

AUDIENCE INTERPRETATION OF THE FILM “KAMISAMA WA BALI NI IRU” CONCERNING RELIGIOSITY, GENDER, AND ECONOMIC CODES

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ABSTRACT

The research aimed to interpret the film “Kamisama wa Bali ni Iru” according to the audience’s perception of whether the Bali expressed in the film reflects Balinese ethnic identity. “Kamisama wa Bali ni Iru” is a film by a Japanese director released in 2015 in the comedy-drama genre. The film was set almost entirely in Bali, which was the space where the events took place. Through a review of the narrative of “Kamisama wa Bali ni Iru” on the diegetic aspect, three things were dominantly reflected in the events of the film in the Balinese space, namely religiosity, gender, and the economy of society. By referring to the audience reception method, the audience who acted as the giver of meaning to the film text were nine young adults of Balinese ethnicity. Audience interpretation was understood through interviews, with questions set through the codes that appeared in the film’s scenes, namely the codes of religiosity, gender, and the economy of society. The interviews with the nine viewers were a reproduction of meaning into a new text, and the results of the viewers’ answers were categorized according to three positions: dominant, negotiated, and oppositional. The results show that the film tends to cause misperceptions of Balinese ethnic identity according to the codes of religiosity and economy. However, the audience affirms the gender code in this film as a representation of Balinese society. The novelty of this research is that it proves that the movie “Kamisama wa Bali ni Iru” can be a medium to introduce Bali, although it needs to be supported by explanations to avoid misperceptions regarding codes of religiosity and economy.

Keywords: *Kamisama wa Bali ni Iru, audience’s interpretation, code of economy, code of gender, code of religiosity, ethnic identity*

INTRODUCTION

Bali is an international tourist destination, an island, and a province in Indonesia. Its international fame often overcomes Indonesia’s global recognition. Bali’s title as the island of gods and goddesses shows its identity as a religious region. Balinese people adhere to Hindu beliefs, specifically Balinese Hinduism (Hynson, 2021).

The internationalization of Bali is also reflected through films that use Bali as a setting. *Eat Pray Love*,

an American film released in 2010, is an example of a phenomenal example of film work with a filming location in Ubud, Bali. The choice of Bali as a film setting was made in 1926 by a German-Russian director named Walter Spies for his film *Bali Indonesien: Sanghijang und Ketjaqtanz* (Mulyadi & Sunarti, 2019). *Toute la Beauté du Monde*, by French director Marc Esposito, released in 2006, was also a film with Bali as the filming location. The film *Kamisama wa Bali ni Iru* (or *Bali Big Brother*) is one of two films by Japanese directors who chose Bali as the setting for the

film's narrative.

Kamisama wa Bali ni Iru is a film by director Lee Toshio that was released in 2015 in the comedy-drama genre. This film is an adaptation of a novel by Kuroiwa Sho entitled *Dekasegeba Daifugowhich*, which tells the story of a young man from Osaka, Japan, who wanders to Bali and successfully becomes a wealthy businessman. The film *Kamisama wa Bali ni Iru* begins with a scene of the main character, Terukawa Shoko, who intends to commit suicide by jumping off a cliff located in Bali. Shoko is a young businesswoman who is broke and in debt. She comes to Bali and, in her desperation, meets Aniki. In Japanese, Aniki is a nickname for an older brother, and in this film, it refers to the main character, a Japanese businessman who successfully builds his business in Bali. Aniki is a highly wealthy and generous person like *Kamisama* or God, as stated in the film titled *God Exists in Bali*. Aniki's characteristics inspire Shoko, and at the end of the story, Shoko manages to rise from her slump. *Kamisama wa Bali ni Iru* is almost entirely set in Bali, especially the Jembrana region. Bali, as a setting, not only acts as a place where events take place but also as a space for the events in the film to take place. As a space, the cultural and social background of Balinese society is also reflected in the film. The choice of Bali as the action space for the Japanese major characters shows the closeness of Bali to Japanese society, as one of the most popular tourist destinations for Japanese tourists (Ery, Ridwan, & Handoko, 2022; Pickel-Chevalier & Yanthy, 2023).

