

HERITAGE COMMODIFICATIONS “NEKARA PEJENG” AS TOURIST ATTRACTIONS IN PEJENG-GIANYAR- BALI

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ABSTRACT

Tourism unity here influenced through the Balinese culture, in which there are some crucial issues related to how the Balinese new idea daily life in modern time. Though of the necessary impact the Balinese still but maintain their own traditional culture in the case of "Nekara Pejeng". The main question is fasten how the Balinese preserve then local tradition in term of "Nekara Pejeng" secondary what are the main impact related to the destination, and thirdly what kind of symbols are meanings that they send to measure the local culture in term of sustainable tourist development.

Keywords: Commodification, Nekara, Pejeng, Tourist Attraction.

1. Background

Tourism is one of the global cultural products and its presence makes the blurring of social and cultural boundaries of traditional territory (Salazar, 2006: 188). In contrast, tourism also makes the relationship between countries closer, as there is no distance separates, including relations between Indonesia and other countries in the world. Bali has become Indonesia's main tourist destination because it has beautiful natural charms, cultural diversity, customs, religious ceremonies and cultural heritage diversity, which no other region in the world have. All of those aspects become main attraction for tourists to travel to Bali. Of course their presence in Bali will always be accompanied by their culture, and no doubt can affect the attitude and behavior of the community, especially in areas where tourists live. It should be noted, however, that the culture of modernity has an attitude which tends to abandon the things that have traditionally been in the culture of a society (Hoed, 2010: 210). It seems that such habits have influenced the attitudes and behavior of local people. The phenomenon refers to that habit is seen in those who are always in contact with foreign tourists, such as in Kuta, Badung, Bali, which is a forging base of foreign tourists. In some cases, those who cannot control themselves almost lose their identity. The attitudes and behaviors of modernity culture, including: consumptive culture, show off, wasteful life, and others, which is not a habit of local communities.



As a major tourist destination and setting the cultural heritage as one of the tourist attractions, of course the protection of heritage is very important. Thus, a major challenge in cultural heritage tourism is ensuring that developed tourism does not undermine the main qualities which attract the tourists to visit that place ([File:///C:/Users/Vaio/Documents/Cultural Heritage Tourism.htm](File:///C:/Users/Vaio/Documents/Cultural%20Heritage%20Tourism.htm)). Nowadays, cultural heritage attractions are favored by foreign tourists. The high level of tourist visits in Bali, is inseparable from the contribution given by the cultural heritage as a tourist attraction. One thing should be alerted is that tourism is like a double-edged knife, which on the one hand can be economically profitable, but on the other hand it can give negative impacts, such as environmental pollution, the destruction of the site and the ancient objects (Ardika, 2007: 35).

"Nekara Pejeng", is one of the heritage attractions located in Pejeng Village, Gianyar, Bali. Its existence is very sacred and revered by local people. Because of its position in the sacred space, to see it the tourists must enter the sacred space. It causes the tourists can freely enter the sacred space by paying donations, without ever being questioned whether they are in a dirty condition (menstruation). Pros and cons occur between the parties who are committed to maintain the value of the sacredness of the temple (shrine) with the rulers who make money (capital) as a social force of society. Various problems appear on the surface, and one of them is interesting and will be discussed in this research is the impact and value inflicted of commodification. Thus, it is clear that the purpose of this study is to know the impact and value of commodification "Nekara Pejeng", both to Pura Penataran Sasih and to the people in Pejeng Village.

2. Research Methods

This research used critical qualitative approach and method. That is, in approaching the object, those who were selected as informants are considered capable of giving honest information about the existence of the object under study. Even the most important thing to do is to deconstruct the views of previous researchers and/or community leaders who are seen as less accurate on the grounds of academic logic, although traditionally has been considered true. Therefore, the method used, including: (1) observation, by seeing and observing various phenomena of the object carefully, both the existence of "Nekara Pejeng" or attitude and behavior of local communities; (2) interview, by conveying questions and listening various explanations from informants about "Nekara Pejeng" with research; and (3) literature, by conducting literature review by selecting books, journals, magazines, and other sources which have relevance to the issues discussed. Furthermore, the analysis activities are done carefully and critically for the validity of the data obtained.

