

**THE DYNAMIC OF VIHARA IDENTITY
AND CAP GO MEH AS THE CULTURAL INTERACTION SPACE
Study of Buddhist-Tionghoa in Makassar**

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Abstract

During post-Soeharto era, Tionghoa people tried to rebuild their primordial identity, so called "Tradition". Meanwhile, on the other hand, they gained legitimacy from the government by embracing the state official religion, namely Buddhism. Therefore, since New Order Era, many Klentengs (Tionghoa Shrines) are considered as Vihara. This study discusses the boundary between Tradition and Buddhism by looking at the symbolic features in them. Then, it finds the category of Viharas in Makassar. Cap go Meh, as the cultural interaction space, is a very helpful sample in observation for looking at the symbolic features. However, on Cap go Meh 2014, Tionghoa begin to present their ethnic identity as Tionghoa, and not their religious identity as Buddhist. Therefore, Cap go Meh is an interesting phenomenon to discuss; it is a space of representing identity, as an event beyond religious label, and as an independent event from state politics. It is a progress of Tionghoa culture in Indonesia post-Soeharto. On the other side, it is also an astonishing result of how religious studies can be an entrance into another dimension of historical and political genealogy.

Keywords: Vihara, *Klenteng*, Tradition, Tionghoa, *Cap go Meh*.

The term Tionghoa refers to Chinese Indonesian. Another equal term with Tionghoa is "Cina", however, the last term has negative connotation in Makassar, or even in Indonesia. The term put Chinese overseas Indonesians as non-Indonesians, the outsiders of Indonesian country. Besides that, my informants tend to introduce themselves as Tionghoa rather than *Cina*.

Tionghoa is one of the ethnic groups among many in Indonesia, and is concentrated in Makassar. Tionghoa or Chinese are usually recognized as part of a nation, instead of an ethnic group. Indonesia tends to see their diversity as ethnical based diversity (Ahimsa-Putra, 2007). Tionghoa as part of Indonesia becomes one of Indonesian ethnic groups, and then it will be easier to see Tionghoa in Indonesian context.

By using an anthropological approach, it is almost impossible to separate Buddhist issues in Makassar from Tionghoa phenomena. There is an issue of overlapping identity in regards to Buddhism, so called “religion”, and Tionghoa’s belief, which they call as “tradition”. Both, religion and tradition meet each other in a place called “vihara”, and in an institution called “Vihara”¹.

Vihara itself is a worship house of Buddhism. The Viharas have varies of belief, and not all of them belong to the Buddhist tradition. Some of them more strictly follow Tionghoa tradition and are actually Tionghoa Shrines, or by Indonesian so called *Klentengs*².

For the investigation, the following questions were composed: How can we define Vihara identity in Makassar? And How does Cap go Meh, as the cultural interaction space, construct identity among Viharas?

Framework and Methods

Indonesia is a multicultural nation, as well as democratic country. As a product of modernization, democracy politically demands homogenous culture in the society (Hefner, 2001: 2). It is the state’s obligation to homogenize their citizens. Indonesian diversity is different with Malaysia and Singapore, as the other multicultural nation mentioned by Hefner. Indonesia politically and culturally acknowledge themselves as one nation consists of varies ethnic groups. This perspective facilitates in studying Tionghoa phenomena in Indonesian context.

The theoretical framework used in answering the research questions about ethnic boundaries in this research was formulated by Fredrik Barth (1969). For acquiring the category and types of Vihara in Makassar, this research concerns symbolic features that meant by Barth. Since diversity in Indonesia is in ethnical

¹ It will be written this way onwards.

² Klenteng is similar with Vihara; klenteng refers to the place, the building, while Klenteng (with capital) refers to the people, and the institution.

category, Tionghoa is seen as an ethnic group, therefore, it is also crucial to use what Barth means with ethnic groups.

Barth doesn't really think that ethnicity is biological. He tends to see ethnic groups as populations which share fundamental cultural values, realized in overt unity in cultural forms, making up a field of communication and interaction, and also as a membership which identifies itself, and is identified by others, as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order (Barth, 1969: 10-1). The last definition is the most influential definition of "ethnicity" that summarizes Barth's ideas of ethnic boundary.

