

COMMODIFICATION OF *TELAJAKAN* AT UBUD VILLAGE, GIANYAR, BALI

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ABSTRACT

This study was intended to understand the phenomenon of the commodification of *telajakan* at Ubud Village, Gianyar Regency, Bali in the era of globalization. It focused on how the commodification of *telajakan* took place in the era of globalization; what factors causing the commodification of *telajakan* to take place; and what were the impact and meaning of the commodification of *telajakan* at Ubud Village. The data were collected through observation, interview, library research and documentation study. The theory of Commodification, the theory of Discourse, the theory of Power and Knowledge, and the theory of Globalization were eclectically used in the present study.

The results of the study were as follows. The commodification of *telajakan* was defined as how it was produced as economic space, how it was distributed through printed media, announcement board, from mouth to mouth, and through the meetings held by traditional organizations, and then it was consumed by the owners and others undertaking businesses. The factors contributing to the commodification of *telajakan* were market ideology, business of tourism, technological flow, and mass media as the popular cultural agent, mimicry, and economic libido. For the sake of money, *telajakan* was not regarded as a local genius any longer; its value as traditional green open space was neglected; as a result, ecological damage could not be avoided; the aesthetics of the Balinese architecture was getting extinct; and the Balinese identity was getting destructed.

Keywords: tourism, commodification, *telajakan*, globalization.

INTRODUCTION

This study explored the commodification of *telajakan* in the era of globalization at Ubud Village, Ubud District, Gianyar Regency. From the perspective of cultural studies, this present study discussed a reality taking place in relation to the matter pertaining to how *telajakan*, as one of the open traditional spaces, was used as the place where business was undertaken (Brata, 2012). The rapid flow of global culture to Ubud area has caused the practices of market ideology framed with the industry of tourism to appear. The industry of culture, popular culture, life style, and the culture of consumerism illustrate this (Ibrahim, 2003: 15). *Telajakan*, as one of the traditional open spaces, has been commodified (Picard, 2006: 164), as an adaptive form following what tourists desire.

Globalization has caused the function of *telajakan*, as one of the identity features of traditional open space with its values, to be getting disappear. In addition, the streets have become narrow and, as a result, traffic jams cannot be avoided. The commodification of *telajakan* in the era of globalization is defined as how it is produced, distributed, and consumed by the market; how it is commercialized and traded as a commodity or service, or commodified in various forms or shapes of space with economic value.

This present study was intended to explore and understand the commodification of *telajakan* in the era of globalization at Ubud Village. Apart from that, it was also aimed at identifying and understanding the factors causing the commodification of *telajakan* to take place in the era of globalization at Ubud Village, and its impact and meaning in the era of globalization at Ubud Village.

In theory, it was expected that the result of the present study would contribute to the development of sciences and the studies related to the value of traditional space previously conducted. In practice, it was expected that the result of the present study may give input to the decision maker as to how to manage *telajakan* as one of the traditional open spaces as part of the sustainable development in order to anticipate the impact of the ideology of market framed with the industry of tourism.

RESEARCH METHOD

Qualitative method was used in the present study to give emphasis on an in-depth description which is ethic, emic, and holistic in nature through the approach of cultural studies (Barker, 2004: 29). Ubud Village was chosen as the location where the study was conducted for the following reasons. First, empirically, most *telajakan* at Ubud Village had been commodified for economic purposes; and second, Ubud Village, as the center of arts and culture had undergone many changes; it seemed that it did not need to show off the values of space any longer. The qualitative data supported by quantitative data were used in the present study. The primary data were obtained through field observation and in-depth open interview, and the secondary data were obtained by tracing or consulting books, journals, documents, encyclopedia, and internet.

The informants in the present study were purposively determined. Those who were chosen were made to be able to represent the objective field condition determined

based on their social statuses and roles in the community. The main instrument used was the researcher himself as the data collected were the qualitative data, that is, the data which were obtained from the informants. In this case, the researcher was equipped with an interview guide, a tape recorder, writing equipment, and telephone.

The data were collected through observation, in-depth interview, documentation and library research. The in-depth interview was the most important part of the whole process of collecting the primary data. The data were also checked and rechecked. Direct observation was importantly made to observe, pay close attention to, and directly record various matters pertaining to the problems under study. The library research included the activities of tracing, collecting, and analyzing resources such as books, articles, journals, encyclopedia and internet. The data were analyzed while the study was conducted. The data were descriptively, qualitatively and interpretatively analyzed.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

When Ubud Village was determined as one of the icons of the world's tourist destinations, the impact of the development of tourism could be felt. The economic growth at Ubud Village inspired investors, business doers and job seekers coming from different parts of Indonesia to come; as a result, the total of population increased. Such a growth of population affected the traditional space; more space was needed for residences; more space was needed for undertaking businesses in order to survive. Such a condition caused the owners of *telajakan* to be caught in the law of demand and offering. As a consequence, how space was used shifted from being framed with cultural value to being faced with economic value, as space was needed to exhibit commodities (Sutrisno, 2010: 282).

