

SASAK TRADITIONAL VILLAGES: A POTENTIAL TOURISM AND PORTRAIT OF CONSERVATION EFFORTS FOR CULTURE AND PLANTS

DESA TRADITIONAL SASAK: SEBUAH POTENSI PARIWISATA DAN POTRET UPAYA KONSERVASI BUDAYA DAN TUMBUHAN

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Abstrak

Di era milenium, struktur sosial-masyarakat yang menjadi semakin meng-urban mengakibatkan hilangnya akar keasliannya. Bagi beberapa komunitas lokal, kehilangan budaya dapat diartikulasikan dengan kehilangan identitas. Salah satu upaya untuk melestarikan budaya dan tanaman adalah dengan melestarikan dan mempertahankan desa-desa tradisional dan mendorong program pemerintah untuk meningkatkan jumlah desa tradisional untuk dinyatakan sebagai "Desa Budaya". Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap potensi wisata tujuh desa tradisional Sasak yang, di antara beberapa hal lainnya, meliputi bangunan tradisional, pertunjukan seni, penggunaan tumbuhan, dan potensi ekonomi lainnya yang dapat diciptakan. Penelitian dilakukan dengan mengunjungi dan mewawancarai 35 penduduk lokal di tujuh desa tradisional (lima penduduk lokal di setiap desanya). Hasil penelitian mengindikasikan bahwa desa tradisional Sasak dapat memberikan banyak manfaat nyata, seperti kesempatan kerja atau pendapatan tambahan, dan manfaat yang tidak nyata, misalnya pelestarian budaya lokal, termasuk pengetahuan budaya dan tumbuhan. Desa tradisional Sasak dapat juga memberikan ketahanan pangan bagi masyarakatnya, terutama sumber sayur dan buah, sehingga mereka tidak begitu bergantung pada ketersediaan barang-barang konsumsi di pasar tradisional yang tunduk pada fluktuasi harga. Penelitian ini juga mengidentifikasi dua aktor utama dari desa-desa tradisional Sasak, yakni masyarakat dan pengunjung.

Kata kunci: bangunan tradisional, etnobotani, Lombok, pertunjukan seni

Abstract

In the millennial era, social-community structure is increasingly urbanised, that might loss of their original roots. For local communities, the loss of culture is articulated by a loss of identity. One of the efforts is to preserve culture and also plants by traditional villages. The other is to encourage government to increase number of traditional villages by declaring "Cultural Tourism Villages". This study aims to unravel a potential tourism of seven Sasak traditional villages which, among other things, consist of traditional buildings, art performances, plant usage, and other economic potentials that could be created. The study was conducted by visiting and interviewing 35 local residents in seven Sasak traditional villages. The results indicate that Sasak traditional villages provides tangible benefits, such as job opportunities or additional income, and intangible benefits, such as preservation of local culture, including cultural and plant knowledge. Sasak traditional villages provide food security for their people, especially as sources of vegetables and fruits, so that they do not depend so much on the availability of consumer goods in traditional markets, which are subject to price fluctuations. Also, this study identifies two main actors of Sasak traditional villages, which are the community itself, and the visitors.

Keywords: art performances, ethnobotany, traditional building, Lombok

Introduction

"You can see Bali in Lombok, but you cannot see Lombok in Bali!" – Traditional local Lombok saying. Often referred to as "Bali, 30 years ago," Lombok is finally coming into its own as a traveller's destination. Bali and Lombok are often seen as "sister islands," with Lombok taking the role of the shy and beautiful younger sister, overshadowed by her glamorous

older sister. While many of the features that make Bali so appealing to visitors also exist on Lombok, the island is a unique and fascinating destination in its own right (Thomasson-Croll, 2010). Lombok has a rich and diverse culture, which blends the traditions of the indigenous Sasak people with Balinese Hindu and Arabic influences, to name a few. Many of Lombok's traits and customs are similar to those of Java and Bali, yet its people retain traditions and

beliefs unique to the island, particularly in language, cultural performances, celebrations, and the arts (Hanna, 1976; van der Kraan, 1980; Picard, 1998).

Located 35 km due east of Bali, Lombok has long been the poor sister in terms of tourism statistics and global allure compared with her superstar island neighbour since 1990s. But with southern Bali increasingly gridlocked and overdeveloped (Vickers, 1996; Howe, 2005), attention has inevitably shifted to Lombok, which can match Bali for physical beauty, if not for artistic heritage. Visually, it is stunning with astonishing landscapes defining the north of the island, home to fecund volcanic foothills, and also the deep-south whose staggering coastline of largely untouched surf beaches is a revelation. Culturally, Lombok is mainly Islamic and offers a very different experience for the visitor from Bali, with large tracts of unadulterated wilderness and a lot of less traffic and commerce (Steward, 2017).

Lombok Island is not only known for its exotic nature, as well as the culture contained therein, but also the diversity of plants is diverse, and it is unique to see the comparison with the island of Bali; both of which are separated by the Wallace line (Whitten *et al.*, 1997). Sasak people are considered as indigenous people who inhabit Lombok Island (Cederroth, 1991). Until now, several Sasak communities can still be found, even though their numbers have begun to decrease. The Sasak people who inhabit several traditional villages in Lombok still adhere to local values, i.e., living in a traditional house that were once practiced by their ancestors, although the trend towards acculturation with modern culture is already beginning to emerge. Nonetheless, the Sasak Traditional Villages could be one of the strongholds of preserving Lombok's local culture along with a variety of local knowledge contained therein, including ethnobotanical knowledge.

The relationship between culture and plants can be derived from the ethnobotanical studies. *Ethno* represents the ethnic community with its culture, and botany is plant science (Martin, 1995). Communities that live and inhabit a particular area, close to forests/nature, generally have strong attachments to plants. In other words, plants are an integral part of people's lives which cannot be separated. In its development, culture has a positive correlation

with the types of surrounding plants. For example, a culture that is developed and/or maintained by a community at the same time is the same as the diversity of plant species that exists at that time. This shows that the existence of certain plant species affects the cultural sustainability of a community, and vice versa. There is a kind of causality between the two, in other words, if one is threatened, it will affect the other. One effort that could be considered to maintain the sustainability of culture and plants and to improve the local people's economy is to preserve and/or build a Cultural Village, which is an area, set aside to depict the lifestyles, activities, and artefacts of a particular culture, usually in the format of a living museum (Salazar, 2012).