Barth (1969: 11-2) assumes that ethnic groups develop their culture not only because they are isolated from other ethnic groups due to ecological factors. On the contrary, the culture of an ethnic group could develop through its interaction with the other groups. The way of seeing the boundary among ethnic groups, according to Barth, is by looking at the *cultural features* in every ethnic group.

Heddy Shri Ahimsa-Putra (2007: 713) calls the cultural features as "*ciri-ciri simbolis*" or *symbolic features*. By looking at the symbols in Vihara, and finding the symbolic features of it, the ethnic boundary could be clearly seen and the category of Vihara could be defined. The theory of ethnic boundary built by cultural or symbolic features will work if culture is seen from perspective of the definition provided by Clifford Geertz (1973: 3). It is that culture is "... a pattern of meanings embodied historically transmitted in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in the symbolic forms by which humans communicate, preserve, and develop their knowledge of life and attitudes toward life."

Barth (1969: 14-6) also explains about the cultural contents in the ethnic group's culture. There are two types of cultural contents: one is material and the other is non-material. The material cultural content could be dress, language, house-form, and life style. In looking at the material cultural content of Vihara, observation is a compulsory method. It is observable from the architecture, statues, altars, etc. Meanwhile, the non-material cultural content is based on value orientation, such as

ideology. Interviews can better investigate the concept of life, such as reincarnation, *karma*, *nirvana*, etc.

By tracing the symbolic features in every Vihara, so it is finally acknowledged that there are three types of Vihara, which are Theravada Vihara, Mahayana Vihara, and Tionghoa Shrine labeled as Vihara. From the category, then, it is found there are phenomena of including and dismembering in Vihara, then, it answers the question of what is happening in Vihara. Meanwhile, observation of *Cap go Meh*, as the biggest event in Vihara, would answer the second question. In answering the question, we should change the perspective of vihara as a worship house into Vihara as a community. Durkheim (2003) has inspired this work with his conception of the Church. Vihara in this sense is not merely a material place of worship, but also an institution and a community: a group of people who have their own way to live, their own particular ideology, and their own perspective on this world.

In answering the research questions, there must be an appropriate research method. This research was conducted over the course of two months, during *Cap go Meh*. For this topic, ethnographic research was the most effective method to gain deep and plentiful data. Ethnography is considered data, but is understood as a research method in learning the culture through cultural experience, which presents a live view of the subject as an object of study related to how subjects think, live, and behave (Spradley, 1997: 5).

The type of data gained by ethnographic research is qualitative data. Ahimsa-putra (2005) explains qualitative data is not numerical data. It involves statements that give explanation and information about contents, features, characters, and situations or phenomena or of relations between one phenomenon and another. These phenomena could be physical matters, behavioral patterns, or ideas, values, norms, and could also be events in the society. There are two techniques in gathering qualitative data: participant observation and interviews.

Participant observation is a data-collection technique that is considered the most efficient technique in social and cultural research, specifically anthropology. In this technique, the researcher acts as an observing participant (Bernard, 2006: 347). Besides semi-structured interview, I more often used ethnographic interviews during my research. This method involves “a series of friendly conversations in which the researcher slowly introduces new elements to assist informants to respond as informants” (Spradley, 1979).

Tionghoa and Vihara in Makassar

Even though the city is named Makassar, and even though the region developed under Makassar Kingdoms, Bugis is the dominant ethnic group there. Bugisnese has the highest population among the other tribes in Southern Sulawesi. There are 3 million Bugisnese live in Southern Sulawesi and about 600,000 overseas Bugisnese are outside the province, while Makassarrese is claim 2 million people, Toraja make up 600,000 people, and Mandarnese is 400,000 people (Pelras, 2006: 13).

In the new order era, the state tended to construct ethnic identity based on the region in Indonesia. Therefore, the legal local ethnicity in Makassar, which is well-known among common Indonesian people now, is Bugis-Makassar. There are even Indonesian people who cannot differentiate between Makassar and Bugis, since they think both are include in one of ethnic group (Pelras, 2006: 16).

From the first century until the 15th century, Tionghoa came to Makassar in their mission of trading (Setiono, 2008: 19-40). The history of Tionghoa in Makassar started to become a part of Tionghoa’s history in Indonesia since the Dutch colonial era. In 1619, Jan Pieterszoon Coen was appointed Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies (Setiono, 2008: 77-83). Coen immediately built Batavia with the help of the Chinese people. The Dutch persuaded and gave promises to the Chinese so they would want to move and promote trade in Batavia. In addition in persuading and seeking emigration of Chinese people from Banten to Batavia, Coen also brought

many workers from the plains of Tiongkok. They worked as laborers, artisans, and retailers for the benefit of the Dutch.