3. Results and Discussion

Based on the World Heritage Committee report up to July 7th 2008, 878 have been registered as world cultural heritage sites, 679 of all (77%) are cultural heritage, 174 (20%) natural heritage, 25 (3%) mix between culture and nature, and 30 (3.4%) are inherited (Hitchcock, M. Victor, T. King and Michael Parwell (eds.) and Ardika, 2015: 6). When associated with today's tourism life, cultural heritage has a significant value for the tourism industry because cultural tourism is the world's largest industry and cultural heritage tourism is the fastest growing sector (Ardika, 2015: 6). In Indonesia



recently, especially in Bali pretty much commoditize cultural heritage as a prima donna tourist attraction.

Talking about the commodification of cultural heritage as a tourist attraction in Bali is an interesting discourse in postmodern, because it presents something different from the previous era. It is said to be different (unique) because of the newness in terms of commodity products (Benjamin, 2009: 112). It means that the commodity newness is not limited to the control of labor, goods, and services, but also to other aspects, such as education, religious symbols, passions, the human body, even death. Such phenomena have affected Bali's vital parts, especially regarding to holy places (temples) laden with religious symbols. The holy place (temple) is of course which has the values of uniqueness which is interesting to be visited. Such as Tanah Lot temple (Tabanan), Uluwatu temple (Badung), Taman Ayun Temple (Mengwi-Badung), Gunung Kawi temple (Tampaksiring-Gianyar), Tirta Empul temple (Tampaksiring-Gianyar), Goa Lawah temple (Klungkung), and Penataran Sasih temple. Penataran Sasih temple becomes tourist attraction, because inside the temple is stored a very unique cultural heritage known as nekara, which by local people commonly called "Nekara Pejeng".

4. Forms of Commodification

Various forms of cultural heritage in the temple are used as a commodity tourist attraction, one of them is "Nekara Pejeng". "Nekara Pejeng" is very interesting to be visited because of its uniqueness, such as: shape, size, decorative pattern, local type, and supported with myth moon fall from the sky; shaped books, articles, journals, purana, social media texts; and other forms. In an effort to distribute and promote the cultural heritage to reach the consumers, is conducted by four helix, including (a) **government**, in this case the tourism office is in collaboration with the relevant departments within SKPD of district government, either directly to other areas in Indonesia and other countries of the world, as well as cooperation with other institutions; (b) **business institutions**, including electronic media, such as TV (government and private), printed media, social media, and so on; and nonmedia, such as Asita, Travel Bureau, HPI, hotel, and so on; (c) **intellectuals (academics)**, both foreign and indigenous, through the socialization of his written works, seminars, discussions, and other forms of activities; and (d) **custom village institutions**, which are indirectly and routinely conducted by object guides through tourists who visit Penataran Sasih temple. In addition, promotion is also done by custom village institution staff through social media (internet). Furthermore, consumers who are expected to be the main target is foreign tourists, without ignoring the local and domestic tourists. Target to be achieved was increasing number of tourists visit to Penataran Sasih temple.

Commodification Process

Commodification is one of the interesting phenomena in the era of global tourism today. Bali as a major tourist destination considers that commodification is not a taboo (forbidden) thing to do, even to the sacred things. For example, the commodification of cultural heritage in Penataran Sasih temple. The commodification of cultural heritage "Nekara Pejeng" as a tourist attraction up to its existence recently, has a long process. Referring to Greenwood's (1977) opinion, it is said that in the beginning the community accepted traditionally with the hospitality of the tourist presence, subsequently transformed into commercialization and up to commodification (Pitana, 2005: 83). This condition seem to happen in Penataran Sasih Temple. Because



of money-obsessed (capitalist), commodification is not only done on cultural heritage, but penetrated to the *nista mandala* (*jaba* side) temple revitalized, as a shopping center, parking, and senggol markets. It means that commodification is not only limited to cultural heritage, but extends to the development of tourism carrying capacity, although recently it more often serves as a senggol market.

