

Regional Pop Music in Indonesia

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Abstract

Music is an essential part of our cultural life, a power to enrich our lives, build relationships between people, and shape identities and places. Indonesia's contemporary artistic and cultural life is very diverse, considering that Indonesia has a wide geographical area in Southeast Asia, with more than 17,000 islands – and is the 4th most populous country in the world. Indonesia has a music landscape that is increasing. Some music is Karawitan from Java and Bali, Keroncong in Java, and Music with Sape from Kalimantan to Malay music in most areas of Sumatra. Indonesian musicians combine the elements of traditional music with elements of pop music. This paper will discuss how pop music from urban areas is combined with traditional music from each region in Indonesia and then gives a new genre known as musik pop daerah (regional pop music) – the methodology used for this paper qualitative method with literature study. The result showed that pop music is a sign that culture – or, in this case, music – is fluid and can change according to the times.



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INTRODUCTION

Seven posters promoting music events in one night would be okay if it occurred in Yogyakarta. Saturday, May 6, 2017, interestingly, one of the posters showed a face rarely seen at gigs. At the same time, it was very familiar. Didi Kempot, the icon of the Indonesian *campur sari*, appeared on the campus stage with the excitement of the young people. Without intending to make a distinction based on geography and race, for those who were born and grew up as Javanese, perhaps he brings back memories of an afternoon radio session at home with our father or the song we hear when we timidly follow our mother to get chicken satay or fruit ice at home. We do not have to be ashamed if we remember the name; we can sing *Sewu Kutho* and *Stasiun Balapan* as fluently and loudly as we can now shout "Wish You Were Here" by Pink Floyd or *Kangen* by Dewa 19. We listened to his songs during childhood, then memorized them by heart. That is what Didi Kempot is like for many people. People around Indonesia, even children, will know and remember who Didi Kempot is. Some of them put Didi Kempot's song as their go-to wedding song.

Tracing the history of the birth of campur sari music, we can reflect on C Hardjosubroto; this Yogyakarta-born artist could be responsible for the campur sari delivery. It makes traditional gamelan art more flexible to face the times. The late Manthous later became a musician who pioneered the campur sari genre of music with Campur Sari Gunung Kidul (CSGK) in the mid-70s. However, it was Didi Kempot who could say that campur sari has increasingly become popular to a level of fame that was previously unexpected in the 1980s until now. Many young people, millennials especially, called Didi Kempot The Godfather of Broken Heart. Sobat Ambyar, or can say in English "The Heartbreak Club," is the new term for Didi Kempot's fans. One of them is Ayu. Ayu is one of the millennial people who is a fan of Didi Kempot. She said many of Didi Kempot's songs relate to her love life. She has been listening to Didi Kempot's songs since she was a kid.

She knows his famous song, Stasiun Balapan, Pamer Bojo, and Cidro. She said not only is Didi Kempot's music part of her childhood memories, but the lyrics also have a deeper meaning to our everyday life.

Campur sari is a unique music genre. This music combines the elements of Javanese karawitan with modern musical instruments. There is a ride transfer going on here. In the campur sari, the pentatonic pelog, and slendro, Javanese karawitan tunings play through modern instruments such as keyboards, guitars, and basses. Generally, this musical building is added with drums in the rhythmic department and two or three pairs of saron to further strengthen the sense of njawani. The campur sari simplifies a Javanese gamelan ensemble with various instruments. Campur sari summarizes the arrangement of the instrument into a simpler one. In terms of structure, campur sari also simplifies its form; instead of the complex and sophisticated forms of Javanese musical music, such as ketawang or ladrang, campur sari presents a form of music that can be considered relatively "popular." (Setyawan, 2021). It is Didi Kempot's advantage. The music, which is quite "popular" but still has that Javanese feel, makes it easy for many music lovers to accept if we look further, specifically towards music lovers from the lower middle class.

