

# **SOCIAL AND POLITICAL EFFECTS OF *POP BALI ALTERNATIF* ON BALINESE SOCIETY: THE EXAMPLE OF "XXX"<sup>1</sup>**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This article will clarify how the music genre "Pop Bali Alternatif" affects contemporary Balinese society, both socially and politically. The article focuses on the band "XXX" (Triple X), whose major hit "Puputan Badung" was released in 2006. Recent studies on the "Pop Bali" genre by Balinese researchers have divided it into two main streams: "Pop Bali Konvensional" and "Pop Bali Alternatif." In contrast with the former, which is deeply connected with traditional Balinese music, "Pop Bali Alternatif" includes a variety of influences. For this reason, it exerts a powerful social influence, particularly on young people. The activities of "Pop Bali Alternatif" band members, which are covered extensively by mass media, are quickly imitated by their fans. How did this system come about? What kind of albums/songs produced by these bands have influenced the young and to what extent? Finally, how do the historical backgrounds and surroundings of "Pop Bali*

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*Alternatif" figure into this equation? This article investigates the issues raised through these questions by using XXX as a case study and will closely analyse their most popular song "Puputan Badung." I will show how the social position of the band comes into play, focusing on the narrow line that connects the band to local politics. The conclusion of this article expands the focus of my argument to consider the wider influence of "Pop Bali Alternatif" on Balinese society as a whole.*

**Keywords:** Balinese popular music and social/political influences on contemporary Balinese society, Pop Bali Alternatif, XXX band, Puputan Badung, local politics

## INTRODUCTION

What is *Pop Bali*? *Pop Bali* can be described as local popular music in each district of Indonesia that is commonly sung in local/ethnic languages. It sometimes combines popular music and elements of traditional music; also known as *Pop Daerah*. *Pop Bali* is thus also a type of *Pop Daerah*. Usually it is sung in the Balinese language by "Balinese" singers and is sometimes mixed with elements from Balinese traditional music, such as the musical instruments of Balinese Gamelan, or using traditional musical techniques. In this paper, nevertheless, I would like to bring in additional songs that are sung in other languages, such as English/Indonesian or that employ mixed languages but are sung by "Balinese" to claim a "Balinese" identity.

Recently, the influence of *Pop Bali* has grown more popular in Balinese society, especially among the youth. The purpose of this article is to clarify how *Pop Bali Alternatif* (alternative Balinese pop) affects contemporary Balinese society, both socially and politically. In particular, its influences on social community formation, the activities held through the local identity of "Balineseness," also known as "Ajeg Bali," and its relationship with local politics will be examined. To this end, the band "XXX" (Triple X) which authored the major hit "Puputan Badung" in 2006 will receive special focus for the purpose of this article.

In recent years, autoethnographic studies of *Pop Bali* have been made by Balinese researchers, and in their studies, findings concerning *Pop Bali* clearly divide this into two specific genres: *Pop Bali Konvensional*

(conventional Balinese pop) and *Pop Bali Alternatif*. *Pop Bali Konvensional* is a genre or style characterised by traditional Balinese music, whereas, *Pop Bali Alternatif* includes a variety of styles of western pop music.

A closer look at the differences between these two will be provided later; thus, the main focus point is *Pop Bali Alternatif*. These musicians have a very powerful influence. Although unexpected at first, since band members have widely appeared in the mass media, the social/political opinion or ideas of these musicians are routinely followed by the younger generations and social activities, such as cleaning campaigns, are also reflected in youths' action as soon as they are introduced in newspapers and magazines.

The points that will be discussed in this paper are: What kind of works have they launched? How can we account for the bands and musicians' significant influence? And, what do the background, history and local environment have to do with the effect of this music/band/musician?

## THE INCIDENT THAT OCCASSIONED THE PRESENT STUDY

In the course of conducting my previous research on this topic, contained in a 2009 paper entitled "Ajeg Bali and Pop Bali: Cultural movements over local identity and the changes of popular music in Bali" published in 2010 from Keiso Shobo as a part of the book titled *Overcoming Local and Global: Asian Popular Music* (Inoue, ed. 2010), I was required to obtain usage rights to some photographs of XXX. Therefore, I had to obtain formal permission from the band. I visited the production office of XXX and met their producer to discuss and decide how to do this. In the end, I obtained permission, although their final request was surprising to me. They demanded that the following caption to the song "Puputan Badung" be placed in my article:

*"Launching Lagu Puputan Badung di laksanakan di Puri Peguyangan, Denpasar oleh Bapak Wali Kota Denpasar yaitu Anak Agung Puspayoga pada tahun 2006."*

This sentence translates as, "*Puputan Badung* was launched by A. A. Puspayoga, the mayor of Denpasar city, at *Peguyangan* Palace in Denpasar city in 2006."

The production studio made contact calls to Ngurah Supartha, and his personage can be spotted in the video produced along with this song; he was introduced as a "director" of this song's video clip. Why did the music production studio ask his permission for the photo? And why did he request

that I specify the name of the mayor, who appears not to have any connection to the photos and video clip?

A series of peculiar decisions and actions are the main reason for writing this paper, building on a previous presentation held in Hong Kong in 2010.<sup>3</sup>

## PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON POP BALI

There have been a considerable number of scholars, such as Sen, Hill, Wallach and Baulch, who have conducted studies on Indonesian popular music and related studies of Indonesian popular music to technology, politics and historical/social perspectives of popular music.<sup>4</sup>

As for studies on Indonesian popular music, which is also the subject of this article, there have been some studies on Indonesian popular music done by Sen and Hill that discuss the formation of the underground scenes and the activities of local society (Sen and Hill 2004). In addition, Wallach has published several studies on Indonesian popular music by middle class youth who formed the underground scene, the differentiation between modern, urban and rural areas in the underground scene and its politics (Wallach 2002, 2005a, 2008). Wallach's studies also touch upon the impact of technology on the Indonesian popular music scene and musicians who made use of technology to produce popular music (Wallach 2005a, 2008).

These aforementioned articles are strongly suggestive for the present article; unfortunately, their argument only focuses on metropolitan Jakarta. Little attention is paid to the local scene, such as the situation in Bali, which is far different from that of the metropolitan city of Jakarta, specifically in terms of the spread of telecommunications in Balinese society. The usage of the Internet in the underground social scene in 1997, mentioned in the previous studies, was non-existent in Bali at the time of discussion. Even though telecommunications and mass media in Bali is not the main topic of this paper, it is highly influential and has an important role in the history and impact of

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<sup>3</sup> This paper is based on my presentation in a biennale conference of Inter-Asia Popular Music Studies (IAPMS) held in Hong Kong, 2010.

<sup>4</sup> Research on *Pop Bali* in Japanese has been lacking in the past and at present to introduce their outline. Lately in 2009, Naito and Nakamura have published papers on Balinese media and television broadcasting in Bali. In those papers, Naito argued a little about *Pop Bali* within a relationship of Balinese local media and culture. And also except my articles on *Pop Bali* with media, cultural movements around the local identity, there are only a few studies of *Pop Bali* in Japanese (Naito 2009; Nakamura 2009; Fushiki 2009, 2010).