Impact of Commodification

Marvin Haris argues that one of the fundamental characteristics of capitalism is commodification, such as almost all goods and services, including land and labor (Mulyanto, 2012: 20). Barker (2004: 14), says that commodities are products which contain value and exchange rates. Commodities are something available for sale in the market and commodification is a process associated with capitalism, such as objects, qualities, and marks turn into commodities. Furthermore Mulyanto (2012: xviii), says that commodities are the result of human labor (goods or services) which are deliberately produced to be exchanged through market mechanisms. Commodification is the process of making something that is not a commodity to be or treated as a commodity which can be traded for profit. But Piliang (2005: 191) seems more extreme, and says that one of the hallmarks of a postmodern society is to make almost entirely part of life as a commodity for sale. In this case the postmodern society is also referred to consumer society. Commodification has penetrated the education, culture, religion, body, passion, even death.

If the views above are summarized, something being commodified is not limited to the work of human beings in the form of goods and services which contain value and exchange rate, but also land, labor, and then penetrated in the fields of education, culture, religion, body, desire, even death and all of them are associated with capitalists (money). Such phenomena have also affected Bali's vital parts like the commodification of sacred places (temples) and cultural heritage which is sacred as a tourist attraction. Penataran Sasih temple is one of the many holy places used as tourist attraction in Bali, because of the uniqueness of "Nekara Pejeng". It is said to be unique because it has a very large size, and the largest in Southeast Asia (Calo, 2009; Bintarti, 1985; Kempers, 1960), and largest in the world (Raka, 2015: 142; Ardika, 2017: 31); not including into the Heger I-IV type (Djoened, 1984), therefore it is known as the local type of Pejeng. Since there is no greatest, grandest, most beautiful, uniquely pre-Hindu (prehistoric) heritage in Bali other than "Nekara Pejeng", it is reasonable to say that Pejeng is said to be the beginning of Balinese civilization (Raka, 2016: 51).

"Nekara Pejeng" is interesting to be visited for anyone because of its uniqueness and it is not available in the tourist area, and become one of the choice of local, domestic, and foreign tourists to visit. Departing from written sources, foreign researchers are interested in "Nekara Pejeng" has been initiated since the Dutch colonialism. They are: Rumphius in 1705 writes about nekara Pejeng; Nieuwenkamp describes the distinction of "Nekara Pejeng" with other nekara ever found in Indonesia; next Stutterheim, Bernet Kempers (Djoened, 1984); Goris (1948); Calo (2009), and others. At first, the foreign tourists who visit only allowed to enter into the temple with custom-made dress without paying donations. Since 1990, for the incoming tourists are prepared cloth by the object watcher and paid for donations voluntarily (Raka, 2015: 216).

Tourism is not an independent activity, but its presence requires various other elements to support and complement it. One of the elements is the presence of cultural heritage as an object and tourist attraction to meet the needs of tourists (Raka, 2015:



130). The role that cultural heritage plays is very important as a commodity of tourist attraction. The presence of heritage becomes one of tourist attractions, besides having cultural, history, science value, but also the value of beauty. In this era of global tourism, cultural heritage is highly loved by tourists, thus making heritage important to be conserved because it has economic value.

