

DISMANTLING THE POWER RELATIONS OF THE PRE-WEDDING PHOTO PHENOMENON IN BALANGAN BEACH

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ABSTRACT

Photography is one of the forms of identity in visual images. Photographic work (pre wedding photo) is only one visual image that is produced as a form of breeding signs from the world of reality that can affect social relations, and forms of sociality since the last ten years. The problem that occurs is the practice of commercialization of natural space to religious exploitation on Balangan beach, Nusa Dua, Bali in the phenomenon of pre wedding photo. It is necessary to answer the form of power relations, ideology, and implications arising from the phenomenon of pre-wedding photo. The theory of knowledge power relations, Bourdieu's practice theory, and ideological theory are used to dismantle the power relations of knowledge that exist on Balangan beach. Qualitative methods are used as a method of collecting data, therefore we can know that land owners, heads of the environment, travel agents are the actors who capture that knowledge to influence, control, regulate the existence of the presence of commercialization and religious exploitation on Balangan beach. There is no denying the implications of increasing the economy, utilizing social capital, and building relationships causing the sustainability and continuation of the commercialization of Balangan beach as the object of pre-wedding photo shoots that will continue to be carried out over a long period of time.

Keywords: Pre-wedding photo, Power Relations, Balangan Beach

BACKGROUND

Pre-wedding photos are portrait photographs that have become discourses since the nineteenth century supported by characteristics that produce images realistically. Someone's portrait photo represents for who wants to show themselves with a specific purpose as a description of the picture they want to make. According to Irwandi, popular photography is supported by humans who like them to be enshrined in the medium of photography, meaning that portrait photos are made without any purpose, but made with specific purposes (Irwandi, 2012: 5).

Historical value in the art of photography is a human need in addressing phenomena in the surrounding environment. The same opinion was also conveyed by Tendi Antopani in his journal entitled "Photography, Tourism and Self-actualization Media" stating that photography activities have a very close relationship with the lifestyle of modern society because it contains values such as social strata, imaging, and self-actualization, that is all for the sake of finding a new identity. The process of establishing a lifestyle that can be said influenced the field of tourism, one of which is the pre-wedding photo phenomenon. The formation of identity is also influenced by the developing media culture both print and electronic media (Pilliang, 2018: 82). The analysis and thoughts set forth in this study can also illustrate how the art of photography becomes an interesting discourse to study. Various phenomenon are created from the visual world of photography today. Photography is no longer seen as only documentation but has developed into an effective medium for delivering messages containing various elements of interest in it.

The phenomenon of photo prewedding with the use of natural space provides an opportunity for certain elements to try to take advantage of this situation as a way to improve the economy. This is evident from several local Bali mass media such as Bali Post.com (May

11, 2018) which reported the arrest of three people suspected of being linked to illegal logging of prewedding photos at Tegal Wangi beach, Jimbaran, South Kuta.

There was also illegal logging by the local person to the photographer who was doing a pre-wedding photo on Balangan beach by asking for some money outside the cost of fees (tickets). Illegal logging occurs because community groups in the upper part of Balangan beach and lower area community groups, namely the coastal area do not make an agreement in the management of Balangan beach tourism when a photographer conducts a photo session on the coast (interview, 21 March 2018).

Some of the cases above show Balangan beach has experienced commercialization practices in the form of illegal fees related to the practice of pre-wedding photo. The practice of commercialization is not only in the form of extortion, it has even lead to acts of thuggery. No doubt the phenomenon of pre-wedding photo has raised an element of interest in a market ideology. Not only in Balangan beach, the beaches in the Nusa Dua area have largely been commercialized due to the phenomenon of pre-wedding photo even though most do not yet have a special management, but it is still based on individual interests in collecting the cost of photographing pre-wedding photographs. This causes Balangan beach to be one of the beaches in the Nusa Dua area that has structured and well-managed management for now and still being a favorite place for pre-wedding photos for foreign guests. Balangan Beach, located in the village area of Jimbaran, *Banjar Cengiling*, Kuta Selatan, Badung, Bali is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Bali.

Viewed from the standpoint of human ecology, how reciprocity between humans and their environment is not enough to pay attention only to material, information, and energy but in postmodern life the cash flow is more important in terms of economics, technology, politics, and social culture (Soemarwoto, 2001 : 23). The advantages of Balangan beach aside from the potential of its natural beauty are also the facilities supporting pre-wedding photo activities. Existing facilities include: ample parking, bridal makeup, lodging, restrooms, and stalls. Even in some photo spots on the beach Balangan made a place that seems sacred by decorated with *poleng* cloth (red, white, black color), white, and yellow. There is also a statue of *Ganesh* and a rock that resembles a figure decorated with cloth and *udeng*.