If we look closer, Campur sari can be categorized as regional pop music. This genre is just one example of the abundance of regional pop music throughout the Indonesian archipelago. If we dissect it more deeply, campur sari represents the region's pop music. Campur Sari uses Javanese in the lyrics of the song. Meanwhile, the musical arrangements are a mixture of traditional Javanese music (karawitan or gamelan) with the addition of various musical instruments that are arguably more modern. The combination of this music then quickly spread and became popular among people in Javanese-speaking areas such as Solo, Central Java, and Yogyakarta, to the diaspora to the capital when immigrants played this music. Campur sari is just one small example. Every region in the Indonesian archipelago actually has its variety of pop music. From Sabang to Merauke, this regional pop music was born, developed, and loved by every community in the region.

The current condition of the Indonesian pop music industry is, Indonesian pop music is polarised into two parts: major and indie. Major labels are profit-oriented, while indie labels focus on creativity and freedom. The market strategy will continue through standardization, homogenization, and commodification to deceive and create false needs for society. Besides that, the role of the media determines the success of the culture industry in shaping market tastes without being aware of it by consumers. Therefore, the indie movement is an alternative to deconstructing the text of the culture industry by giving a new nuance to the pop music genre, which has become a necessity for society lately (Khadavi, 2014).

The symbols of Indonesian pop music used in the culture industry are one text tied to other related texts. As a form of commodity, producers try to establish this relationship through various marketing communication systems. Through deconstructing this relationship, its stability can be continuously dismantled through different textual games and cultural contexts. The texts developed by the cultural industry related to Indonesian pop music have many relations with other cultural texts. Cultural texts are constructions built by the culture industry involving capital owners (record labels) and the mass media. The cultural text includes; production, musical works, the form of performance, and lifestyle.

Indie music is generally built based on community. Indie musicians do not compete with each other. In contrast, indie musicians join hands to expand the influence of alternative music. This is the power of indie labels or often also called non-mainstream labels. The criteria for mainstream indie pop music are related to the industry. The difference is more toward the value of the investment issued by the record company. Regarding talent, indie bands are better than mainstream bands. So in the indie pop music culture industry context, it is not oriented towards financial gain. Meanwhile, the Indonesian pop music industry is mainly based on profit labels because they invest large amounts of capital in musicians for greater profits. Indonesia is an archipelagic country with many ethnic groups as its inhabitants. Each of these tribes or ethnicities has its distinctive music in the region. Pop music from the widespread industry has its place in certain ethnic groups, in addition to traditional music that has evolved from generation to generation. Each ethnic group in Indonesia has its regional musical idiom. This music is known as 'regional music,' 'folk songs,' or 'regional pop.' They are produced and distributed in areas outside Jakarta, commonly known as the "center." However, these folk songs were eventually distributed to Jakarta by migrants who had moved from their respective areas to Jakarta (Wallach, 2008). This paper will discuss the phenomenon of the emergence of regional pop music, about how "Pop music" from urban areas is combined with traditional music from each region in Indonesia. Then it gives birth to a new genre known as musik pop daerah (regional pop music).

RESEARCH METHODS

The methodology used for this paper was qualitative, with a literature study. The qualitative method is a method or approach used to understand the issues that happen in human life; as an individual or community (Creswell, 2003). The qualitative method was used because the researcher wanted to understand how regional pop music in Indonesia got distributed and became part of people's lives in Indonesia. One of the characteristics of the qualitative method is that the researcher does not rely on one source of data but uses multiple sources of data (Creswell, 2003). During this paper, the researcher collected qualitative data from various sources such as books, journal articles, and online articles, then arranged them into coherent writing. This research focused on the birth of pop music and regional pop music in Indonesia, the distribution of regional pop music, and the regional music types in Indonesia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As mentioned previously, the research will mainly discuss how pop music from urban areas is combined with traditional music from each region in Indonesia. First, we will discuss how pop music in Indonesia was born and became more known since the colonial era. The second part will be concerned with how regional pop music still emphasizes elements from their respective regions in terms of music and lyrics.