*Pop Bali*, especially after the 2000s. Therefore, these related studies are not only suggestive, but also implicative, for this article.

In discussing the situation of popular music in Bali, Baulch's book is the first and most important one published in English internationally. The formation of the underground scene in the Balinese popular music world started in the early 1990s and continued until the outbreak of the Asian economic crisis in 1997. Baulch mainly argues about the underground scene of Balinese popular music such as punk, and the thrash metal scene in Kuta area,<sup>5</sup> and describes through analysis the activities of bands such as "Superman Is Dead" and "Eternal Madness" (Baulch 2007). However, the scenes of her study are not mentioned by Balinese researchers. During my research in libraries of Udayana University (Universitas Udayana or UNUD) and the Indonesian Institute of the Arts (Insitut Seni Indonesia-Denpasar or ISI-Denpasar), some of the findings indicate that the descriptions of the scenes of underground music such as punk, thrash metal and more other genres, which were argued before by Baulch (2009), are not accounted for. Whether these omissions were intentional or not remains ambiguous. Although *Pop Bali Alternatif* has been much studied by researchers, no one has mentioned the underground scenes. Why is there a difference in addressing the indie/alternative scene, rock and other styles such as Punk and Metal when these were all thought of as *Alternatif*?

Baulch's studies may be useful for researchers who have an interest in Balinese popular music in the early 1990s. However, the situation of genre/scene differences experienced a drastic turn after that. In the late 1990s, the concept of "Bali" and consciousness about "the Balinese culture" in Bali began to have more attention paid to them by various performing arts as forms of "Balinese culture." While there were debates on the concept of "Balineseness," even the Indonesian Institute of the Arts in Denpasar (STSI-Denpasar<sup>6</sup>) produced one collaborative work that includes *Pop Bali* in traditional Balinese Gamelan music in the reception of the International Gamelan Exhibition in the Balinese Art Festival 2000.<sup>7</sup> With such a background, the findings of Balinese researchers on *Pop Bali* began to appear.

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<sup>5</sup> At the time, Kuta area was famous with its music and its followers. The young followers were commonly found walking around inebriated and forming some teams or groups on the street (denoted as "Base camp"). And sometimes, due to a youngster passing away after a strong alcohol overdose, such as *arak* (Balinese spirit), the "scene" became a known social problem in Bali.

<sup>6</sup> At the time, the institute was called as *Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia-Denpasar* (STSI-Denpasar), former name of ISI-Denpasar.

<sup>7</sup> ISI is usually thought as the "traditional," academic training school of Indonesian arts and music. Especially as for the music, there was only *Karawitan* (traditional music) genre and no Western music styles in music division at the time.

Darma Putra connected *Pop Bali* and its local identity, its relationship with politics in the historical development from the colonial era; Marheni analysed the history of *Pop Bali Konvensional* and its three eras (the era of Made Cakra (1970–1975), the era of Sagita (1980s) and the era of Widi Widiana (1993–present)). Darmayuda made additional arguments about the genre of *Pop Bali* (Darma Putra 2004; Marheni 2005; Darmayuda 2007, 2008). The research of Marheni and Darmayuda provide us the details of *Pop Bali* culture and show us the widening world of *Pop Bali* itself with its musical styles. And Darma Putra's perspective provides a basic understanding of *Pop Bali* in the society, as well as revealing how academicians and intellectuals in Balinese society observe the scenes.

In addition, in regards to the expansion of the influence of music and the performing arts in Bali, including Pop Bali, Harnish discussed the historical development of Balinese Gamelan, the birth of the new genre of Balinese traditional music and youth activities from the historical perspective in the colonial era to the present (Harnish 2005). However, McIntosh, who researches Balinese teenagers' activities in performing arts, especially on disco beat and dance, points out in his article the musical activities of "youth," whereas the research findings of authors such as Baulch and Harnish are not among the typical examples mentioned. As McIntosh's study has shown us, today's *Pop Bali* appeal not only to older male youths (Noszlopy 2005) but also to teenagers (age up to 14 years<sup>8</sup>), male and female high school students, and university students, and now it has become a popular form of entertainment (McIntosh 2010). As mentioned before, this article will also be arguing the influence on teenagers.

## Research site

I have been a part of the Indonesian Art Institute from 1995 to 1998 in Bali, in order to learn and study Balinese Gamelan while enjoying the various musical scenes in Balinese society. Throughout and after those years, I partook in annual visits to do field research until August 2010, and researched the activities and performances of the youths, teenagers, men, women and professional Gamelan players around the southeast area of Denpasar city. As for my research of *Pop Bali*, collective research on Balinese local mass media and pop started around 2005, then intensive research was carried on in 2009 and August 2010. This article is part of these research results. My research

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<sup>8</sup> This definition is based on McIntosh's research.

field for this paper was mostly confined to urban areas, especially in Denpasar city and Gianyar prefecture. In the field, I have visited musical production studios and met production editors; moreover, the editor of the single journal of *Pop Bali* at the time, Made Adnyana, agreed to do an interview. In addition, to do research on *Pop Bali* in local mass media, I visited the office of Bali Post to research their archives. This was followed by library research in UNUD with assistance of Prof. Sutjaja and musicians of the scene. Consequently, I was able to establish communication via e-mail and interactive messaging services such as Facebook, in order to conduct the interviews.

## **SHORT INTRODUCTION OF POP BALI**

### **Short History of Pop Bali**

Back in the 1970s, Pop Bali experienced commercialisation by recording media, went to market and became known as popular music. The earliest band that received commercial success was Band Putra Dewata, which started their activities in 1963 and became rapidly popular in the 1970s. This band was formed by A. A. Made Cakra, who was the owner of a barbershop in Denpasar city, and a violinist of Indonesian popular music *kroncong*. After the hit of their first album "Kosir Dokar" (Coachman), they produced many songs, one after another, and became highly popular in a very short time. Consequently, mainly due to the fact that there was no other band to compete with them, the character of *Pop Bali* was mainly decided by the songs in their first album: many of these songs focus on love themes, with a touch of humour.



Figure 1: Made Cakra "Kosir Dokar" (Bali Record).

At the time, in the 1970s, in addition to Made Chakra, A. A. Wedhasmara, a composer of *Pop Indonesia*, contributed to the development of *Pop Bali*. The 1980s, however, proved an era of misfortune for *Pop Bali*. The appearance of new media, such as the opening of the Balinese branch of Indonesian national television, made a new hobby for Balinese audiences and wrested audience from radio. Radio became an old-fashioned media utilised for the audience in rural areas where people lacked television access, and *Pop Bali*, which was mainly radio content, garnered the image of "rural" and "old-fashioned" music. The singers K. Bimbo and Yong Sagita, who arrived on the scene in the 1980s and 1990s and remain active, are the most popular singers from that era. At the time, many singers sang songs of tragic love, rueful sentiments in simple lyrics with unchanged musical styles. That is the reason why *Pop Bali* couldn't fully attract the heart of the youth, and therefore became the subject of criticism.