Religious exploitation and the environment is one form of action taken on the Balangan coast and suspected to have been carried out since the phenomenon of pre-wedding photo. The installation of certain statues with the aim can be used as an object of photography and become a special attraction, but it looks as if it is a sacred place that is believed to be a place of worship for Hindus. The existence of a number of statues, writing information as a sacred place and giving cloth to the statues are one of the ways in which landowners to attract the attention of foreign guests. The objects used can be engineered in such a way as one of the efforts to increase people's confidence in something that is sacred. Not surprisingly, this happens because pre-wedding photos really need interesting places, especially foreign brides who want to find objects as a characteristic of a place or region.

This uniqueness adds to the attraction of tourists not only for local tourists but also foreign tourists. Over time Balangan beach becomes a natural space that is in great demand, especially by foreign guests, especially China guest. The dominance of foreign tourists who do pre-wedding photos in these places raises the curiosity of researchers to examine more deeply. Not only the natural beauty that can be enjoyed, but there is also the *Pura Dalem Segara* which is often used as a photo object by tourists. The emergence of the phenomenon of pre-wedding photo provides a breath of fresh air to be used by the community, especially the Balangan coastal area in improving the economy.

Balangan beach natural space management in the practice of pre-wedding photo has begun since 2008 and is now a routine destination for couples who will do pre-wedding photo. Beach objects that should be owned by the state and freely enjoyed by many people have been converted into commercial objects by the intellectual elements within them. Such practices give rise to the phenomenon of hedonism as an attempt to profit and shape the power plays of knowledge.

In the process of packaging, pre-wedding photo being an habits or knowledge that has been attached to the community. Empirical facts prove pre-wedding photo as the art of photography today is not only seen in the aesthetic realm but has changed as a product of

commodification or leads to the realm of business. The shift from these domains there are symptoms which are power relations. Research entitled "Dismantling the power relations of pre-wedding photo knowledge on Balangan beach in Bali" in general to deconstruct what is the ideology behind the phenomenon of pre-wedding photo and disclosure of facts that can provide an overview of knowledge and understanding of the practices of power relations.

It is interesting to being research further how the way or process of distribution is carried out to sell or promote Balangan beach as a place for photo shoots pre-wedding, how the relationship between landowners and surrounding communities, and whoever plays or certain elements behind the phenomenon of photo shoot pre-wedding on the beach of Balangan. It is expected that the results of this study can provide references to further research, especially in the art of photography.

Balangan beach pre-wedding is said to be a matter of cultural study when the existence of Balangan beach as a pre-wedding arena is captured as knowledge by actors who have the power to speak on behalf of the pre-wedding photo as expressed in the background above. As for several problems related to the forms of knowledge power relations, ideology, and what implications arise from the power relations of knowledge on the Balangan beach.

DISCUSSION

The research plan regarding pre-wedding photo as one of the parts in the art of photography is aimed at understanding the development of the art of digital photography which has a major impact on people's lives, especially those on the Balangan beach. Balangan Beach is located to the north of Dreamland beach and south of Kuta beach, precisely in the Ungasan hill, South Kuta, Badung, Bali. The advantage of this beach with another beach is that Balangan beach is still a beautiful and private beach due to the access road only one and the beach is surrounded by coral hills, thus minimizing visitors with large numbers.

Research on dismantling the power relation of pre-wedding photo knowledge on Balangan beach has never been done by previous studies, but research on the commodification of Balangan beach in the phenomenon of pre-wedding photo has been studied. Research conducted by Ramanda in a scientific journal (2018) with the title "Commodification of Balangan Beach Space in The Phenomenon of Pre-wedding Photo in Bali". The research focuses on how the commercialization of natural space, namely in Balangan beach since the presence of the pre-wedding photo phenomenon. The need for reference data from previous studies to complete the data needed to support the foundation of interpretation of a study and also critical analysis in accordance with theories cultural studies.

Since the phenomenon of pre-wedding photo on Balangan beach, natural space is no longer owned by everyone but has been turned into a commercialized quality of how power creates and engenders new knowledge. Power always produces knowledge as the basis of its power. According to Foucault, knowledge is always linked to power, but the links are not mutually exclusive, but rather reinforce each other, and spread. In the theory of power relations Foucault contained three concepts namely discourse, knowledge and power (Wijaya, 2016: 2).

