

Culture Tourism to Pesarean Kawi Mountain as A Culture of Cultural Products

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Abstract: This paper aims to find out how the production of *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi area which was originally a sacred has been developed into a cultural tourism area that aims to attract the number of tourists to this region. This research was conducted at *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi which is located at the administrative area of Wonosari Village, Wonosari District, Malang Regency, East Java. The study was conducted by using qualitative research with ethnographic approach. Specifically, researchers were investigating a cultural group in a natural environment in a sufficient period of time which carried out flexibly and developed according to conditions in the field. The results show the role of developer, government, and mass media is influential in changing the image of *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi today. This is done primarily to attract more tourists to visit. As a result, new cultural products emerged which are the impact of the process.

Keywords: *mount kawi, pilgrim, cultural tourism, cultural production*

Introduction

Mount Kawi is one of the mountains at Malang Regency, East Java. This mountain is precisely located at the administrative area of Wonosari Village, Malang Regency. The existence of Mount Kawi become special because in this region two figures of Islamic religious leaders which are also Prince Diponegoro's independence warriors were buried. They are known as Mbah Djoego and R.M Iman Soedjono. Until now these tombs crowded by pilgrims from various religious, ethnic and national backgrounds. The tombs of the two figures are known as *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi.

Pesarean of Mount Kawi is a sacred room for the growth of religious phenomena among pilgrims who came from various ethnic and religious background. *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi becomes like that since every sacred room implies the existence of *hierophany* that is, an eruption of the sacred room which is formed by separation of cosmic environment around it to build region which completely different from the profane (Eliade, 1987:12). The tombs of Eyang Djoego and R.M Iman Soedjono became *hierophany* for pilgrims. The tomb of the two figures are no longer just a tomb, but something sacred. All pilgrims come because of belief in the supernatural powers which exists there. Therefore, as a tribute to this, appears a rite that has been set and must be carried out by pilgrims who come from various ethnic or religious backgrounds.

Increasing number of pilgrims who come to Mount Kawi also has an impact on the economic, social and cultural life there. Presence of people from various groups has gradually changed the economic, social and cultural life of society. On the other hand, the large number of visitors who come to Mount Kawi each year provides an opportunity for a number of parties to commodify these cultural artifacts which used to be ritual space for pilgrims to function to be a religious tourism place.

Potency of *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi as a source of local government's revenue through the development of local tourism seems to be taken seriously. In 2002, Wonosari Village was proclaimed and designated as "Ritual Village " by Malang Regent at that time (Rahmaniah, 2015: 26). This event has opened up the way for the disclosing of Mount Kawi as a sacred ritual for pilgrims with various ethnic, cultural and social classes background. Besides that, at government of Malang Regency

official website (www.malangkab.go.id), *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi is one of the primary tourist destinations of local government to attract tourists to visit this region.

With various developments, currently *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi is not the only destination for pilgrims, but also for tourists who want come to visit for enjoying the natural beauty, atmosphere, and various cultural products which exist. This paper aims to find out how the production of *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi area which was originally a sacred has been developed into a cultural tourism area that aims to attract the number of tourists to this region.

Method

This research was conducted at *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi which is located at the administrative area of Wonosari Village, Wonosari District, Malang Regency, East Java. The study was conducted by using qualitative research with ethnographic approach. Specifically, researchers were investigating a cultural group in a natural environment in a sufficient period of time which carried out flexibly and developed according to conditions in the field.

Data sources of this study are informants, events, and documents. Selection of informants was carried out by purposive sampling. The criterion is they understand the circumstances of Mount Kawi. Based on the consideration of object material sensitivity and difficulty in reaching the data because it relates to the realm of informant's religiosity, the snowball method was used for the selection of informants, it was done by setting key informants to deliver researchers into more specific group members. From these considerations the key informants in this study were the caretaker of *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi and the village head of Wonosari. Events that become data source are realities that occur in society as long as researchers conduct the research process. They were the events that related to the production and products in Mount Kawi. Documents that were used as data sources in this study came from books, journals, newspapers, magazines, articles on the internet, also research reports that related to the aim of the research, about commodification on Mount Kawi.

