

INNOVATION OF THE TRADITIONAL SANDSTONE CRAFT PRODUCTS IN THE GLOBALIZATION ERA AT NORTH SINGAPADU VILLAGE GIANYAR

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays the process through which the sandstone craft products are produced at North Singapadu Village has changed. The appearance of different types of popular sandstone craft products reflecting the local identity produced by the young craftsmen at North Singapadu Village shows this. Such products are different from the traditional sandstone craft ones in terms of form and aesthetic style. Globalization, ideology and technology have basically led to the change. The sandstone industry has become highly innovative. This present study uses the qualitative and interpretative method and the theories used are the theory of acculturation, the theory of deconstruction, and the theory of postmodern aesthetics.

The conclusion of the present study is that the form and process of innovation initially resulted from new ideas and concepts and the craftsmen's paradigm. The main things which have been responsible for changing the traditional way of life into the modern way of life are formal education, tourism and modern technologies. Those who are positively and negatively affected by globalization are not only the capital owners and craftsmen but the villagers and consumers as well. The sandstone craft products at North Singapadu Village contain the meaning of creativity, the economic meaning, the commodificative meaning and the meaning of cultural change. The finding of the study shows that the craftsmen at North Singapadu Village have ignored the traditional concepts, the technique of producing the products, and the materials used. However, the sandstone craft products at North Singapadu Village do not get extinct but remain to exist and both domestic and foreign consumers are interested in them.

Keywords: sandstone craft product, globalization, commodification, postmodern aesthetics.

INTRODUCTION

In Gianyar Regency many cultural and art heritages have been discovered since the prehistoric era. The old heritages show that the ancestors were very good at making masks, carvings and statues. Now they can be observed in the *Yeh Pulu* archeological sites at Goa Gajah located at Bedulu Village, Tebing Bebitra Temple and Tebing Gunung Kawi Temple located at Tampaksiring, Gianyar (Kempers, 1977: 122; Ardhana, 1994). The foreign artists,

Walter Spies and Miguel Covarrubias, who came to stay in Bali in 1930 (Covarrubias, 1957) were so interested in the Balinese ornamental motives. They changed the natural forms in such a way that renewals were created. They and the local artists influenced each other. The cultural acculturation led to new innovations, causing the Balinese arts in general and fine arts and craft products in particular to change. That has inspired the concepts of the production of the traditional sandstone craft products which the people living at North Singapadu Village, Sukawati, Gianyar refer to.

North Singapadu Village is the center of the sandstone craft industry; almost 75 percent of the villagers work as craftsmen. Their products are well-known all over the world. If viewed from the characters, forms, and motives of the traditional sandstone industry at North Singapadu Village, they reflect a specific decorative identity; they have adopted the dimensional forms of the Balinese puppet using three proportions (Covarrubias, 1957:55). They are (1) *lanjar* for the tall scale statues; (2) *nyepék* following the human size; and (3) *rentet* as shown by the funny statues 'punakawan'. The form, symbol, characterization, expression and ornamental decoration are created to follow the traditional norms and sources 'pakem', causing the statues produced look sacred (Goris, 1993: 154).

Modernization has certainly changed the view point and way of thinking of the young craftsmen and motivated them to create new forms oriented towards the globalized market. Since the sandstone craft products were used as the commodities of tourism several craftsmen have changed their profession; they are not only craftsmen but also art dealers. Such a situation has led to a gap between the traditional craftsmen and the young ones who are innovated to develop new models, ideas, concepts, the production technique and more modern motives in order to reach the globalized market. In relation to the Innovation of the Traditional Sandstone Craft Products at North Singapadu Village, Gianyar, the problems of the study can be formulated as follows: 1) what are the form and process of the innovation of the traditional sandstone products in the globalization era at North Singapadu Village, Gianyar like; 2) what factors contribute to the innovation of the sandstone craft products; 3) what are the implication and meaning of the innovation on the level of the socio-cultural and economic life of the people living in Gianyar in general and at North Singapadu Village in particular.

The data were analyzed using the theory of acculturation. The traditional value was reorganized into the new traditional value. The theory of deconstruction proposed by J Derrida was used to reveal the deconstructive values behind the form or model of the sandstone craft at North Singapadu Village. The theory of postmodern aesthetics proposed by Piliang (2003:

164) was used to analyze the aesthetic value of the sandstone craft product in the globalization era.

This present study is intended to understand the problems explored in relation to the background, form and process of the innovation of the traditional sandstone industry in the globalization era at North Singapadu Village, the factors which contribute to the innovation, and the implication and meaning of the innovation on the consumers, the sustainability of the production of the sandstone industrial products.

RESEARCH METHOD

Based on the problems formulated above, as far as the study entitled “the Innovation of the Traditional Sandstone Craft Products at North Singapadu Village, Gianyar” is concerned, the method used was the qualitative method with the approach of cultural studies. The steps taken in the qualitative study include the data collection, data analysis, and data display (Bailey, 1987: 32). The data were collected through observation, namely the researcher went directly to the field to observe the innovation of the traditional sandstone products in the globalization era at North Singapadu Village. The data on the background of the innovation of the sandstone craft products were obtained through interview. The data were authentic and reliable. In the qualitative study, the entire object is accurately explored before the data obtained are analyzed (Soedarsono, 2001: 46).