This changed in the 1990s. It was a time when Balinese society was greatly confused by economic and political issues. Underground scenes formed in the *Pop Bali* world, and new styles of music, such as Reggae, Punk and Metal came out as well. Moreover, the audience of *Pop Bali* also shifted from those living in rural areas to those living in urban areas: in other words, educated, middle class youth.



Reggae became highly developed alongside with the sightseeing industry and became a kind of music to play in front of the tourist crowds in early 1990s Bali. Bauch mentioned it was around 1992 when the new genres of Punk and Metal came to be heard in Bali (Baulch 2007: 53). The introduction of Metal and Trash Metal music were launched by the radio programme "1921," from a small and independent local radio station, Radio Yudha, which helped to create notions of Metal music as leisure and fun for the audience; and also, contributed to the making of the larger "real" scene for musicians and fun seekers to gather around. People all in black fashion looks gathered on "base camp" then sometimes emerged on the street to drink and join open-air concerts. Some bands, such as the famous "Superman Is Dead" and "Lolot" emerged to the scene, and their music became accepted by youth, especially by university students.

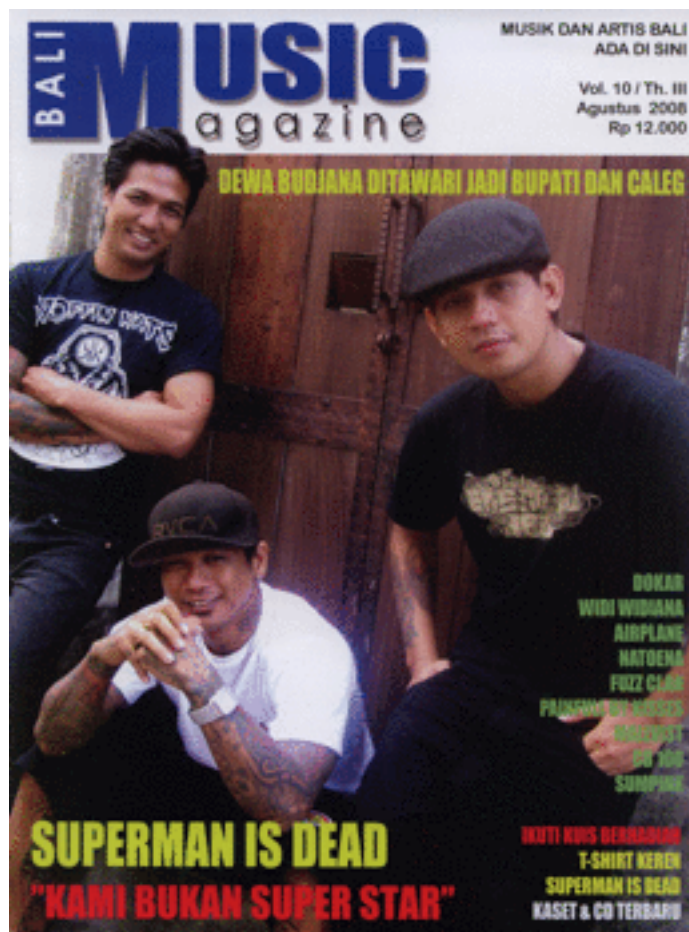


Figure 2: Superman Is Dead on the cover of the only one journal for *Pop Bali*, Bali Music Magazine.

By the second half of the 1990s, such music evolved from the background to become a major scene. In 1996, the *Pop Alternatif Festival* (Alternative Pop Festival), supported by major western environments, was held in Jakarta. Metal and Punk became one of main events in the festival, and joined by a Balinese band; this kind of music became readily accepted in the major scene in Bali. This type of concert is relatively recent, and their music is called *Pop Alternatif* (Alternative popular music). The event was held in a big stadium, with an open square and an exhibition hall with small live performances. Even though the market of commercialising their cassette tape was still small, the influence in society was large, and their activities not only comprised music but were social in nature too. They made the news and were broadcasted through local mass media into Balinese society. However, *Pop Bali* drastically changed and developed many varieties. In 2000s, Balinese intellectuals re-evaluated *Pop Bali* and radically started discussing representations of "Balineseness."

In the following section, we will analyse the characteristics of such developed *Pop Bali* according to the understanding of Dharmayuda.

### ***Pop Bali Konvensional (Conventional Pop Bali)***

According to Marheni, there are three eras in the history of *Pop Bali*. The first is the era of Made Cakra (1970–1975), the next is the era of Sagita (1980s) and the last is the era of Widi Widiana (1993–present) (Marheni 2005). The most notable era is the third one, and the styles of *Pop Bali* became richer in its variations in this era. *Pop Bali* of this type—historically divided in three eras by Marheni—was named *Konvensional* by Darmayuda. It has three characteristics: using Balinese language, melody in five-tone scale (the kind of scales, *pelog* or *slendro*, either of them), and musical accompaniment with a mixture of western popular music and Balinese traditional music (Darmayuda 2007). Moreover, this kind of *Pop Bali* in the 1990s grew varieties of *nuansa* (nuance), such as *nuansa Mandarin* (Chinese nuance).

These *nuansa*-s were adopted by musical styles from other areas in Indonesia, or from some musical styles/characters/images from other genres of music. The first example that was shown and picked up by Darmayuda was *Pop Bali* in *nuansa Mandarin* and appeared in the beginning of the 1990s. This style brought back something "new" to *Pop Bali*, something that the youths at the time had already lost interest in. The first piece from this nuance was "*Tresna Ngantos Mati*" (Loving You Until the End of My Life) composed by Sagita, and arranged in a *nuansa Mandarin* style with added characteristics

of Chinese music by J. Sila who is an ethnic Chinese composer. The song was sung by Widi Widiana. After this song, another one of Widianas', "*Kasmaran*" (Fall in Love) became a great hit in Bali. *Pop Bali nuasa Mandarin* now received a great deal of popularity and has taken hold on Balinese society.

After this, many *nuansa*-s have appeared. *Nuansa Sunda* is somewhat of an imitation of the melody line with Sundanese traditional singing and "borrowing" melodies with musical instruments from Sundanese Gamelan; *nuansa Banyuwangi* adopts musical styles of traditional music in Banyuwangi; *nuansa Jawa* is arranged by a composer from central Jawa. Many more examples can be pointed out. In recent years, *Pop Bali Konvensional* still has such kinds of *nuansa*-s. Songs with some *nuansa* influences have become largely popular in Bali. The differences in the *nuansa*-s influences are, however, difficult to ascertain. In some of these *nuansa*-s, there are no specific musical styles, and characteristics cannot be clearly defined. For instance, the girl who is expected to be the lover of the hero in the song may immerse her local flavour. This is because these *Pop Bali* songs—*Pop Bali Konvensional*—are mainly love songs with the theme of *BTA* (*Beli tresna adi* or I Love You<sup>9</sup>) or songs for a broken heart.