This research is a field research. However, documents which are related to research objects also need to be collected. To collect data, researchers used qualitative research data collection techniques proposed by Cresswell (2014: 268-273). Therefore, to collect data related to the purpose of the problem in this study was carried out by 1) in-depth interviews, 2) observation of participants, and 3) documents review. This study used research instruments in the form of 1) researchers, 2) interview guides, 3) field notes, and 4) recording tools.

In this research, data analysis was carried out by displaying, reducing, and concluding. The displaying included activities such as 1) processing and preparing data which are derived from transcription of interviews, field notes and documents. Various data that were collected were classified and arranged according to their categories based on the source, 2) reading all the information that was obtained and reflecting the meaning thoroughly. This relates to general ideas and information obtained during the process of reading the data that has been collected. Data reduction was done by 1) filtering the various data needed in accordance with the research objectives, 2) coding each data that was obtained based on the type. In this process researchers shared information that was obtained into segments to be interpreted. Concretely, this was done by collecting written data and drawings that was compiled beforehand to then separated them into categories and labeled with special terms, 3) after coding, describing of settings, people, categories, and themes in accordance with the purpose of the study were being conducted, and 4) linking each theme and description that have been obtained for later analysis. The final stage is taking conclusions by interpreting the data.

Results and Discussion

At this time it cannot be denied that the presence of globalization has led to the collapse of the geographical and cultural boundaries of society. As a result, the era of globalization can be seen as an arena of contestation that occurs between various elements of human life throughout the world (Andalas, 2018: 1). In this process, traditional and local values are often regarded as a form of authenticity which is an attraction for various elements of society to see it. As a result, various forms of traditional arts, traditional performances, and various local things are often used as a tool to attract tourists to come to visit a region.

Currently, the existence of *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi does not only function as a sacred space for visitors, but also has become a profane space for visitors who want to enjoy it as a tourism spot. This condition can be seen from the number of visitors who see the function Mount Kawi not only as a place to make a pilgrimage or ask for blessings, many domestic and foreign tourists come to enjoy the atmosphere, buildings and cultural performances there.

Various changes that occur in Mount Kawi until it turns into its current form is a process of cultural production that is carried out by strategy of representations changing. In order to produce representations or images of Mount Kawi as something that can be accepted by all people, there are several production strategies that carried out in changing its image. Changes in the representation of Mount Kawi from sacred and only visited for religious purposes merely become a place of tourism without leaving the elements of religiosity that can be enjoyed by all people through three things, mass media, government, and developer.

Representation by Indonesian Mass Media

In commodification process *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi as a cultural tourism, role of mass media as an information provider to audience is influential. As Hall (1997) shows, media is a tool that can be used to see how our world works. Media is a tool to construct meaning to the reader. News coverage by the media to the general public is always related to the ideology and interests of the media in addressing a problem (Khosro, 2015). In this context media can be a tool in building representations of *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi to their readers.

In a number of online mass media in Indonesia (merdeka.com, okezone.com, tribunnews.com, tempo.com) Mount Kawi's image which was originally perceived as a place to look for *pesugihan*, haunted, and the place of pilgrims seeking blessings received rejection and changes in the image of Mount Kawi become a historical heritage, a blessing giver to visitors, also a tourism and religious icon. This can be seen at nationalisrakyatmerdeka.com that started their news narrative with historical proverb "*hancur badan dikandung tanah, budi baik dikenang jua*". Through the narrative, the writer then relates it to the image of two figures buried in there, Mbah Djoego and Iman Soedjono as historical figures. The large number of pilgrims who come to *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi is described because the two figures are heroes of the country. Therefore, a hero deserves respect for the current generation. At the narration that they were built, history of the two figures are clearly illustrated to eliminate the mythological elements which are often pinned on the two figures. Description about representation of *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi as a cultural and historical tourism area completely eliminates the previous representation of the hauntedness *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi that has been growth among people.