This research refers to Kim and Park's research (2021), which examines the social influence of the film *Eat Pray Love* on the audience and the audience's attitude towards the film. They categorize it as a tourism film, and the audience that becomes the object of research is residents living in the Ubud area. Therefore, this research also intends to interpret the film *Kamisama wa Bali ni Iru* according to the audience's perception, namely whether the Bali expressed in the film is a representation of Bali in the socio-cultural life of the audience, or other words, whether the representation of Bali in the film reflects Balinese ethnic identity. However, unlike *Eat Pray Love*, which is shown in Indonesian theaters, *Kamisama wa Bali ni Iru* is only shown in Japan. This causes the popularity of *Kamisama wa Bali ni Iru* among Indonesians, especially Balinese, to be far below that of *Eat Pray Love*. This becomes an obstacle to obtaining an audience that specifically resided in the Jembrana regency as the film's shooting location. Therefore, the audience designated as the subject of research is those categorized as ethnic Balinese in the age range of 20-30 years. The audience in this age range is referred to as young adults who have independence of thought and sufficient cultural experience.

Furthermore, Mulyadi and Sunarti (2019), through the results of their literature study, have stated that the film *Eat Pray Love*, as a phenomenal work, has become a reference for the local community to promote Ubud to tourists. Like *Eat Pray Love*, the

film *Kamisama wa Bali ni Iru* belongs to a category of popular culture related to tourism called film-induced tourism, which is one of the subcategories in the tourism industry related to the location of a film or TV series (Liu, Chin, & Nechita, 2020). Thus, this research also intends to find out whether the film *Kamisama wa Bali ni Iru* can also be used as a reference to promote Bali, even if it is limited to Japanese tourists, which is understood through the audience's perceptions.

As mentioned, Bali is the space for the events in the film to take place, causing the cultural and social setting of the Balinese people to be reflected in the film. Through a review of the narrative of *Kamisama wa Bali ni Iru* on the diegetic aspect, three things are dominantly reflected in the events of the film in the Balinese space, namely religiosity, gender, and the economy of society. Religiosity tends to appear at the beginning of the narrative, especially in the actions of Aniki, who expresses admiration for this. Gender can be seen through Aniki's relationship with the minor characters, who are Balinese women. The economic aspect of society is expressed through the scenes of the lives of the minor characters, especially the children, and the scenes set in the school. If identity is understood as representation (Sutanto et al., 2020), it is possible to know whether the narrative events that reflect these three things are codes that represent Bali according to the interpretation of the audience.

METHODS

The research refers to the audience reception method, which centers on the film's audience as the focus of the research with the idea that the audience, as the research subject, has the freedom to give meaning to the text (Debby et al., 2020). As explained earlier, this research aims to prove whether the representation of Bali in the film *Kamisama wa Bali ni Iru* reflects the true Balinese ethnic identity. When a narration is dominated by a particular content (in this film, Bali is a space that dominates the narrative), the audience will gain meaning concerning that content (Sutanto & Kosasih, 2023). Thus, the audience's perception regarding the representation of Bali can be used to determine whether this film can act as a valid reference to promote Bali tourism.

To be able to determine whether the film can act as a valid reference, an audience that can provide valid information is needed. For this reason, the audience determined that the subjects giving meaning to the film text are those who are Balinese, experience life in Balinese culture and society, and belong to the young adult category. Nine viewers with these criteria are chosen. The technique of obtaining the information from the nine viewers is carried out by interviewing, recording the interview results, and then conducting a study of the answers given by the viewers.

The interviews with the viewers refer to the questions based on the space in the film, namely Bali as a setting and how it is described in the film.