"Nekara Pejeng" is one of the cultural heritages which has the value of science, culture, and history of the past, and is commodified as a tourist attraction. Unconsciously, that the commodification of the cultural heritage "Nekara Pejeng" has a very significant impact on the existence of Penataran Sasih temple, the place where the heritage is kept. Positive things that can be felt as the impact of commodification, such as: the effort of arranging the temple environment; repairing palinggih; development of parking lots; construction of shops for shopping spaces; and other forms of activity. Conversely, the negative impact is the desecration of the temple, as a consequence of the discretion given to tourists entering the sacred space (*utama mandala*), without knowing whether they are not in a dirty condition (menstruation)? Similarly, the revitalization of *jaba sisi* (*nista mandala*) pretending to be a parking lot, business space (shopping space), senggol market, can tarnish the temple concept of *tri mandala*.

Commodification Value

Tourism is like a double-edged knife, on the one hand, economically profitable, but on the other hand can cause harm, such as environmental pollution, destruction of sites, and ancient objects (Ardika, 2007: 35). Behind it all, when examined deeply, commodification also provides its own meaning, such as: educational information, symbolic imagery, esthetics, and economic value. It is not only felt by pura stakeholder, but also for them (the tourists) who visit Penataran Sasih Temple. Although they pay donations, but they get precious thing. The cultural heritage of "Nekara Pejeng" which is currently commodified as a tourist attraction, on one side is sacred and made a medium of worship by local people, and on the other because its uniqueness, has its own meaning for the tourists who see the heritage directly.

Educational Information Value

Past historical education, indicated by past historical searches relating to the origin, status, and function of the cultural heritage. Associated with the past history, it can be seen that "Nekara Pejeng" comes from pre-Hindu period, the legacy of the metal age (bronze). The meaning obtained is the knowledge of civilization of the past, at that time Balinese people, especially in Pejeng already have a very high civilization. For those who have specialized expertise in pouring metal to produce certain desired objects, inspired by local wisdom. "Nekara Pejeng", until now is believed to be the work of local people, it can be said that local people not only imitate outside influences, but innovate with local capabilities. As a booster supported by observations of experts nekara observers, such as: G.W.W.C. van Hovel, J.J.M. de Groot, and F.Hirth, says that "Nekara Pejeng" does not belong to any of the groupings of Heger I-IV (Djoened, 1984: 245-246). It means that "Nekara Pejeng" is the work of the local people, and the possibility of printing equipment is currently located in Sembiran, Buleleng or in Manuaba, Gianyar (Ardika, et al, 2017: 20).

Socio-cultural education, indicated by various bronze tools produced, and one of them is "Nekara Pejeng", is the greatest, most unique, and most beautiful heritage. "Nekara Pejeng" and other ceremonial equipment items made of bronze and very beautiful, all illustrate that the level of civilization at that time was very high. Exquisite work such as "Nekara Pejeng" can only be done by those who have special skill and



also professional in the field of bronze processing to be made a certain item as needed. All that can be done by the tools of the undagi (artist) under the protection of the leader. It means that the existence of society has been well organized under the control of the leader.

Religious social education, from the inherited sources of artifacts, indicates that the religious social life of society in the bronze age reached its peak. Bronze objects are made like nekara, candrasa, religious ceremonial instruments, and so on are used for religious ceremonies, either as a medium of worship or to complement the needs of the ceremony. "Nekara Pejeng" is made and functioned as a medium for rain when the community is in a state of drought. The meaning derived is the knowledge of religious life in the past, as a reflection and a guide to improve the community service bureau today to Hyang Istadewata "Ratu Sasih" which is placed in "Nekara Pejeng".

Socio-political education, such as the knowledge of the cult of rulers and religious leaders because of their role in society, both when the nekara was made, the ancient Balinese era, the early days of the new order, and now. Especially for now, "Nekara Pejeng", in addition to be a media of worship, it is also used as a medium to build a sense of unity of all citizens in Pejeng Village. Although administratively Pejeng has been divided into 5 administrative villages, but by custom, recognizes that Pejeng Village is the origin of their village, and assume that Penataran Sasih temple as *kahyangan jagad*. As evidence, every ceremony of "*pujawali*" in Penataran Sasih temple, all of custom villages carries the God "*kahyangan tiga*" in their village to Penataran Sasih temple. Next, placed together in *palinggih gedong*.