In the new representation process of *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi as a place of cultural and historical tourism, there is relation to the formation of representation that carried out by mass media. The interesting thing is that the national, regional and local mass media who have written news about *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi have provided support for the new image of *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi as a profane activity place for visitors, namely tourism. None of the news was carried out by prioritizing the crowds of visitors coming to Mount Kawi due to the promising *pesugihan* there. The

strengthening of its representation as a place of cultural and historical tourism has been carried out by building a narrative on historical figures and the history of his lineage based on existing historical data. In this process it can be understood about how our world works by looking at existing media in reporting an event to audience (Hall, 1997).

Representation by the Government

Government of Malang Regency, in their attempt to change the image of Mount Kawi as a mystical area that was only visited by pilgrims, also changed the image of Mount Kawi through efforts to set and make Mount Kawi as the host of various cultural festivals there. The government wants to introduce and change stigma of *Pesarean* and the Mount Kawi itself into a tourism area that can be visited by local and foreign tourists.



Figure 1. Barongsai in Opening Ceremony of Culture Suro Festival Gunung Kawi

Besides that, in 2018, *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi area will be a place of Malang Regency's Selection of Raka and Roro. In this process, the government aggressively works for and promotes this area as a primary tourist destination in Malang Regency to the wider community.

Representation by the Developer

New interpretation process for pilgrimage ritual and *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi is also carried out by the local developer, the Ngesti Gondho Foundation. In its previous conception, *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi and the pilgrimage rituals there brought negative perception or image among society. The pilgrimage ritual that is held at *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi is always identified as a ritual that intends to gain blessing on the two figures buried there in the form of smooth business or *pesugihan*. This previous representation is what the developer is trying to change in order to build representation of *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi as a place of tourism.

In building a new representation of the pilgrimage ritual and the *Pesarean* area of Mount Kawi, the developer carried out a number of developments in the *Pesarean* area to support the tourist activities of the visitors. The leader of the Ngesti Gondho Foundation, Mr. Yana, said that the expansion and development of the pilgrimage ritual and the *pesarean* area of Mount Kawi is very important to do due to the reduced number of visitors. Mr. Yana acknowledged that the rapid development of the tourism industry at Malang, especially at Batu area, has become one of the causes in decreasing number of visitors, so that a development of the area of Mount Kawi is needed to increase it.

This statement shows the attractiveness of Mount Kawi in the past which functioned as a sacred place for pilgrimage to *pesarean*, is not as famous as before. Rapid development of tourism at Batu region is one of the causes of reduced interest of the community to come to *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi. Therefore, to respond to the reduced interest of visitors to come to the *pesant* of Mount Kawi, the developer of *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi plans not only to change the image of pilgrimage rituals and *pesarean* of Mount Kawi as merely a sacred space for pilgrims, but also to become tourist facility for visitors who come.

When we viewed carefully, statement made by the chairman of the Ngesti Gondho Foundation is very interesting. The ritual activities carried out by pilgrims who came to visit were interpreted by him as an activity of "ritual tourism". The statement shows the developer's perspective in interpreting the activities of pilgrims who came to the graves of Mbah Djoego and R.M. I. Soedjono is not merely a sacred matter, but as a sacred and profane activity because it is a tourism. Apparently, the developer is aware that the attraction of *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi is not only the two figures who are buried there, but also the architecture, performances, and multiculturalism of religious life that has been built there is a potency for the development of tourism area at *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi.

Various new label on ritual activities (sacred) and tourism (profane) there continues to be built by developer to develop the name of *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi not only as a sacred space for pilgrims who wish to make a pilgrimage to the graves of two religious leaders in Malang Regency but also, they can watch various cultural performances and of ethnic and religious multiculturalism life there. The labeling process of Mount Kawi image as interethnic and interfaith multiculturalism space has actually been built since *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi was there.