At the same time, there has been a shift in human needs, from what was originally considered a tertiary need, has now become a primary need, and an example that can be seen is the need for tourism. The increase in tourist trends, supported by a stable Indonesia's economic growth at around five percent, which is believed could create job opportunities, makes tourism potential very promising to drive the social economy amongst local communities. These opportunities have been captured by several related Ministries and State-owned Enterprises to develop and build Cultural Villages in Lombok Island. The program is considered right on target, where Lombok Island is a relatively small area, and previously only relied on the tourism sector based on natural beauty. At this time, many new tourist destinations have been initiated in the form of Cultural Villages. This study aims to unravel a potential tourism in seven Sasak traditional villages which, among other things, consist of traditional buildings, art performances, plant usage, and other economic potentials that can be created.

Lombok at a Glance

Bali and Lombok are separated by the 35 km-wide Lombok Strait, which is more than 1300 metres deep in places. An imaginary boundary, the Wallace Line, runs through it, marking a division between the distribution of Asian and Australasian wildlife. The boundary is named in honour of the nineteenth-century British Naturalist Sir Alfred Russel Wallace. He suggested that during the ice ages, when the levels of the world's oceans dropped, animals

were able to range overland from mainland Asia all the way down through Sumatra and Java to Bali, but were halted by the deep waters of the Lombok Strait. Similarly, animals from the south could roam only as far as Lombok on the other side of the strait. Some evidence supports his theory. Bali and the islands to the west have creatures mostly common to mainland Asia (rabbits, monkeys, and tigers), while the wildlife on Lombok and the islands to the east is more characteristic of Australia and New Guinea (parrots, marsupials, platypuses, and lizards). However, research has since shown that many animal species are common to both Bali and Lombok; for example, crab-eating macaques and silver leaf monkeys, both found in Bali Barat National Park and on the slopes of Mount Rinjani. Today, naturalists refer not to Wallace's Line but to a zone of transition from the Asian type of animal life to the Australasian (Holmes and Nash, 1989; Smith and Beccaloni, 2010).

At around 5,300 sq. km (2,046 sq. miles), measuring 80 km by 70 km, Lombok is only slightly smaller than Bali. The pace on Lombok is unhurried and the atmosphere laid-back. The beaches are uncrowded and tourism enclaves are not marred by high-density development. Although the island has a good infrastructure, tourism development only started in the '90s and it has had a slow and, steady growth rather than a gold-rush expansion since then (Thomasson-Croll, 2010).

The mountainous north is dominated by the bulk of the sacred volcano Mount Rinjani, at 3726 metres, one of the highest peaks in Indonesia and a popular trekking destination. Most of the population lives in the central plains, in a broad, urbanised corridor that runs right across the island from the capital, Mataram, in the west, to the port of Labuhan Lombok in the east (Steward, 2017).

Lombok's agricultural economy is focused on producing rice, cassava, cotton, tobacco (a major export), soya beans, and chilli peppers (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2018). The provincial government is encouraging diversification on Lombok, with tourism as one of several potential growth industries. The main focus of Lombok's tourism has always been along its western coast, with the resort of Senggigi, a convenient hub,

and the shoreline to the north encompassing a string of stunning bays. But in the last few years, interest in the wild south coast, centred on the small but growing surfers' resort of Kuta, has taken off with independent travellers. Despite the many attractions, the tourist presence on Lombok is far less as on Bali. The island hosts a few hundred thousand foreign tourists a year, compared to the almost five million annual visitors that descend on Bali. As a result, it is easy to find remote villages, unspoilt coastline and people still living traditional lives (Steward, 2017).

Study Area

The study was carried out by visiting and interviewing local residents in seven Sasak traditional villages in Lombok. The villages are scattered in almost all corners of Lombok Island, including Sade and Ende villages that represent the southern part; Segenter and Gumantar Beleq villages are on the northwest side; Bayan Timur and Senaru villages located in the North; and Sembalun Lawang Village located on the northeast side.

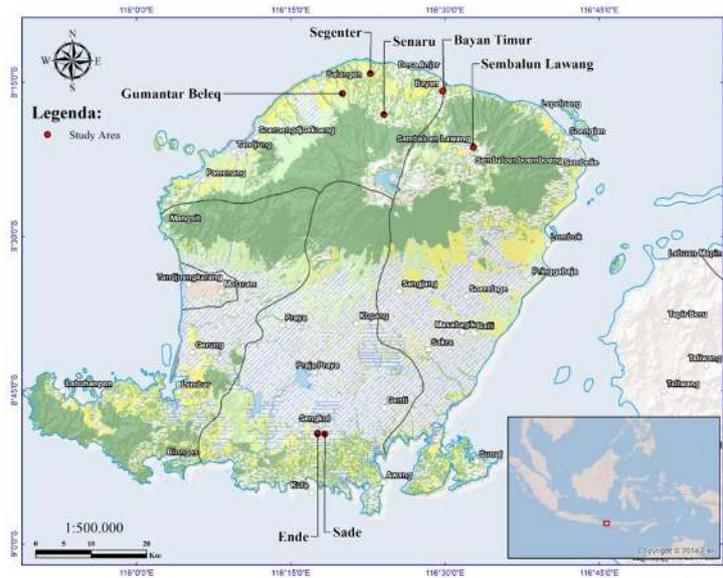
Although strongly suspected to come from the same tribe, namely Sasak, each traditional village has its own uniqueness. This can be easily identified from the structure of village buildings that have tangible differences with modern villages. Village life is based on the mainstays of farming and traditional handicraft production (McKinnon, 1996). Almost all residents in the seven villages depend on the agricultural sector, and now developing the tourism sector. Some villages are well known as Traditional Villages such as Sade and Ende.

History of the Sasak (Indigenous people of Lombok Island)

The indigenous Sasak people of Lombok are descendants of a Malay race who have inhabited Lombok for at least 2,000 years. Numbering about three million, they are thought to be descended from a hill tribe of North India and Myanmar. The majority of Lombok's 3.4 million inhabitants are indigenous Muslim Sasak. Their history is not well documented but many converted to Islam in the sixteenth century,

Figure 1

Study area



with a minority following the animist-influenced Wetu Telu branch but are not officially recognised, thus numbers of followers are unknown (Cederroth, 1991; Thomasson-Croll, 2010).