The Birth of Pop Music/Regional Pop Music in Indonesia

Pop music in Indonesia was born in the colonial era. The embryo of popular music was born between 1903 and 1917 when record labels such as Gramophone Company, Odeon, Beka, Columbia, Graphophone Company, Parlophone, Anker, Lyrphon, and Bintang Sapoe flourished. It is reported that Odeon produced 2,614 singles, while others, such as Bintang Sapoe and Gramophone, produced 1,140 and 632 singles. The popular music industry has thrived since the early 20th century with record labels and local companies. Among other private enterprises, Tio Tek Hong began his business in 1904 by importing and distributing phonograph cylinders throughout Indonesia. Popular songs recorded with Tio Tek Hong include Tjente Manis, Boeroeng Nori, Djali-Djali, Tjerai Kasih, Paioeng Patah, Dajoeng Sampan, Kopi Soesoe, and Sang Bango, among others (Aryandari, 2021).

Keeping track of the entry of the popular music industry in Indonesia is relatively easy. Many researchers have discussed this. One of them is Michael Denning. In his book *Noise Uprising: The Audiopolitics of a World Musical Revolution*, he mentions that popular music was born from vernacular music, previously known in pubs or taverns in colonial ports. Then, the Gramophone technology was invented, and music could finally be recorded and re-listened anywhere in the world. That was the beginning of the birth of pop music (Denning, 2015). Popular music in Indonesia became popular between 1980 and 1990. Pop music in Indonesia reached its popularity because, at that time, there was a competition where people could write a song, then if your song got chosen, your favorite singers would sing it. No wonder there were so many new songwriters in the 80s and 90s with their songs. TVRI was one of the popular television shows and also helped those new songwriters promote their pieces in the programs called "Aneka Ria Safari" and "Kamera Ria" (Taher, 2009).

In the case of regional pop music, regional pop is a label attached to music in regional languages or regional dialect elements. Apart from the lyrics in regional dialects, in terms of music, regional pop often mixes regional instruments, rhythms, and melodic contours in their compositions (Wallach, 2008). Some examples of regional pop music are Minang pop, Sundanese pop, campur sari, and tarling (guitar dan suling or guitar and flute). Dangdut has played a significant role in the development of regional pop musicals. The strong nuance of dangdut can be seen in campur sari, a Javanese pop genre that emerged in Yogyakarta in the late 90s. Campur sari mixes keroncong music, dangdut, and elements of traditional Javanese music. Some of its pioneer artists, such as Manthous, sang in the high-level Javanese language (krama inggil). Music is a fluid cultural art form. So, a piece of music can be adapted into other forms of music in the development framework. Dangdut, as a mix of Malay, Indian, and rock music, eventually crystallized into a separate musical genre, which was very popular with many people in Indonesia. It is only natural that dangdut was later adapted to regional pop music. At least by taking the timbre of the sound of the ketipung, or dangdut's distinctive rhythm, many regional pop music samples bits and pieces of this dangdut music.

The form and pattern of this pop music underwent a significant change. Despite adopting the uniform forms and ways of popular music originating from the mainstream music industry in the center (read: Jakarta), an exciting process of assimilation took place. Tim Perumus, (1989) stated that regional pop songs represent a

particular region's soul, emotion, and character. Regional pop songs can be translated into Indonesian as 'daerah'. The term "daerah" or region itself has a meaning that each geographic regions and ethnic groups have its characteristics that makes them different from other regions (Susilo & Yampolsky, 1989). As Andrew Hicken 2010 said, "Most Indonesian regions have their variation on regional pop" This statement is true because we all know that Indonesia contains of more than 20 islands. Each island and each region has a different style of music, depending on the region's characteristics, society, and history. This regional pop music inserts or mixes a little regional element into the musical structure. For example, the campur sari incorporates Javanese musical patterns into modern conventional instruments – Pop Minang, which musically has very pop elements but is sung with lyrics in the Minangkabau language. Broadly speaking, although they sometimes have the same pop music pattern, regional pop music still emphasizes aspects from their respective regions in terms of music and lyrics.