The questions asked are to confirm the portrayal of Balinese identity in the film, which is determined according to the encoding/decoding model. This research model can be understood as a process of how messages stored in films can be connected and then read by the audience (Langdrige, Gabb, & Lawson, 2019). In films, the stages of the encoding/decoding process can be explained (Xie et al., 2022). The first stage is the encoding process by the director, which is when he/she captures meaningful information from the surrounding world. The second stage is the transmission of codes through the film, which is the process when the director converts the information he/she has obtained into symbolic codes that are reflected through *mise-en-scène*. The third stage is the decoding stage by the audience, which is when the audience, as the recipient of information through the film, interprets the codes they find in the film through the reflection of *mise-en-scène*. The fourth stage is the reproduction of meaning by the audience, which is the stage when the audience reinterprets the codes that appear through *mise-en-scène* and narrates them back into a new text.

Of the four stages, this research is conducted in the third and fourth stages, as the first and second stages have been completed in the form of the film *Kamisama wa Bali ni Iru*. The questions given to the viewers are set according to this third stage, which is preceded by the reception of the film codes by the research team, who are also the audience. The researchers then determine the codes that appear in the form of *mise-en-scène* that allegedly represent Balinese identity. These codes are scenes that reflect religiosity, gender, and the economy of society. Furthermore, the results of the interviews with the nine viewers constitute the reproduction of meaning into a new text, namely through the process of reviewing the answers given by the viewers and compiling a narrative of the results of the interpretation of the viewers. After carrying out the fourth stage, the last step is to categorize the viewers' answers according to three positions, namely 'dominant decoding position', 'negotiated decoding position', and 'oppositional decoding position' (Xie et al., 2022). 'Dominant' is the position of viewers who affirm the information provided, and 'negotiated' is the position of viewers who reject the information provided. Referring to the categorization results, it is possible to conclude whether or not this film can act as a valid reference to promote Bali.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents a study of the audience's perceptions regarding Balinese identity as reflected in the film *Kamisama wa Bali ni Iru*. As stated, the questions posed to the viewers are limited to three issues, namely religiosity, gender, and the economy of society. These three issues are codes expressed through *mise-en-scène* in the film's narrative.

As stated, the audience that acts as informants is comprised of nine young adults and Balinese. The

criterion of Balinese ethnicity is determined by the condition that the viewers are born as residents and actors of Balinese culture. Regarding the young adult criterion, the nine viewers are in the age range of 20-29 years. The nine viewers are referred to as viewer 1 (20 years old, male), viewer 2 (20 years old, female), viewer 3 (21 years old, male), viewer 4 (21 years old, male), viewer 5 (21 years old, female), viewer 6 (21 years old, female), viewer 7 (22 years old, male), viewer 8 (23 years old, female), and viewer 9 (29 years old, male).

In the film, Aniki and Shoko are the main characters. The relationship between them occurs because Ryo introduces Shoko to Aniki after Ryo thwarts her intention to commit suicide. The religiosity questioned to the viewers refers to the following two scenes. The first scene takes place at 00:23:03. The *mise-en-scène* in this sequence begins with a shot of Aniki and Shoko visiting a statue craftsman's place. In that place, there are various statues made by carvers. Shoko then buys a Buddha statue at Aniki's request "to put in the room and ask for blessings from him every day". Seeing Shoko carrying the Buddha statue, which she puts in an eco-bag, Aniki then reprimands Shoko. He criticizes Shoko's behavior as a Japanese who does not show respect for the Buddha statue. The second scene starts at 00:24:34, and the setting is a locally designed restaurant. The *mise-en-scène* shows Aniki having a business conversation with someone and Shoko sitting at a different table in the restaurant. Then, the camera shifts focus to Shoko in a close-up on one half of the screen (00:25:53), while the other half shows a waitress who is about to perform a ritual of offering *banten* in the courtyard of the restaurant. Aniki then moves and sits across from Shoko with his eyes on the courtyard. The camera then takes a shot from the opposite direction, zooming in on the waitress, who is offering *banten* with Aniki looking at her in the background. After finishing her ritual, the waitress goes back inside the restaurant. Then Aniki approaches her and gives her a wad of money.