Figure 3: Dek Ulik's album "*Sader beli*" (Please be Awake, My Lover) (Januadi).

<sup>9</sup> This sentence refers to men only. Literally it means "Sister, I, elder brother of you, love you." In Balinese, the husband/man calls himself "*beli*" (elder brother) for their lovers, and also call his wife/lover as "*adi*" (younger sister).

### ***Pop Bali Alternatif (Alternative Pop Bali)***

Another type of *Pop Bali* is *Pop Bali Alternatif*, which emerged from the underground scene in the 1990s. Since many of the musicians of these styles were active in bands, this kind of music was called *Musik Band* before the phrase *Pop Bali Alternatif* became popular.

Darmayuda has pointed out the following three characteristics of *Pop Bali Alternatif*: *irama musik* (rhythm of the music) in Pop Rock, Reggae, Punk, Latin and Disco.<sup>10</sup> Many of these are not digitalised or processed through computer recording,<sup>12</sup> but, rather, are recorded live. Many musicians do not recognise themselves as musicians/singers in the *Pop Bali* scene, even though they have much experience as Balinese musicians in nightclubs, pubs and discos. In addition, many have never tried singing *Pop Bali* (Darmayuda 2007).

All these points show us that many of the musicians in the scene of *Pop Bali Alternatif* were not recognised as part of "Balineseness" at the beginning of their careers. As a matter of fact, Rahman, who is the manager and the producer of XXX—the band that emerged from the *Pop Bali Alternatif* scene and will be described later—told me in an interview, that there were some influences from the *Ajeg Bali* movement, and that they were deeply concerned about "Balineseness" although they never expected their music to become popular "Balinese" music.

As a result of the appearance of *Pop Bali Alternatif*, however, Darmayuda pointed that there were some influences on the *Pop Bali* world: adding a new colour to the *Pop Bali* music, while at the same time decreasing the perception of shame that they originally held. The feeling that their music was lacking in sophistication in their music diminished. The entire scene was somewhat rescued from decline and, as a consequence, directed the projection of the future of *Pop Bali* away from becoming stereotyped *Pop Bali Konvensional* with *nuansa Mandarin*. In addition, it confirmed the possibility of using Balinese language, as well as western rhythms such as Rock and Rap, shifting the identity of *Pop Bali* from that of remote areas that received the

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<sup>10</sup> This is a big difference from conventional one that was mixed Balinese traditional musical elements.

<sup>12</sup> Interestingly, to add the elements of Balinese traditional music, *Pop Bali Konvensional* usually uses computer recording system with midi-controlled synthesisers. But of course, of recent, *Pop Bali Alternatif* has also been using it for their recordings.

influences from Mandarin,<sup>13</sup> Sunda, Jawa, Banyuwangi to a global and modern identity (ibid).

The understanding of these influences makes it easy to connect the ideology/activity of "Balineseness"/*Ajeg Bali* to *Pop Bali*. *Pop Bali* is the ideal subject for *Ajeg Bali* when its ideology seems to be living a modern life while positioning their eyes on their future in a global context without adhering oneself to the past.

According to Darmayuda, there are various styles in *Pop Bali Alternatif*: *rock, rap, reggae, Pop Indonesia, kroncong, dangdut* and so on. The rock bands are Lolot (already introduced above), Bintang Band, di Ubud n' Band, So Band, Raja and so on (ibid).

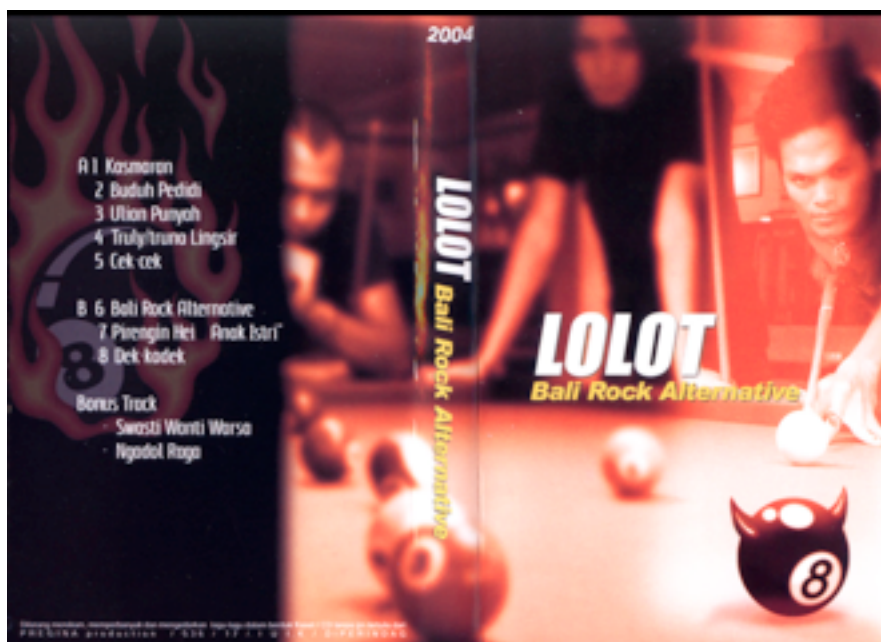


Figure 4: Lolot, album "Bali Rock Alternative."

Usually they are not projecting Balineseness; hence not recognised in their music and activities. Nonetheless, when more attention is paid to Balineseness in Balinese society, some musicians attempted exploring Balineseness. The song "*Cekcek*" in their album "*Bali rock alternative*" testifies as an example. The song in western popular music is mixed with *Kecak*, and uses *Kecak* dance in their video clip. In addition to Lolot, Darmayuda introduced us to XXX from Rap, Joni Agung and Double T from

<sup>13</sup> In here, we have to pay attention. If someone in the Balinese pop scene says "Mandarin," it does not mean real China, but the image of Chineseness as imagined by them.

Reggae, and both of them are still very popular in the *Pop Bali Alternatif* world.

### XXX (TRIPLE X)

XXX is taken as an example for this paper, since it emerged from the scene of *Pop Bali Alternatif*. XXX is basically a three-brother/family band with their elder brother Rahman Murthana as the producer.<sup>14</sup> The members are two vocalists (Rahtut and Rahtwo) and lead guitar (Ramink). Additional members are Sila (guitar and keyboard), Rahalit (drum), Annga (Bass) and staff.

This band started from a small business for video shooting and editing, set up by two brothers: Rahman Murthana—a graduate from Faculty of Technic, Udayana University whose hobby was editing videos—and his younger brother Rahtut, who became a main composer of XXX later. They started their business at Jayagiri Street and named their company Jayagiri, signaling the beginning of the Jayagiri production. The video shooting and the editing by cameraman Rahtut and editor Rahman took place at this location.

