



Cultural Commodification in the Bau Nyale Tradition in Sasak Community



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Abstract

Today's culture or tradition is filled with cultural values or local wisdom and has economic and political content. It causes the opening of space for cultural capitalization that prioritizes selling or exchanging values and not using values. The study aims to explore the cultural commodification that occurs in the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak NTB community, including the existence of the Bau Nyale tradition, the commodification of Bau Nyale, to the value transformation and shifting in the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak NTB community. This study is qualitative research with primary data sources, namely community leaders such as Adat and the Sasak people in general. The data obtained through interviews, books, and articles are then interpreted using the commodity approach of Karl Marx. The analysis results show that the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak community today is not just a tradition of catching Nyale (sea worms) for the Sasak people. More than that, the Bau Nyale tradition has various dimensions and goals, including economics. In this case, Bau Nyale has become a secondary activity as an activity or tradition that follows the primary activity, namely economic activity. The commodification that occurs in the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak community causes a shift in orientation and even raises social problems such as gambling, fights, and even murder cases.

Introduction

The cultural face of the archipelago continues to experience dynamics, due to the influence of global changes. The socio – anthropological perspective on various cultures must therefore involve political and economic aspects, not just as a tradition filled with cultural values or local wisdom. As is the case in viewing the Sasak people today, they make use of traditions and living habits passed down from generation to generation, not only as a vehicle for preserving the local way of life, but also for developing tourism. This causes the opening of space for cultural capitalization which tends to aim at increasing selling or exchange values and not use values (Laila and Qudsy 2021).

Today's culture or tradition is not only filled with cultural values or local wisdom but also contains economic and political content. Culture or traditions owned by the community are used as a medium for tourism, so this causes the opening of space for cultural capitalization that has or even prioritizes selling or exchanging values and not using values (Laila and Qudsy 2021). Commodification is a form of capitalism where signs and objects are used as commodities (Rozy, Fathur 2021). In this case, the economic value becomes a new orientation in the implementation or practices of rituals or traditions where the main orientation is to gain economic and political benefits in that culture or tradition. It will give birth to a form of cultural commodification. The commodification of culture itself is one of the contemporary issues that is developing along with the thought of globalization in this post – modern era. The existence of cultural commodification reconstructs culture in such a way that culture in this context becomes an attraction. It is used as an economic resource which is then exchanged based on the value of money. The culture or tradition does not only have the dimension of cultural values or local wisdom but also dimensions or bring in economic resources.



The Sasak people, who are known to be full of culture and tradition, cannot be separated from these phenomena. The Bau Nyale culture or tradition is one example. Bau Nyale, as one of the cultures or traditions of the Sasak people, cannot be separated from commodification. Bau Nyale is a tradition of catching Nyale (a type of sea worm), which has a close connection with the culture or legend of Princess Mandalike in the Sasak people (Fazalani 2018). The Bau Nyale tradition itself has its own meaning for the Sasak people. This is inseparable from the existence of historical values or backgrounds that are rooted in the life of the Sasak people. It starts from the story of patience to the sacrifice of Princess Mandalike in making decisions regarding her problems and kingdom. (Nursaptini et al. 2020)

So far, studies on the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak community have only focused on three aspects, namely: First, the functions or values contained in the Bau Nyale tradition, starting from historical functions, recreation, tourism events, expressions of cultural values, and a place for cultural enculturation (Fazalani 2018). Second, the existence of the Bau Nyale tradition as a medium for the introduction and preservation of crocodiles in the Sasak community (Nursaptini et al. 2020). The existence of the Bau Nyale tradition does not only focus on the practice of Bau Nyale itself but more than that, in practice, the Bau Nyale tradition involves a number of arts and cultures of the Sasak people, from Peresean to Wayang. The tradition displays or tells local stories of the local community in this is the Sasak people. This then has an impact on the function or existence of the Bau Nyale tradition, where the Bau Nyale tradition is not just a sequence of traditional practice but is a forum for introducing the culture or arts of the Sasak people. Third, studies on the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak community so far have also focused more on determining the date of Bau Nyale itself in the Rowot Sasak calendar (a typical Sasak calendar) (Zulhadi 2018). Related to this, the existence of the Sasak calendar (Rowot) has an important role in determining the date for the implementation of the Bau Nyale tradition. Furthermore, according to the results of research conducted by Heri Zulhadi, the determination of dates in the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak (Rowot) calendar is based on the Hijriyah calendar (Lunar calendar) and the results of the decisions of community leaders such as traditional leaders.