About fifteen percent of the population is of Balinese origin, practicing Balinese Hinduism, introducing themselves as Balinese even though their families may have been on Lombok for several generations, and speaking both Balinese and Sasak. The history of the two islands has long been interlinked (Warren, 1993). The east Balinese kingdom of Karangasem invaded west Lombok in the seventeenth century and established a Balinese community that still thrives in modern-day Mataram (the capital and largest city on the island). West Lombok's Balinese rulers extended their dominion over east Lombok. The Balinese colonised the island for 150 years until 1894. The last king of Lombok reigned over western Lombok during the mid-1800s and oversaw the construction of an impressive number of temples. He also restricted the land rights of the Sasak aristocracy, introduced an inflexible taxation system, and demanded forced labour of Sasak peasantry. The Sasak revolted several times in the 19th century, with Islam the unifying factor among the armies scattered and isolated across the island. Sasak leaders approached the Dutch for help in overthrowing the Balinese in the early 1890s. The Dutch, mistakenly believing Lombok was rich in tin, obliged and the Sasak

War broke out in 1894. The Balinese were soundly defeated and a number of temples and palaces were destroyed. The Dutch seized the chance to take control, bringing the entire island of Lombok (and Karangasem) under colonial rule until Indonesian independence. In 1958, Lombok and neighbouring Sumbawa became jointly administered as the province of Nusa Tenggara Barat, or NTB (West Nusa Tenggara), with Mataram the provincial capital (van der Kraan, 1980; van der Kraan, 1995).

As part of the Indonesian archipelago, Java has influenced Lombok to varying degrees, conquering, and incorporating the island into the Majapahit Empire in the 14th century. Today's Sasak aristocracy still claims Javanese ancestry. Over the centuries, Lombok has been populated by migrants from Java and other Indonesian islands, particularly Bugis shipbuilders and seafarers from Sulawesi. As part of the historical Spice Islands, Arab traders, Chinese, and Dutch all made their homes in Lombok and thus the island has become a melting pot of religions, cultures, beliefs, and ceremonies. The majority of the population today practices a moderate form of Islam, which is still changing and evolving with the impact of modernization and education. Most Sasak Muslims observe Islamic religious practices, such as prayer five times a day and fasting during the month of Ramadan. There are two main groups among the Sasak: Waktu Lima, meaning "five times" (the number of times worshipers pray per day), or Sunni

Muslims, and Wetu Telu, “three times,” nominal Muslims who combine Islamic observances with a mosaic of Hinduism, animism, and ancestor worship. Other religions, particularly Hinduism and Buddhism, peacefully coexist alongside the Muslim population (Cederroth, 1991).

On Lombok, most women dress modestly, wearing a hijab (headscarf which covers the hair) or jilbab (hair and neck), but may combine this with anything from Arabian style ankle-length robes to tight-fitting jeans. The centre and east of the island are more conservative and devout. The mosque is the centre of the Muslim faith, and prayers on Friday at noon pretty much empty the villages of men (women often do not attend this service). Those planning to visit a mosque should be aware of the expected etiquette. Many new, extremely grand concrete mosques are under construction throughout the island and driving around the interior. Thousands of islanders every year manage to afford the many millions of rupiah (the official currency of Indonesia) needed for a pilgrimage to Mecca. It is still unclear exactly how Islam came to Indonesia, but it seems likely that it spread along trade routes, probably via traders from Gujarat in India who had converted to Islam in the mid-thirteenth century, and by the sixteenth century had reached Lombok. Traditionally, the arrival of Islam in Java is thought to have more exotic roots, brought by nine Islamic saints or Wali Songo, one of whom is believed to be buried near Sade Village in the south of Lombok. The most influential modern-day Islamic social organisation on Lombok is Nahdlatul Wathan, which was founded in east Lombok by Guru Pancor in the 1930s. It now runs more than seven hundred Islamic schools in Lombok and Sumbawa and has many adherents among government officials. Significantly, the former provincial governor, Zainul Majdi (popularly known as Guru Bajang, or “Young Teacher”), is Guru Pancor’s grandson (Steward, 2017).

Informant profiles

The study was conducted in April 2018, a few months before the earthquake that devastated Lombok Island in early August 2018. A total of 35 respondents were interviewed in this present study and all of them were women with aged less than 30 years. The selection of respondents was conducted purposively. In each surveyed traditional village, five respondents

were interviewed. This study is in line with the idea of determining the consumption patterns of the people living in a traditional villages. In this case, an emphasis was on the consumption of local plant species grown in the villages. Women or young mothers have a vital role in determining the menu of food to be consumed by their families, while still taking into account an income given by their husbands. In addition to this role, there is a kind of correlation that can be accounted for, in order to prepare a strong generation in the future, so that adequate nutrient intake is needed for mothers, where they will give a birth, raise, and educate their children (future generations of Indonesia) for cultural sustainability. Taking into account these reasons, this study focussed on taking respondents who were all women.

At the same time, gender issues have become a hot topic and many developed countries in the world have made gender equality a priority as part of their subscription to the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) (Servaes, 2017). This study is also in-line with SDG gender equality that aims to document the perceptions, thoughts, and active roles of local women in Lombok. The obtained data can also be used, for further studies, as a base-line in determining national policies for empowerment and strengthening the role of Indonesian women.

Villages’ Infrastructures

This study obtained that almost all surveyed traditional villages have a minimum standard of infrastructures, such as arches, waterways, and road access which could be considered adequate. Only in the village of Segenter, the village gate is in a damaged, and provides a glimpse into a harsh reality of life on the island’s dry side, yet they welcome every visitor with a smile and proudly share their simple life with tours through the village. The villagers in this northern side of the island, basically live by cultivating corns and beans. The infrastructure is fully funded through governmental programs, while maintenance costs are supported by donations (voluntary) provided by tourists, both foreign and domestic, who come to visit. The concept of donations developed by Sasak traditional villages is quite interesting. A donation is a gift based on a willingness of donators. This concept does not involve any deposits to the local governments. Donation funds provided by visitors are fully

managed by traditional villages for prosperity and mutual progress.