Not only discourse, power and knowledge, but when the practices of these relations work, the '*arena*' needed in Boudieu's terms is the field of social struggle. By using this concept model, it is possible to analyze relationships, group positions, and trends in producing social order in building power relations. The term pre-wedding photo captured as a discourse (use of language) by Balangan beach landowners since 2008 gives a new form of knowledge in knowing a reality of the phenomenon of photography on Balangan beach. The discourse captured is then correlated with other statements that may be related to the pre-wedding photo phenomenon either through political, economic, social, or cultural discourse. When this happens new knowledge will emerge that can determine the conditions of its existence. Knowledge that develops and eventually spreads will build relationships from the practice of spreading the discourse.

According to Sujaya, a former worker at Balangan beach since 1998 and retired in 2010, the practice of pre-wedding photo shoots at Balangan beach began to bloom in 2000 based on interviews (March 29, 2019). With the rise of photographers who do pre-wedding photo on Balangan beach, landowners began to conduct structured management in 2008. The

management is both from the payment system and compensation to the agent that can bring in guests or couples who will take pre-wedding photos on Balangan beach.



Photo 1. Pre-wedding photo shoot activity at Balangan Beach



Photo 2. Bridal decoration room facilities at Balangan beach

In terms of economic capital, ownership of four hectares of land has been passed down from generation to generation including the Balangan coast. The location is a great opportunity to benefit from the sale of entrance tickets and permission to photograph pre-wedding. The nominal price is determined by the land owner himself based on observations or references from similar management elsewhere. Economic capital is also owned by other actors with various variations which will be deepened through observation in the field.

In terms of the social capital of the land owner and manager is one of the original residents of *Banjar Cenggiling* and has been settled for a long time. Currently, the son and daughter-in-law become one of the managers and also include indigenous *Banjar Cenggiling*. Not only relationships within the scope of the family, but also have spread in a wider scope.

Cultural capital is inseparable from the form of researcher observation in which cultural capital highlights the forms of cultural knowledge possessed. Based on a preliminary survey of several local actors including landowners, they got information that their cultural capital is actually not too high when viewed from the level of study that averaged middle and high school graduates, but there are some who are studying in tertiary institutions that later have the

opportunity to strengthen cultural capital. Meanwhile the weaknesses of cultural capital ownership from senior actors are covered by the symbolic capital they have.

Based on the results of interviews with the head of the environment Mr. Adnyana, he said that the land owner and manager is a *Banjar Cenggiling*. With the status as a stakeholder, that is someone who helps in leading a ceremony in Bali, Mr. Adnyana indirectly also has a symbolic capital that refers to the degree or position of honor. With capital as the father of Adnyana, he has the authority to regulate or carry out cultural practices in the Balangan coast area. With the existence of social capital, so that landowners have the power to exploit in matters of religion against the objects of shooting namely the cave that is on the beach Balangan.



Photo 3. Statue settings for background photography purposes.



Photo 4. Ganesha statue and sesari box

The objects in the example above seem to contain a sacred value, but in reality it is only a setting to increase the attractiveness in that place. For the pre-wedding photo needs of the bride and groom can be subject to considerable costs by travel agents and photographers depending on location, photographer services, and clothing. The results of interviews with photographers (interview, 25 February 2019) the location of the photo shoot on Balangan beach included in the pre-wedding photo package that they offered that had previously collaborated and made agreements with landowners. Not only contributions through travel agents, landowners must also give money to the village with a certain nominal.

Judging from the pre-wedding photo phenomenon on the Balangan beach that the implied ideology is a process of the workings of the binary opposition, in other words the image created with the Balangan beach object becomes a place of pre-wedding photos that is in great demand is how the image is presented or advertised with a better representation of another place or term for *Pilliang* is "the others".

CONCLUSION

Balangan coastal area management cannot be done only by one party, but there is a need for cooperation involving certain elements who do have the same interests. This means that landowner's knowledge is power which refers to certain relations and discourse or ideology. Power always produces knowledge as the basis of its power.

As explained above related actors who capture the knowledge that is scattered behind the discourse of the pre-wedding photo phenomenon that has moved these actors to make knowledge become power and play in the arena of ideological battles. Actors who capture this knowledge include landowners, neighborhood heads, prospective brides, photographers, and travel agents. The implication is of course due to the market ideology in the economic sphere. Increased economic values in the form of exploitation of both nature and religion are played as objects of production by capitalists with social, cultural, symbolic, and economic capital. It cannot be denied that power over relations is inseparable from the role of knowledge which is spread through discourses by certain elements. The continuation of power relations that will continue to exist through the relations of generations of landowners and strong social capital makes the pre-wedding photo phenomenon a commercially valuable capitalist object.

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