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Music and Regional Identity in Indonesia: *Tembang Sunda* of West Java

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Abstract

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Tembang sunda is an aristocratic vocal genre that developed in the Western third of Java, Indonesia, a region also known as Sunda. This classical form originated in the 1840's in Cianjur (a town between Bandung and Jakarta) during the Dutch colonial period. In the 1960's, its practice expanded throughout West Java, and relocated to the region's prevailing cultural center—metropolitan Bandung.

Despite the institutionalization of music education in contemporary Bandung, the oral-aural transmission of musical knowledge between teacher and student is still the primary mode of teaching *tembang sunda*. Many traditional genres of West Java, such as *gamelan degung*, have experienced change and innovation in theorizing musical processes, thereby becoming modernized in their pedagogy. Yet, *tembang sunda* has continued to maintain the oral tradition as a central and inherent component of its learning processes. This is due to the different performance contexts that characterize *tembang sunda*, each of which requires adaptability and knowledge on the performer's part. Based on my learning and performance experiences in Bandung, I have learned that there are also different aesthetics and expectations associated with each performance context. Each context is important in maintaining the social organization distinctly framed by *tembang sunda*, and informed by the history of both the Sundanese region as well as the entire island of Java; hence, it is important to perform according to context.

A student learning *tembang sunda* is made aware of these differences by employing the oral approach in their training, through maintaining close interaction with

the teacher, and participating in relevant musical and extra-musical activities. The learning process subtly prepares a student or performer to adapt to each of these different contexts. Therefore, by means of effective teaching methods, the student is acquainted with the analogies and dissemblances between performance contexts, and thus, the significance of *tembang sunda*.

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TEMBANG SUNDA OF WEST JAVA

INTRODUCTION

An Ethnomusicological Study of *Tembang Sunda*

Background

Tembang sunda, is a West Javanese (Sundanese) vocal genre that developed in the Western third of Java, Indonesia, a region also known as Sunda (see Figure 1).[1] This classical form, occasionally also referred to as *Cianjuran* or *mamaos*, originated in the Cianjur Regency (located between Bandung and Jakarta) during the Dutch colonial period around 1840. *Tembang sunda* consists of intoned poems performed by a male or female vocalist, accompanied by *kecapi* (zither), *suling* (bamboo flute), and occasionally, *rebab* (two-stringed bowed lute).

Figure 1: Map of West Java

Tembang sunda developed during a period between the late 18th and early 19th centuries when the Sundanese had at long last gained an upper hand over the neighboring

[1] Throughout this thesis, the term "Sundanese" will be used synonymously with "West Javanese".

regions of Java, particularly the Central Javanese (Javanese), who until then had controlled all parts of the island.[2] This shift in power arose from their advantageous geographical positioning in terms of agricultural profitability for the Dutch occupants during the colonial era (Sutherland 1973, 125-127). In order to conveniently administer Sundanese regional affairs, the Dutch divided the Sundanese region into governmental units known as regencies, each headed by a regent to whom they delegated all internal responsibilities. This allowed the overseeing regents to benefit financially as a result of which they could patronize and promote the Sundanese performance arts as an assertion of this movement away from the inbred Javanese authority in their culture.[3]

Around the time of Indonesian Independence in 1945, the uprooted economic system caused considerable changes in patronage, leading the centre of *tembang sunda* practice and performance to gradually relocate to the metropolitan capital of West Java, Bandung (Williams 2001, 33). Nowadays, most established *tembang sunda* musicians reside in Bandung; the urban city environment actively furnishes and promotes *tembang sunda* through cultural performances, competitions, educational institutions, and media broadcasting. The relocation of *tembang sunda* from a small regency to a major city has impacted the music, musicians, and Sundanese society, eliciting change within the overall *tembang sunda* context. Yet, certain uniquely Sundanese aspects of the musical and social behavior surrounding *tembang sunda* have been maintained. These traditions serve to remind the Sundanese, especially *tembang sunda* musicians and audiences, of their historical past and regional mores. As a result, the music and cultural context of *tembang*

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[2] Similarly, the term "Javanese" will be reserved for describing the Central Javanese people, not as a generic reference to the entire island of Java.

[3] For further information on the history of West Java, see Sutherland (1973, 125-131), Kartomi (1990, 18-22) and Becker (1980, 8-10ff).

sunda function as remnants of Sundanese history, symbolizing the formation and continuity of the distinctly Sundanese identity. Specifically, I would like to explore the pedagogy and performance aspects of *tembang sunda* to see how the two relate to one another, and how they influence the *tembang sunda* genre as a whole, shaping the development of Sundanese society and *tembang sunda* within this cultural context.

Within Sundanese societies, musical practices differ to a large extent from one genre to another. In understanding differences between genres, it is crucial to look at the underlying theories governing each, as well as the concepts of social, musical and behavioral organization from which they develop. Judith Becker explains the parallels between the conceptualization of music and culture as follows:

> "The same concepts which control the organization of other kinds of experience within a culture control the organization of music and determine the selection of a limited pool of elements from the infinite possibilities of acoustic sound. Music systems are but one way in which the people of a given culture conceptualize and make sense of their world" (Becker 1979, 197).

In other words, understanding the way in which a culture is organized can in turn help explain how music within that culture is organized as well. In the linguistically and culturally distinct region of Sunda, the lyrical and structural elements of the performing arts are closely tied to certain village traditions and notions of class (Williams 1997, 27). Apart from *tembang sunda*, there is a wide range of art forms including popular and classical Sundanese vocal genres such as *pop sunda*, *kliningan*, *kawih*, as well as Sundanese dance and instrumental forms such as *jaipongan*, *kecapi-suling*, *gamelan degung*, and Sundanese puppet theatre, known as *wayang golék*. Despite the prevalence

of these eclectic artistic traditions, *tembang sunda* has maintained a unique position due to its aristocratic subtext, strong roots in tradition and history, and persisting divergences from Javanese music. Thereby, *tembang sunda* falls into a hierarchy of Sundanese genres and is held most superior by *tembang sunda* practitioners and connoisseurs.

Learning and performing *tembang sunda* simultaneously contribute to the knowledge of the genre as a whole. By examining the relationship between these tightly intertwined aspects of pedagogy and performance aesthetics in *tembang sunda*, I highlight the concepts of hierarchy and division within Sundanese genres as well as Indonesian genres on the whole, hence demonstrating how these aspects influence social organization in Sundanese societies. Thus, this alludes to the way in which musical processes within a cultural context are reflective of the surrounding community, and therefore, instrumental in shaping regional identities in West Java.

Research Methodology

Between May and July 2009, I conducted fieldwork in Bandung, West Java, over the course of two months. My lessons, social interactions, and observations of daily routines and activities exposed me to the complexities in the personal, professional and social life of *tembang sunda* musicians. I learned *tembang sunda* with an eminent musician, Ibu Euis Komariah, and resided with her family during my stay. My *tembang sunda* lessons provided me with an understanding of musical technical details as well as the learning process itself.[4] In conjunction with lessons, I accompanied Ibu Euis to various social functions and musical activities, and eventually gained opportunities to

[4] *Ibu* literally means "mother", and is a respectful way of addressing older women in Indonesian societies.

perform myself. These experiences represented the vast multiplicity of settings in which *tembang sunda* music is incorporated, as well as the implications surrounding each performance situation.