In addition to the concept of donations for the village, there is also a donation (tipping) for the youths who work as guides who are in charge of guiding every visitor who comes to tour of the village. At the end of the tour, visitors

usually give tips, suggested around 15,000 to 20,000 IDR (US\$ 1.5). The amount of tipping is at the visitors' discretion. Tips to all guides are collected and combined everyday then equally divided amongst the group to ensure equality of income.

Figure 2

Interview process with respondents in the village of Sade Village (a) and the village of Ende (b). Both villages are located in Central Lombok Regency, and an interesting example of Sasak traditional architectures.



Sumber: Dokumen Penulis

Figure 3

(a) Enter gate of the village of Gumantar Beleq; (b) A donating place in the village of Sade. There are a number of youths, worked as a guide. They receive tipping voluntarily from the visitors.



Sumber: Dokumen Penulis

Sasak Traditional Buildings/Houses

The influence of Javanese, Hinduism and Islamic cultures can be seen in architectures and ceremonies, while Muslim-Javanese architectural influences can be best seen in the mosques, and the Sasaks provided the distinctive shape of the rice-barn (*lumbung*), more rarely seen now than in the past. Also, Balinese people living in Lombok retain their traditional houses, as do the Bugis people, who have settled along

Lombok's eastern and southern coasts and live in wooden houses constructed on tall piles (McPhee, 1946).

The indigenous Sasak people also have their own architectural style. At this moment, quite a few examples of old Sasak architecture, the traditional houses of the time before the advent of the Dutch, can still be seen. Sasak traditional villages, such as those at Bayan Timur, Gumantar Beleq, Segenter and Senaru in

northern part of the island; Sembalun Lawang in northeast; and Sade and Ende in southern, are walled enclosures, with a gateway that is closed at night. Traditionally, houses were very small and not very high, with a sweeping thatched roof of *alang-alang* grass (*Imperata cylindrica* L.). Especially in the village of Sade, the floors are made from dried cow dung, compressed and polished over the years. New layers of cow dung are added when the flooring wears down and the smell disappears fairly quickly. Houses may have none or only a few windows with a veranda on at least one side. Traditionally, the cooking hearth and eating area are inside the house; a walled-off room, the *inan bale*, is used for storage but is also the place where newlyweds spend their first night.

The symbol of Lombok is two-story *lumbung* huts that are built in rows, on four piles usually with woven bamboo walls, and a thatched *alang-alang* roof with a single opening high up. *Lumbung* huts have distinctive roof shapes, which curves down from the apex and then flattens out at the eaves, like a bonnet. A circular wooden disc, the *jelepreng*, on each post stops rats climbing up to the rice. Underneath each post, old Chinese coins (*kepeng*) are buried for good luck and protection. In the last few years thatched *lumbung*-style cottages have become wildly popular as (faux-traditional) tourist bungalows in the Gili islands (famous touristic places in Lombok), and even in Bali.

Figure 4

(a) Forms of the Sasak traditional house in the village of Gumantar Beleq; (b) The traditional house of Sembalun Lawang, and the village is considered as the entrance gate of Mount Rinjani; (c) The mosque of Bayan Beleq Mosque is believed to be the oldest *mosque* on the island of *Lombok*



Sumber: Dokumen Penulis

The village of Ende, seven kilometres from Kuta beach of Lombok, is authentic and less grasping. As with other villages in southern part of the island, the thirty homes here are simple, low-roofed windowless constructions, with mud and buffalo-dung floors, bamboo walls and thatched roofs. Some have satellite TV but bathrooms are communal. The other traditional village is Sade, one kilometre south of Ende. A distinctive feature is the *lumbung*, a bonnet-shaped rice barn. Once a symbol of Lombok, these barns are now rare. The walls of the thatch-roofed barns and houses are made of bamboo, i.e. *Gigantochloa apus*, or palm-leaf ribs (*Arenga pinnata*).

The villages of Gumantar Beleq and Segenter are a more authentic and rewarding experience than the traditional villages around Kuta (southern Lombok), these villages can be accessed from the main road through dry expanses of cashew plantations. The traditional part of the villages comprises a grid of very

simple, mud-floored bamboo and thatched huts, and the occasional open-sided *berugaq* (general-purpose hut). Inside the house is an eating platform, stone hearth and the *inan bale*, a small house-within-a-house where newlyweds spend their first night, but which is otherwise used to store rice.

The village of Bayan Timur, located further north, is renowned as the root of early Islam on the island and maintains old dance and poetic traditions, such as *kemidirudat*, a theatre performance based on the one thousand- and one-nights fable. The village of Bayan Timur is the site of Lombok's oldest mosque, in local name called Masjid Kuno Bayan Beleq, located on the eastern edge of the village, 1 km east of the junction with the road to Senaru. Masjid Kuno Bayan Beleq is open only for special prayer ceremonies. Said to date from before 17th century, around the time when Islam probably first arrived in Lombok, Masjid Kuno Bayan Beleq is strikingly simple in design, its profile

reminiscent of a volcano, constructed entirely from timber, woven bamboo and palm thatch, a top a foundation of stones. It has been renovated, but apparently in the original style. Visitors are not allowed to go inside but we can peek through the holes in the bamboo walls to see the mud floor and the bamboo torches, which light the interior during the few festival days when the mosque is used. This whole area, around the foothills of Mount Rinjani and the sacred mountain itself, is a stronghold of the *Wetu Telu* branch of Islam. One of the oldest and most important *Wetu Telu* mosques is located in this village, and important sacred sites from Lombok's ancient past are located nearby, and Masjid Kuno Bayan Beleq has a central role (Cederroth, 1991).

The small settlement of Segenter village is a typical, traditional Lombok community, a good place to wonder and to see the people going about their daily lives. The inhabitants are less pushy and commercially-minded than those around touristic places, i.e., Senggigi beach. In the late morning, many villagers can be seen resting in the "guest huts", open structures with platforms raised above ground level, set between rows of the larger thatched houses which make up the village as a whole.

The village of Sembalun Lawang has a few thatch-roofed houses standing in a crumbling compound, with other nearby homes falling into ruin. Here the culture is firmly rooted in animist beliefs, with a circle of sacred stones in the centre of the compound and the spirits of the ancestors close by. People here still practice the old traditions and Sasak adat (traditional customs). The village has retained many older cultural traditions, and the village has a tomb that holds the remains of a Majapahit ancestor (the last major empire which is considered to be the greatest and most powerful empires in Indonesia).

