

## ISSUES IN THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG BALINESE POP MUSIC, TOURISTS, AND THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

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### ABSTRACT

Province of Bali, Indonesia, is growing very rapidly as a tourist destination in recent decades. Currently five to six million foreign tourists visit it every year. On the other hand, Balinese pop music has also grown quite intense in the local communities, especially since the 1990s. Nevertheless, so far, there has not been a significant relationship between Balinese pop music, tourists, and the tourism businesses in this province. Balinese pop music has not been a special product of Bali tourism. This research was conducted to explore and criticize a number of factors that led to the lack of acceptance of the music as part of tourism industry. This literature study was conducted with a descriptive-qualitative approach. The results of the study show that the similarity of Balinese pop music genres to modern music in general is one of the factors. Taste of the tourists, the destinations chosen, lack of promotion, theme of the songs/music, composition, and language used in the lyrics cause the fact that Balinese pop music is less accepted by tourists, especially foreign tourists. It takes certain efforts from artists (musicians), music industry and tourism industries, and also governments to make certain concerted efforts if Balinese pop music wants to be accepted in a tourism business parallel to traditional music products which are already consumed by tourists.

Keywords: Balinese pop music, artists/musicians, tourism products, tourists, tourism industry.

### INTRODUCTION

Tourism business has become one of the important sectors that sustain the economy. One of the regions (provinces) in Indonesia which economy is largely supported by the tourism sector is the Province of Bali. In Bali, the role of tourism for the economy has surpassed previously dominant agriculture where, in the past, agricultural activity was actually the basis for the development of Balinese culture which artistic aspect then turned into a tourism product. In Bali, the development of the tourism industry has started since the early 20th century (early 1900s) but began to grow rapidly since the 1950s and especially 1960s when Bali Beach Hotel in Sanur, Denpasar, and

Ngurah Rai International Airport in Tuban, Badung, opened. Since the 1990s, Bali has been almost identical to tourists and the tourism industry. The era of industrialization of tourism has begun. In recent years, Bali has been visited by five to six million foreign tourists per year. Various tourism companies, such as travel agents, transportation, hotels, restaurants, entertainment venues, souvenir shops, and supporting facilities and infrastructure, are scattered in various tourist destinations.

The local culture of Bali is the main factor causing the success of the tourism industry in Bali. The importance of culture for Bali tourism destinations is evidenced by the cultural tourism paradigm as stated in Bali Local Regulation (Peraturan Daerah Bali) Number 3/1974, then Bali Local Regulation Number 3/1991, and Bali Local Regulation Number 2/2012 which is still applied until now (Mudana, Utama, and Widhari, 2017 <<https://ojs.unud.ac.id/index.php/ecs/article/view/33150>>; Mudana, Utama, and Widhari, 2017a <<https://ojs.unud.ac.id/index.php/kajianbali/article/view/35152>>; Mudana, Utama, and Widhari, 2017b <<http://ojs.pnb.ac.id/index.php/SOSHUM/article/view/717>>; Utama, Mudana, and Astawa, 2017 <<http://ojs.pnb.ac.id/index.php/IJASTE/article/view/536>>).

In addition to local culture such as traditional arts (different genres of dance like *dramatari* and various traditional music), there is also modern arts based on Balinese culture, such as Balinese pop music. Indeed, Balinese pop music can be a potential for the development of the tourism industry in Bali. Nowadays, it actually does not develop as a tourism product that can attract the attention of tourists. Balinese pop music is almost never noticed by foreign tourists. This is an interesting issue to study because Balinese pop music has been developed for a long time and even has many good artists/musicians and, on the other hand, Bali tourism is growing so rapidly.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research is done using a qualitative approach. It intends to understand the phenomenon experienced holistically by the subject of the research, through description way in the form of words, in a special context that is natural and by utilizing various scientific methods (Moleong, 1990: 6). The way how it is revealed is descriptive. As a literature study, the authors use a variety of literature in the writing. Data analysis is