In 1931, a Chinese named Tan Kie Yam was the first Chinese to visit Mount Kawi. Mr. Yam felt calm lived there, and decided to settle in Wonosari to serve Eyang Djoego and Iman Soedjono by built a road from *Pesarean* to Stamplat. Tan Kie Yam died in 1964. Mr. Yam's presence in Wonosari encouraged the Chinese to visit Mount Kawi. In addition, the ethnic Chinese named Ong Hok Liong, whom still a relative of Tan Kie Yam, are known as Bentoel cigarette entrepreneurs. When he and his wife visited Tan Kie Yam, met with mbah Djuwul (the caretaker) and was given two seeds of bentul (a kind of taro mountain plant), then came the inspiration to try to make cigarettes with the Bentoel symbol. Finally, his business has been succeeded until now. The news of the success of Ong Hok Liong's business spread everywhere, so that many Chinese want to visit Mount Kawi. With various success stories that spread to the community, the number of visitors and ethnic diversity that came to visit are diversely increasing. Along with that, development in Mount Kawi is getting bigger.

Various house of worship for Muslims, Confucians, and Buddhists stand in a row in the *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi area. The diversity of religious life and ethnic heterogeneity that comes to visit there is the initial capital for developer in changing the sacred representation of Mount Kawi to be a place that can be visited as a tourism spot for all people of any age group.

The workers and managers of *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi use Javanese clothing to preserve the identity of the two figures who were buried still have a line of relations with the Mataram palace, it also serves as an attraction for tourists who visit. To form a representation of Javanese which is attached to the identity of *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi, the manager requires a working uniform in the form of Javanese clothing complete with *keris* which is flanked on the back of clothes. In a representational political point of view, this is because various things around humans are organized and framed by signifying practices because they are beneficial for the participants (du Gay et al., 1999: 18). This means that the developer wants to build a representation of *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi even though it is dominated by Chinese visitors and the number of Chinese architecture buildings, but the Javanese identity of the two buried figures is maintained by the developer as the original identity.

Besides that, the chairman of the Ngesti Gondho Foundation also realizes that the various attributes that exist at *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi is a labeling practice regarding their identity. How they build identity about themselves. These days, the sacred space for pilgrims on Mount Kawi is no longer seen as a sacred space as in general. Various cultural spaces related to performances and able to attract tourists more than the sacred space. Various forms of this are like the cultural carnival performances that were held in the month of Suro.

In order to expand market share and increase the number of visitors, developer no longer sees pilgrimage ritual activities as sacred which only has religious values, there is an interest in building a greater image of *pesarean*, which is developing its tourism sector that can be enjoyed by various

circles. Developer has carried out future development in the representation of *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi representation not only as a place of pilgrimage rituals but also tourist attractions, they have launched a regional development plan by integrating it with the development of Malang Raya tourism market. The developer's perspective in addressing various potentials and developing the pilgrimage ritual area in Mount Kawi. Thousands of potential visitors who come, as well as an increase in the area of Malang Raya as a prime destination for National tourism, lead in the opportunity to develop the pilgrimage ritual area into a tourist area.

The conditions regarding the representation change of the pilgrimage ritual in *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi, which is actually a sacred activity, into a profane cultural tourism have caused ambiguity in the identity of the developer and the society. On the one hand, they are trying to maintain their traditionality, but on the other hand they want to be modern by utilizing tourism to gain economic benefits. However, in the context of changing the representation of change in, developer have managed to change the image of Mount Kawi by combining traditionalism as the root of their identity (Javanese) with the image of multicultural life of modern society. This condition shows how strong market forces are in changing the patterns of thought and culture that exist in a society. Economic value has been able to change the extraordinary manifestation of a relation that occurs in pilgrimage rituals at Mount Kawi and at the same time become the main means of place for commodity value in capitalist society (Strinati, 2007: 101).

Conclusions

Development of *Pesarean* area of Mount Kawi from the sacred space to a cultural tourism field involves a number of production processes that occur between the agents in it. The role of developer, government, and mass media is influential in changing the image of *Pesarean* of Mount Kawi today. This is done primarily to attract more tourists to visit. As a result, new cultural products emerged which are the impact of the process.

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