Of the seven traditional villages, almost all villages still maintain a traditional architectural form of the original Sasak tribe of Lombok. Some villages maintain traditional houses/buildings in the form of displays that are not occupied by the owners, but in several villages such as Ende, Gumantar Beleq, Sade, Segenter, and Senaru, many residents still occupy the traditional houses. This is a result of an ancestral traditions and promises of future generations to maintain the culture that has been

practiced by previous generations. Cultural heritage in the form of traditional houses/buildings is a commitment that must be maintained against the flow of modernity and the progress of the times. The commitment of the next generation has been paid off with more and more visitors who are interested in coming to see the first-hand of the uniqueness of authentic traditional houses/buildings. On the other hand, the existence of traditional houses/buildings has become natural museums and historical learning places for present and future generations. A lesson learnt from the existence of these traditional houses is the importance of preservation efforts to ensure the sustainability of local culture and knowledge.

Art show and Festival

The island of Lombok has a rich heritage of music and dances. The indigenous Sasak traditions have been subject to many influences, both Hinduism and Islam, direct from Bali and Java, and through Bugis and Makassar traders (Dibia and Ballinger, 2005). The resulting mixture of puppetry, poetry, song, and dance is varied and accessible to tourists. Cultural shows may stumble across a wedding or other celebration.

In contrast to the huge academic interest in Balinese performing arts, Sasak dances have been far less studied (McPhee, 1966; Ramseyer, 1977; Tenzer, 1991; Fischer and Cooper, 1998). Of the various public dances, the *Gendang Beleq* was traditionally used to send off soldiers heading into battle and to welcome them home again. It is performed to the distinctive rhythm of huge drums (*gendang*) and in these days staged to welcome tourists. The *Batek Baris*, which is performed in elsewhere, has dancers wearing costumes mimicking Dutch army uniforms and carrying wooden rifles while they lead a procession to the sacred springs. At the Nyale Festival near Kuta beach, the Princess Mandalika legend is re-enacted to large crowds; the popular *Kemidi Rudat* re-tells the One Thousand and One Nights stories, complete with colourful characters and clowns; the *Telek* is based on the tale of a princess who falls in love with a humble man; and the *Kayak Sando* (with masks) dramatizes the *Panji* stories from Java in which a prince undergoes numerous adventures while searching for his lost bride. Village-based dances include the *Gandrung* of central Lombok, a demonstration of love performed by a solo

female dancer who selects a man to join her, and the *Tandak Geroq*, staged in east Lombok to celebrate the end of the harvesting season.

There are also trance dances such as the *Suling Dewa*, accompanied by flutes and song which is particular to North Lombok and used to induce spirits to enter the local shaman and bless the village. *Tandang mendat*, from the village of Segenter, a men's martial dance, a unique version of *wayang wong* theatre. More a martial art than a performing art, but still a massive spectator draw, *Peresean*, or stick fighting, involves two men attacking each other with long rattan canes, with only a goatskin shield to defend themselves. The aim is to draw blood from the head – and it is all for real, as the injuries show. Every schoolboy learns the art of *Peresean* and contests are staged between village teams. The best time to see a stick fight is on August 18, the day after Indonesian Independence Day (Steward, 2017).

Lombok's traditional *gamelan* music is similar to Bali's, though some of the orchestras

are different. The Sasak *gamelan* gong resembles the *gamelan* gong, but may be combined with the bamboo xylophones of the *gamelan grantang*. The *gamelan oncer* is also widely used, and accompanies the Gendang Beleq dance. *Gamelan tawa-tawa* and *barong tengkok* are used in processions at weddings and circumcision ceremonies. The usual gongs and drums are accompanied by eight sets of cymbals attached to decorated lances. The *gamelan barong tengkok* from central Lombok actually has gongs suspended within a Barong (a panther-like creature or character) figure (Belo, 1948). *Gamelan rebana* consists of up to twenty different drums, which mimic the traditional sound of *gamelan* music, but without the use of bronze instruments. More unusual is the *gamelan klentang*, made up entirely of iron instruments. Other musical ensembles that are seen on the island include *kecimol* and *cilokaq*, consisting of an oboe (*preret*), flutes, lutes, violins and drums, and are often played to accompany Sasak poetry.

Figure 5

- (a) The performance of Lombok's traditional music art accompanies every visitor who comes to the village of Ende; (b) Warmest greetings in the form of songs from the children at the exit gate of Ende Village accompanying visitors who return after tour around the village.

(a)



(b)



Sumber: Dokumen Penulis

Gendang beleq (“big drums”) is the distinctive music of Lombok and forms an important part of island culture. In almost any major event or cultural performance in Lombok, we can see a band of colourfully dressed dancers carrying huge drums across their bodies, filling the air with an irresistible beat. These drums are actually a variant of the *kendang* drum that traditionally accompanies *gamelan* orchestras. The barrel-shaped drum produces a deep bass tone and a characteristic high-pitched slap. The *gendang beleq* used in Lombok are distinctive

because of their huge size—usually around 1.5 m (5 ft.) in length and 50 cm (20 in.) in diameter. *Kecimol* music, also found in Lombok, is similar and often accompanies marriage processions through the streets of the villages. A vibrant combination of performers includes drums, *gamelan*, keyboard, and flutes dancing along with someone on a megaphone mounted on a small carriage. This raucous fusion moves to an almost military marching beat. The keys are played in an Arabic style, with wailing flutes lending Eastern tones to the mix. The whole

ensemble is accompanied by a vocalist singing love songs. It is an unmistakable sound, played at high volume, announcing the parade to all the villages and homes it passes along the way.

Dances and music performances could be a breakthrough activity for the villagers to develop their traditional villages in the midst of competition in the tourism industry, which is now mushrooming. Culture is the spirit of the traditional village. Interested visitors come due to the curiosity of the culture, which is found within the traditional village. “*Megambel*” a traditional music instrument and introductory song from children in the village of Ende give a fantastic impression for every visitor who comes. Creativity is a necessity to keep visitors coming not only once but many times, also sharing what their experiences to others. Art creativity based local culture, as demonstrated by the people of Ende, has an important role in cultural preservation, it could be one of the options to avoid cultural erosion, especially for the younger generation.