The religiosity expressed in the first scene is the relationship between art and belief that cannot be separated in Balinese Hinduism. Sculpture as an art product in Bali is one of the expressions of sacred art (Parmajaya, 2020). Works categorized as sacred art are believed to correlate with *taksu* (spirit) in the work (Suardana, Muka, & Ruta, 2023). Aniki's reprimand to Shoko for putting the Buddha statue into an eco-bag and then carrying it shows an expression of the sacred code on the statue so that it should not be treated the same as inanimate objects in general. The religiosity reflected in the second scene is the *Banten* ritual. *Banten* is an offering or element of *upakara* held as a medium to connect humans with God, their creator, and is an expression of Balinese culture (Arini, 2022; Sudana et al., 2020). The action of the waitress performing the ritual of offering *banten* followed by Aniki's action of giving some money expresses a high code of religiosity regarding the offering of *banten*, namely the causal relationship between the waitress' action and

Aniki's action, which seems to be an appreciation of the girl's action. These two scenes serve as a reference for the question posed to the viewers, namely whether the religiosity expressed in these two scenes reflects Balinese identity.

Concerning the first scene that expresses the sacredness of the statue through Aniki's action, five viewers (viewers 1, 2, 5, 6, and 7) affirm Aniki's admonition to Shoko, who should treat the Buddha statue as a sacred object. Specifically, viewer 7 explains in accordance with what has been described in the paragraph that "there are statue craftsmen in Bali who produce works with *taksu* value so that the statues they make have the energy". Viewer 5 also emphasizes that statues (in the form of gods) are sanctified in Bali. Four viewers (viewers 3, 4, 8, and 9) give the opposite perception that many sculptural works in Bali are intended for commercial purposes as souvenirs, so the statue purchased by Shoko is of that type. Viewers 8 and 9 explain that the *mise-en-scène* of the statue-maker's place that Aniki and Shoko visit reflects the Balinese people's diligence in producing artworks with the technique that they have inherited from generation to generation. Furthermore, viewer 8 argues that the statues that represent Bali are not Buddhist but a variety of Hindu deities.

Regarding Aniki's action of giving the waitress a wad of money after she performs the ritual of offering *banten*, seven viewers (viewers 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8) consider the action inappropriate. In comparison, two viewers (viewers 1 and 9) do not question the action. However, three of the seven viewers who blame the action, viewers 6, 7, and 8, find Aniki's action tolerable. While the seven viewers state that Aniki's action is not at the right moment, they consider that such a *mise-en-scène* could lead to the perception that the activity of performing and offering *banten* is done in the hope of earning financial rewards. They further state that offering *banten* or praying as such is a daily routine of Balinese people who always get closer to God. Strong criticism is made by viewer 5, who says that giving money is unethical because even though for foreigners, the act of offering *canang* (another name for *banten*) is mesmerizing, it is unethical when someone prays and then is rewarded with money. Bali's economic conditions are not so low, so giving money seems insulting. Furthermore, two viewers do not take issue with Aniki's actions because they tend to have a positive view of Aniki's characteristics, which seem to appreciate Balinese traditions. Although the three viewers belong to the category that disapproves of Aniki's action of giving money to the waitress, they consider that the action could be interpreted as tipping.