Ibu Euis Komariah is a renowned and highly respected Sundanese musician with an especially successful professional background in *tembang sunda*. Most of my research was conducted in her home environment where we had lessons, conversations, and social gatherings with musicians. In the 1980's, her composer-choreographer husband, Pak Gugum Gumbira, established a recording studio, *Jugala*, adjacent to their residence.[5] Coinciding with the advent of the Indonesian cassette industry, many albums were successfully released under the *Jugala* label; these albums featured eclectic and innovative music rooted in the Sundanese tradition. This novelty in musical propagation marks one of the earliest instances in which traditional Sundanese music was launched into a nontraditional performance format, paving the way for its inception into both the radio and television industries. With time and the emergence of numerous competitors in what was then the booming cassette industry, *Jugala*'s prominent stature in the recording industry gradually waned (Spiller 2008, 188); nevertheless, their studios are well in demand and their home continues to function as a gathering space for a large majority of musicians in Bandung, particularly those specializing in *tembang sunda*.

Studying and living in this environment for two months provided me with opportunities to supplement and enhance my learning experience through interacting with musicians, participating in rehearsals and informal musical gatherings, observing the instrumental techniques involved in the primary accompanying instruments, and

[5] *Pak* literally means "father", and is a respectful way of addressing older men in Indonesian societies.

witnessing the creative stages behind the composition of *tembang sunda* and modern Sundanese-Western fusion. These encounters uncovered the key component of my analysis—the inherent link between learning and performing *tembang sunda*. Performance situations typically vary in terms of formality, social context, and importance ascribed to music in that particular context. Attending and participating in these performance situations is an integral part of understanding both the technique as well as the social value placed on *tembang sunda*. This effectively allows musicians to gauge disparities in performance contexts, leading them to associate each with a particular level of importance. Hence, music and social structure both impact one another, which in the case of *tembang sunda*, affirms the uniquely Sundanese attributes of both music and culture.

Literature Review

Sean Williams' "Sound of the Ancestral Ship" (2001) and other related ethnomusicological journal articles such as "Competition in the Sundanese Performing Arts of West Java" (1997), "Constructing Gender in Sundanese Music" (1998) and "Current Development in Sundanese Popular Music" (1989-1990) are based on fieldwork conducted between 1987 and 1996, a primary component of which included *tembang sunda* lessons with my teacher, Euis Komariah. Her studies provide a comprehensive examination of the musical components, patronage, performance practices, and pedagogy of *tembang sunda*, discussed in view of the historical context and the urbanization that the Sundanese region has undergone. In one particularly insightful section of her book, Williams analyzes certain standard pieces in the *tembang sunda* repertory, detailing the

relationships between musical and social structures within specific repertoire and performance settings. Overall, Williams' prolonged field studies and extremely relevant experiences provided me with knowledge and perspectives from another *tembang sunda* student's experience.

In "The Poetry of *Tembang Sunda*" (1984), Wim Van Zanten uses the poems in *tembang sunda* to describe Sundanese culture. Specifically, he describes the formal, stylistic, metrical, linguistic and thematic aspects of the poetry to determine the music's structural and cultural significance. He offers an explanation for certain recurrent textual themes such as nostalgia, nature, love, and sociopolitical commentary, suggesting ways in which the music establishes Sundanese identity through the discussion and narration of such topics. In his other articles such as "The Tone Material of the Kacapi in *Tembang Sunda* in West Java" (1986) and "Sung Epic Narrative and Lyrical Songs: *Carita Pantun* and *Tembang Sunda*" (1993), Zanten offers theories for tuning systems in *tembang sunda* and discusses associated cultural themes to uncover the relationship between the content and context of the music. Through his musical-technical and comparative approaches, he relays the cultural significance, popularity and prestige assigned to *tembang sunda*.

Studies by Alan Merriam and Daniel Neuman on ethnomusicological theory emphasize the dual role of music and culture in determining the nature of a musical tradition. Merriam was a significant proponent of these prescriptions as he redefined ethnomusicology from being "the study of music in culture, to the study of music *as* culture" (Merriam 1977, 204). While the former term focuses rather exclusively on musical activities, the latter does more justice to the cultural facet of music and societal systems. Similarly, in "Towards an Ethnomusicology of Culture Change in Asia" (1976),

Neuman explains how an ethnomusicology of culture change may be understood through changes that occur in a music system wherein music is a component of the culture, or through changes in a cultural system as modeled by the music, or by studying the nature of the relationship between music and culture (Neuman 1976, 1). Thus, Merriam and Neuman distinguish the different levels at which music and culture interact, prompting increased specificity in the approaches used by ethnomusicologists in their research. Applying this logic to *tembang sunda* allowed me to clearly compartmentalize my study as 1) the ways in which the music itself has changed in response to its evolving cultural context, 2) the changes that have occurred in the conceptualization of Sundanese culture as mirrored by the music, 3) the interrelationship between the music and regional identification.

The structural and technical aspects of learning and performing music vary from one tradition to another. Music is perceived differently depending on a mixture of physiological and behavioral factors. Judith Becker's "Percussive Patterns in the Music of Mainland Southeast Asia" (1968) focuses on rhythmic sensibility in Indonesian percussion patterns, whereby complexities underlying the seemingly straightforward rhythmic structures might not even register in the ears of those observers who are unaware and unaccustomed to higher levels of rhythmic organization. Transcriptions may further hinder the absorption of this material since the ear is capable of perceiving musical units phrase by phrase, unlike the eye (Becker 1968, 173). Likewise, Nazir Jairazbhoy relays the importance of oral-aural skills in understanding and practicing different kinds of nonwestern music. He proceeds to describe the immense role that the invention of recording equipment has played in the development and sustenance of

ethnomusicological studies, and how it has helped preserve musical details that are invariably altered or misconstrued by the fieldworker. Becker and Jairazbhoy describe the importance of possessing keen awareness and aural skills when studying unfamiliar musical styles since transcription and recording processes might not account for certain components of the music; as a consequence, details become lost in translation. Furthermore, different musical traditions must be treated separately as the distinguishing criteria within each may not be comparable. These articles raise points that are especially relevant to perceptions of learning processes in *tembang sunda*, wherein students must solely rely on acute observation to truly understand the music.

Understanding pedagogical practices in musical traditions involves much more than the mere reproduction of sound—it must include both formal and informal engagement in the music as well as the associated music related behaviors in order to gain a comprehensive and balanced understanding of music as a part of culture. In her essay on "Learning processes in the *nanguan* music of Taiwan," (2002) Chou Chiener outlines the ideologies that govern other musical and cultural contexts in terms of the evolution of the learning environment, the coursework, the development of learning processes over the years, and the nature of interactions with musicians. While certain approaches in Chou's analysis are compatible with mine on *tembang sunda*, others, such as her viewpoint as a local taking an ethnomusicological perspective in "Experience and Fieldwork: A Native Researcher's View" (2002), partially challenged my views. In another article which emphasizes the pedagogical aspects of music, "Indian Music as a Cultural System" (1985), the author, Daniel Neuman, models some of the ways in which the Islamization of music patronage and production in *hindustani* music has generated

cultural adaptations through biological kinship, specialist vocalist, and performance context, all of which have fundamentally affected the performance of the music itself. That is, a particular societal factor may trigger change within musical systems, and potentially dictate the performance of a music (Neuman 1985, 98). In many ways learning processes in *nanguan* and *hindustani* music are similar those in *tembang sunda*. Each of these musical forms foreground the importance of audience participation, observation, aural skills, and conformity to group requirements during collaborative work. Additionally, each of these musical traditions must ideally not employ the usage of notations; rather, it is through repetition and oral transmission that the music is best conveyed whilst learning.