Figure 6

Statue of Princess Mandalika



Sumber: Dokumen Penulis

In addition to dances and music performances, the annual *bau Nyale*, or *Nyale Festival*, is all about the sea worm, *Eunice viridis*, known locally as *Nyale*. The worms live attached to rocks in the ocean, but at roughly the same time every year, on the nineteenth day of the tenth Sasak month (February or March), they begin their sexual cycle and release brightly coloured male and female sexual parts, which rise to the surface ready for fertilization, turning the ocean into a seething mass of fluorescent spaghetti. The number of worms is believed to indicate the success of the next rice harvest and draws huge crowds to celebrate the festival. Around a hundred thousand people travel to Kuta’s Seger beach and other south-coast

beaches to gather the worms – which are believed to be aphrodisiacs – and to enjoy traditional singing, dancing, poetry and a re-enactment of the Princess Mandalika legend. This tells how the beautiful Princess Mandalika, distraught because of the number of suitors who were fighting over her and loathed to upset any of them and risk plunging her country into war; flung herself into the sea where her hair was changed into *Nyale* sea worms (Steward, 2017).

Plants Usage for Foods

Lombok means “chili” in Sasak, so it is no surprise that traditional Sasak food is often fiery hot. Lombok is a melting pot of cultures and this is reflected in the styles of food available, ranging from Dutch-influenced breads and *martabak* (a stuffed pancake) to authentic Chinese cuisine, spicy Padang food from Sumatra, and traditional Indonesian foods. Lombok is famed for its specialty chicken dish, named *ayam taliwang* (small, free-range village chicken), which actually originates from the neighbouring island of Sumbawa. A whole *ayam kampung* (kampong chicken) is grilled over coconut husks and served with sambal. *Pelecing ayam* is grilled chicken broken into pieces, added to the spicy and piquant sauce, and slowly simmered, turning the marinade into a delicious red coating. Being a Muslim island, pork is not readily available except in the tourist areas and at Chinese restaurants and lamb is rare. Particularly popular in Lombok are *pelecing kangkung* and *pecel*, sold from *kaki lima* and *warung* everywhere, both are a small restaurant or café. *Pelecing kangkung* is locally grown *kangkung* (a type of leafy water spinach or *Ipomoea aquatica* in Latin) boiled and served with fresh bean sprouts and topped with a fiery red chili and tomato sauce. *Pecel* is a variant that combines *kangkung*, cabbage, and other vegetables, fresh bean sprouts, and sometimes tomato with spicy peanut sauce and prawn crackers. *Lalapan* is a plate of fresh cabbage, snake beans, and cucumber served with spicy sambal. *Beberuk* (or *Beberuq*) is a typical Sasak side dish of finely diced snake beans and small, round eggplant, with tomato, chili, shallots, lime, and spices. *Ares* is a unique dish made from the inner stem of the banana tree and mixed with coconut milk and spices. *Olah-olah* is made from the heart of banana tree flower mixed with coconut cream, mild spices, and finely chopped snake beans. *Rujak* is unripen

fruits such as mango or papaya, mixed with ripen fruits, i.e., apple, guava, or pineapple, coated in a hot and sweet and sour sauce of sweet soy, palm sugar, and chillies (Hutton, 1999; Thomasson-Croll, 2010).

To reduce dependency on buying consumer goods in traditional markets, the people of Sasak living in the villages use local plant species for daily needs. For example, the people of Segenter lead an almost self-sufficient life; they cultivate plants, i.e., paddy, cassava, taro, etc. used for staple foods necessary for their daily needs, and plant cotton, and tobacco and then sell it to the traditional markets. This can help when materials' prices increased. In general, the people of Sasak cultivate plants for foods, vegetables, spices, and crops, including paddy, in the yards of their homes, gardens and rice fields. Most of the Sasak people are farmer who own land, so that needs for rice and vegetables is mostly from their own crops. As for the needs of side dishes, and additional food ingredients that are not produced in their own lands; these are usually purchased from the nearest traditional markets.

The concept of planting, harvesting and consumption is one of the pillars of sustainable living. This concept is important because the community has implemented a pattern of

survival with the help of nature. Consumption of vegetable ingredients that are grown and maintained by the villagers is definitely safe from pesticides, and is beneficial for health. In addition, consumption of food/vegetable from local sources could be interesting for tourists who could learn about traditional recipes and their associated health benefits. A Sasak saying: "we used to store rice in our *lumbung* huts, now they are used to store tourists!"

In addition to cultivating vegetable crops, the local people also cultivate fruit crops and living fence plants which is used for shading and boundaries among houses. Several types of fruit plants have been cultivated by the people of Sasak, in which each traditional village has differently fruit commodities depending on habitat suitability. For example, in the village of Bayan Timur, the people cultivate grapes and mangoes. Fruit is also sold to the traditional markets, so that it has a positive impact for the community and improving livelihoods (Eiseman and Eiseman, 1994). In addition to fruit crops, the people of Bayan Timur cultivate Waru (*Hibiscus tilliaceous*) as shading plant which is also has a medicinal property. The decoction of leaves is used to treat sore throat, coughing, tuberculosis, digestive problems, and ulcers (Sujarwo *et al.*, 2015).

Figure 7

(a) Bunga Turi (flowers of *Sesbania grandiflora*; Leguminosae) are used to make vegetable soups. *Sesbania grandiflora* or Turi in Indonesian is planted by the people of Sade in their home gardens; (b) Chilli (*Capsicum annuum*; Solanaceae) is planted as living fence in the village of Ende. This can save household expenses when the price of chillies soars in the traditional markets.



Sumber: Dokumen Penulis

Figure 8

- (a) Grapes (*Vitis vinifera*; Vitaceae) cultivated by the people of Bayan Timur;
(b) Waru (*Hibiscus tilliaceous* L; Malvaceae) is planted around the houses in the village of Segenter. Both villages are located in North Lombok Regency.



Sumber: Dokumen Penulis

Figure 9

- (a) *Gasingan* (*Sida acuta*; Malvaceae) is dried, and then used to make brooms by the people of Gumantar Beleq Village; (b) The local people of Gumantar Beleq weave leaves of *Alang-alang* (*Imperata cylinrica* Poaceae) to make the roof of traditional houses.