The Dutch divided citizens of Makassar into a system of hierarchy, like in the other regions in Indonesian archipelago. The European people were in the first social class. In the middle class, there were the foreign Eastern people or *Vreemde Oosterlingen*. Tionghoa were included in this class (Suryadinata, 2002: 103). And then, in the lowest class, there were the native Indonesian people or *inlanders*. This social hierarchy separated Tionghoa from the Indonesian people, which meant they were different. According to Setiono, this is the historical reason behind the massacres of Tionghoa people late in Indonesian independence history.

In Makassar, Tionghoa³ people finally earned a place as one of the ethnics among the ethnic groups; such as Makassar, Bugis, Mandar, Toraja, Jawa, etc. Therefore, politically the term Tionghoa is more comfortable in Makassar, rather than *Cina*. This is the same in other regions in Indonesia. Tionghoa is a more polite term, which means “A Land in the Middle” (Suryadinata, 2008: 100-18).

Tionghoa in Makassar, rarely use the term “*Cina*” for identifying themselves. They tend to call themselves “*Tionghoa*”, or “*Chinese*” which is an English word for “*Cina*”. Both terms, *Cina* and Tionghoa, actually refer to same subject. In context of Makassar people, *Cina* has negative connotation for them. On the other hand, Tionghoa is a more polite term.

According to Leo Suryadinata (2002: 103), the negative connotation of “*Cina*” started since the colonial era. At that time, the Dutch categorized three social classes in the society, and the category was the race-based category, namely European, Oriental foreigners (*Vreemde Oosterlingen*), and *inlander* (the native). Tionghoa were Oriental foreigners, however they were discriminated against and underestimated by the other Oriental foreigners since they were lost in the war with Japan.

³ Yoyo on Discussion Forum “Membangun Identitas dengan Pluralitas” on 2 February 2010 at Pena Fajar Building, Makassar.

The separation between *inlander* (or *pribumi*) and non-*inlander* (*non-pribumi*) from the colonial era affected the assimilation of Tionghoa with the Indonesian people in the post-proclamation. On the Soeharto's era, the negative connotation of "Cina" term did not change (Aguilar, 2001). For the sake of Indonesianizing Tionghoa in Indonesia, the word "Cina" started to be used less frequently, and became replaced by "Tionghoa".

Even the both terms, *Cina* and Tionghoa, refer to the same subject, namely mainland or Tiongkok, the term Tionghoa is less problematic in the Indonesian language. It is because in the Indonesian language, *Cina* refers to the state, RRC (*Republik Rakyat Cina*) or People's Republic of China, which means they are not Indonesians (Tan in Aguilar, 2001). The using of the term is an effort to assimilate Tionghoa with Indonesians. So, the terminology is a matter of nationalism and is very political.

In the post-Soeharto era, the term "Tionghoa" is becoming more popular than *Cina*. Brigjen Tedy Jusuf, who has mandarin name Him Rek Yi, the head of Association of Indonesian Tionghoa Society, stated the difference of the term Tionghoa and the term *Cina* (Suryadinata, 2002: 108-9). He marked that *Cina* refers to the foreigners, non-Indonesian people, *Warga Negara Asing* (WNA). Meanwhile, Tionghoa refers to the Indonesian Chinese, the Indonesian citizen who are Chinese parentage, or *Warga Negara Indonesia* (WNI).

The confusion has started in Soeharto's era around 1960s. It is probably accompanied by the confusion of the term "Cina" and "Tionghoa" to call Chinese overseas people in Indonesia. According to Leo Suryadinata (2002: 100-118), at the beginning of New Order regime, government still permitted Tionghoa culture in Indonesia. However, in the middle of the regime, the government seemed aiming to nationalize or "Indonesianize" the Tionghoa.

In gaining Indonesia identity, government banned many *Klentengs* and Tionghoa institutions. In Makassar, the *Klentengs* that have been banned are still established. They still work as *Klentengs*, as Tionghoa Shrines, but they are labeled

as Vihara, the Buddhist worship houses. They, however, remain the representative of Tionghoa Tradition. This research found there is new phenomenon that some of Tionghoa now feel that they need to differentiate between Vihara and *Klenteng*, which means they try to differentiate between Buddhism and Tionghoa culture, so called Tradition, or “*tradisi*” in Indonesian language.