When relating pedagogy and performance in *tembang sunda*, there are a range of issues attributable to the linguistic, cultural and social barriers posed by the specific surroundings. Especially as a beginner, it is often unlikely that music studies will give way to performance opportunities within a short span of time. Nonetheless, in my experiences, since I was considered a relatively fast learner, or perhaps also because I was an outsider with a relatively short period of time to learn this tradition, my teacher and other observing musicians immediately thrust me onto a variety of performance platforms. It was through this concurrent involvement in both the learning and performing sides of *tembang sunda* that my research was conceived. Thereby, I was able to construct bridges between matters which were emphasized during lessons, and the way in which these concepts were manifested and underscored during performance. Only through a combination of attendance, observation and performance can one understand

how the musical processes in *tembang sunda* come to play in the formulation of Sundanese identities.

Although existing research describes much of the history, society and cultural situations surrounding *tembang sunda*, my fieldwork is based on present circumstances in West Java, offering a more current inspection of the musical and social practices that characterize today's continuously evolving *tembang sunda* scene. Furthermore, throughout my fieldwork, I maintained my approach as a *tembang sunda* student rather than that of a student learning *kecapi*, *suling* or other related Sundanese arts. This allowed me to maximize my time developing relations with *tembang sunda* musicians, all of whom are centrally linked to vocalists, as a result of which I was able to learn vocals, perform and practice with various well known instrumentalists, observe musical interactions and engagements, and converse with various musicians, non-musicians, family members and audience members.

The changes facilitated in musical settings, when founded upon underlying theoretical systems, lend critical insight to the relationship between music making and larger cultural processes. Hence, these alterations are iconic of broader social movements (Blum 1975, 218). Characteristics of pedagogy and performance in the *tembang sunda* tradition, are inextricably bound and often indistinguishable in practice. Historical hierarchies in Sundanese society contribute to the significance of *tembang sunda* above all other art forms in West Java. Outsiders and newcomers to the music are made to comprehend this logic by actively participating in various settings so that they may directly perceive the social nuances which certify *tembang sunda*'s aesthetic depths. Hence, pedagogical processes are merged with performance in every way possible in

order for students to fully appreciate the status and sociocultural significance associated with *tembang sunda*.

I

MUSIC AND PERSPECTIVES ON THE SUNDANESE REGION, CULTURE AND SOCIETY

CHAPTER 1

The Impact of Social Hierarchy and Division in Java on *Tembang Sunda*

In this chapter, I examine significant social and historical situations that continue to influence the formation of regional identities in Java. This will illustrate how the past translates to the present, and how evolving ideologies play a significant role in the maintenance and progression of traditional art forms in Java. In particular, I consider the relationship between the West and Central Javanese regions, and the distinctions between different subdivisions of West Java itself, using *tembang sunda* to map the historical framework onto the contemporary musical context. Thereby, I study the manner in which musical and sociocultural practices interact to inform one another, and I explore the Sundanese contextual association with the broader movement that intersects music, history, and the ensuing evolution of regional identities in Java.

Conflict between the Regions—Sundanese Versus Javanese

The Javanese, an ethnic group indigenous to the island of Java, are principally situated in the central to eastern expanse of the island. They are the largest ethnic group on both the island, and also in the Republic of Indonesia. Originally, the Javanese were concentrated in the provinces of East Java, Central Java and Yogyakarta. The Sundanese are the second largest ethnic group of Indonesia; they possess language, traditions, and cultural attributes that are considerably different from that of the rest of Java. Yet, there are similar cultural characteristics that are reminiscent of a previous unity and conformity amongst the regions in Java (see Figure 2). The gradual divergence in the cultural and

social processes in these regions is rooted in two specific historical periods when the Sundanese were in a position of power—the first in the pre-colonial 1300's and the second during the Dutch colonial period (1600-1950).[6]

Figure 2: Geography of Ethnic Groups in Java

For many centuries prior to the 14th century, a succession of small kingdoms rose and fell in power in different parts of the island of Java, but only a few had an influence outside their own territory (Williams 2001, 24). After the fall of the Sumatran kingdom of Srivijaya, which until then had maintained trade ports in West Java, the Sundanese kingdom of Pajajaran was founded in 1333.[7] In the meanwhile, the defeaters of Srivijaya founded the Hindu-Javanese kingdom of Majapahit, which grew to power and marked the peak of Hindu-Javanese culture (Noorduyn 1978, 207).

The beginning of a strained relationship between West and Central Java was marked by a specific occurrence during the era of the Pajajaran and Majapahit

[6] McTaggart (1982, 296) classified urban development in Indonesia into three eras: precolonial (before 1600 A.D.), colonial (1600-1950) and postcolonial (1950-present).

[7] Pajajaran is an ancient Sundanese Hindu kingdom (1333-1579) located within the Priangan highlands. To the Sundanese people, it represents a past "Golden Era".

kingdoms.[8] Mythical stories passed through the generations provide accounts of how the king of *Majapahit*, Hayam Wuruk, fell in love with the daughter of Prabu Siliwangi, the Sundanese princess of Pajajaran, and proposed marriage. While the Sundanese regarded this as an invitation for coalition, the prime minister of Majapahit considered it an act of abdication. This misunderstanding was an embarrassment to the Sundanese, and it harbored strong disagreement between the Javanese and Sundanese regarding their respective statuses, paving the way to battle that resulted in the loss of many Sundanese lives. The aftermath of this incident unquestionably left the Sundanese humiliated and demoralized.

This legendary event has been recounted in the poetry traditions of each region, but is arguably very subjective—the Javanese version is detailed, dramatic, and assertive of their "unchallenged" power, while the Sundanese account is brief and nondescript (Zanten 1984, 303). This may be seen specifically in excerpts from the Old Javanese poem, *Kidung Sunda* (see Figure 3), which narrates the events at Majapahit, and the Sundanese *Carita Parahyangan* (see Figure 4), a text on the history of kings and kingdoms in West Java before the spread of Islam in 1200-1600.

[8] For further description of this historical episode, see Williams (2001, 24), Wessing (1978, 10), Coedès (1968, 239) and De Graaf (1949, 65-66).

Figure 3. *Kidung Sunda* (Verse 2.69-2.71)

Text	Translation
[...], *yan kitâwĕdîng pati, lah age marĕka, i jĕng sri naranata, aturana jiwa bakti, wangining sĕmbah, sira sang nataputri*.	If you are afraid to die, then come forward and pay obeisance at the feet of His Majesty the King and offer him the living evidence of your servitude: the fragrant obeisance, the princess.
Wahu karungu denira sri narendra, bangun runtik ing ati, ah kita potusan, warahĕn tuhanira, nora ngong marĕka malih, angatĕrana, iki sang rajaputri.	The Sundanese king just barely heard this, as he stood up angrily: "Hey, listen you messengers, just tell your master that I don't have the intention to approach him and to send the princess!
Mong kari sasisih bahune wong Sunda, rĕmpak kang kanan keri, norengsun ahulap, rinĕbateng paprangan, srĕngĕn si rakryan apatih, kaya siniwak, karnasula angapi.	"Even if the Sundanese only have one arm left, or even if both the right and the left arms are destroyed, their eyes won't be impressed if they are outnumbered on the battlefield." The Sundanese vizier also got irritated as he heard the sharp words (of the Majapahit envoy).