The expression of religiosity through the depiction of *banten* is also identified by seven viewers (viewers 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 9) in the *mise-en-scène* at 00:04:21, which shows Shoko accidentally stepping on a *banten* in Aniki's villa and getting a reprimand from Aniki and at 00:13:41, which shows Shoko intending to throw away the *banten*. The identifications by the seven viewers are opinions that emerged outside of

the questions given to the nine viewers. Regarding the *mise-en-scène* starting at 00:04:21, viewers 1, 4, 6, and 8 state that the incident of *banten* being stepped on is common in Bali. Therefore, Aniki's reaction to admonishing Shoko, which is that her behavior is creating a bad image of Japanese people, is seen as an overreaction. Nevertheless, viewers 1 and 8 provide detailed explanations that the *mise-en-scène* showing the domestic worker's alertness in removing the *banten* that is stepped on by Shoko confirms the interpretation of the expression of the sacred value of *banten*. For the *mise-en-scène* at 00:13:41, when Shoko intends to throw away the *banten* at Aniki's house and gets a strong reaction and prohibition from the workers there, viewers 3, 5, and 9 interpreted it as follows. For viewers 3 and 9, as *banten* is a material that can be thrown away, the strong reaction to Shoko is an unnatural expression to show, as *banten* that has been offered can be thrown away moments later. However, viewer 5 affirms the *mise-en-scène* expression that as one of the symbols of Hinduism, *Banten* should not be thrown away carelessly.

The gender issue posed to the viewers refers to the scene at the beginning of the film when Aniki invites Shoko to his house at 00:11:05. As stated earlier, Aniki is narrated as a wealthy businessman. Aniki's house is described as spacious and luxurious. As Aniki enters his spacious courtyard and is followed by Shoko, the *mise-en-scène* shows three women welcoming Aniki. Through the costumes, language expressions, and faces of the three women, it can be understood that they are of Balinese ethnicity. The three women, along with Aniki, walk towards the house while joking around. The camera zooms in on Aniki's gesture of embracing and patting the three women's buttocks. The code reflected in this scene is whether the female figures in the *mise-en-scène* show a marginalized existence against men. This is the reference for the question posed to the viewers. Women in Bali are said to be still bound by the culture of a patriarchal society, which results in gender inequality (Ariyanti & Ardhana, 2020; Masrurroh, 2022; Pickel-Chevalier & Yanthy, 2023). The three Balinese women, whom Shoko initially mistook for Aniki's wives, are the domestic workers employed by Aniki. The *mise-en-scène* of Aniki's actions towards them allows for interpretation as legitimizing the existence of Balinese women who are marginal to men.

On the question of Aniki's attitude towards the Balinese female workers, seven viewers (viewers 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 9) view the *mise-en-scène* as an expression of a common attitude. As stated by viewers 1, 2, 6, and 9, the expression of the women accepting Aniki's action represents Balinese women who are innocent and naïve and represent Balinese people who are friendly. Viewers 3, 4, 6, and 7 even emphasize that Aniki's action, which shows male dominance over women, is part of the Balinese patriarchal culture, as seen in their statements, "men are the main actors", "men can act more freely towards women", and "Aniki shows economic security". Only two viewers (viewers

5 and 8) find Aniki's actions towards his female domestic workers to be abusive, and the harshest criticism is expressed by viewer 5, that the *mise-en-scène* gives the impression that Balinese tend to be inferior to East Asian visitors, so the women become lower in social strata.

The question posed to the viewers regarding the depiction of the Balinese economy refers to these three scenes. The first scene is at 00:31:20 when Aniki and Shoko stop their car when a group of elementary school children is about to cross the road. Some of the children appear to be wearing only flip-flops despite their school uniforms. The scene continues at 00:32:05, with Aniki stopping the car in the elementary school yard with two large baskets filled with shoes. Aniki distributes the shoes to children who do not have shoes. Aniki's action affirms the figure of Aniki, who is characterized as generous towards the poor people around him, represented by the shoeless elementary school children. The second scene is at 00:46:08. The *mise-en-scène* that begins at the minute is a flashback that expresses the character Ryo examining the eyes of elementary school children. Ryo is described as a Japanese Ophthalmologist who is motivated by Aniki's generous behavior, so he follows Aniki's steps to live in Bali and volunteer. The third scene takes place at 01:15:33 when a small local boy steals Aniki's bag, then quickly runs away as his action is noticed by Shoko. The story goes on to say that Aniki and Shoko manage to chase and catch the pickpocket. The kind-hearted Aniki does not punish the little boy but buys him food. The scene relates to the scene at the beginning of the film (00:03:00), which depicts a boy stealing Shoko's bag, and both incidents are committed by the same boy.