Within Indonesia, local musicians have been developing their craft in the provinces amidst the growth of internet users in the post-Soeharto era. New media allows local musicians to articulate, in their mother tongue, their problems and struggles that cannot be represented by mainstream Indonesian musicians (Akmaliah, 2022). Not only regional pop, from Andrew Weintraub's perspective, after the collapse of the New Order regime, a specific type of music emerged known as regional dangdut. This regional dangdut is characterized by using the language of each region and is explicitly marketed to specific ethnic communities. This regional dangdut has developed, for example, in West Sumatra (saluang minang dangdut), West Java (Sundanese pong-dut), Cirebon (Tarling Cirebon), East Java (koplo dangdut), and Banjarmasin (Banjar dangdut) (Weintraub, 2010).

Distribution of Regional Pop Music in Indonesia

To understand the distribution of regional pop music in Indonesia, we must first understand what pop music is. Pop is short for popular. Put, "pop music" means music that is popular or well-known and common in society. The Cambridge English dictionary defines pop music as "the kind of music with words and a strong rhythm many young people enjoy listening to and dancing to."

Pop music could be solely characterized by 'standardization'. In his famous paper 'On Popular Music', Adorno wanted to emphasize the dull nature of the verse-bridge-chorus structure of songs. This meant that nothing novel could be produced from popular music. Adorno felt popular music was ruining the way we consumed art. He believed this standardization of music resulted from the distribution of music in capitalist society (Adorno, 1998). Pop music is often considered "banal music," a form of kitsch with no high artistic value because it was created (read: manufactured) by the industry and then sold to listeners as a form of commodity. At least, that is the argument of the Frankfurt school thinker, Theodor Adorno. According to Adorno, pop music is part of pop culture, a fake culture that is duplicated as much as possible for the benefit of the industry. Adorno argues:

"It is a matter of something like a culture that arises spontaneously from the masses, the contemporary form of popular art. From the latter, the culture industry must be distinguished in the extreme. The culture industry fuses the old and familiar into a new quality. In all its branches, products tailored for consumption by the masses, which largely determine the nature of that consumption, are manufactured more or less according to plan. The individual branches are similar in structure or at least fit into each other, ordering themselves into a system almost without a gap. This is made possible by current technical capabilities and economic and administrative concentration. The culture industry intentionally integrates its consumers from above. To the detriment of both, it forces the spheres of high and low art together, separated for thousands of years. The seriousness of high art is destroyed in speculation about its culture industry reconsidered efficacy; the seriousness of the lower perishes with the civilizational constraints imposed on the rebellious resistance inherent within it as long as social control was not yet total. Thus, although the culture industry undeniably speculates on the conscious and unconscious state of the millions towards which it is directed, the masses are not primary but secondary; they are an object of calculation, an appendage of the machinery. The customer is not king, as the culture industry would have us believe, not its subject but its object" (Adorno, 2001). However, despite Adorno's firm opinion that pop music is cheap, it is undeniable that it has gained a special place in the hearts of every fan. Pop music can explain one particular phenomenon. Pop music has a diaspora across continents, from America or England to the far eastern mainland, and vice versa, where pop music from the east sometimes also has a diaspora to the west.

Local pop music indeed adapts the same pattern as what Adorno described. Initially, conventional pop music in Indonesia was born in a large music industry and put forward the similarity of musical forms for one specific reason: how to sell this pop music to as many people as possible throughout Indonesia.

Naturally, pop music has a form that can be similar or even the same. The style of the same melody, rhythm, and the constant theme of the song lyrics is that everything mostly talks about love. The format or style of the musicians who carry this pop music is usually the same. If it were not in the form of a band with standard instruments such as guitar, bass, keyboards, and drums, this musician would have been a soloist accompanied by a backing band.