This led to what is referred to as the market of *telajakan* with a motive of obtaining benefit. In the era of globalization, the commodification of *telajakan* was defined as how it was produced to be spaces with economic values; it was used where cafes, boutiques, art shops, electronic shops were built, depending on what was desired by the market. Then, *telajakan* was distributed as space where businesses were undertaken in the form of promotion through printed media, announcement board, from mouth to mouth, and through meetings held by traditional organizations. After that, *telajakan*, as space where businesses were undertaken, was consumed (utilized) by the owners and others to exhibit their businesses in order to earn money. Based on that,

commodification, apart from being defined as production of commodities were also defined as how products and services were distributed and consumed (Fairclough, 1995: 207).

The more developed the industry of tourism at Ubud Village, the less local people who were interested in working as farmers. The shift in profession from working as farmers to being employed in the industry of arts and craftsmanship caused the agricultural culture-based social capital, on which the tolerance and solidarity among human fellows, '*saling asih, saling asah, and saling asuh*' were based to be getting extinct. The concept of *ngayah* (doing something without being paid) shifted to the concept of *mebayah* (doing something for payment). Using money as the measurement caused human to be greedy (Nugroho, 2001: 103). This indicated that the market ideology was becoming the foundation of people's lives; the impact of globalization was making such a condition worse (Ritzer and Goodman, 2011: 598).

Being determined as one of the tourist destinations, Ubud Village was getting progressively meaningful to the development of the people's socio-economy. However, this also meant that the intervention in the traditional space layout, such as *telajakan*, was getting stronger. The fact showed that the economic spaces constructed as the places where what was needed by tourists were offered made use of *telajakan*.

The existence of technology with its new accompanying values caused various problems to occur to traditional space lay-out. As an illustration, the introduction of electricity, telephone and internet shop with their electronic equipment needed new spaces. The form of *telajakan* had to be adjusted to the change in the human activities it accommodates in order to anticipate the development of technology. It was commodified through mass media in such a way that it could be used as places where capitalistic ideology-based businesses can be run.

The uncontrollable imitating nature caused more and more people to commodify *telajakan* into space where businesses could be run. The need to fulfill all their dynamic and complex necessities and the need to satisfy their uncontrollable and continued economic libido caused them to exploit traditional open space greedily and arbitrarily.

Anthropocentrism constitutes an ideology which believes that man is the center of all the activities in the universe, as if whatever is done on the earth is legal provided that they can satisfy what man desires and needs (Hardiman, 2003: 95). Such an anthropocentric view is used to justify the commodification of *telajakan* in the era of

globalization. It was exploited for the purposes of making money. It had not been considered a local genius any longer. The values of *telajakan* as green traditional open space had been neglected; as a result, ecological damage could not be avoided, the Balinese architectural aesthetics was getting extinct, and the Balinese identity was getting destructed. However, socio-economically, on one side, tourism was beneficial to the local people; however, on the other side, it led to dependence and a social gap.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The commodification of *telajakan* at Ubud Village in the era of globalization took place through the process of production, distribution and consumption. It was produced to be space where economic activities were run, distributed through mass media, announcement board, news release, from mouth to mouth and meetings held by traditional organizations by the owners and others to satisfy what was desired by the market. The factors which were responsible for the commodification of *telajakan* at Ubud included the ideology of market, business of tourism, the flow of technology, and mass media as the agent of popular culture apart from mimicry and economic libido. For the sake of material, *telajakan* was not considered a local genius any longer; its values as traditional open space was neglected, ecological degradation took place, the Balinese architectural aesthetics was getting extinct, and the Balinese identity was getting destructed. On one hand, tourism was beneficial socially and economically; however, on the other hand, it also led to dependence and social gap.

It was expected that the result of the present study would be used as a consideration by the owners of *telajakan* and the leaders in all levels of life and the decision makers in the village/sub-district, district and regency/city levels, both executive and legislative institutions, and entrepreneurs when solving various types of developmental problems for the sake of collective welfare; *telajakan* should be used as one of the traditional open spaces.

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