From previous studies related to the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak community, very few have even studied specifically regarding the cultural commodification that occurs in the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak community. This article is a response to previous studies related to the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak people of NTB, Indonesia. To find or reveal the phenomenon of cultural commodification in the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak community. This article will analyze 3 matters, namely: First, the Bau Nyale tradition in the tradition of the Sasak people of NTB. Second, the commodification of culture in the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak people of NTB. Third, the transformation to the shift in values that occurs in the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak people of NTB.

It is important to study the commodification of culture in the Bau Nyale tradition because it will have an impact on the understanding, character, and orientation of the Bau Nyale tradition itself. Because in this context, the occurrence of social problems such as a shift in values and orientation in the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak community is the result of a shift in orientation or even a radical commodification that occurred in the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak community. So the existence of policies that do not look at aspects of the values and orientation of the Bau Nyale tradition will not be able to have an optimal impact on the construction and socio-

cultural structure of the Sasak people. This is because there are obstacles or problems that are socio-cultural in nature that have not been identified in the socio-cultural life of the Sasak people.

In this study, the object of study here is the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak people of NTB. At the same time, the location of this research was conducted in Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. The reason why this research was conducted in the Sasak community, namely, the Sasak people have a complex socio-cultural structure. The main attraction in seeing how the Sasak people conceptualize and place their culture or traditions which will ultimately have an impact on the entire social system of society starting from education, social, economics, to religion. Meanwhile, the reason for selecting the theme in this study is related to the commodification of culture in the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak community, namely, there are social problems related to shifts in orientation and values that occur in the practice of the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak community.

Research Method

This study conducted as field research. The research method used in this study is a descriptive qualitative research method, namely research in which the data is in the form of verbal. In this study, researchers used the commodity approach of Karl Marx. Its relation to commodification Karl Marx explains that commodification is anything that is produced and for sale (Niko and Atem 2019). Obtaining data from a study requires techniques in collecting data. In this study, the researcher used the interview method. That is, the data collection technique was carried out by one-sided questioning and answering, which was carried out systematically with the aim of obtaining data related to the research topic.

In this study, the researcher used a semi-structured interview method in which the researcher gave questions that were not too focused on one question but could be developed according to the needs of the researcher. In this study, the research took several main data sources, namely "A", and "B" as the local community (Sasak community), "M.P" as the head of the region, religious figure as well as traditional leader of Penelando. The choice of traditional and religious leaders as data sources is due to the fact that traditional and religious leaders are people who know the socio-cultural structure and history of the community. They understand the Bau Nyale tradition, especially the commodifications that occur in the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak community. While the selection of the Sasak people is because the Sasak people are a group of people who carry out and accept the implications of the Bau Nyale tradition.

In addition, to get comprehensive answers or data related to this research topic. The researcher tries to trace or examine previous research such as journal articles, books and so on related to the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak community which in this case the researcher uses as supporting data. It is related to the research topic, namely the commodification of culture in the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak people of NTB. Meanwhile, to analyze the data in this study, the researcher used a descriptive philosophical analysis method, namely describing and presenting data based on data from the findings that researchers obtained through interviews and the results of previous research, both books and journal articles.

Bau Nyale in the Tradition of Sasak Community

Certain times or days have special meaning in every cultural community. Time is usually associated with good luck or bad luck. Time is also associated with certain

supernatural figures who are believed to have the power to give good or bad in the path of human life. Therefore, every community that supports culture, like the Sasak people, pays close attention to certain days in carrying out cultural activities. Bau Nyale is a tradition of catching Nyale (a type of sea worm) which is carried out by the Sasak community twice a year, that is, in the tenth month according to the Sasak calendar (around February and/or March). Bau Nyale itself can be divided into two, namely Nyale Poto (end) and Nyale Tunggak (beginning). Furthermore, judging from the time of his arrest, Bau Nyale can be distinguished *jelo penumpah* (trial day) and *jelo pemboyak* (closing day). Each falls on the 19th and 20th of the tenth (around February and/or March)(M. Interview 2022). Furthermore, "A" explains that:

"The trial day was carried out to avoid erroneous calculations as to the correct day and date for Nyale's release. This needs to be done considering that the calculations of parents (community leaders) can be wrong in the sense that they are not always correct and correct". (Interview with A, 2022)

Related to Bau Nyale (catching sea worms), most Nyale will come out at the time of Nyale Tunggak (start). So it is no wonder most people catch Nyale in the tenth month (February). In the Bau Nyale tradition, the community will flock to the fishing location, namely Kaliantan Beach in East Lombok, Kute Beach in Central Lombok and other southern beaches. Some walk and some use vehicles. The people who catch Nyale come from all walks of life and classes, starting from children, the elderly, young people, men and women. Bau Nyale itself has become a tradition or even a festival like a people's party in the customs or traditions of the Sasak people. In the social construction and beliefs of the Sasak people themselves, the Sasak people believe that Nyale is a form or form of sacrifice from a Puti Raja named Putri Mandalaike. Furthermore, according to the results of the interview "A" explained that:

"A King has a Princess who is very graceful, beautiful, and has high nobility. All the kings and princes then wanted to marry her. Every prince is vying to get the princess's love which causes the King and Princess to become uneasy and gloomy. Because the slightest mistake can hurt them which in the end can lead to war between kingdoms. The king then handed over the decision to the Princess. Before making a decision, the Princess contemplated the differences between herself and the people, especially her people. Taking into account all of this, the princess prefers to throw herself into the sea. With hopes and goals for the common good. After the Princess threw herself into the sea, a sea worm appeared which the Sasak people call Nyale". (Interview with A, 2022)

The Bau Nyale tradition for the Sasak people is not just a tradition of catching Nyale (sea worms). However, more than that, the Bau Nyale tradition for the Sasak people is full of values and meanings ranging from social solidarity, prioritizing the interests of the masses over individual interests to sacrifices for the sake of social harmony (I Made Purna, 1). Furthermore, according to the results of research conducted by Runi Fazalani (2018) it shows that there are values contained in the Bau Nyale tradition which are manifested in the story of Putri Mandalaike, such as patience, sacrifice, complete personality for women, courtesy, manners to courage and responsibility. Responsibilities are values that are used as measuring tools or assessments in the knowledge or social system of the Sasak people (Fazalani 2018)

Cultural Commodification in the Bau Nyale Tradition

The commodification of culture was born as a result of globalization which is inseparable from the impact of the global economy and culture. Barker explained that

commodification is a process of association of capitalism, namely objects, qualities, and signs are made as commodities (Niko and Atem 2019). Commodification explains the capitalist way of accumulating value through the transformation of use value into exchange value (Fakhruroji 2005). Its relation to commodification Karl Marx explains that commodification is anything that is produced and for sale (Niko and Atem 2019). Commodification itself is a general term that has to do with various kinds of phenomena in the midst of people's lives such as financialization to capitalization. The main purpose of commodification itself is the economy, namely by trading goods or services on the market (Smessaert, Missemer, and Levrel 2020). Related to commodification in the context of Bau Nyale in the Sasak community, people who come in the Bau Nyale tradition have a variety of different purposes, starting from the Nyale itself, trading, to politics. The large number of seasonal visitors in the Bau Nyale tradition is utilized by the community for various purposes, one of which is the economy. Regarding the matter, "B" explains that:

"The date for Bau Nyale is not entirely correct. So this causes that sometimes more Nyale come out on the trial day than on the closing day or vice versa. Because of this, many people have been at the Nyale fishing location since the 15th. The community will form groups and make tents while on vacation to sell various goods and food on the beaches". (Interview with B, 2022)

Furthermore, "B" in this context explains that:

"There are some people whose orientation or purpose is only to sell or put on a show. In some cases that are close to elections, such as the Regent's, the Bau Nyale tradition is used as an arena for political contestation. This can be seen from the presence of candidates who donate entertainment such as wayang for the community on behalf of the candidate". (Interview with B, 2022)

