



BALIMAJINESE

“Constructed Audiovisual Language in Tropical Tourism (Bali, Indonesia)”

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The research deals with the complexity of image making in the field of tropical tourism induced by the medium of moving image (film/video). Tourism has been creating a meeting point, where a collective image of “paradise” is needed to keep the exchange continue and to keep both the tourist and the local profiting from each other. Since different purposes (economic, politic, culture, etc.) set the agenda and digital technology influences the way that room is experienced, image making is commonly making something that is actually not.

In this project, moving image is seen as a language that can be deconstructed and reconstructed, and it’s focused on examining films/videos made in Bali from the colonization period until today. BALIMAJINESE is a constructed audiovisual language in which the (audiovisual) “lexicon” is established based on visual semiotic theories and the “grammatical” system is driven by an ancient terminology of Bali, Kawi (Poet) language, a religious, prose language that still used in literary arts and in theatrical performances until today.

By putting Moving Image and Tourism in tension with another, the project is an attempt to create a universal audiovisual terminology in understanding the “origin”, the “development”, and the “future” of a culture through the use of moving image.

Tourism in Bali

The research is focused on Bali. An island that is not only one of the famous tourists destination, Bali has also a long history in dealing with the concept of Image making. In the beginning of the 20th century, the Dutch colonialists succeeded in changing the image of Bali from a dangerous, barbaric island into a harmonious and gentle society. They re-ordered the political law and economic order, opened policies to a form of cultural tourism, and created an image of cultural paradise. After Indonesian independence in 1945, Bali was then used as the culture embassy of Indonesia and the central marketing place.

The beautiful image of Bali has been maintained under different powers for different purposes, not only to keep Bali “survives”, but also to keep the black history of the island under the surface, which has been experienced big corruptions, terrorist attacks and massacres. The Balinese has been caught up in the “paradise image making”, along local and international influences. The challenge is then how to keep the “primitiveness” while globalization changes the society and the Internet changes fundamentally the way tourism is being produced and consumed.