The lines from *Kidung Sunda* in Figure 3 refer to events involving the Prime Minister of Majapahit, Gajah Mada, who treated the Sundanese in a degrading manner, conveying his views on the Sundanese kingdom as beneath Majapahit. The Sundanese king did not take this disrespectful treatment lightly and decided against giving his daughter for marriage. This conflict resulted in battle whereby the Sundanese were outnumbered by the Javanese.

Figure 4. *Carita Parahyangan*

Text	Translation
Manak deui Prebu Maharaja, lawasniya ratu tujuh tahun, kena kabawa ku kalawisaya, kabancana ku seuweu dimanten, ngaran Tohaan.	Because of his children, Prabu Maharaja who was king for seven years, was subject to disaster, due to harm brought by his son, because the lady was asking for too much.
Mundut agung dipipanumbasna. Urang réya sangkan nu angkat ka Jawa, mumul nu lakian di Sunda. Pan prangrang di Majapahit.	At first, they went to Java because the daughter did not want a Sundanese husband. Then there was war in Majapahit.

As seen above, the *Carita Parahyangan* does not allude to the detailed sequence of events at Majapahit and their deeper implications on Sundanese society. Instead, it adopts a far more generalized perspective whilst relaying the unbiased facts. These discrepancies provide further insight on the relationship between these regions. The tensions between West and Central Java prompted severed ties and suppressed interactions, an element that also defines present circumstances. The Sundanese were previously, and to an extent, still remain in a minority position; Javanese culture has continuously been held in high esteem, and is manifested in a number of Sundanese cultural features, including those that are considered "unique" to West Java (Zanten 1984, 302-303). Many germane examples are seen in the Sundanese regional language, literature, *gamelan* music, dance, and *wayang*, all of which either trace back their origins to Javanese traditions, or exhibit a resemblance in structure and concept.[9] Nonetheless,

[9] *Gamelan* are Indonesian gong-chime ensembles. Sundanese gamelan ensembles include *gamelan degung*, which was created for local Sundanese regents during the early 20th century, and *gamelan saléndro*, used to

the Sundanese have consistently made conscious efforts to declare their regional independence by reconstituting and modifying the aspects of their culture that originated from Central Java; a strong illustration of this movement is reflected in the strictly Islamic culture that characterizes the Sundanese region, as opposed to the strong mysticism attached to the *kejawen* culture of Central Java.[10]

Following the fall of Pajajaran in the 16th century, there was no distinct cultural centre that had authority over the whole of the Sundanese region. In spite of this, Sundanese culture proliferated, as described by Mikihiro Moriyama:

> "The absence of a single powerful cultural centre does not mean that the 'production' of culture stopped with the fall of the Sundanese kingdom. Rather, it resulted in an accumulation and diffusion of knowledge that was different from that of other cultural communities in the archipelago." (Moriyama 2005, 2).

Example of aspects of Sundanese culture that were spread include the *pantun* epic narrative oral tradition, as well as the practice of writing on palm leaves and traditional paper to produce Sundanese manuscripts in old scripts and languages (Ekadjati 2003, 126-127). In the 17th century, after being conquered by the Javanese kingdom of Mataram, Javanese culture dominated the formerly Sundanese region, influencing the arts, administration, lifestyle and language. During the period of colonialism, political power in West Java flowed from regencies—administrative and cultural centers controlled by a Dutch-supported local aristocracy. A regency, or *kabupaten*, is a level of government smaller than a province, but which enjoys greater decentralization affairs

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accompany theatre, dance and songs in *saléndro* tuning. *Wayang* is Indonesian for "theatre". Term may used when referring to different kinds of puppet theatre, e.g. *wayang golék* (Sundanese rod puppet theatre), *wayang kulit* (Javanese shadow puppet theatre), or for the puppet itself.

[10] Javanese communities are largely syncretic in their beliefs. Certain members follow *kejawen*, an animistic ethnic religion with strong influences from Hinduism and Buddhism.

than the province does, such as the provision of public schooling and health facilities. Both regency and city have their own local government and legislative body, but they differ in demographics, size, and economic activities. The head of each regency, the regent or *bupati*, displayed and consolidated their influence in part by patronizing refined performing arts. However, this was met with a reversal in the 19th century, when Sundanese language, literature, and art forms were used to symbolize their individuality (Zanten 1984, 302). From the early 18th century onwards, the regents of West Java were affluent due to the establishment of the Preanger System, or Dutch Revenue System. Developed by Dutch colonizers, this system primarily capitalized on coffee production in the Priangan regencies and continued until 1916.[11]

Priangan (Parahyangan or de Preanger*)*, literally "the abode of the gods", is the highland plateau that traverses the central and southern parts of West Java. The Priangan Regencies comprise Cianjur, Bandung, Sumedang, Ciamis, Cimahi, Garut, Sukabumi and Tasikmalaya. Over the course of the century, these regencies experienced reorganization and a series of changing government under *bupati* drawn from a complex of very old, prestigious families. Hence, the Priangan regents experienced an overall strengthening and were associated with prestige and grandeur due to the *bupati*'s high position and generous Dutch subsidization. Thus, they maintained an exceptionally high standard of living compared to the neighboring regions until the end of the colonial period (Sutherland 1973, 125-127). By the 1800-1850's, the Sundanese were in a position to legitimize their superiority in status, power and cultural position through the development

[11] For information regarding the Priangan Regencies and their significance to the Dutch, see Fasseur and Elson (1992, 22-23) and Knaap (1996).

of prestigious and unique art forms such as *tembang sunda* and *gamelan degung* that would affirm their distinct regional identity.

Sociopolitical events simultaneously also influenced the development of the music and arts of Central Java. These changes, by contrast with the Sundanese, were rooted in their struggles with the Dutch, from whom they received little financial support and to whom the courts lost further power and territory after the Java War (Kartomi 1990, 20).[12] The consequences of these difficulties were also manifested in Javanese music, which many considered had diminished in quality over the years. Specifically, the complexity and refinement associated with Javanese music was thought to have peaked in approximately 1800, experiencing a decline thereafter. Between the 18th and 20th centuries, the arts have gradually reduced their ceremonial content, which corresponded to the secularization and rationalization of the meaning and functions of Central Javanese art forms. In terms of artistic outlook, individual skill has increased in significance compared to the previously underscored aspect of communalism (Becker 1980, 8-10).

Hierarchies within West Java

The Sundanese people retain a strong sense of regional identity and take pride in their own discrete art forms, particularly those that raise awareness of the regional character. The general involvement in promoting specifically Sundanese characteristics within music, is prevalent in most Sundanese musical genres (Williams 1989-90, 106).

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[12] The Java War was fought in Java between 1825 and 1830. It started as a rebellion led by Prince Diponegoro, the eldest son of the Sultan of Yogyakarta in response to the Dutch decision to build on property that contained his parents tomb. He was met with support by the Yokyakarta aristocracy, who felt betrayed by the Dutch after they were no longer able to rent land at high prices, and the Javanese peasants at large. In 1827, when the Dutch army finally gained the upper hand, the *kraton* (courts) lost yet more power and territory.

Yet, there is still an assertion of independence by individual Sundanese social and artistic communities; each community is regulated by distinctive ideologies that influence the significance and scope of their genre, and the designation of individual roles in the relevant artistic process. For example, *tembang sunda* is designated a higher status level than other predominant Sundanese artistic genres due to its profound meanings, musical-technical challenges, and association with prestige; this hierarchization is enforced through the exclusivity of its most traditional events, defined learning processes, and characteristic performance structures. By extension, the undercurrent of segregation is reflected in the social structures that order and distinguish musical practices from one another, substantiating the grounds for demarcation within Sundanese society.