Basically, commodification is closely related to the market (Atmadja 2014). Related to this, the existence of an economic to political dimension in the Bau Nyale tradition is optimally utilized by the community, namely opening booths by displaying various kinds of merchandise in the form of goods, food to performances, or typical culture of the Sasak people such as prisean making the Bau Nyale tradition an activity. Second Bau Nyale has become *secondary activity* as an activity or tradition that follows *primary activity* namely economic and political activities. If you look closely, you can see that the Bau Nyale tradition is not just a cultural practice. But more than that, it is a place where the process of commodification of culture takes place as an economic resource that manifests itself in commercial forms. The commodification of culture in the Bau Nyale tradition can be seen in the event concept which refers to the festival concept. This shows that the Bau Nyale tradition is no longer a sacred tradition that has religious and socio-cultural values. Many visitors who come to the Bau Nyale tradition then make this tradition a regional tourism object.

The Bau Nyale procession or practice, which used to only aim to capture Nyale, which is full of religious and socio-cultural values of the Sasak people, such as sharing and sacrifice for the wider community, has been interspersed with various artistic events such as Peresean to Wayang as a special attraction in tourism. This then had an impact on the orientation of the people who previously only caught Nyale but turned into entertainment. This shows that there has been a transformation of values in the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak community. The existence of culture or art in the implementation of Bau Nyale is not only of interest but also generates economic resources. The commodification that appears in the practice of tradition or culture often

gets stuck in shifting or eroding values which will eventually have an impact on fading or losing the meaning and philosophy of the culture itself (Widyastuti 2011). Cultural commodification can be interpreted as the commercialization (trading) of cultural symbols in order to obtain economic or monetary value. The commodification of culture is also a process of turning elements such as symbols or cultural activities into commodity products that are traded with economic motives through various processes such as re-production to meet market standards (Shepherd 2002).

Bau Nyale Transformation: from Tradition to Industry to a Shift in Values

The term tradition seems to be a simple term but because of its complexity makes tradition one of the most complex terms to explain. Tradition, as a general term, is a complex phenomenon or related to community behavior which contains norms, values, and beliefs about certain practices as behavior and even as social awareness of society (Qazi 2021). The existence of community traditions or culture is projected and felt through community products in the form of practices and perspectives. These products include works of art as well as norms and values. Basically, practice in a tradition is a pattern of social behavior in society according to the pattern set by the community concerned.

In the life of the Sasak people, the local wisdom traditions of the local community are still quite strong. This can be seen in a series of traditions that exist in the Sasak community, and Bau Nyale is one of them. Community activities such as traditions cannot be separated from the influence of the beliefs they profess. It forms a series of values in this traditional practice. The Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak community can be said to be part of the cultural activities of the Sasak people, which are indeed full of meaning and value. However, nowadays, these values and meanings are more constructive and varied according to human needs and utilized for certain purposes. Bau Nyale, which was originally the culture of the local community, was then packaged into a product that deserves to be exhibited to a wider audience. The global community is more commercial in nature, which of course, is full of economic values. In other words, the tradition or culture of Bau Nyale is currently undergoing a process of commodification, where in a political-economic perspective, commodification is present in commercial forms where the state or government places rules based on market standards and sets market standards (Awalia 2017).

Marx states the economic structure was the beginning of human activity. The economic structure is the driving force of the social system that causes social change. This is inseparable from the existence of an economic structure that forms the basis of all human behavior (Martono 2012). According to Marx, every society is characterized by an infrastructure and a superstructure. Infrastructure in society is in the form of an economic structure. The superstructure includes ideology, government laws, family, and religion. The economic structure is the foundation upon which all other power bases are built. Thus a change in the method or orientation of the production of goods and services causes changes in all human relations (Martono 2012). In this context, the change and development of a society is determined by the way they produce goods and services. Related to this, commodification is the main tool for transforming social relations into economic relations. In other words, the process of commodification in the Bau Nyale tradition cannot be separated from economic elements. The economic structure plays an important role in adding to or even changing the value of a tradition or culture so that it has commercial value and becomes a product that is marketable according to national, transnational and even global market standards.