Makassar is dominated by Islam since Bugis and Makassar people, the native people there, also conform to Islam. On the other hand, Tionghoa Shrines in Makassar or *Klenteng* are labeled as Vihara (Buddhist Temple) and are under the scope of Buddhist Institutions. Meanwhile, Buddhism is the minority religion in Makassar. The observation about *Klenteng* is important for this study since *Klenteng* is a symbol of Chinese Culture.

The native religions of Chinese are Taoism and Confucianism (Hopfe, 2001: 168). Even so, they both emerged as philosophies of ethics, rather than religions. That being said, it is normal for ancient Chinese to adhere to more than just one doctrine of religion. Hence, *klenteng* could not be called a Confucian shrine only; even some *klentengs* in Indonesian are considered Confucian.

It is also stated by Salmon (1985: 11) that *Klenteng* is the center of Tionghoa life. The detailed research about architecture and iconography of *Klenteng* could give the information about Tionghoa society. In 1970, some *Klentengs* were enlarged and renovated. Salmon claimed that the progressing of religious activities was accompanied by the improvement of financial economy in the society.

In the first century until 15th century, many *klentengs* were built in Makassar by the colony from Tiongkok, which came for trading (Setiono, 2008: 19-40). However, the buildings of *klenteng* were not permanent. The temple building began to be permanently built in the 1600s. The first permanent *klenteng* was Vihara Ibu Agung Bahari or *Klenteng Thian mo Kong* which is located near from the port, now is Soekarno-Hatta Port. The *klenteng* is particularly a place to worship Ibu Agung Bahari, a Goddess who guards the sea and the sailor (Setiono, 2008: 19-40).

The first Buddhist Vihara in Makassar is Vihara Girinaga. The real definition of vihara in Buddhism is “a place to stay and learn *dharmā*”⁴. However, the subject of research of this study is larger than the definition; it is the place and space labeled ‘vihara’ in Makassar. *Cetya* is also a Buddhist term, which refers to an object of worship. In Makassar, however, the term *Cetya* also means a smaller Vihara, a community which doesn’t have enough followers to become Vihara⁵. Meanwhile, *Klenteng* is a term which comes from a different tradition than the other two. *Klenteng* refers to a shrine for Chinese Tradition. Each *Klenteng* has their own One Prime Deity that they set as the label of the *Klenteng*.

In the list compiled by *Bimbingan Masyarakat (BIMAS) Buddha*, there are only one *Klenteng* exists in Makassar, *Klenteng Kwankong*. In the reality, there is only *Klenteng Kwankong* which considers their selves as *Klenteng* without Vihara name, while in fact; there are some *Klentengs* that have two names, *Klenteng* name and Vihara name.

BIMAS Buddha (The Counselor of Buddhist by Regional Government in Makassar) and WALUBI (The Representative of Buddhist in Indonesia), these two Buddhist institutions, are chosen as the samples, since they are the decision making institutions in Buddhist society in Indonesia. WALUBI is a non-governmental association that represents the Buddhist from all Buddhism schools in Indonesia. Meanwhile, BIMAS Buddha is the representative of Buddhism in the government.

⁴ On interview with Banthe Siriratano Thera of Vihara Sasanadipa on 22 January 2010.

⁵ Peraturan Bersama Menteri Agama dan Menteri Dalam Negeri Nomor : 8 dan 9 Tahun 2006. Bab IV about Pendirian Rumah Ibadah. Pasal 14, ayat 2; “... rumah ibadat harus memenuhi persyaratan khusus meliputi: (a) daftar nama dan Kartu Tanda Penduduk pengguna rumah ibadat paling sedikit 90 (Sembilan puluh) orang yang disahkan oleh pejabat setempat sesuai dengan tingkat batas wilayah sebagaimana dimaksud dalam Pasal 13 ayat (3); (b) dukungan masyarakat setempat paling sedikit 60 (enam puluh) orang yang disahkan oleh lurah/kepala desa; (c) rekomendasi tertulis kepala kantor departemen agama kabupaten/kota; dan (d) rekomendasi tertulis FKUB kabupaten/kota.