In West Papua, with its reggae music genre, there are groups like Tropica Rasta, De Sagoo, Sulu Brothers, Papua Roots, Ulagay, and D'Joan Liberty Sky. Meanwhile, in South Sumatra, with its pop music genre, there are groups such as Silva Hayati, Frans and Fauna, Ovhi Firsty, Ipank, and Dan Rayola. Their Music is popular and well-loved in South Sumatra and is also embraced by people of Minang descent who have migrated to urban areas in many Indonesian provinces. In South Sulawesi, artist Ridho Jeka successfully mixed pop music with the dangdut genre, interspersed with amusing local anecdotes. This music genre, which incorporates anecdotal humor into songs, is promoted through YouTube Channel Musisi Jenaka Makassar (Makassar Funny Musician) (Akmaliah, 2022).

Due to the decisive locality factor of regional music and the different languages and dialects within the Indonesian archipelago, most music products are only circulated and consumed by those who share the same ethnicity and language. However, geographically they may live in different parts of the country, far away from their hometowns. Instead of being barriers, the diversity of language expressions and local culture only strengthens the primordial solidarity that could only be understood by those who share the same roots.

Regional Pop Music in Indonesia

We can observe this primordial solidarity from the regional pop music diaspora. Previously, Jakarta pop music had a diaspora in various regions in Indonesia. For example, consider the Sumatra region. In North Sumatra, this pop music is mixed with typical Batak musical patterns, such as the taganing pattern, and with Batak language lyrics. Later, this eclectic music turned into a diaspora from Sumatra to Java, specifically to Jakarta. So, we often encounter or listen to pop music typical of the Batak area, which is present and played at various lapo and food stalls that serve Batak food and drinks. The Batak people, who migrated from North Sumatra to Jakarta, feel they have one common root: the Batak tribe. It is only natural that they later feel a cultural closeness to each other. They celebrate together by listening to North Sumatran pop music in the lapo scattered throughout Jakarta. Not only played on lapo, but this Batak regional pop music is also played in various metro mini or angkot, public transportation modes standard in Jakarta's urban areas and surrounding city.

Tarling is also one of the well-known regional pop music in Indonesia. This subgenre thrives in the West Java region, especially in the Indramayu and Cirebon. The name tarling, which consists of two syllables, is short for guitar/guitar (tar) and suling/flute (ling). In her research, Sandra Bader describes that tarling began to appear in the Indramayu/Cirebon area in the late 1930s in the colonial era. In 1931, a Dutch commissioner asked Mang Sakim, a gamelan expert from Kepandean Village in Indramayu, to repair his guitar. Sugra, the son of Mang Sakim, is a skilled gamelan player. He transferred the gamelan pentatonic scale to the guitar medium, then played it along with the suling (flute) (Baders, 2011). The musical accompaniment is complemented by vocals singing verse after verse of poetry in the local language (Sundanese). In its development, when dangdut began to reach its highest popularity in the 1970s and 1980s, tarling began to assimilate with the music, and a new subgenre emerged called dangdut tarling. According to Kasim (2023), tarling can stand together with other forms of arts, such as wayang kulit, wayang golek, cepak, traditional skit, or tayuban. As one of the regional pop music in Indonesia, tarling has the basic performance elements of traditional performance, which combines tembang Cirebonan or Dermayonan (Sartika & Mulyana, 2021).

One of the pioneers who played tarling was Udin Zean with his group Kamajaya. The popularity of Kamajaya, who played tarling, was then followed by other groups such as Cahaya Muda, Nada Bhayangkara, Chandra Lelana, and the Nengsih Group. Tarling quickly became known not only in West Java, it then spread to the Pantura from Banten to Banyuwangi in East Java. In later days, as single organ performances became more popular, more tarling dance groups emerged in Karawang, Subang, Indramayu, Cirebon, Majalengka, and Kuningan.

Like the fate of dangdut music, which initially sparked controversy, tarling dangdut also sparked controversy in its development. Tarling dangdut singers from the Indramayu area are labeled as 'villagers' by the elite and upper middle class. Not only that but the Indramayu singers are also known for their reputation as vulgar singers who can be booked as commercial sex workers at low prices (Baders, 2011). As Bader emphasized, women's sexuality is always a central topic when discussing tarling and specifically tarling as a sub-genre. Tarling performances always bring out singers dressed in sexy, sensual movements, vulgar lyrics,

and interactions with the audience on stage. In Bader's understanding, it is this element of female sexuality that causes "tarling" to be labeled as country music and erotic entertainment (Baders, 2011). In contrast with Baders, (Sartika & Mulyana, 2021) in their research about Tarling as Performance, Education, and Communication 1966-2000, found that "tarling" has an educational function. They stated that "tarling" has a function as a guide and education through drama performances. Especially during 1966, Abdul Adjib did some improvement by adding elements of drama performance containing advice and guidance for life using the "tarling" show.