In 2002, a new broadcasting station, Bali TV, started to make frequent use of their service and video clips, and Jayagiri production became famous. They always attempted to create novel video clips and tried new techniques that had never been used in Bali at the time. Examples include adding animation to the video, giving it a special effect. This was the case with their debut video clip of the song "*Sami Bagia*" (Everyone is Happy), composed by Rahtut and played by him with the assistance of his two younger brothers.<sup>15</sup> It was at this time, in October 2003, when XXX was founded.<sup>16</sup>

The great hit of this "*Sami Bagia*" spurred efforts for their first album. Requested by the audience, XXX decided to make their debut album and released "*Druwenang Sareng*" (What's Mine is Yours) in 2003. Although recently, they claim their music as a "mix" of Hip-Metal, Rock, Pop, Reggae

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<sup>14</sup> Murthana joined some social activities for protecting copyright and anti-piracy movements as a member of *Pramusti Bali* (Association for musicians and music productions of *Pop Bali*). In 2010, he became the chairman of *Pramusti Bali*, starting the competition of *Pop Bali* under the name of *Pramusti Award*. As for the competition/award of *Pop Bali*, the beginning was the *Denpos Award* that was started by Made Adnyana who was in *Denpos*, one of local newspapers under Bali post conglomerate in 2001 and which ended in 2007. After the end of the *Denpos Award*, *Radar Bali Music Award* and *Malam Apresiasi Musik Bali* (Appreciation night for Balinese music), there was no *Pop Bali* award for a few years.

<sup>15</sup> The name of the band "XXX" means the gathering of three anonymous people, Mr. X. (Tokoh 9, January 2012).

<sup>16</sup> Nowadays, Jayagiri company becomes a production centre for popular musicians such as Nanoe Biroe, Bintang, 4WD, Dian, Tisna, etc. The company's services range from the production, recording and promotion of music and videos. Moreover, their company activities expanded to a recording and shooting section in the original studio, setting up public events as to become an all-around entertainment company.



and so on, their first album was in fact Rap music oriented. In 2004, they launched their next "techno" album "*Jingkrak-jingkrak*" (Let's Dance) that included an interesting piece named "*Bali Industri*" (Industrialised Bali), a song meant to expose destructive development in Bali. From the album "*Bikul Pisuh*" (Swear at the Rat) in 2006, however, their music became Pop Rock, and sometimes they presented their music in a combination with traditional Balinese Gamelan and *Pop Bali*. Especially after the album "*Sangat Delem*" (Story of good and bad Balinese puppets) in 2008, they presented more combinative pieces, showing a "traditional," "Balinese" attitude in their concerts. According to Murthana, this perspective did not emerge intentionally at first. Since the composer of this band, Rahtut, originally played traditional Balinese Gamelan, he has tried to make a combined work. Thence, the next album "*Nak Bali*" (Balinese) released in February 2010 was clearly a combination of traditional music and pop, and all songs were sung in Balinese, depending on audience's demand.<sup>17</sup> The latest album "Remix" was released under the name of three people: although it is not a combined work, it can rather be defined as "Techno Disco," and became the self-cover album of the hits of XXX.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Rahtut wrote about this on XXX Facebook page account September 2011.

<sup>18</sup> According to Murthana, sales of each album until the release of "*Sangat Delem*" were about 25,000 cassettes (Murthana 2010). Two albums later between 3,000 and 5,000 CDs were pressed. The amount of their "mega hits" was similar and even famous popular musicians'/bands' albums sold only about 3,000 to a maximum 5,000; the market for *Pop Bali* is not so big.



Figure 5: XXX "Nak Bali" (Jayagiri).

### **The Background of the Making of "Puputan Badung" and the Aristocrate Second Generation**

When XXX had just released their third album, "*Bikul Pisuh*," the request of a special project team came to act upon it. This was a project of "*Puputan Badung*" intending to showcase XXX to the audience: youth and general public alike. The year 2006 was the centenary of the "*Puputan Badung*," which was a memorable incident in Balinese society. It memorialised the overall start of the special project creating *Pop Bali*.

*Puputan Badung* refers to the mass ritual suicide death procession performed by the Balinese against the Dutch armed forces, which happened on 20 September 1906 in Badung kingdom, South Bali. There were two immediate reasons for going to war with the Dutch forces, causing *Puputan*



*Badung*: one was the enforcement of the *satie*-death<sup>19</sup> taking place in October 1903 at Tabanan kingdom according to Balinese custom, which was already prohibited by Dutch officials at the time. The other was a claim for damages regarding the incident with a Chinese merchant's cargo that happened in May 1904 at Sanur beach. The cargo was carried away from a stranded cargo ship in accordance with the traditional Balinese salvage rights (*tawan karang*) for vessels wrecked off the Balinese coast. Dissatisfied Dutch officials decided to claim damages from the Badung kingdom. Since the Badung kingdom did not agree, Dutch officials sent their armed forces to the area. At the time, the royal family of Badung kingdom, relatives and citizens took part in a procession for an honourable death, wearing ceremonial white clothes and committed mass suicide right in front of the Dutch forces. This incident is known as *Puputan Badung*. The Balinese interpretation of *Puputan Badung* is based on a folkloric tale, "The story of a pregnant woman," written back in 1977 by a female author who was a descendant of the last *raja* (king) of Badung kingdom.<sup>20</sup>

Actually, there is a kind of conflict between the nation state policy of Indonesia and the local policy of Bali from early 20th century. While Balinese began to consider outsiders as "others," the national consciousness of "Bali" emerged, and they defined themselves as "Balinese."<sup>21</sup> Although Balinese had requested special autonomy in the last few years of the 20th century after the end of Suharto's policy, in the end they did not receive it.<sup>22</sup> According to Creese, with the reflection of the New Order era (Suharto's era), this 1977 tale depicted *Puputan Badung* "in broader, historical context of its narratives and memories," and her "narrative was imbued with the familiar nationalist rhetoric of the period, and paid anachronistic tribute to the implementation of one of the founding principles of Indonesian nation state, the inter-group harmony that is reflected in its motto 'unity in diversity'" (Creese 2006). More details can be found in Creese's paper; yet, the important points coalesce around the two reasons for *Puputan Badung*. First, the act was performed in order to keep customs and traditions; and second, *Puputan* was also a

<sup>19</sup> *Satie* is a custom for the women in the Royal family especially for the wives of *Raja* (King/ruler) at the era. At the cremation of the *Raja*, wives must follow their husband to heaven and jump alive from the high bridge into the burning fire of their husband's dead body.

<sup>20</sup> Other sources of Balinese interpretation of *Puputan Badung* are Balinese poems, "*Geguritan Bhuwanawinasa*" (Destruction of the World) and "*Geguritan Puputan Badung*" (*Puputan Badung*). *Bhuwanawinasa* was composed by Pedanda Ngruh between 1906 and 1918, and later notable Indonesian representations include the *geguritan* poem, *Puputan Badung* written by A. A. Alit Konta who is also the descendant of last *raja* in 1977 (Creese 2006).

<sup>21</sup> For more details for the historical perspectives of this topic, please see Vickers (1996).