Identity and Category of Viharas in Makassar

In simplifying the case, I divide Vihara in Makassar into three categories; namely *Theravada Buddhist Vihara*, *Mahayana Buddhist Vihara*, and *Tionghoa Shrine* or *Klenteng* that labeled as vihara.

The division of vihara in Makassar is not only through the material features of the place or the building, but also through the behavior, the way they practice their belief, and through the idea and the abstract concept of life, *karma*, reincarnation, and hereafter. On the other hand, Vihara as a membership identity is more than just a factory where the religious symbols are produced. With the religious symbols that they produced and embedded in their members, they become communities which need loyalty. It means that if someone is a member of one Vihara, he or she should not join another or other Vihara at the same time.

The cultural features or symbolic features of religious symbols in Vihara forms boundary among Viharas. The boundary remarks membership identity of Viharas which identify who is insider and who is outsider. Even though in ancient Chinese religion, embedding two religions at the same time is a usual phenomenon (Hopfe, 2001: 168); it is different now in Makassar Tionghoa community. For adherents of Viharas, the most powerful features to identify the boundary are the non-material features, such as their doctrines and ideologies. The adherents of Viharas are allowed to work for other Vihara, as long as they don't worship there.

The sense of belonging for the followers of Vihara and for the workers of Vihara is different. The terms of insider and outsider might be not merely referred to the people who are the member of Vihara and the people who are not. It is crucial to mark that the followers is different with the workers of Vihara. The people who worship in the Vihara are different with the people who work in Vihara.

It is a general sight in Makassar, local men with darker skin work for Vihara or *Klenteng* in a shirt written a name of the Vihara they work for. They are responsible for the cleaning of the Vihara. They were also there to help the worshipers to burn the incenses. The sight as this usually happens in the big *Klenteng*.

I have visited three biggest *Klenteng* in Makassar, they all have the workers like this. One *Klenteng* could have more than three local men who work for them. And from the all workers that I had asked, none of them are Buddhist, they all are Muslims.

The boundary between insider and outsider in case of Viharas workers is not as obvious as the boundary in case of Viharas *barongsai* groups. *Barongsai* is the example how strict the boundary could be. Even so, the workers in Vihara also can strictly claim which Vihara they really belong. The case of *barongsai* groups in Vihara is not about being a good athlete of *barongsai*. It is about being a member of one community and being loyal in it. The loyalty such this also appears in any group of art and sport. The interesting point of *barongsai* in Makassar is because they are not only groups of art or sport, beyond that; they are the member of religious institutive community.

The confusion between Vihara and *Klenteng* leads some issues about the overlapping identity among those two. They are the differences between *Waisak* and *Cap go Meh*, *Klenteng* and Vihara, Tradition and Buddhism, and then, Ethnicity and Religion. After looking at category and differences of Vihara, and what is in there and who is in there, then there is a phenomenon of overlapping identity between religion, in this sense Buddhism, and tradition.

Barth (1969) states that the boundary among groups is built by the contestation of symbolic features. However, he also states that the matter is not only about how the groups construct their identity with their cultural features, but it is about how they maintain the ethnic boundary that they build as well (Barth, 1969: 35-8). Barth also add, that the second matter; maintaining identity, is more crucial than the first matter; constructing identity.

Trisuci Waisak, or the Holy Three of Waisak, is the Buddha's birthday, the day of enlightenment he reached, and the day of his *parinibhana*, reaching the *nibbana*. Waisak is on the fourth Cap go of Lunar Calendar, or in other words, it is on the 15th day of 4th month in Chinese Calendar. Waisak Celebration in Indonesia is centered at Borobudur, as the biggest Buddhist temple in the world.

Waisak celebration in Makassar was not as festive as Cap go Meh celebration⁶. It is more like religious ritual, rather than a festival. Even though every Vihara in Makassar, the both Buddhist Vihara and Klenteng, celebrates Waisak, they don't celebrate it together. They celebrate it on the same time, but at their own viharas with their own way. Waisak in Makassar, is the way of maintaining identity of the Viharas.

***Cap go Meh* as Cultural Interaction Space**

All *Klentengs* in Makassar celebrate *Waisak*, which is a Buddhist spiritual day. It is because the both *Klenteng* and Vihara are under protection of WALUBI and BIMAS Buddha, while whether WALUBI and BIMAS Buddha is Buddhist Institutions. Hence, all *Klentengs* have to celebrate *Waisak*, while Vihara doesn't have to celebrate *Cap go Meh* if they don't want to.