Although the three scenes seem to focus on the generous characteristics of Aniki and Ryo, the three scenes give an impression of Bali's economic condition as a poor region. This is characterized by the codes: the inability of elementary school children to buy school shoes (first scene), the absence of local health experts to serve the needs of the community, especially elementary school children (second scene), and the existence of the pickpocket boy (third scene). This depiction seems to contradict the references, which state that Bali is a province in Indonesia with a relatively low poverty rate, at an average of 4% (Rasyid et al., 2020; Said & Sasongko, 2022). The relatively low poverty rate is accompanied by a relatively declining unemployment rate in Bali from 2007-2014 (Radila, Priana, & Wahed, 2021). Thus, the question presented to the viewers is whether the *mise-en-scène* in the three scenes shows Bali's identity as an area with a low economic level or as an area with relatively poor people.

Regarding the code for the economic condition of society shown in the first scene, namely the expression of poverty through elementary school children who do not have shoes to go to school, all nine viewers state their opinion. Three viewers (viewers 1, 4, and 7) respond that the *mise-en-scène* of the children

in flip-flops is like criticism of Bali's economic success thanks to tourism, although Bali is known as an international tourist destination. Its economic growth has not been evenly distributed throughout the region as there are still underdeveloped areas far from urban areas. Specifically, viewers 1 and 2 have mentioned Karangasem as an area with relatively low welfare. They emphasize the statement that Bali's high economic growth has not been able to evenly reach the poor (Said & Sasongko, 2022). Viewers 2 and 6 also affirm the unevenness of economic conditions, although both provided additional explanations that the depiction of Bali's general conditions differed.

The other four viewers (viewers 3, 5, 8, and 9) negate the *mise-en-scène* as a reflection of Balinese economic identity. Viewers 8 and 9 highlight the *mise-en-scène* at 00:32:35, which shows the appearance of a female teacher wearing a civil servant uniform. The female teacher's dialog with Aniki explains that she has known Aniki for a long time due to the assistance Aniki has often provided for the elementary school. Viewers 8 and 9 state that although the film is set in 2015, the *mise-en-scène* is irrelevant as a portrait of poverty in Bali, as there has been an education grant program through the *banjar* (village-level government) since 2005. For this reason, the civil servant uniform worn by the teacher is a depiction that emphasizes that the school is among those who have received the education grant. According to viewer 9, the reality of children wearing flip-flops as a symbol of the inability to buy school shoes does occur in Bali, but this is in the 1990s.

Next, the second scene is expressed through Ryo's action of devoting his skills as an Ophthalmologist to volunteering. This code expresses that the existence of foreigners is needed to contribute to the welfare of the Balinese people, as the viewers stated. Five viewers (viewers 2, 3, 5, 8, and 9) negate the scene as a reflection of the condition of Balinese society, which is that local health workers and government attention are sufficient to not rely on foreigners' help. Viewers 3 and 8 provide additional explanation that Ryo, as a common volunteer in Bali, needs community acceptance of their existence through volunteering. Viewer 9 also adds that the real function of foreign volunteers is to broaden people's knowledge. In contrast, four viewers (viewers 1, 4, 6, and 7) interpret the scene as a criticism of the condition of Bali, where the government and the people have not been able to provide health assistance to areas that are still underdeveloped or less prosperous, so the contribution of foreigners becomes crucial. More critically, viewer 6 criticizes the local people who, according to him, tend to be complacent about foreigners' aid, thus lowering their own social status, many of whom merely become workers for foreigners.