Dangdut Adaptation in Regional Pop Music

On the other hand, local pop music does not always address the theme of love or is as close to sexuality as tarling. When entering regional areas, for example, dangdut, as one of the most well-known music genres in Indonesia, can also carry a religious message in its music. Dangdut can also be classified as regional pop music, considering that dangdut is a mixture of Malay music, Indian music, and in Rhoma Irama's case, western rock music. Throughout his musical career, with the group he leads, Soneta, Rhoma Irama has broadcasted religious messages in his lyrics, especially Islam, considering that this religion is the majority religion in Indonesia.

Dangdut enters a new phase with religious messages inserted into it. Among them is Rhoma Irama. Everyone in Indonesia knows who Rhoma Irama is. If you ask people on the street randomly, their answer will be, "Yes I know Rhoma Irama". Some people even know the gossips that happen with Rhoma Irama at particular times. However, he is consistent to spread the religious messages in some of his songs. After returning from the pilgrimage to Mecca, Rhoma Irama changed the moral theme of his band Soneta. For example, he encourages (or slightly forces) his band members to stop drinking alcohol and have sex outside of marriage. Members who do not comply with these rules will be fired from the band immediately. In order to change the lyrics and music, Rhoma also made changes to his dressing style. He cut his hair shorter and wore typical Muslim clothes (precisely a Middle Eastern style). Rhoma's efforts to change this image are more visible in *Perjuangan dan Doa* (Struggle and Prayer). This film is arguably the world's first Islamic rock musical (Frederick, 1982).

After returning from Hajj, Rhoma Irama further strengthened his efforts to use music to convey, instruct, and lead his listeners. He then changed his name from Oma to Rhoma Irama, the "R" and the "H" are the acronym from Raden and Haji. He believed music should be used as a tool to change order rather than just a form of entertainment. In Rhoma's understanding, dangdut has a vital role in shaping public morality and can help fight societal ills such as corruption in government, gambling, drug use, and sex outside marriage (Weintraub, 2010). At this point, the songs of Rhoma Irama and Soneta insert many religious messages. At this point, the songs of Rhoma Irama and Soneta insert many religious messages. This statement is also supported by Mustolehudin (2012), in his research, he stated that most of Rhoma Irama's songs contain moral values, love stories, social criticism, and our daily life within our society. He also mentioned especially during the year 1970-1980, such as the value of trust, truth, justice, self-control, bravery, strength, patience, and compassion. These moral values even these days can be implemented in our daily life, through our society, and in our relationships with others. An interesting statement said that Rhoma Irama's songs have different meanings to different generations. Raditya (2021) stated in Generation Y, Rhoma Irama is more popular with his political agenda and his dangdut figure authorities. Meanwhile, for all the "boomer generation" Rhoma Irama is a representative agent of society and expresses moral values to people through dangdut music. We can see from one of his popular song called *Begadang* was very popular since it was launched. The song itself has a message to people not to stay up late because it is not healthy for you and for your body.

Rhoma understands music as a medium of *da'wah* (an effort to invite people to enter and obey Islamic rules). On October 13, 1973, Rhoma declared that Soneta Group was a "voice of Muslims" with the primary purpose not only as a form of entertainment music but also as a medium of information, education, unity, and *da'wah*. Rhoma also emphasized that *da'wah* music must meet four criteria: (1) the structure of the music must be beautiful and attractive; (2) song lyrics must be strong, make sense, and convey good arguments to touch the hearts of the listeners; (3) the melody, lyrics, and rhythm must be harmonious; (4) singers and composers must make lyrics that correlate with people's daily lives (Weintraub, 2011).