done through qualitative data analysis, which according to Miles and Huberman (1992: 44) consists of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In general, pop music is a type of music that is easily heard with lyrics that are commercial because it undergoes commercialization in the field of (music) industry. In the lyrics, pop music is easily consumed by listeners. What pop songs/music and pop singers/musicians do is something that can be enjoyed instantly. In this case, in Indonesia, "pop music" is almost identical to *dangdut* (a music genre which is very popular among the lower classes) because *dangdut* is also part of "popular music" (Seneviratne, 2012: 78-79). Even *dangdut* has its own cultural identity in the Indonesian society (Weintraub, 2012).

Many experts say pop music is designed to achieve economic success (Mack, 1995; Storey, 2004, 2006; Budiarto, 2001). This is the most common understanding. But there is also popular music that is not made solely for commercial success but to make musicians or singers famous for music. In addition, there are also many songs and music designed for economic gain, but in reality they are ultimately less popular and less liked by the public. On the other hand, many songs are regarded as pop songs simply because they are often played on radio or television but are not particularly well known for being disliked.

Balinese pop music is a blend of (universal and global) pop music genres and Balinese cultural entities especially in terms of language, musicality, and presentation (Ardini, Wirawan, Suarka, and Sugiarta, 2015 <<https://ojs.unud.ac.id/index.php/ecs/article/view/18406>>; Ardini, 2016 <<http://erepo.unud.ac.id/id/eprint/10610>>). This is a genre of pop music with Balinese language (lyrics) and culture in a way how singers/musicians present songs/music. It also has various genres and nuances, as stated in the study of Darmayuda (2007) and Ardini (2016 <<http://erepo.unud.ac.id/id/eprint/10610>>). But the language used since the early days of music development continues to shift from traditional Balinese to a more modern language.

As the name suggests, Balinese pop music is an integral part of the pop music family. In its history in Bali, it evolved from "gegendingan (*lagu-lagu rakyat* or folk songs)", to "Balinese song (*lagu Bali*)", and finally to "Balinese pop music". The "Balinese song" has evolved into "Balinese pop music" since Anak Agung Made Cakra and Band Putra Dewata released the album/song "Kosir Dokar (The Coachman or Dokar Driver)" in the 1970s. Listibya Propinsi Bali Seksi Musik (1986) wrote, this song was very popular in the 1970s.

Balinese pop music in modern times has finally followed the development of the growing social phenomenon in society (Dethu, 2011). This is not just for the economic reasons of the artists (musicians). The artists/musicians try to meet the aesthetic needs of humans with the aim of entertaining in addition to educating. But this idealism seems to be shifting from these needs to entertainment only. Here, Balinese pop music provides social and economic functions at the same time. It can provide musicians (songwriter, singer, musician, arranger, producer, recording studio, etc.) welfare in addition to certain popularity.

Balinese pop artists/musicians come from Balinese society. Balinese pop music involves many parties. They are primarily actors of the related industry, i.e. artists/musicians, producers (production houses and recording studios, music stores and outlets, and event organizers) supported by the media, governments, and of course the people of Bali who are generally the actual and potential market, as direct or indirect music consumers (Ardini, Wirawan, Suarka, and Sugiarta, 2015 <<https://ojs.unud.ac.id/index.php/ecs/article/view/18406>>; Ardini, 2016 <<http://erepo.unud.ac.id/id/eprint/10610>>).

However, the fact that Balinese pop music became a music industry (or market-based music) began to emerge from the 1990s as new technological developments, economic systems, and new musical cultures led to the existence of recording studios, artists/musicians, and products (Frith, 1988; Frith, 2006). In this case the role of media has greatly helped the development of Balinese pop music, especially the role of Bali TV since the 2000s (Ardini, Wirawan, Suarka, and Sugiarta, 2015 <<https://ojs.unud.ac.id/index.php/ecs/article/view/18406>>; Ardini, 2016 <<http://erepo.unud.ac.id/id/eprint/10610>>).