Chart 1 shows the whole phenomena of Viharas in Makassar. Indonesian people tend to separate the Culture and the Religion, and that is how people categorize *Cap go Meh* and *Waisak*. *Cap go Meh* and *Klenteng* are called tradition, which tradition belongs to cultural box of category. Meanwhile, *Waisak* and *Vihara* are Buddhist traditions, which in Indonesia, Buddhism is a religion. Hence, even *Cap go Meh* is sacred, it is conducted regardless religious affiliations.

Barth (1969: 16-7) claims that ethnicity is a product of interaction among ethnic groups. He also assumes that in aiming to see the boundaries among the ethnic groups, the observation could focus on the cultural features of the groups. The symbolic features are not only shown in identifying themselves, but it is beyond the observable material issue. The symbolic features are the main role in building structure of interaction among the groups. Hence, the ethnic boundaries are social boundaries.

⁶ Article of Liputan6.com on 14 May 2006, "Puncak Peringatan Waisak di Candi Borobudur", states: "ritual peringatan Hari Raya Waisak di Kota Makassar, Sulawesi Selatan, berlangsung sepi." ("the ritual of Waisak Celebration in Makassar City, Southern Sulawesi, was slack.")

Chart 1

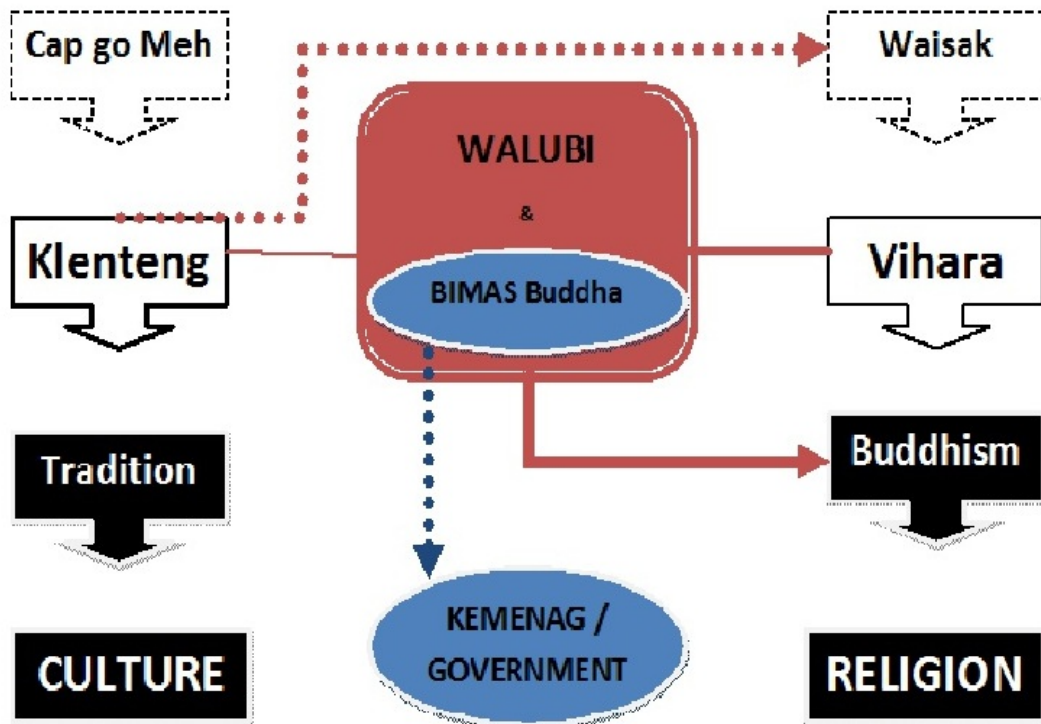
The Relation of *Klenteng* and *Waisak*

Note : The black color shows how *Cap go Meh* could be beyond religion.

The pink color shows why *Klenteng* celebrate *Waisak*.

The blue color shows why government doesn't financially support *Cap go Meh*.