The success of Rhoma Irama and Soneta inspired the birth of another regional pop music group, namely Nasida Ria. Nasida Ria is a modern kasidah music group formed in 1975 in Semarang, Central Java and founded by HM Zain, a Koran teacher. According to Umam & Martini (2022), Nasida Ria means a happy song with an Islamic melody. At the beginning of their career, Nasida Ria consisted of nine women who were students of HM Zain. Those nine-number dedicated to the number of Walisongo who also consist of 9 people.

HM Zain hopes this group can emulate the aspect of da'wah from Walisongo. The nine women were Mudrikah Zain, Mutoharoh, Rien Jammain, Umi Kholifah, Musyarofah, Nunung, Alfiyah, Kudriyah, and Nur Ain. At first, Nasida Ria only used the tambourine to accompany the songs they sang. Later they added an organ, bass, violin, and guitar as accompaniment instruments. Nasida Ria Alabaladil's debut album *Makabul* was released by Ira Puspita Records. Their songs are in line with the songs of Rhoma Irama and Soneta Group; they are used as propaganda media. Nasida Ria is much inspired by qasidah, music from the Arabian Peninsula.

Qasidah is a kind of musical poetry that developed in the Arabian Peninsula. It is not clear when Qasidah first entered the archipelago. However, some singers claim that qasidah was introduced to the archipelago from Malaysia in the 1960s (Hung, 2017). After entering Indonesia, there were several changes in the form of qasidah. Among them is the absorption of the qasidah and changing it to Indonesian into kasidah. For most Indonesians, Arabic qasidah lyrics often need help understanding. Therefore, many kasidah groups then use Indonesian as the lyrics.

Nasida Ria is a modern qasidah group because it applies this formula. They use Indonesian in their song lyrics to make it easier for most Muslims in Indonesia to understand. They put Qur'an in their lyrics and write their own lyrics so people can relate to their daily life. Nasida Ria also added modern instruments and electronics beyond the tambourine. Among them are organ, tambourine, ketipung, mandolin, guitar, bass, and flute. Nasida Ria's music incorporates thick Arabic elements such as qasidah and mixed dangdut elements. This mixing of music is with reason. Nasida Ria picked up dangdut elements so that their music was more widely known. Nasida Ria even performed in Germany on the 18th of June 2022 for the Opening Week Music Program Documenta Fifteen in Kassel, Germany, not only in Germany but also already performed in The United States in 2017.

They followed in the footsteps of Rhoma Irama and the Soneta Group, which were commercially successful because they used dangdut as a medium of da'wah (Hung, 2017). This variant of dangdut mixed with kasidah, as played by Nasida Ria, is known as modern kasidah, a genre of music that puts forward religious messages in the form of entertainment (Rasmussen, 2005).

CONSLUSION

Regional pop music has been born and is proliferating throughout the Indonesian archipelago. From Sabang, the westernmost region in Indonesia, to Merauke, the easternmost region in Indonesia, regional pop music has become an inseparable part of Indonesian people's lives. The forms and themes of regional music also vary greatly depending on the socio-political conditions of each region. Messages in regional pop music can tell stories about romance, community survival, cultural preservation, and the importance of protecting nature and the environment, right down to religious matters brought by Rhoma Irama and Soneta or Nasida Ria. What is clear is that regional pop music is a sign that culture—or, in this case, music—is fluid and can change according to the times. If interpreted more broadly, the rise of regional pop music in Indonesia can also be interpreted as a sign that Indonesia is a prosperous country, both in terms of arts and culture as well as from an economic perspective, where Indonesia has so many natural resources that can be utilized for the benefit of the people—Indonesian society. Sometimes, there are art and culture or music purists who regard regional pop music as decadent because it undermines the sacredness of traditional music. If we want to think more openly, pop music in this area is a genius for cultural development. So, let the purists of arts and culture speak as they, please. In the distant future, regional pop music will still exist, and it will likely continue to develop into new forms that were previously unimaginable.

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