Tembang sunda began as a highly localized genre, in the small regency of Cianjur, during the latter part of the colonial era (around mid-19th century) but gradually evolved and expanded to include the entire region of West Java, reestablishing its center as metropolitan Bandung (Williams 2001, 4). The geographical relocation and transformation of *tembang sunda*'s identity from a communal to a regional genre delineate this process of musical urbanization. In response, textual themes in *tembang sunda* frequently describe and relate to its history in Pajajaran, functioning as commentary on the shift from past to present, and reminding the Sundanese of the glorious and prominent history attached to this genre. Another reaction to democratization is seen in musical terms through the lowering of pitch level; lower pitch is associated with increased importance and elevated status. This not only sets *tembang sunda* apart from the characteristic Javanese vocal styles, but also from other related

Sundanese genres such as *kacapian* and *gamelan* (Zanten 1986, 91).[13] Such inter-genre relationships are explored in further detail in Chapter 2.

The musical processes of *tembang sunda* are hierarchical in that they contain musical and social aspects that are associated with specific levels of importance. In terms of the musical elements, certain tunings, pitch levels, poetry categories and vocal styles are considered more important than others. Similarly, the role of practitioners—as vocalist, instrumentalist or composer—also falls into a hierarchy based on the perceived difficulty and dignity associated with occupational function.

The island of Java comprises markedly self-contained regions and a myriad of autonomous communities within each of these regions. The preservation of separate identities amongst and within regions represents the complex system of social stratification which parallels the musical changes that have occurred within Java. Reciprocally, the development of musical genres derived from Central Java and West Java correspond to the historical events that shaped the present social landscape, and regulated the identities and status levels that continue to be associated with different communities and art forms. In Neuman's study of the social organization of North Indian hereditary specialist musicians, he concludes:

> "A study of the social organization of musical specialists illuminates the social and cultural environments that affect this organization and the 'patterns of sound' which are part of the response musicians make. The shift in the hierarchical and ascriptive mode of recruitment, in the use of sociomusical identities, and in the

[13] *Kacapian* refers to a flashy style of playing a board zither or *kecapi siter* (different from the boat-shaped zithers that characterize *tembang sunda* accompaniment) and it is known as one of the sources of Sundanese popular music. It can be accompanied by a wide variety of instruments— *suling* (bamboo flute), *kendang* (drums), *goong* (gong), and occasionally *rebab* (two-stringed bowed lute)—and can be played instrumentally or as the accompaniment to either a male or female vocalist singing in *kawih* vocal style

> status and roles of performers adumbrates, at the least, the general directions of music changes. Thus, the possibility of explaining in social and cultural terms the dynamics of a music system becomes the more evident" (Neuman 1977, 243).

There are similarities in the concepts of social and musical organization between North Indian music and *tembang sunda*. In this chapter, I have addressed the instances that have resulted in the separation and individualization of social and musical behaviors in Java. My examination of the historical connotations underlying the varied artistic traditions provides a broader scope in viewing the function of music in affirming individual, social, and regional identities.

CHAPTER 2

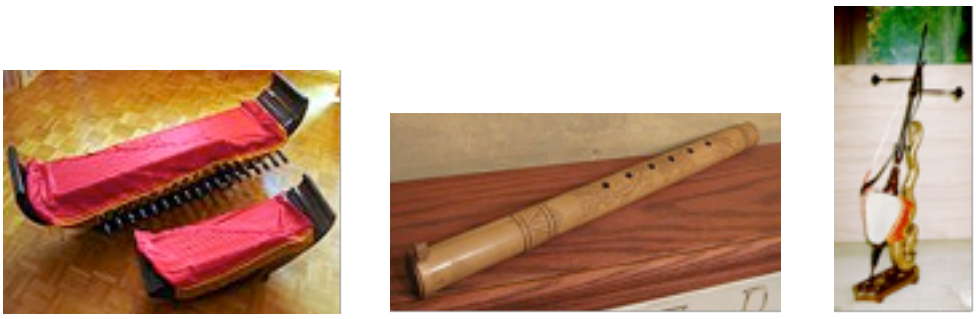
Tembang Sunda and Other Sundanese Musical Genres

This chapter highlights the distinguishing characteristics of *tembang sunda* and its significance to Sundanese culture. By considering relationships between predominant Sundanese art forms, I explore the impact of historical influences on modern practice within the Sundanese arts, and the process of differentiation that occurs between art forms. I specifically analyze *carita pantun, gamelan, kecapi-suling*, and *pop sunda*, illustrating their development and bases for instrumental and vocal genres. In this way, I show that *tembang sunda* is indeed related to other Sundanese art forms, but has simultaneously developed as a genre endowed with a rich history that substantiates its unique status.

Tembang Sunda and other Instrumental and Vocal Genres

Tembang sunda was developed in the courts of the Cianjur regency in the latter part of the 18th century, initially consisting only of *mamaos*, free-metered sung poetry performed by a male or female vocalist. This was accompanied by the *kecapi*, *suling*, and occasionally *rebab* (see Figure 5), and tuned to either *pélog degung, sorog* or *saléndro.*

Figure 5: Instruments (*left to right*): *Kecapi* (*Indung and Rincik*)*, Suling, Rebab*



The *panambih* fixed-metered portion of *tembang sunda* repertoire, literally "additional", was featured in addition to *mamaos* during the early part of the 20th century (Cook 2001, 68). These originally instrumental pieces borrowed from *gamelan degung* and *gamelan saléndro* repertoire were first added between songs to give the singers a break. Later in the 1930's, *panambih* was sung by the vocalists, confining the instrumental role to the opening, closing and intermediary material found in *bubuka* and *gelenyu*. These are indicated in Figure 6 below:

Figure 6: *Tembang Sunda* Song Set in *Pélog*

Bubuka Pélog

Mamaos

gelenyu
"*Papatet*"
gelenyu
"*Mupu Kembang*"
gelenyu

Panambih

gelenyu
"*Kupu Kupu*" Verse 1
gelenyu
"*Kupu Kupu*" Verse 2

Tembang sunda developed during the period between the late 18th and early 19th centuries when the Sundanese had finally gained an upper hand over the neighboring regions of Java, particularly the Central Javanese, who until then had controlled all parts of the island. This shift in power arose from their advantageous geographical positioning in terms of agricultural profitability for the Dutch occupants during the colonial era (Sutherland 1973, 125-127). This allowed the overseeing regents of Sundanese regencies to benefit financially as a result of which they could patronize and promote the

Sundanese performance arts as an assertion of this movement away from the inbred Javanese authority in their culture.

These distinctions from Javanese music persist and serve to place the music of *tembang sunda* in a hierarchy amongst other Sundanese genres themselves. This is based on the extent to which other Sundanese genres are "unique" to Sundanese culture. Hence, genres that exhibit characteristics that are reminiscent of Javanese culture or which are derived elsewhere—both nationally and internationally—are lowered in the hierarchy.