The last part is the third scene, which is characterized by the *mise-en-scène* of a small boy stealing Aniki's bag. To this scene, six viewers (viewers 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 9) negate it as a depiction of Bali. They emphasize that Bali is an island in Indonesia known

as a safe area. Viewers 5 and 9 explain the reason for judging Bali as a safe region, namely because of the Balinese belief in *karmaphala*, which is one of the five beliefs that are guidelines for life in Hinduism. *Karmaphala* can be simply interpreted as the result of an individual's good or bad deeds. Therefore, the act of stealing, especially by a child, is an anomaly. Viewer 9 adds that the behavior of small local children who tend to disturb tourists' comfort is limited to asking for small objects such as candy, pens, or books. Viewer 8 even explicitly states that in her lifetime, she has never seen a pickpocketing incident by Balinese ethnic locals occur in Bali. Only three viewers (viewers 1, 2, and 7) respond positively to the scene. All three viewers state that the scene reflects the unequal welfare of the Balinese people and is a criticism of the exploitation of Bali as an international tourist destination.

Furthermore, referring to the results of this analysis, the nine viewers' interpretations of each code, religiosity, gender, and economy can be described in these tables.

Table 1 Religiosity Code (First Scene)

| Viewer | Dominant | Negotiated | Oppositional |
|--------------|----------|------------|--------------|
| Viewer 1 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 2 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 3 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 4 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 5 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 6 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 7 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 8 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 9 | - | - | √ |
| Total | 5 | 0 | 4 |

Table 1 shows the viewers' interpretation of the religiosity code reflected in the first scene, which expresses the sacredness of Balinese sculpture. The interpretation results show two positions, dominant and oppositional, which are almost balanced. This result indicates that the Balinese identity reflected in this scene is still acceptable as a representation of Bali.

Table 2 shows the results of the viewers' interpretation of the religiosity code represented by the action of a waitress performing the *Banten* ritual and Aniki giving money. The viewers tend to be oppositional, disapproving of Aniki's action, which is considered to give a negative perception of the sacred *Banten* ritual for Balinese people. However, viewers who tolerated the action refer to the custom of tipping. Table 3, concerning the religiosity code about the *Banten* phenomenon expressed by seven viewers, shows that the depiction of the tradition concerning banten still seems inappropriate to represent the *Banten* tradition. Thus, according to the results in Tables 2 and 3, the religiosity code represented through the *Banten*

tradition can lead to misperceptions in viewers in general.

Table 2 Religiosity Code (Second Scene)

| Viewer | Dominant | Negotiated | Oppositional |
|--------------|----------|------------|--------------|
| Viewer 1 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 2 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 3 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 4 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 5 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 6 | - | √ | - |
| Viewer 7 | - | √ | - |
| Viewer 8 | - | √ | - |
| Viewer 9 | √ | - | - |
| Total | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Table 3 Religiosity Code (Third Scene)

| Viewer | Dominant | Negotiated | Oppositional |
|--------------|----------|------------|--------------|
| Viewer 1 | - | √ | - |
| Viewer 2 | - | - | - |
| Viewer 3 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 4 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 5 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 6 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 7 | - | - | - |
| Viewer 8 | - | √ | - |
| Viewer 9 | - | - | √ |
| Total | 1 | 2 | 4 |

Table 4 Gender Code

| Viewer | Dominant | Negotiated | Oppositional |
|--------------|----------|------------|--------------|
| Viewer 1 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 2 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 3 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 4 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 5 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 6 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 7 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 8 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 9 | √ | - | - |
| Total | 7 | 0 | 2 |

Table 4 shows the results of the viewers' interpretation of the gender code that specifically pertains to the treatment of women. The results show that patriarchal consciousness is still dominant, which is reflected in the majority of answer positions,

dominant. For this reason, the scene at 00:11:05 is interpreted as a positive relationship between Aniki (a foreigner) and Balinese women (locals), which means that the majority can accept the scene as a representation of Balinese society.