(Source : Modified by Batari Oja)



On the “*Wacana Penutup: Kemelayuan sebagai Tanda, Batas Sosial, Imajinasi, dan Citra Budaya*”, Ahimsa-Putra (2007: 697-724) supports and uses Barth’s theory of Ethnic Boundaries. Ahimsa-Putra assumes that the symbolic features are the language in communication and interaction among the ethnic groups. The symbolic features are not only observable material, such as cultural artifact, but also the abstract ideas, such as the perception of life.

Cap go Meh performs the symbols that we need as the efforts of tracing identity. They are statues of Deities, uniforms that they wore, and the performance they offered. Those three are some of the symbolic features in *Cap go Meh* that represents their Vihara, their membership, their community, their selves, in sort; their

identity. Those emblems show the symbolic features of each Vihara. The symbolic features mark the boundary among Viharas. The parade itself has the boundary which identifies them from the crowd. Despite that the parade and the crowd are the active subjects; they are identifying each other as well.

The committee of *Cap go Meh* Parade consist of many parties from varies religion. The parade was divided into two groups, namely the ritual groups and the *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* groups. The committee was mostly the students of the university. Some of them are the students of Islamic Universities in Makassar. As a cultural event, *Cap go Meh* is conducted by cooperation of many parties from many religious backgrounds. The *Cap go Meh* Parade, then, is not merely a ritual, but it also is a service. However, the people who give service in this parade are not only the Tionghoa, the people who supposed to own this tradition. There are also the people who are the outsiders of the Vihara and this tradition that include in this parade. They not only join the parade, but they also contribute in running the event.

The *Cap go Meh* Parade is an independent event, regarding the fund they spend and the message they convey. It could be the only event in Makassar without any political agenda. Indeed, it is politically legitimate Tionghoa culture as part of the culture in Makassar City. It is, however, not the political agenda in the sense of governmental campaign. This far, Vihara and *Klenteng* are the independent communities in financial issue.

Salmon's (1985: 11) assumes that religious activity is directly related with the economical situation in society. The religious events are the indicator of the better situation in society in economic sense. Hence, *Cap go Meh* is the sign of a good financial economy in Makassar. And, even the *Klenteng* people repeatedly call this event is not religious; they have no idea to deny that this event is base camped in *Klenteng*. Meanwhile, *Klenteng* is still labeled as Vihara, which is the worship house of Buddhism, one of the legitimate religions in Indonesia.

Conclusion

The historical background of Tionghoa in Makassar society leads them to be categorized as Buddhist, even some of them are adherents of Chinese belief. Because of some political situation of the state, *Klenteng* or the Tionghoa Shrine has to be disguised as Vihara, the Buddhist Temple. It leads the overlapping identity between Tionghoa tradition and Buddhism.

The background of the phenomenon between Tionghoa and Vihara in Makassar is the history of Makassar itself. Makassar was built and developed by international trading with local people and merchants from abroad. On colonial period, the trading was monopolized by VOC, however, Tionghoa merchants was still the major population of foreign people in Makassar.

Tionghoa become one of the ethnic groups in Indonesia on the post-proclamation. However, their customs, including *Klenteng*, was banned in Soeharto's regim, New Order era. Therefore, even Tionghoa shrines or *Klenteng* in Makassar were historically appeared earlier than Buddhist Temples or Vihara, the shrines now are labeled as Vihara. They are also under protection of Buddhist Institutions; namely WALUBI and BIMAS Buddha.

The history has shown the dynamic of Vihara identity in Makassar. Several Viharas, or if not a half of the Viharas, in Makassar don't belong to Buddhist tradition. Several Viharas in Makassar are Tionghoa shrines or *Klenteng*. Those *Klentengs* are labeled as Mahayana Tradition by BIMAS Buddha, or in other words, by government. BIMAS Buddha has categorized Vihara into two main categories, namely Theravada and Mahayana, which also has many schools.

Vihara and *Klenteng* could be identified by their symbols. In identifying Vihara and *Klenteng*, it is compulsory to trace the symbols inside Vihara. By tracing the symbolic features of Vihara and *Klenteng*, it found three categories of Vihara. They are Theravada Buddhist Vihara, Mahayana Buddhist Vihara, and Tionghoa Shrine labeled as Vihara.

Vihara as a community consist of adherents and followers. The followers of one Vihara are not able to join other Vihara at the same time. Lion dance or

barongsai group also reflects the loyalty of the Vihara or *Klenteng*. The member of *barongsai* groups is ethically forbidden to join other groups at the same time. On the other hand, some *Klentengs* have workers who are not the followers of the *Klenteng*. Some of them are from other Buddhist Vihara and some others are even Muslims. So it could be the way how the outsider could enter *Klenteng*, however, they join it not as followers.