For instance, the most important tuning in *tembang sunda*, *pélog degung*, is unique to the Sundanese. Yet, with the exception of *gamelan degung*, other genres do not exclusively employ this tuning, and are more commonly based entirely on other tunings such as *saléndro*. Another aspect is the focus on the vocal part in *tembang sunda*, an attribute less common to other art forms which developed as more instrumentally focused genres to which the voice was gradually added. In this way, the uniquely Sundanese tuning, and innately vocal-oriented style, differentiate *tembang sunda* from related instrumental genres, while the elaborate ornamentations, high level of technical virtuosity, and wide improvisatory scope, set *tembang sunda* apart from related vocal genres.

Carita Pantun

Tembang sunda is said to have originated from the *carita pantun* tradition that integrates recitation of dialogues between characters, and songs, or *lagu*, sung by a male singer self-accompanied on *kecapi* or sometimes on *tarawangsa* (a type of two-stringed bowed lute). *Tembang sunda* retains many of the stories and song texts from the *pantun*

repertoire, and mimics the genre's musical and structural idiom (Zanten 1993, 152). In contrast to *tembang sunda*, however, *pantun* is not considered very prestigious or well-attuned to the urban settings commanded by modern Sundanese lifestyles.

Gamelan Music and Associated Genres

Gamelan degung was another such elite Sundanese genre, created to indicate this history of aristocracy for the future generations of Sundanese and Javanese people. *Gamelan degung* retains its aristocratic nature and thus, is deemed appropriate for relatively high-status social functions organized by prosperous members of the Sundanese society. This instrumental ensemble, not found outside Sunda, is tuned to the uniquely Sundanese five-note scale, *pélog degung*. During colonial times, it was played in regional courts and consisted of purely instrumental repertoire, which came to be known as *degung klasik*. After Indonesia's independence, solo melodies, or *kawih*, were introduced, giving rise to the more recent *degung kawih* genre and *kawih* vocal genre. *Degung kawih* juxtaposes light vocals onto the music, and employs usage of instrumentation, rhythms, and playing techniques of other affiliated Sundanese genres including *tembang sunda*, *jaipongan* and *dangdut*. The *kawih* singing style is considered much easier than that which is found in *mamaos* songs and may be used in the *panambih* section of *tembang sunda* (Williams 2001, 46).

Gamelan saléndro is comparable to Central Javanese *gamelan* tunings, and is primarily featured in *wayang golék, kliningan*, or *jaipongan*. In all of these genres, vocals were gradually introduced to the respective main focuses of the art. The associated female singer (*juru kawih* or *pasinden*), now plays an essential role in these genres, and is

often the primary focus of attention—an underlying cause for the ongoing tensions between performers. By means of these diverse art forms, *gamelan saléndro* has continuously provided entertainment for the Sundanese; yet, it is associated with a lower social status than that of *gamelan degung*, since is found amongst village art traditions which commonly feature loud-playing musical styles, and which objectify the female performer (Weintraub 2004, 54).

Many Sundanese musicians have maintained that *gamelan saléndro*, *gamelan degung*, and *panambih* songs, did not traditionally include a singer (Cook 2001, 86). This supports my hypothesis that *tembang sunda* was far more unique in its employment of the voice as its primary instrument.

Pop Sunda

Pioneering composers in the 1950's were willing to take `more risks in expanding the repertory derived from traditional formulas (Sutton 1987, 88). Sundanese popular music, or *pop sunda*, developed out of this context, initially juxtaposing a musical imitation of European and American popular music arranged in Sundanese language while using Western instruments (such as the keyboard and electric guitar), making language the only element indigenous to the art form. The vocal genre has seen recent transformation in the devices it employs—instrumental accompaniment, tuning, vocal and rhythmic elements; gradually, *pop sunda* has developed into a style that employs traditional Sundanese tuning systems, characteristic Sundanese vocal ornamentation borrowed from *tembang sunda*, lyrics that addressed the Sundanese in a more direct, pertinent manner (through the employment of themes that specifically relate to

Sundanese culture), and *gamelan degung* accompaniment (Williams 1989-1990, 108). Hence, *pop sunda* was born out of a literal fusion of Western pop music and traditional Sundanese music but has evolved into a genre that is identifiable as uniquely Sundanese. Through this timeline, it is possible to observe *pop sunda*'s development and conformity towards *tembang sunda*. As a result, a large number of *tembang sunda* practitioners are able to perform *pop sunda* by default, and treat it as a less regulated offspring genre that requires little or no formal training, and which employs less technical skill.

Kecapi-Suling

Kecapi-suling is a genre that is paradigmatic of the tensions and hierarchization underlying performers of *tembang sunda* itself. Ever since its earliest stages, vocalists and composers in *tembang sunda* were associated with a higher status than the instrumentalists, who were regarded as the subsidiary accompanists that were easily replaceable, and who practiced the art form as a means for financial support, rather than spiritual and musical engagement. Sean Williams provides a descriptive background of this genre, which developed during the 1960's and 1970's as a result of urbanization in West Java. It features specific *panambih* repertoire played only by the *kecapi* and *suling*. Williams provides three ways in which the role of instrumentalists in *tembang sunda* has evolved, following the genre's success in the cassette industry. Firstly, it brought about a reevaluation of their putative low status. Secondly, its widespread popularity began to recontextualize the music from its earlier associated status level. Thirdly, it initiated compositional creativity and strategic marketing amongst those musicians who had been previously deemed unsuitable for *tembang sunda* composition (Williams 2001, 160-162).

Although these norms are still prevalent in the arts community, the advent of *kecapi-suling* has initiated a reshaping of the mindset of musicians, leading to innovation in the performance contexts and compositional activity within *tembang sunda.*

This chapter provides an introduction to *tembang sunda*, and indicates the inter-genre relationship between the major Sundanese art forms, setting the background for the forthcoming chapters on pedagogy and performance of *tembang sunda*. The description of the different genres has an important subtext which uncovers the reasons for *tembang sunda*'s continuous association with a higher status level. This is attributable to *tembang sunda*'s aristocratic roots and its maintenance of tradition and history—both musically and socially, traits which may be observed in the genre's performance contexts and learning processes. However, these social divisions have resulted in a two-pronged effect, whereby expertise in the art form is possessed by a rare minority of the Sundanese population, and also, the appreciation for this expertise, is realized by only certain members of the music community, most of whom belong to the *tembang sunda* community itself. This has largely caused the genre to be contained in its self-sufficient niche amongst the other Sundanese art forms, and has led practitioners to further value the unique identity that *tembang sunda* ascribes them.

II

THE MUSICAL DEVELOPMENT OF *TEMBANG SUNDA*

CHAPTER 3

Music, Structure and Subject Matter of the *Tembang Sunda* Repertory

This chapter surveys the musical and structural elements that characterize the *tembang sunda* tradition, specifically examining the instrumentation, tuning systems, poetry categories, textual themes and Sundanese language employment. These features contribute to the creation of hierarchies both within the music and also in the modern-day composition processes of *tembang sunda*.

Musical Characteristics

Instrumentation

The primary accompaniment for *tembang sunda* vocals is provided by the *kecapi indung* (literally, "mother *kecapi*"). The *kecapi indung* is considered indispensable to the practice and performance of the music and is often the only accompaniment used during rehearsals. The *suling* is the second most important instrument in the *tembang sunda* ensemble. Although *suling* accompaniment is not essential during the learning stages, it is always exhibited as part of performances. The *rincik*, or *kecapi rincik* (smaller version of *kecapi indung*) is even less crucial in nature to *tembang sunda,* sometimes left out altogether in performances. Finally, even though it is not a characteristic component of a *tembang sunda* ensemble, the *rebab* is used to replace the *suling* during songs presented in the *saléndro* tuning.

