tabanan’s strategy as a cultural center on the economic aspects of the *puri*, and the community. Tabanan Regency as an agricultural area, *puri* has an important role, in supporting the local economy through *subak* institutions and local trade with the development of traditional markets located around Puri Agung Tabanan. Despite the implications of *puri*’s strategy on socio-cultural aspects, *puri* still has strong traditions and social networks in the community. The implications of *puri*’s strategy on the religious system, *puri*’s and the community, make efforts to strengthen spirituality through the implementation of

religious traditions and rituals based on Hindu teachings.

Based on the research results, the author can contribute suggestions related to the research results. First, the strategy of Puri Agung Tabanan as a cultural center. It must be done in a sustainable manner considering that *puri* is one of the sources of Balinese culture. Second, the direction of the strategy is how to create a strategy (survival strategy), because the strategy is a strengthening to maintain the existence of the *puri* in globalization and social changes that occur in society. Third, the strategy of Puri Agung Tabanan as a cultural center must still refer to the cultural capital owned by Puri Agung Tabanan, so that the *puri* and the community do not lose their cultural identity.

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