Table 5 Economic Code (First Scene)

| Viewer | Dominant | Negotiated | Oppositional |
|--------------|----------|------------|--------------|
| Viewer 1 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 2 | - | √ | - |
| Viewer 3 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 4 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 5 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 6 | - | √ | - |
| Viewer 7 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 8 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 9 | - | - | √ |
| Total | 3 | 2 | 4 |

Table 5 shows that in terms of the economy reflected through the scene of elementary school children wearing flip-flops, although the poverty rate in Bali is relatively low, four viewers reject the scene as a representation of Bali's condition, while three viewers affirm the scene as a criticism of the inequality of public welfare in Bali. With two viewers in the 'negotiated' position, it can be concluded that the scene seems less acceptable as a representation of Bali according to economic codes.

Table 6 Economic Code (Second Scene)

| Viewer | Dominant | Negotiated | Oppositional |
|--------------|----------|------------|--------------|
| Viewer 1 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 2 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 3 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 4 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 5 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 6 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 7 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 8 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 9 | - | - | √ |
| Total | 4 | 0 | 5 |

Table 6 shows the viewers' interpretation of the contribution of foreigners (Japanese) in supporting the welfare of Balinese people. The interpretation results show two positions of the viewers, dominant and oppositional, which are almost balanced, although oppositional tends to be more in number. These results suggest that the scene at 00:46:08 is less acceptable as

a representation of Balinese life.

Table 7 Economic Code (Third Scene)

| Viewer | Dominant | Negotiated | Oppositional |
|--------------|----------|------------|--------------|
| Viewer 1 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 2 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 3 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 4 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 5 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 6 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 7 | √ | - | - |
| Viewer 8 | - | - | √ |
| Viewer 9 | - | - | √ |
| Total | 3 | 0 | 6 |

Table 7 deals with the economic code of local poverty represented through the figure of a child pickpocket, which is rejected by the majority of viewers. For the six viewers who reject it, this code seems to correlate with religiosity. Their belief that Bali is a safe place can be explained by their belief in *karmaphala*. Therefore, while the scene can be seen as a reflection of the persistence of poverty in certain areas of Bali, the majority of the audience affirmed 'safe' as Bali's reputation.

CONCLUSIONS

As stated earlier, this research aims to understand whether the film *Kamisama wa Bali ni Iru* represents Balinese ethnic identity according to the interpretations of the younger generation audience. Based on the results of interviews with nine Balinese viewers, the questions are divided according to three codes. Regarding the scenes reflecting the religiosity code, the audience tends to assess the scenes as not being representative of Balinese society based on the 'oppositional' and 'negotiated' positions of the audience, which tend to be greater in number than the 'dominant' position, according to the conclusions of Tables 1, 2, and 3. Whereas in the scenes reflecting the gender code (Table 4), the audience gives affirmation as scenes that can represent Balinese society. Then, according to Tables 5, 6, and 7, the audience in the 'dominant' position is relatively less than in the 'oppositional' and 'negotiated' positions, which shows that the tendency of the audience's interpretation is that the scenes reflecting the economic code cannot be stated as representing the socio-economic life of Balinese people.

Thus, answering whether the film *Kamisama wa Bali ni Iru* can function as a medium to promote Bali and referring to the results of the interpretation of the younger generation audience, the film tends to cause misperceptions of Balinese ethnic identity according

to the codes of religiosity and economy. However, the audience affirms the gender code in this film as a representation of Balinese society. Therefore, the film can still be a tool for teachers in schools or campuses to introduce Bali to foreign students by providing more detailed assistance and explaining the things that can cause misperceptions.

This research aims to understand ethnic Balinese audiences' interpretations of *Kamisama wa Bali ni Iru* regarding the Balinese setting in which the events of the film take place. Achieving this goal at the same time becomes a limitation of this research. Future research could expand the scope of the audience by including Indonesians other than those of Balinese ethnicity to compare whether the interpretations of non-Balinese audiences would yield the same results as those in this research, thus allowing for a deeper anthropological understanding of the influence of the audience's ethnic background.

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