The *kecapi* is a boat-shaped zither that comes in three forms—*kecapi indung*, *kecapi rincik*, and *kecapi siter*. The *kecapi indung*, also known as *kecapi parahu*

(literally, "boat *kecapi*"), has 18 brass strings wound around tuning pegs which protrude along the length of one side the *kecapi*. These strings rest on small pyramid-shaped bridges on the surface of the *kecapi*. Approximate pitch adjustments are made by rotating the pegs and fine-tuning is achieved by sliding the bridges. The *kecapi indung* has the most important function because it relays the overall tonal structure upon which the vocals and all other instruments are aligned. The *kecapi indung* accompaniment is also a reflection of the structures underlying *gamelan* music. *Gamelan* music features a juxtaposition of musical layers provided by different instruments, some of which contribute towards the melodic structure and others which embellish upon the basic structure.[14] In this regard, the notes played by the *kecapi indung* can be thought of as a reduction of the different structural instruments contributing towards a particular *gamelan* musical arrangement. The similarities in structure can be traced back to the short aristocratic period during which both *tembang sunda* and *gamelan degung* developed out of a need to assert Sundanese independence and individuality through the arts. Hence, these analogous musical traits can be extrapolated to understand the inter-genre relationships discussed in Chapter 2.

The *kecapi rincik* is the smaller, 15-stringed zither featured only during instrumental sections and the *panambih* where it elaborates the structural notes established by the *kecapi indung*. The *kecapi siter*, commonly found in experimental musical genres, is yet another type of zither but one that takes the shape of a flat board. It is not used during performances and important rehearsals but is more convenient and

[14] See Becker (1980, 105-107) and Sutton (1991, xix-xx) for specific information regarding Central Javanese *gamelan* musical structures which are comparable with those found in Sundanese *gamelan* traditions.

portable so it is occasionally used in place of the *kecapi indung* while practicing and learning.

The *suling* or bamboo flute is the second most important instrument in *tembang sunda.* It provides cues for the vocalist, mimics the vocal line and plays the melody during instrumental sections. The *suling* is also used as an accompaniment in *gamelan degung*. This *suling*, the *suling degung*, has four finger holes. However, the *suling tembang* played in *tembang sunda* is longer, ranging between sixty and sixty-two centimeters, and has six finger holes. Generally, the length of the *suling* is chosen to correspond with the pitch range of the vocalist and *kecapi*. Furthermore, pitches may be slightly altered or doubled in frequency by controlling the intensity of airflow and adjusting finger placement; this allows for changes in tuning and an expanded playing range. The *suling tembang* is generally only used to accompany songs in *pélog* and *sorog* tunings even though there exist certain types of *suling* which cater to *saléndro* and *mandalungan* tunings.

The *rebab* is a two-stringed bowed lute which is more frequently played in *gamelan saléndro* ensembles. On occasion, if *saléndro* songs are featured in a performance, they are accompanied by the *rebab* in place of the *suling*. Hence, it matches the *suling* closely in its functions of providing cues for the vocalist, imitating the vocal line and playing the melody during instrumental sections.

Tuning Systems

Tembang sunda mainly employs three tuning systems or *laras—pélog* (or *pélog degung*), *sorog*, and *saléndro*. These tunings fall within a categorized system that

hierarchizes the level of musical and social importance associated with each. This is a phenomenon better understood through the teaching and performance contexts of *tembang sunda*, in which the progression of tunings marks separate phases (Zanten 1986, 85). *Pélog* features the maximum number of songs within the *tembang sunda* repertoire, and is followed in descending prominence by *sorog*, and *saléndro*.

When learning *tembang sunda*, students are typically taught in a style that emulates this order, suggesting the significance associated with each. Similarly, in performance situations, the program is structured such that the repertoire is sequenced according to this hierarchy. Furthermore, in these performance contexts, the importance of each tuning is conveyed through distinctions between the different performers who perform the tunings; distinguishing factors are generally status, gender and age. These distinctions are most conspicuous in the prestigious *malam tembang sunda* performance context described by Sean Williams in her own research which was conducted in the 1990's (Williams 2001, 60-61).

In musical terms, *pélog* (synonymous with *pélog degung*) is a five-note scale that is unique to the Sundanese musical system; hence, it is generally not found outside the region. *Sorog* is a derivative of *pélog*, in which only the third pitch is slightly raised. *Saléndro* is derived from the Javanese *saléndro* tuning. Due to the historical Sundanese assertion of their independence from the Javanese, *saléndro* tends to be the least important to performance and learning processes of *tembang sunda*, and is often omitted altogether. Additionally, other less important tunings that are not unique to the Sundanese, such as *mandalungan* and *mataraman*, are performed from time to time in entire song sets, or during modulated sections of certain pieces. From my experiences in

Bandung, *mandalungan* also seemed to hold quite a significant place in *tembang* sunda. This might be because my teacher, Ibu Euis Komariah, was one of the pioneers of performing this tuning on cassette; in fact, she released a cassette in which all featured pieces were in *mandalungan*.

Pitch Level

Throughout its history, *tembang sunda* has associated its cultural status with low-pitched singing; this feature is considered to highlight its high status (Kusumadinata 1969, 18-19). Sean Williams has pointed out that many Sundanese aristocrats continued to hold the Central Javanese in high regard, and still emulated certain customs up until the early 20th century, when a more conscious shift away from the Javanese occurred in the singing style and performance aesthetics of *tembang sunda* (Williams 2001, 43). One of the ways in which this was implemented was through singing *tembang sunda* in a lower vocal range to contrast the high-pitched style that characterizes Javanese vocal styles.

Pitch has also been an integral part of expressing the importance of individual instruments within the *tembang sunda* ensemble itself, whereby the lower the pitch, the higher the importance of the instrument to the performance. Thereby, the increased significance of the *kecapi indung* over the other accompanying instruments is reiterated since it plays the lowest notes.

Finally, as mentioned in Chapter 2, *tembang sunda* saw a re-lowering of its pitch levels in reaction to an increasingly democratic Sundanese society whereby everybody was free to learn music that was traditionally restricted to the descendants of aristocracy.

Hence, singing *tembang sunda* at an even lower pitch was a means to separate the aristocratic music and community of *tembang sunda* from outsiders who attempted to learn *tembang sunda*, from *gamelan* music, which began to lose its aristocratic association, and *kacapian* popular music, which featured many elements that might have caused it to resemble *tembang sunda* (Zanten 1986, 91).

Compositional Style

Tembang sunda songs may be divided into categories that are each characterized by their musical and poetic features (Zanten 1984, 289-290): *papantunan*, *jejemplangan*, *dedegungan*, *rarancagan* and *panambih*. Furthermore, each compositional category is associated with a particular level of difficulty perceived by the performers. This is attributable to the complexities in vocal ornaments, style of accompaniment, and feelings invoked by the music (Williams 2001, 151).

Papantunan and *jejemplangan* are considered the earliest of the five song categories to have developed in *tembang sunda*, with the oldest songs of the *tembang sunda* repertory. Both feature prosaic text and are always sung in the *pélog* tuning. *Papantunan* models the *pantun* (epic narrative) tradition closely in style and content. *Jejemplangan* songs seem similar in style to those of *papantunan* but they have distinct vocal ornaments, *kecapi* accompaniment, *narangtang* (characteristic opening phrase) without interchangeable lyrics, and textual themes that are less historically focused than *papantunan* and might address topics such as love.