<sup>22</sup> For more details for this movement, please see Nordholt (2007) and Picard (2005).

legitimate act for protecting Balinese pride against Dutch officials who deliberately disregarded customs and traditions that were thought to be sins.

In 2006, at the centenary planning period of this *Puputan*, the group called "Aristocrat Second Generation" was founded. The most important people in this group are the *Triwangsa* (three high-cast groups in Balinese society) people, and they interact well with the Royal Denpasar family<sup>23</sup> still connected with local politics. This may explain why Aristocrat Second Generation decided to shoot the video clip of the song of *Puputan Badung at Pura Tambangan Badung* (Tambangan Badung temple), which possesses a deep relationship with the last raja of Badung kingdom and their relatives. A launching ceremony was held at *Puri Peguyangan* (Peguyangan palace), which is part of the Royal Denpasar family residence. It was made possible by having the support of a family member of the Royal Denpasar family from *Puri Satria* (Satria palace), A. A. Puspayoga; the mayor of Denpasar city at the time.

The key characters were: the author of "the story of a pregnant woman" published in 1977 and the mayor. The heroine of the story was the character Jero Nyoman Nuraga, who happened to be the aunt and grandmother-in-law<sup>24</sup> of the author, A. A. Sagung Purti Kapandyan. And the mayor is the nephew of Kapandyan in *Puri, Puri Satria*, in the palace of the last *raja* of Badung kingdom, Cokorda Alit Ngurah Pamecutan III. The story depicted the notion of *Puputan Badung* towards Balinese people in the second half of the 1970s. Then, thirty years later, a direct descendant of the last *raja* who seems to be an appropriate person to express Balinese feelings about *Puputan*, had strengthened the discourse and image with the relation of the making/launching of the song. XXX was in charge of arrangement and playing, and also it was XXX who promoted the song widely.<sup>25</sup>

As for this song, most of the lyrics are in Indonesian, which is rare in *Pop Bali*. The reason is that an original poem/text was written in Indonesian by Supartha. The lyrics are as follows:

Terlukis kisah sejarah Perang Puputan  
Seorang Raja yang anti Belanda  
Ini terjadi di tanah pulau Dewata  
Demi martabat dan bela negara

<sup>23</sup> Royal Denpasar family is descendant of last raja of the Badung kingdom.

<sup>24</sup> The lineage of the royal family is very complicated. For more details of the lineage, see Creese (2006).

<sup>25</sup> It seems that there is some special purpose on the founding of this group, Aristocrat Second Generation. But it is not clear yet, because the founding groups are not mentioned in interviews. Incidentally, the members of XXX are also *Triwangsa* people.

Raja demi Raja berkumpul jadi satu  
Untuk mengusir kaum penjajah  
Darah merah mengalir di setiap kota  
Terjadilah Puputan yang bergelora

Puri Denpasar, Pemecutan, Satria, Kesiman, dan Taensiat  
Tombah, keris siap di tangan

Menghalau musuh dari bumi Pertiwi  
Dalam kisah Puputan Badung,  
Dalam kisah Puputan Badung,  
Dalam kisah Puputan Badung,

Nyen ento menyeling di jaba tengah  
Nyen ento menyeling di jaba tengah  
Gusti Ngurah Alit Jambe Pemecutan  
Gusti Ngurah Alit Jambe Pemecutan

The meaning is as follows:

We will paint the historical story of the Puputan war.  
There was a King who was against the Dutch colonizers  
To protect their dignity and martial nation of the deities' land, Bali,  
The Puputan war was started by him.

Every king in Badung, gathering together  
to chase off colonizers.  
Red blood had flown in every city,  
and the turbulent Puputan war had begun.

Every member from the palace of Denpasar, Pemecutan, Satria,  
Kesiman, and Taensiat,  
hold their pikes and keris (traditional sword) in their hands to join the  
war.

Dispel enemies from the earth of the goddess [Bali],  
with the Puputan Badung story!

Who is the man who played a flute<sup>26</sup> in the courtyard of the palace?  
He is the last king, Gusti Ngrah Alit Jembe Pemecutan.

This music video clip used historical, real photos from the Archives in its opening, soon after the theatrical clip started. In the clip, the members of XXX played the role of the royal family of *Badung kingdom* who stand up together with the Balinese folks, who were played by extras, and the music clip concluded with their death in front of the Dutch armed forces.<sup>27</sup> The clip was produced and frequently broadcasted on Bali TV, a company known for promoting "Balineseness."

This music exerted a strong influence in Bali though it was brief. In addition, this music raised the consciousness of the centenary of *Puputan Badung* among many people who were part of a wider generation. It consequently played a role in allowing *Ajeg Bali* to seep into the awareness and minds of the youth who came to embrace *Pop Bali Alternatif*.

## CULTURAL POLITICS OF AJEG BALI AND POP BALI

It was by the end of the 1990s, that the movement for "Balineseness" in Balinese society became popular. In the 1990s, the global recession began that incurred the Asian economic crisis, hitherto affecting the tourism industry and Balinese society, since they depended directly on it. It was the time to focus on the local culture/identity, "Balineseness." This local identity was defined as a syntagmatic set of customs, religious (Hinduism) life and local culture. It placed "culture" at the top of the list in order to rebuild Balinese society. Originally, "Balineseness" was known as *ke-Bali-an* in the Indonesian language; however, a few years later, the word *ke-Bali-an* changed to *Ajeg Bali*. Then, *Ajeg Bali* became the way to refer to "Balineseness." This word was expressed incidentally by Satria Naradha, ABG the President of the Balinese Media conglomerate *Bali Post* in a seminar around May 2002. Although, according to Mas Ruscitadewi in the *Bali Post*, it was after the first

<sup>26</sup> This sentence means "who is whistling to the people/folks to join the Puputan war?"

<sup>27</sup> But on the other hand, they also inserted these words; "*Kami bangga setiap pementasan bias mengibarkan bendera merah putih... Kibarjan terus merah putih Ku...* (We [without you] are so proud to flap the Indonesian national flag in every our concert... Flap forever OUR national flag...) At the end of the clip, they put the words; "*Puputan Badung sebagai renungan rasa persaudaraan diantara kita* (Puputan Badung is a reflection of our [including you] brotherhood feeling)." This is a typical negotiate posture of them. Although they feel a kind of conflict between national and local, they don't express it directly and show the posture to follow their nation.

Bali Bombings in October 2002 when the discussion became more active thereafter November 2002 (Mas Ruscitadewi 2009). Throughout the year 2003, there were numerous conferences on *Ajeg Bali* and its connotations. The subject matter which was discussed during those conferences ended up being published by Bali Post as a book. Once the definition of *Ajeg Bali* had been determined, a leaflet was presented; then, the *Ajeg Bali* ("firm Bali" or "sustainable Bali") concept became an objective and a purpose to be followed.<sup>28</sup>

At the time, the sentence "sustaining Balinese culture" had a profound impact. Though, according to Mas Ruscitadewi and Sutjaya, IGM from Udayana University, it is understood by some academics that *Ajeg Bali* has a different meaning than "sustaining Balinese culture." From an etymological analysis, the difference is evident, with the words *Melestarikan Kebudayaan Bali* (Sustaining Balinese Culture) including a slight meaning about the inability of the possibility to progress, to be modern and sustain the past in the form of "a living museum." Whereas, the meaning of *Ajeg Bali* entails the possibility of progress, and it possesses a certain consciousness about facing and dealing with modernism for its people. In this entire cultural wave, *Pop Bali* as the local and modern popular music of Bali came to receive positive support as one of the important cultural movements to represent "Balineseness."