DISCUSSION

The decrease in production and the fact that only a limited number of young people who intend to develop the traditional sandstone craft products are responsible for “the Innovation of the Sandstone Craft Products at North Singapadu Village, Gianyar. The reason is that the traditional sandstone craft products are still oriented towards the interest of Hinduism and the interest of the king (the ruler). The products only refer to specific norms, and are religiously and magically meaningful, adopt what gods look like, and are decorated with reliefs locally referred to as *kekarangan* and *pepatran*. Therefore, the young craftsmen make innovations; the ideas, concepts, designs, motives and the technique of production. The materials used to support the aesthetic elements of space, and building and souvenir ornaments are also innovated. Such multipurpose products are produced to fulfill what is needed by foreign and domestic tourists. The innovated sandstone craft products at North Singapadu Village usually adopt the creative objects of the local environment and culture,

causing them to have specific characteristics. Heindegger (in Barker, 2008: 14) states that the innovated sandstone craft products represent the relationship between the past values with the current and future ones.

Basically, the innovated traditional craft products in the globalization era at North Singapadu Village cannot be separated from the traditional root which is processed and developed through the postmodern aesthetics in which the aesthetic idioms are critically arranged in order to fulfill the globalized market. It is such a condition which has caused the sandstone craft products at North Singapadu Village to be dominated by the capitalists, causing the traditional craftsmen, who still maintain the working idealism, to be marginalized. A wise action needs to be taken as this phenomenon cannot only weaken the local identity but can also destroy it. What is was described above shows that the globalized culture strongly affects the traditional culture as can be seen from what has happened to the traditional sandstone craft products at North Singapadu Village. The innovations were made within the last seven years, from 2007, when Bali bomb blast II took place, to 2013. The phenomenon is reflected by the sandstone craft products which have been created using the current technology and new ideas and concepts.

The Innovation of the Traditional Sandstone Craft Products in the Globalization Era at North Singapadu Village is created through the coordination of three components; each has its own strength or idealism. They are the capital owners, entrepreneurs, designers and the craftsmen. They benefit one another (symbiosis mutualism). In this context, the capital owners, entrepreneurs, and consumers consume the sandstone craft products made in Bali and outside Bali, the craftsmen and designers who live around North Singapadu Village create the products.

As far as the discourse of postmodern fine arts is concerned, the concept of creation developed by the young craftsmen does not have anything to do with the ideological meaning; it seeks pleasure. The young craftsmen play with signifiers with the principle that form follows fun. The most recent aesthetical model is expected to be the model used to understand and develop the discourse of cultural products in general and the discourse of fine arts in particular. The postmodern aesthetics has five styles; they are the pastiche style, the parody style, the kitsch model, and the schizophrenia style (Piliang, 2003: 187-202). They are used as the basis for developing the traditional sandstone craft products at North Singapadu Village. Finally, the postmodern aesthetical concept can develop the sandstone craft products to show an identity which can fulfill the globalized market's demand so that the local people's

welfare and economy can improve. The development of the sandstone craft products can be viewed from the ideas and concepts which inspire them, their forms, the technique of production used, the motives and functions, and is marked by the appearance of new themes and motives. The undersea life, the flora and fauna, the motive of cloud, the flowing water created using the carving technique, the surficial texture illustrate this. If viewed from the context of innovation, it is clear that, as far as the new motives are concerned, the old values have shifted into the new ones in the form of commodification (ARdika, 2003: 21).

The development of the sandstone craft products at North Singapadu Village can also be viewed from four aspects. They are 1) the traditional and modern style, if viewed from the style; 2) if viewed from the form, they are communal, sacred, symbolic, individual, identity and propane; 3) if viewed from the function, they are functionally used as the ceremonial, aesthetical, and practical means, and as parodies; and 4) if viewed from meaning 'yadnya', it can be used as an identity and to show freedom (data source: the Nuansa Relief craftsmen, North Singapadu Village).

Basically, the modern forms of the sandstone craft products at North Singapadu Village adopt what are referred to as *keketusan*, *pepatran*, and *kekarangan*. The statues applied to the temples in Bali are also adopted. The models individually and collectively adopted and innovated reflect the innovational values and are intended to have practical interests. That implies that innovations have been made, resulting from the development of situation and condition in which people openly adopt other cultures. What also plays an important role in the situational and conditional development is that the craft products are planned and designed using the stylization, adaptive, and collaborative approach, causing the products to reflect the renewed values. The innovated modern sandstone craft products, as stated by Heindeggar (in Baker, 2008: 14), show the relationship between the past values, current values and future values.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

From the result of analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that the Innovation of the Traditional Sandstone Craft Products in the Globalization Era at North Singapadu Village are the traditional cultural products deconstructed through the idioms of the modern fine arts by the capital owners, designers and young craftsmen with formal education. They have developed the form and process of the product creation, and are affected by the internal and

external factors. That contributes to the level of the socio-cultural and economic life of those living in Gianyar in general and those living at North Singapadu Village in particular.

It can be suggested that new concepts using the traditional values should be developed and taken into consideration when creating art works in order to fulfill what is demanded by the consumer. It is highly important to continuously follow technologies especially when designing products massively.

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