Industrialization of Balinese pop music in the province of Bali has been going on for two and a half decades, marked by its massive production, distribution, and consumption in the society. In relation to the production in the 1990s, a male singer named Widi Widiana from Kuta, Badung, became an icon in the industrialization (Darmayuda, 2007). His most famous song was "Sesapi Putih (White Bat)". Of course, the industrialization is made possible by technologization (Frith, 1988; Frith, 2006), in this case the emergence of digital CD (compact disc) technology that began to replace analogue cassette in its production.

Balinese pop music compositions today use modern musical instruments, such as keyboards, guitars, or drums, but are often mixed with traditional music (*gangsa, kendang, cengceng, suling*, etc). But the traditional musical instruments in music began to be abandoned and replaced by modern musical instruments. Such instruments should not be underestimated given that it is a cultural heritage.

The theme of Balinese pop songs in the early development of Balinese pop music is very diverse ranging from religious messages (a thanking to Ida Sanghyang Widhi Wasa or God Almighty), natural beauty, compassion, local wisdom, and real practice of the daily life of Balinese people. The subsequent development of these themes focuses much on human relationships, especially the relationship between men and women in the context of love or love affairs (or affection in a narrow special sense).

The existence of Balinese pop music in Bali is manifested in a band or solo artist/musician presenting new musical artwork that brings good condition to music atmosphere in Bali. Many artists/musicians and their works appear and compete to sell the best music products to the people of Bali. Since then the Balinese have become accustomed to the music for the sake of their entertainment. In this case, there are many famous names in the current music range, ranging from Widi Widiana, Dek Ulik, Raka Sidan, to several groups such as KIS Band and [XXX].

In fact, the tourists who visit Bali prefer to listen and attend traditional Balinese music performances such as *gamelan* (traditional gong) Bali to Balinese pop music. The traditional music is closely associated with the execution of religious rituals. Hinduism becomes a strong supporting factor that makes such a music exist. Its preservation in

every single *banjars* (sub-hamlets) and traditional villages in Bali makes the music survive from generation to generation.

There are a number of factors that influence the lack of the tourists' interest in Balinese pop music in the tourism industry. The main purpose of tourists coming to Bali is to enjoy the cultural tours that are served and not to enjoy modern pop music, including Balinese pop music. The tourists prefer to enjoy the traditional arts of Bali that can not be found in their country. They do not come to Bali to enjoy the modern things they always meet in their own country. According to Jackson (1989), tourists look for something new and different which they do not have in their culture or environment of their everyday life. They want a so-called inversion.

Tourists who come to Bali are dominated by foreign tourists. In their country, the development of pop music has grown, so a musical genre like Balinese pop music has not been considered unique. Moreover, the tourists do not understand the Balinese language and indeed they come to Bali just for a holiday to enjoy the beauty of nature and especially the culture of Bali, not to learn the Balinese language.

Relationship between men and women dominates the themes of Balinese pop music in the market. Such a theme can inhibit the acceptance of such a music in the tourism industry. Balinese pop artists (musicians) are not dare to get out of the musical path at this time. They are still too nailed to the past things donated by their seniors. This is what makes Balinese pop music can not develop in the tourism industry. The artists/musicians are less willing to do the development of Balinese pop music.

One of the important aspects that led to the lack of interest in Balinese pop music in the tourism industry is the lack of promotional media used to promote the music to domestic and foreign tourists. In fact, according to Ardini, Wirawan, Suarka, and Sugiarta (2015 <<https://ojs.unud.ac.id/index.php/ecs/article/view/18406>>) and Ardini (2016 <<http://erepo.unud.ac.id/id/eprint/10610>>), the media plays a very important role in promoting pop culture, such as pop music, including Balinese pop music. It is proved by the case of Balinese pop music itself in Bali.