Throughout "Balineseness," *Ajeg Bali* also entails social characteristics, such as those stemming from political and cultural movements, which impact local identity. *Pop Bali* has become an important component of *Ajeg Bali* and therefore the entire movement changed and grew drastically. The current situation of *Pop Bali*—active as it is—portrays a number of singers fiercely competing for the spotlight of the scene; launching many musical works and giving concerts that created a feeling of an unprecedented crisis after the decline in the 1980s. Even through the aforementioned crisis, concerts kept gathering large audiences, not only those that presented traditional music, but also those of *Pop Bali* that came to be included in social events or art festivals held by local governments, such as *Pesta Kesenian Bali* (PKB, Bali Art Festival) in Denpasar.

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<sup>28</sup> A leaflet saying here is "*Kesimpulan dan langkah-langkah operasional yang perlu dilakukan untuk mewujudkan AJEG BALI hasil semiloka AJEG BALI Oktober di Denpasar.*" I am unconfirmed what kind of form this original was taken out in, and it is a copy kept by Bali post Corporation that I was able to confirm it.

## BEHIND THE SCENES – CONNECTIONS BETWEEN POP BALI MUSICIANS AND POLITICIANS

*Ajeg Bali* is known as the cultural movement that developed rapidly in the city area, in Denpasar City at first. A. A. Puspayoga was elected as mayor of the city back in the year 2000. He brought the movement concept to local politics and promoted it in a positive way. He made a declaration for Denpasar to become a cultural centre, and made effort to build identity with "the Balinese Culture," then tried to "re-construct" the city with it. Puspayoga directed policy towards preserving traditional culture, not only in terms of maintenance but also emphasising education and creativity. For instance, the creation of "*Tari Sekar Jempiring*" was inspired by his wife Nyoman Bintang Puspayoga, and this piece subsequently became a set of pieces for a primary school competition and a traditional dancing contest for girls in Denpasar. It was, however, not only "traditional" performing arts that received his keen support.

When the Bali Guitar Club (BGC) was established in August 2007 by I Wayan Balawan of Batuan Ethnic Fusion, the mayor publicly congratulated its establishment and shared Balawan's opinion: In spite of the existence of many skilful Balinese guitarists, there are very few performance opportunities in public places other than performances at local hotels or cafes. Moreover, Puspayoga prepared a room/studio for his talented son who was a junior high school student at the time in order to improve his ability as a guitarist and become successful in the scene (Bali Post 2007). In fact, to make it more convenient, a private studio for his son—A. A. Ngurah Abiyoga—was built and fully equipped, to make it convenient to keep all his musical instruments in, and creating a suitable place for him and his friends to rehearse and record as they pleased.<sup>29</sup> With such support, at times Puspayoga considered *Pop Bali* as mere entertainment for various events sponsored by Denpasar city to keep sustaining the activities of *Pop Bali*. Furthermore, it was his son's musical activities that contributed most to directly bind the world of *Pop Bali* to local politics with such smoothness and rapid flow. When Abiyoga joined a band of Balinese guitarists and performed at the exhibition of the establishment of society of BGC, he also participated in and appeared as a guest performer at

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<sup>29</sup> This studio was also used by another very important person on Balinese culture, Kadek Suardana, to make Abiyoga's first album. He is a famous director in theatre, performing arts and music around Bali. His office for the performing arts is in the Balinese provincial culture centre in mid-town of Denpasar city, and his effect on Balinese culture and cultural policy in Bali is very effective. Of course, he has a very close relationship with the people who decide on the cultural policy in Balinese provincial government, moreover, because he was born and still lives near Taensiat palace and Satrya palace. He sometimes promotes the royal family members' cultural activities, such as dance or music, and also has conducted/designed the cultural activities in the area with royal family members, especially on youths.

various concerts afterwards. Later, he joined a band to contribute to the song "*Denpasar Kota Budaya*" (Cultural city Denpasar) sung by Prastyawan and Agus Astika at the end of *Parade Lagu Pop Bali PKB ke-30* (the 30th Bali Art Festival) event supported by the Balinese provincial government in June 2008 (Bali Post 2008). And what is more, he made guest appearances in the concerts of XXX, in 2009 and 2010 and performed on the *Kendang* (traditional drum of Balinese Gamelan) with Rahtut of XXX.<sup>30</sup>

The role of *Pop Bali* in the gubernatorial election of 2008 remains without investigation; thus, as for Abiyoga's commitment to local politics in one way or another, there is little to no doubt of the impact and influence since there was information that Abiyoga could not freely use his studio from the pressure influxed by "the election" at the time of investigation in March 2010. In fact, Puspayoga ran as deputy governor candidate with candidate Governor Mangku Pastika<sup>31</sup> in a governor's race after the 2008 elections. They carried out the election and the vote rate count was 55.1 percent.<sup>32</sup> At last, when a person concerned about *Pop Bali* who ran for local assemblyman in the election of 2009, the *Pop Bali* scene came to effect the elections positively. This reminds us of the activity related to elections developed in the music in Bali for Indonesian political changes in the period of 1960s.

In the case of XXX, their career in the *Pop Bali* world started with Bali TV, the broadcasting company that was established to promote *Ajeg Bali* through the Balinese local mass media conglomerate Bali Post, and the band found themselves under such surroundings that made it easy to commit to be part of local politics from the start. Simultaneously, they joined *Pramusti* (the association for musicians and producers of *Pop Bali*) established in 2004, to protect and improve the *Pop Bali* scene, then carried on social actions with *Pramusti* such as an effort to eradicate pirate record editions sold at street stalls. More so, there was an additional aspect positively regarded to politics; they made a petition to *Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah* (DPRD, local parliament) against piracy. Furthermore, as mentioned in the previous footnote, the producer of XXX, Murthana, became chairman for *Pramusiti Bali* while actively promoting *Pop Bali* in many ways. For instance, he created

<sup>30</sup> When we think that "*Denpasar Kota Budaya*" is one of *Pop Bali* classified in *Lagu Konvensional*, and XXX is one of *Alternatif*, it can be said that there is interchange with the musicians of many genres in the small world of *Pop Bali*.

<sup>31</sup> Mangku Pastika is the person who is the previous public prosecutor from the non-Triwangsa. He commanded the investigation of the Bali Bombing in 2002 and led it to a successful ending. He advocated the motto "*Bali MANDARA (Maju, Aman, Damai and Sejahtera)*" and was involved in the election with Puspayoga.