The Symbolic Imagery Value

The symbolic imagery was emerged from the appearance of the unique variety of "Nekara Pejeng", such as: the biggest and largest size in Southeast Asia even in the world; the shape is divided into three parts, including the legs, body, and head; decorative patterns which adjust on each part; local type; and others. As a tourist attraction, it not only gives pleasure to tourists, but without realizing it can build a positive image for him. By visiting Pejeng they can know that Pejeng is the center of civilization in the past. For local people, especially *warga pengampu pura*, that their village is known abroad because of "Nekara Pejeng".

The Aesthetics Value

The aesthetic value is seen in the form and the ornamental pattern depicted in "Nekara Pejeng" which can describe a beautiful work and has reached a very high degree of civilization. Almost all tourists who visit and see directly "Nekara Pejeng" express "extraordinary big and beautiful". When examined in depth, that expression refers to the admiration of tourists to the ability of local people "local genius" in the mastery of space for the placement of the right painting on each field which can produce beautiful artwork and loaded with philosophical value.

Economic Value

If it is examined carefully that there are two benefits derived from travel habits in the sites of cultural heritage, which fosters the pride of the nation's cultural love and economic cycles of society. When talking about visits to cultural heritage sites such as "Nekara Pejeng", tourists certainly understand that in the management of tourist attractions requires maintenance costs. They do not object to spend money to buy admission tickets. As it is known that in Penataran Sasih temple does not apply ticket sales, but the payment is in the form of donations. It turns out that donations donated by



tourists are sometimes more than the ticket price. It shows, in addition to the money spent to fulfill the obligation to enter the object, even the deeper meaning is the sense of being responsible for its sustainability. For the temple community, all the incoming donations are kept in the LPD. Thus, credit services for the people in need can be improved. It means that the commodification of cultural heritage "Nekara Pejeng" can improve the welfare of local villagers.

5. Conclusion

Starting from the previous description, commodification is always related to production, distribution, and consumption. The form of commodification which is used as a tourist attraction is "Nekara Pejeng" supported by oral tradition, the myth of "Nekara Pejeng", books, journals, articles, purana, social media, and religious ceremonies. The following presents the conclusions of the negative impact and commodification value.

1. **Commodification impact.** Besides giving benefit to the temple community, commodification can lead to the blurring of the boundaries of sacred and profane values; as well as the reshuffle of the *nista mandala pura* space into a parking space, shopping center, and senggol market, resulting in the desecration of the sacred place.
2. **Commodification value.** As what appears on the field, it turns out the commodification can give its own meaning. Not only for tourists, but also for local people, such as: (a) past educational information value about religious social, socio-cultural, and socio-political life; (b) symbolic imagery value in the sight of the international community about the high of Balinese civilization in the past; (c) aesthetic value, it appears in the spatial use of "Nekara Pejeng" ornamental pattern, indicated that the local community has a fairly high philosophical ability; (d) and economic value, increasing the welfare of the people in Pejeng Village.

Findings

Furthermore, some of the findings are: (1) Commodification of cultural heritage "Nekara Pejeng" can give freely space and time to enter the temple for tourists, resulting in the desecration of Penataran Sasih temple; (2) To meet the demands of commodification required the expansion space for tourism facilities, therefore it must sacrifice *nista mandala* of the temple to be used as parking, shopping space as its supporting; (3) Blurring the boundaries of sacred and profane values; overhaul of the *nista mandala* space, which leads to the desecration of the sacred place. Otherwise, commodification also gives positive meaning to the people in Pejeng Village, such as: (a) educational information value, including: past historical education, socio-cultural education, religious social education, and socio-political education; (b) symbolic imagery value of the international community about the height of Balinese civilization in the past; (c) aesthetic value, it appears in the spatial use of "Nekara Pejeng" ornamental pattern, indicated that the local community has a fairly high philosophical ability; and (d) economic value characterized by increased welfare of local people.



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