The description about boundary between Vihara and *Klenteng* reflects that there is an overlapping identity happening in Vihara. It is shown by the interviews about *Cap go Meh* and *Waisak*, *Klenteng* and Vihara, Tradition and Buddhism, and Ethnicity and Religion. All *Klentengs* in Makassar are celebrating *Waisak*, a Buddhist Celebration day, meanwhile, only a few Vihara are joining in *Cap go Meh*, a Tionghoa event.

Cap go Meh is the most important event in helping to see the constructing identity among Viharas, in other words, the boundary between Vihara and *Klenteng*. Firstly, not all Viharas, even *Klenteng*, join *Cap go Meh* parade this year. Second, *Cap go Meh* is conducted by cooperation of many parties from different religious background. Third, *Cap go Meh* is constructed independently in finance.

People in Vihara generally have common understanding of *Cap go Meh* as Tionghoa traditional event. Therefore, Buddhist Viharas don't join the event; meanwhile, people in *Klenteng* consider the two events as the two big events for them. *Cap go Meh* is supposed to be held by *Klenteng*, Tionghoa shrine, since it is a Tionghoa tradition event. Therefore, by tradition labeled, it is considered as a cultural event. In compare with *Cap go Meh*, *Waisak* is supposed to be held by Buddhist Vihara, since it is a Buddhist event. Therefore, under a label of Buddhism, it is considered as a religious event.

Even so, both Vihara and *Klenteng* are under Buddhist Institutions, WALUBI and BIMAS Buddha. Hence, for being legalized Buddhist in Indonesia, almost all *Klentengs* in Makassar celebrate *Waisak*. On the other hand, Buddhist Viharas don't have to celebrate *Cap go Meh* if they don't like to; they only have to celebrate

Waisak. And hence, *Cap go Meh* is conducted by many religious affiliations, since it is categorized as culture, instead of religion.

Since it is a cultural event, and not religious event, so BIMAS Buddha, as a department under Religious Affairs Ministry; in sort, government; doesn't cover the budget for *Cap go Meh*. It practically should be covered by Ministry of Cultural Affairs. However, cultural issue in Indonesia remains bias with tourism issue. Meanwhile, *Cap go Meh* is a ritual which doesn't attract many tourist, so government doesn't support them in finance. The mayor of Makassar didn't even arrange the budget for this event, since he thinks that the event wouldn't be conducted. As a financially independent event, the committee of *Cap go Meh* is able to claim that their event is a non-political event.

This thesis is broadly speaking about a one step forward taken by Tionghoa in Makassar for seeking legitimacy of culture and indigenusness in their society. If this step is rejected again, so they have to take one step back to where they used to be, disguising under Buddhist institutions. However, if their identity as ethnic groups is recognized by the society, there would be three ways in responding it.

According to Barth, first, they who feel need to represent themselves as only Buddhist and no need to join *Cap go Meh*, like people in Vihara Vimala Kirti, would be assimilated with the other groups. Second, who feel need to represent themselves with both categories as Tionghoa and as Buddhist, like people in Vihara Girinaga, would be the group with the lowest status. Third, they who feel need to represent their ethnic identity as Tionghoa without any religious symbols, like the people in *Klenteng*, would lead the nativism movement, or even separation of the state.

I, however, don't think the last two predictions could happen to Tionghoa in Makassar. Since Tionghoa have main role in economy sector in Makassar society since pre-colonial era, it sounds hard for them to be the lowest minority in Makassar. Also, even *Klenteng* has tendency to nativize Tionghoa culture, it is still far from the separation of establishing a new country of Tionghoa, since Tionghoa live in the same residence with the other ethnic groups in Makassar.

Besides those factors, Tionghoa are a polyethnic society in itself. They are not united in their perspectives and actions. It could be seen from their interaction in *Cap go Meh*. It is when some of them didn't want to join the parade because it didn't due in the right time or it is no longer suit with their belief. On the other hand, *Cap go Meh* is supported by the outsiders of Vihara, whether they are Tionghoa Muslim or non-Tionghoa and non-Vihara people. It shows the harmonic interaction of Tionghoa with other ethnic groups in Makassar.

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