<sup>32</sup> It is thought that they insist on "Bali" flourishingly from the view of the situation of whole Indonesian politics even if the reason is because it protects a right of "Bali," but the consideration about this wants to clarify another opportunity.

*Pramusti Bali Award*, starting from 2011, the *Puputan Badung* project in 2006 and continuous *Puputan Badung* tours. After the projects, XXX audiences expanded to include not only young adults but also teenagers and adolescents, generating followers in elementary school and even in kindergartens. They expanded their activities and targeted elementary school students in rural areas, such as Lombok, for an audience and brought messages to the audiences with their music. In fact, their popularity among children was shown in the seventh anniversary event of XXX at the Art Centre in Denpasar 2010, as a colouring competition was held for the kids there, and many participants subscribed to it. After the song *Puputan Badung*, they released their fifth album "*Nak Bali*" with fusion pieces of Balinese traditional music and pop. Even though Rahtut enjoyed playing traditional Balinese Gamelan music, the band's eagerness for tradition and customs dominated the overall direction and thereafter was transferred to mass media. An example of this is Rahtut's teaching of traditional Gamelan music performed in rural areas. In addition to creating combined works, they occasionally perform with local youth bands and collaborate among them in local society (*banjar*). What is more, at the 33rd *Pesta Kesenian Bali (PKB, Bali Art Festival)* in July 2011 sponsored by Balinese provincial government, XXX, along with other bands of Pop Bali musicians (Emoni Bali, Natural, Sura, Tisna Tiana, Deva) and youth groups from local society (*Sekaa Teruna Terini, STT*) carried on the celebration event/concert for the Balinese customary festival *Galungan* (Festival for Ancestors). This event was advertised largely in mass media, especially newspapers and magazines. For instance, in the *Rader Bali* published on 11 July 2011, the writer stated in the headline "*Minus Balawan, [XXX] – Batuan Ethnic Fusion Semarak*" (XXX is such famous/brilliant fusion group of Batuan Ethnic Fusion without Balawan<sup>33</sup>). In addition, the rich popularity received in those events brought XXX more possibilities. Namely, the concert that XXX gave for the anniversary of Denpasar city; and at the celebration for the new release of their second best video album "*The Best of XXX*," a special guest from the government of Denpasar city paid a visit and XXX received a formal request to make a song for Denpasar city. Heretofore, a deep relationship with local politics emerged. Overall, in the background of this relationship, there is another connecting character, Angga—bassist of XXX—a government officer of Denpasar city. Thus further detail of the relationship is still not clearly defined.

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<sup>33</sup> This Balawan is the same person who made the BGC in 2007. After his contract with Sony Indonesia, he cannot do his activity freely.



## CONCLUSION

As mentioned above, *Pop Bali* has been one of the underlining markers of the discussion on *Ajeg Bali*, that pursued representation of "Balineseness" from the beginning. *Pop Bali Konvensional* with its specific contents—as pointed out in the paper<sup>34</sup>—with ethnic roots in Wedhasmara, a composer of *Pop Indonesia*, Made Cakra of the *kroncong*'s violin player, did not advocate "Bali" at all directly. Naturally, *Pop Alternatif* came to be a social tool that later was not entirely aware about *Ajeg Bali* in the beginning. The musicians were not completely cognisant about its influences, and therefore took part in the notion to represent "Bali" as the trend of *Ajeg Bali* strengthened, while they did not strive for direct representation of *Ajeg Bali*. With regards to the *Puputan Badung*, the argument arises when the historical resources/documents are not entirely comprehended, and youth believe the mere messages and follow the overall trend. The people of each royal family in the Badung kingdom bristled with the mass movement, in order to protect "the earth of gods" from the enemy coming from outside "Bali." Such historical recognition resembled the *Ajeg Bali* movement that aimed to protect the threatened "Bali" from the "outside." It went beyond the boundaries of the culture exercise and strove to raise consciousness among the youth towards the ethnocentrism of societal politics. One example to mention is the movement to exclude "outsiders" from the community. The politics of *Pop Bali* are not deliberately planned, though it appears as if intellectuals such as journalists tend to somehow interpret *Ajeg Bali* in *Pop Bali*, and advertise it positively. Actually, XXX as a predominant band in *Puputan Badung* did not directly express any political message in their music while making collaborative works along Bali traditional music. Naturally, this situation caused XXX a dilemma also to partake. After *Puputan Badung*, they recorded their next album in the Balinese language to accede to their audience's demands. It was the album, *Nak Bali*. This album, nevertheless, perplexed members of XXX as in the band's Facebook page, they asked their fans: "How would you like an Indonesian/English album next time?" (XXX 2010). They also asked: "Would we be able to 'go international' if we bring *Nak Bali* into Indonesia/English?" (ibid). Even though they keep their slogan event as "support your local area," they have a perplexity/desire to "go national" and also "go international." Furthermore, they also have other phrases such as "*Kami bukan siapa-siapa... no name, no identity but freedom*" (We are not anyone...no name, no identity

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<sup>34</sup> There was always an argument: *Pop Bali* should be based on the basics of Bali traditional vocal music. In the extension of such an argument, an article is seen in Bali Post that summarised easily the contents that *Pop Bali* should follow in Bali Post of 20 August 2003.

but freedom), nevertheless they already had become entangled with local politics, as the case of the 33rd *PKB* clearly presents.

Notwithstanding, some musicians of *Pop Bali* who are aware about their large influence still continue working positively towards the entire movement. The current limit of the *Pop Bali* market size does not allow the musicians enough commercialisation to make a living out of the *Pop Bali* scene. Therefore, it requires them to find other means to make a living. However, they still assert significant influence and contribution through advertising, encouraging messages to society such as cleaning the cities, planting trees, learning "traditional" culture, engaging in customary activities, living religious lives and clarifying the notion of a person who is concerned with political challenges in newspapers, such as the *Bali Post*, *Denpos* and *Radar Bali*,<sup>35</sup> and magazines like *Bali Music Magazine*. Nonetheless, there are noticeable differences among singers, whether they are part of political activities—with music as an advertising strategy—or an advertising strategy for music itself regardless of political content. The "firm Bali" movement strives to live in the present while fixing the eyes of the audience on the future and aims for reconciliation among all/the crowds. As a result, the connection between cultural politics, local identity and power holders, namely *Ajeg Bali*, was created, even if the authors include political nuances in their music in a conscious or subconscious way.

XXX is only one example of *Pop Bali Alternatif*. Overall, the influence of the *Pop Bali* in Balinese society has nowadays evolved to an unmistakable reality.

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<sup>35</sup> *Denpos* is a local paper published by *Bali Post* Company in around the Denpasar. *Radar Bali* is another local newspaper in around Bali sponsored by *Java Pos* Company of the Javanese capital. Nowadays, the demand for *Radar Bali* have increased because the readers begin to dislike the *Bali Post* which has been inclined too much to *Ajeg Bali*.

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