The commodification process will usually be supported by the mass media as a marketing communication tool, either through print or digital media. This is because today's media has lived in the social system of society (Yusuf 2016). Today, local culture or wisdom has its own charm in the tourism industry. Tourism that focuses on cultural experiences is now called cultural tourism. Cultural tourism itself is the movement of a person to a certain special cultural event. Tourism as the most important part in the process of commodification of culture and consumption, is present in society oriented towards market interests. The commodification that occurs in the Bau Nyale tradition seems to obscure the purpose of carrying out the tradition itself, namely to reflect noble values such as sacrifice to prioritize the interests of the masses rather than the interests of individuals or groups and so on. For example, the inclusion of new instruments in the Bau Nyale tradition, such as drinking and gambling, has caused problems in the Bau Nyale tradition, ranging from fights to murders. Furthermore "B" explains that:

"Bau Nyale is not just catching Nyale (sea worms). But more than that, Bau Nyale is a people's party where many people gather with all their facilities. It's no wonder that some problems arise or are even resolved there (Bau Nyale). So that it is not uncommon, even almost every year, there are victims who die at the Bau Nyale event. This can be caused by external problems or sometimes problems arise right away, such as alcohol and so on". (Interview with B, 2022)

One of the challenges in developing tourism is profit orientation and cultural commodification which is a problem in practicing the authentic identity of the tradition itself. Scholars stress the ambiguity of "multiple cultures" in the tourism industry when "sold out" cultures and entities, traditions and cultural practices are transformed into tourism products and representations, commodities and products that can be sequestered for consumption and for the benefit of tourists (Mažeikien and Gerulaitien 2018). Greenwood argues that anything that is sold assumes a form of community, including culture. However, because culture does not belong to anyone, the marketing and sale of cultural production to tourists is a form of wider societal takeover. When this occurs local cultures are altered and often destroyed and rendered meaningless or have no meaning for the community (Shepherd 2002).

Another very important influence in commodification is the role of local authorities and the vision of the central government. The commodification of Bau Nyale in NTB is part of the central government's tourism development program which is welcomed by the local government. In NTB the commodification of culture operates similarly to the commodification of culture in Bali. Bali and NTB do not only sell natural resources, but also explore local traditions and habits to attract domestic and foreign tourists. Therefore, every community that supports culture, like the Sasak people, pays close attention to certain days in carrying out cultural activities.

Some of the modes used as a way to carry out cultural commodification are increasing people's welfare and increasing regional income. The central government argued that NTB's economy is always ranked in the bottom ten in Indonesia, and the high poverty rate is the reason that NTB's economy can be boosted from tourism. Therefore, the infrastructure in NTB continues to be improved, so that access to all areas in NTB will be easier to reach. In the global economic political constellation, NTB has become part of the periphery region which must be a source of capital accumulation controlled by actors in the centers of the global tourism economy network, where the state is the agent.

Conclusion

Culture or tradition does not only contain cultural values or local wisdom but also contains economic and political content. Related to this, the culture or tradition that is owned by the community is used as a vehicle for tourism for commercial activities that have economic value. The existence of commodification in community traditions, such as the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak people of NTB has caused tradition to no longer be the main orientation. Further, here Bau Nyale has become *secondary activity* as an activity or tradition that follows *primary activity*, namely economic and political activities. The Bau Nyale tradition is not just a cultural practice. But more than that, it is a place where the process of commodification of culture takes place as an economic resource that manifests itself in commercial forms. In addition, the existence of commodification in the Bau Nyale tradition also has an impact on aspects of the values in this tradition. This can be seen from the various problems that arise in this tradition, ranging from drinking, and fighting to murder cases.

This study is a response to previous studies related to the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak people of NTB, Indonesia. Trying to reveal the existence of commodification in the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak community. The study reveals the existence of the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak people's tradition, cultural commodification in the Bau Nyale tradition, to the transformation of the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak people of NTB. Given the nature of the era that continues to move forward and change, of course this will have an impact on the orientation and values in people's behavior, including the traditions that exist in the midst of people's lives, not least the Bau Nyale tradition in the Sasak people of NTB. Related to this, studies related to traditions or local wisdom that exist in the midst of people's lives, especially people in the NTB Sasak community need to be developed. This is because each region has a different style of tradition or culture. So that further research or studies are needed to identify problems that have not been identified.

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