Sumber: Dokumen Penulis

The use of plants is not only limited to foods, but also still many other uses that can be created by the local people (Eiseman Jr, 1999), for example brooms made from weed plants (*Sida acuta*). This plant grows wild in garden areas, rice fields, and is considered as an invasive species, since the weed is native to Central America (Caribbean region) (Takhtajan, 1986). For the people of Gumantar Beleq, the weed is dried, and used to make brooms, this could be an alternative for broom sticks. Aside from *S. acuta*, the local people also use *alang-alang* leaves (*Imperata cylindrica*) which are woven to make the roofs of traditional houses. These examples show that local communities in Lombok traditional villages still maintain their local knowledge from their predecessors. The application of ethnobotanical knowledge is maintained in traditional villages, despite the

threat of globalisation and modernisation is emerging. This also provides evidence that indigenous people are very dependent on plants. The sustainability of plants and related local knowledge for various use-categories must be maintained to ensure that future generations understand what their ancestors have practiced.

Additional Services

The topography and site of traditional villages have an influence to the creative and business opportunities that can be created. For example, the village of Senaru, which is located south of Bayan Timur, and the main centre of Rinjani treks, is full of guesthouses and trekking organisers, with cool temperatures. The pretty village in lovely scenery has fantastic views of the volcanic mountains, and also the entrance

gate of Rinjani Geopark. The village has a great potential to develop a professional homestay industry. The price of lodging offered is affordable for visitors, starting from IDR 150,000 (Figure 10b). Within a fenced compound a few metres from the Rinjani trailhead, at the end of the road and almost next door to the Rinjani Trek Centre, is Senaru's original Sasak village (entry by donation), whose residents still live in simple, traditional houses of bamboo and thatch, similar in design to those at Segenter.

At a height of over 400 m (1,320 ft) on the lower slopes of Mount Rinjani, Senaru is braced by cool refreshing air. From here we can

see perfect views of Rinjani to the south and the ocean to the west. Once a secluded mountain settlement sheltered from the outside world, this village with its traditional-style houses is fast becoming a weekend escape from the heat of the coastal regions. It is the most popular departure point for treks and climbs up the mountain. It is also possible to make arrangements for a trek through the Mount Rinjani national park and up the volcano. Camping equipment, tent and sleeping bag rental are available, porters and guides can be engaged and food and other necessities can be bought here.

Figure 10

(a) The entrance gate of Rinjani Geopark; (b) Homestay in the village of Senaru.



(a)



(b)

Sumber: Dokumen Penulis

Local treks such as the Senaru panorama walk (3 hrs) take in the falls and are guided by women from the village. The most complete treks of the mountain involve a round trip from Sembalun Lawang to Senaru, via the summit and the lake (three days, two nights). This ascent over is the most exhausting. Longer trips of up to six days, featuring the "milk caves" and hot springs around the lake as well as the summit, are also possible. Senaru and Sembalun Lawang are by far the most common trailheads.

Other than Rinjani itself, Senaru's main attractions are its waterfalls. The *Sendang Gile* waterfalls at Senaru are among Lombok's most spectacular, even after descending the 200-plus vertical steps to stand below them. The water cascades in a steep vertical drop down the hillside into a rocky stream below. There is a local belief that 'you become a year younger every time you swim behind the falls.

The communities understand that the types of tourist services are temporary, depending

on demand and seasons and cannot alone suffice as the main incomes. Most people in Senaru still work as farmers, also it happens in other traditional villages. Nevertheless, the tourism sector has been stimulating the local people to maintain the traditional houses in the villages. In other words, cultural preservation still exists in the village of Senaru, which even though the penetration of visitors (trekkers) is mostly dominated by foreign tourists.

In addition to Senaru, lying in a valley surrounded by mountains is Sembalun Lawang, a village consisting of single-storey wooden buildings. Visitors are few here, and there are only a couple of basic places to stay. However, there is a pleasant sense of remoteness. The air is fresh, and can be quite cold at night. This is a good place for walks in the countryside. The growing of shallots is a major source of income here, and a pungent, but not unpleasant, scent pervades the valley. From here the view of Mount Rinjani is very vivid: the mountain seems to be almost within an arm's reach. Sembalun

Lawang is about thirty kilometres southeast of Senaru, set in a high, flat-bottomed mountain valley filled with market gardens growing potatoes and chillies. It is a very quiet village that is known chiefly as a trailhead for one of the main routes up Mount Rinjani. The village is the starting point of a Rinjani climb route more direct than that from Senaru, but the facilities here are not as good. There are several gentler local treks as well, i.e., the leisurely Sembalun Village Walk to Sajang Waterfall (4 hrs), and the Sembalun Wildflowers.

Commodity of Merchandises

Lombok's identity has been formed by two major influences. Javanese arrivals in the 14th century brought Islam and Middle-Eastern influences, while the Balinese Hindus, who were the colonial masters of the island from the 17th century until the 1890s, have been an important presence. The Sasaks and the Balinese provide the island with a rich heritage of dialects and languages, traditional dance, music, rituals and crafts. Beautiful pottery is made and cloth woven, using skills passed down through the generations (McKinnon, 1996; Hobart et al., 1997; Eiseman Jr, 1999).

Lombok is famous for its highly collectible and distinctive hand-thrown pottery, huge pots, cooking and dining implements. Other interesting crafts include hand-carved wooden furniture, ornaments, sculpture, and finely woven cloth called *ikat*. *Osap*, a more rustic form of *songket* textile, is spun with cotton and

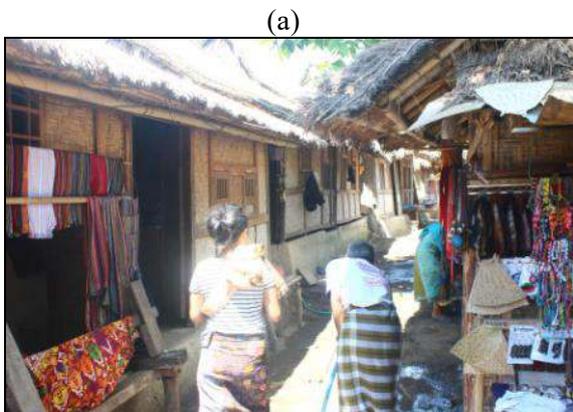
is still common in many villages and available throughout the Sasak areas of the island. Old pieces can command thousands of dollars although most are equal to the price of lunch.