Promotion is an effort used to promote any musical genre. In this age of modernization and globalization, there are many media campaigns that can be used to promote any musical product, namely internet and social media, such as facebook,

tweeter, instagram, and so forth. If Balinese pop music is packaged due to the needs of tourists and well promoted, then this music will be one of the actual tourism products that can promote the economy of society in the region, especially the one in the music industry, including the artists/musicians. It is one of the potential cultures in Bali that can be turned into tourist products if the process of creating the songs is given attention to aspects of the needs of the tourists themselves.

Balinese pop music basically has opportunities to grow and enter the tourism industry and become a tourism product. One of the things that can be done is to promote it professionally. Distribution and marketing as well as the frequency of performances of Balinese pop music is still less intense in comparison with the traditional Balinese music.

Nevertheless there is also an interesting phenomenon in the relationship of Balinese pop music and the tourism in Bali. In fact, there is a spectacle music festival which is very much favored by the public and also the (foreign) tourists, namely Soundrenaline. Since the show was first held a few years ago, it can be said it is a pioneer of music festival at least in Bali. This event is able to amaze thousands of visitors. The number of viewers and spectators and the stage that is always majestic make Soundrenaline the Indonesia's largest music festival in Bali. Of course Soundrenaline is great because Bali is a popular international tourism area. Another thing that makes Soundrenaline a special event is the fresh concepts raised in each edition. In more than a dozen times Soundrenaline does not stop at one style, but instead explores new possibilities that can make it more meaningful and valued. The point is, Soundrenaline often invites local singers and bands in Bali. Last year, Lolot n Band and Nanoe Biroe were invited to perform so that that Balinese pop musicians have spaces in improving the quality of musicality on a wider stage both nationally and internationally.

It is known that consumption of Balinese pop music generally comes from the local community (ethnic), that is those who live in the province of Bali, especially the Hindu followers. When the music is performed on big events like Soundrenaline, that is an opportunity for the local pop artists/musicians to develop themselves.

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Balinese pop music has positive implications for the Balinese people, especially in terms of economic improvements. This music is also a means of the Balinese teenagers to channel and develop their musical talent. Of course, the attention from various circles is needed to support this music growing. The government needs to create events involving Balinese pop music so that the music is not stagnant.

Balinese pop music at the moment is actually pretty good from the aspect of music and songs or from aesthetical perspectives. Indeed, it is really favored by various social system in the Balinese society. But the artists (musicians) are expected to be more creative in creating themes, melodies, lyrics, and nuances so that the products created are in accordance with the existing era. This is because the lyrics of Balinese pop music are easy to understand, especially by the young people. Most of the music is dominated by themes of romance that are highly relevant to teenagers and young people. But the lyrics in Balinese pop music can only be understood by local people, while tourists from outside Bali are unable to understand the meaning of the lyrics in the songs. In this case, the language in the lyrics can sometime be mixed with English version for instance so that the tourists can follow the songs sung.

For foreign tourists in general, Balinese pop music is still less attractive than traditional Balinese music. From the point of view of the foreign tourists, listening to pop music is commonplace because basically, pop music comes from western music. Meanwhile, Balinese pop music uses scales (*tangga nada*), melody, harmonization, and musical instruments that are still thick with western musical elements. The tourists are usually looking for something new. Therefore the choice of the tourists falls on unique musical tradition which has its own identity and never been heard or seen in their country of origin.

The traditional music in Bali has already gone international, but Balinese pop music is still developing in the local area only. In fact many Balinese artists are very talented in the field of Balinese pop music. The government needs to cooperate with the music industry (including Balinese pop artists/musicians) and the tourism industry to make the music accepted by tourists in the tourism business.

Balinese pop music actually has enormous potential in the tourism industry. But in reality it is still very difficult to become tourism products. This is a real problem that needs to be solved. If packaged and promoted well, Balinese pop music will be one of the tourism products that can promote the economy of society and the region.

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