It is undeniable that the people living in traditional villages depend heavily on agriculture and tourism. Most of the population work as farmers and sellers. The agricultural sector has not been able to fully support spending for a family, so that most women, mothers and teenage girls, work as sellers and craft makers, such as woven fabrics, children's toys, and women's accessories. The high potential of tourism can be seen from the number of guests visiting, in the Villages of Ende and Sade, which has resulted in high economic turnover in both, especially in Sade where high volumes of merchandises are purchased by visitors every day. The village of Sade is one of success stories of developing traditional villages program in Lombok. It sees hordes of visitors, is more of a shopping and photo opportunity, and has a reputation for hassle. Sade remains a good place to catch a glimpse of traditional Sasak life, in which weaving textiles, growing rice and rearing goats and cattle are major occupations, while in Ende, the villagers farm soya beans and rice, weave cloth and make basket-ware, some of which are for sale. This is a prosperous model that central and local governments could maintain or creating other development programs to improve the welfare of their people.

Figure 11

The shape of Sade Village.

- (a) Most of the villagers work as souvenirs merchants, such as *songket*, beads, children's toys, women's accessories, etc.; (b) Lombok Coffee (*Coffea canephora*; Rubiaceae), or more commonly known as Robusta Coffee is also sold by villagers of Sade.



Sumber: Dokumentasi Penulis

Government Supports in the Development of Cultural Traditional Villages

A trickle of tourists started arriving on Lombok in the 1980s and local people set up small hostel around Senggigi, the Gili Islands and, later, around Kuta beach. By 1989, there were over 120,000 visitors annually and, though the figures are now over 800,000, many of those only stay in the Gili Islands, and numbers are still a fraction of those visiting Bali. Lombok's fortunes are closely tied with those of Bali, and visitor numbers plummeted following the 2002 and 2005 bombings in Bali. As on Bali, however, Lombok tourism has since revived.

To date, the issue of sustainable tourism on "mainland" Lombok has not been so pressing, not least because there is limited political appetite for tourism on Lombok. Many Sasaks (and Westerners) consider the gap between conservative Muslim morals and those of foreign visitors to be unacceptably wide, while the tourist job market has been increasingly dominated by better-qualified Balinese. Rural Sasak people in particular, forced out of education due to poverty, have a limited chance of landing well-paid work. Though the former provincial governor of Nusa Tenggara Barat, Guru Bajang, is seen as pro-tourism, there are virtually no hotels or facilities in the conservative east of the island, despite a long coastline and several idyllic offshore islands.

The opening of Lombok's new airport in 2011 near Kuta in south Lombok has brought more flights to Lombok – though not the number of international connections hoped for. Investment is evident around Kuta, but so far, the big hotel brands are sitting on land they have acquired. On the plus side, the airport has resulted in the much-needed upgrading of roads across south Lombok and, if tourist development is carefully and inclusively managed, could boost the economy of one of the island's poorest regions. There has recently been an attempt to target Islamic tourism, which is Lombok dubbed Indonesia's best halal destination, and it is hoped that Muslims from the Middle East and other corners of Indonesia will visit a vast new mosque or 'halal' restaurants that is planned for Kuta and surrounding areas. However how this will sit with the town's growing surf and backpacker scene, its bars and party culture, is difficult to see.

Considering the existing potential, the Sasak traditional villages should receive more assistances, financially and physically, both from the elements of the governments (central and local) and the private sectors. Some traditional villages in Lombok are quite well known, such as Ende and Sade. Both villages are located not far apart, and are located in Central Lombok Regency, with a good road access and not far from the Lombok International Airport. With the construction of Lombok's first international airport, Lombok is ready to take its place as an international tourist destination. Some future plans are also underway for a major resort by United Arab Emirates–investment Company Emaar Properties, near Kuta in south Lombok. Though the world economic downturn has tempered the pace of development, and today, most local people approve of the new airport, recognising it as opening Lombok up to international travellers and bringing new opportunities to the predominantly agricultural communities near the airport. Some Balinese feel threatened by the international airport in Lombok, as most travellers previously had to travel to Bali to make the connection to Lombok.

Figure 12

PT. ITDC (Persero) which is a State-Owned Enterprise (BUMN) provides funds for infrastructure program in the village of Ende.



Sumber: Dokumentasi Penulis

On the other hand, PT. Indonesia Tourism Development Corporation is one of the State-Owned Enterprises that disbursed aid for the construction of supporting infrastructures in the village of Ende, and previously the village of Sade and many other traditional villages in Lombok received government assistance through PNPM Mandiri (Poverty Eradication Program). The role of the government in this matter is essential in the development and promotion of traditional villages to become

recognised Cultural Traditional Villages, with the hope that the local people can develop their existing local wisdom and enhance their economy. The benefits that can be gained from the development of traditional villages are preventing the migration of young people from villages to cities, because of the availability of job opportunities. The concept of the Cultural Traditional Village forces the local people to continue preserving local culture/customs, because this is what they offer to visitors. In other words, if they do not want to lose their livelihood, then culture and customs must be preserved and sustained. The government has been present in an effort to help the local communities to preserve and develop the local economy. The government program is expected not only to be carried out for Lombok but can also be applied to wider Indonesia.

Conclusion

The Sasak people are friendly and relatively unaffected by negative impacts of tourism, i.e., attitude, with a warm tradition of hospitality to the visitors. Traditional villages can provide many tangible benefits, i.e., job opportunities or additional income, and intangible benefits (preservation of local culture, including ethnobotanical knowledge). Traditional villages can also provide food security for their people, especially for sources of vegetables and fruits, by reducing dependency on consumer goods in traditional markets which are subject to price fluctuations. The existence of nature (community gardens, forests) and their composition is a source of raw materials that are important for a creativity and sustainability of traditional villages. Moreover, traditional villages can be considered as a role model for conservation of culture and plants. The government program through the relevant Ministries and State-owned Enterprises were developing traditional villages as a cultural tourism village, which is considered to be right on target to develop a village's economy based on local wisdom, and the main actors behind this are the community itself and the visitors.

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