Rarancagan is considered to have open repertoire; *rarancagan* pieces are free-metered, text is based on *pupuh* (poetic meters) and featured in any of the tunings. Topics

addressed are much more diverse than in *papantunan* and *jejemplangan* e.g. nostalgia, romance, nature. Often, *dedegungan* is bracketed under *rarancagan* since both comprise free-metered pieces that use *pupuh* (poetic meters). However, *dedegungan* pieces are intended for performance alongside *gamelan degung* accompaniment with a more identifiable *gelenyu* section, and no room for modulations to other tunings (as is common practice in *rarancagan* pieces) since they are always performed in *pélog.* Furthermore, since they are sung in the *pélog degung* tuning, the overall pitch level is raised.

Finally, the *panambih*, as described in Chapter 2, is the fixed-metered portion of *tembang sunda* that was later on "added" to the *mamaos* section. The *panambih* is based on a gong cycle, and usually takes the form of a strophic piece whereby some parts may even be sung in a group. *Kecapi* and *suling* accompaniment is broadly provided according to the structural and metric organization of the *panambih*; *gelenyu* sections are present occasionally in certain *panambih.*

The *papantunan*, *jejemplangan* and *dedegungan* styles are considered to have a closed repertoire whereby no new songs can be added to the existing group of songs (Zanten 1987, 35). All of these categories are also exclusively sung in *pélog* tuning. However, the most recently developed *rarancagan* and *panambih* styles are still open for composition and may be sung in any of the tuning systems. Hence the latter two categories are most prolific as they include the bulk of modern compositions and are most commonly featured during performance. All the categories, except for *panambih*, consist of free-metered compositions. Of these, *rarancagan* and *dedegungan* pieces are usually based on the four main *pupuh* meters while *papantunan* and *jejemplangan* feature prosaic texts.

Textual Characteristics

Language

Bahasa Sunda, the official regional language of the Sundanese, is a derivative of the Sundanese movement away from Javanese culture following the 18th century. Several linguistic scholars have noticed that this language has scarcely been documented in literature in comparison to *Bahasa Jawa*, the Javanese regional language, from which a large portion of the Sundanese language is derived. Thereby, the Sundanese language is mostly transmitted orally and differing Sundanese language practices remain confined to individual districts and social classes.

Jonathan Rigg shows how at the microcosmic level, the use of language levels serves to distinguish the Sundanese themselves from one another, depending on the particular regional district under question—in Sunda, the regional dialects differ amongst the Banten, Bogor, Priangan and Cirebon districts. The Sundanese people do not understand the varying vocabulary used in different parts of the same region since each sub-community is largely self-sufficient in terms of their language development (Rigg 1862, xiii).

Additionally, speech levels serve as "a means by which notions of social distance...can be expressed in the language" (Wessing 1974, 6). In *Language Levels in Sundanese*, Wessing describes the four basic levels of this indigenous language of West Java. Sundanese dialects are graded by their degree of refinement and often differ due to the geographical location to which speakers are confined; the Priangan Sundanese dialect is considered more refined due to the previous Javanese influence in this area. Wessing also points out that the number of high level words notably diminishes in the more

remote parts of West Java. Hence, hierarchization exists even within language, suggesting the "asymmetrical relationships between subsets of a society" (Wessing 1974, 6), and providing additional reasons as to why a traditional art form such as *tembang sunda* might function as a medium to preserve the less documented features of Sundanese culture, such as high-level language.

Due to their history of colonization, first by the Javanese, then the Dutch, the Sundanese made a rather slow transition towards developing their own unique identity. In the mid-19th century, although *Bahasa Sunda* was the official Sundanese language, education systems still taught the Javanese language as the official written language (Holle 1870, 289). At the end of the 19th century, the Sundanese more frequently spoke Dutch, the language of their colonizers rather than their own regional language as they thought *Bahasa Sunda* hindered them from expressing their thoughts more clearly (Coolsma 1910, X-XI). Yet, *tembang sunda* songs are always sung only in the regional Sundanese language (Zanten 1984, 302). Hence, the affirmation of Sundanese independence and identity is relayed through the Sundanese language, which in turn explains the significance of the exclusive employment of the Sundanese language in *tembang sunda*.

Poetry Categories and Themes

A large number of songs have words written in one of the *pupuh* meters—*asmarandana*, *sinom*, *dangdanggula* and *kinanti*—derived from the Javanese *macapat* meters; these regulate the structure of the music and the poetic meter. The Javanese considered the *pupuh* meter of each verse to express a specific feeling (Zanten 1984,

294). Each meter is characterized by the number of lines in the poem and the ending syllables of each line as shown below in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Characteristics of *Pupuh* Meters

Pupuh	**Number of Lines**	**Syllabic Count**	**Ending Vowels**
Asmarandana	7	8, 8, 8, 8, 7, 8, 8	i, a, é/o, a, a, u, a
Dangdanggula	10	10, 10, 8, 7, 9, 7, 6, 8, 12, 7	i, a, é/o, u, i, a, u, a, i, a
Kinanti	6	8, 8, 8, 8, 8, 8	u, i, a, i, a, i
Sinom	9	8, 8, 8, 8, 7, 8, 7, 8	a, i, a, i, i, u, a, i, a

The music and poetry of *tembang sunda* are closely connected to the mountainous Parahyangan region which often is linked to the Pajajaran kingdom. This representation of history is a crucial component of *tembang sunda* as it highlights the genre's aristocratic roots and its maintenance of tradition and history. Moreover, this facet of the music plays an essential role in educating the Sundanese people about their history and culture. Most documentation of Sundanese history was via inscriptions and manuscripts. Production of such written materials is thought to have ceased by the end of the 20th century; this coupled with insufficient safekeeping measures has resulted in few surviving records of Sundanese literature (Ekadjati 2003, 128).

Between 1918 and 1926, attempts to repair this were further countered by the Dutch government's movements to promote colonialism and instill Western ideals (Fitzpatrick 2008, 270). Furthermore, after gaining independence and recognizing the importance of a national Indonesian identity in 1928 (Yampolsky 1995, 704), regional history was often omitted entirely from the education system, leaving the Sundanese with

many gaps in their understanding of historical instances that shaped their own regional culture. (Williams 2001, 22-23). Hence, composers in the regional art forms also serve the purpose of documenting history. In this way, *tembang sunda* functions as a means to educate younger generations while preserving historical knowledge surrounding the various periods of Sundanese history amongst the entire society. History is conveyed through various themes; some topics that are commonly explored in the poetry concern nostalgia (*waas*), mountains (*gunung*), the sea, love, melancholy and sociopolitical commentary (Zanten 1984, 298-301). These convey the emotional content of the music, and the feelings associated with Sundanese history.

Modern Composition

Most *tembang sunda* compositions nowadays fall into the *rarancagan* and *panambih* categories. New compositions typically feature the re-use of traditional material. This parallels the cyclicity of time and pitch that is prevalent in *gamelan* music which creates a "multi-dimensional matrix through which a piece and its performance are perceived to be meaningful and coherent" (Sutton 1987, 70). Lyricists often allude to more current circumstances and less restricted topics. Furthermore, the increased practice of *tembang sunda* amongst all Sundanese people regardless of their status and background, has caused the textual themes to diversify in content and in mass appeal (Zanten 1984, 304).

Tembang sunda has various distinguishing characteristics in terms of melodic and structural framework, defined through the tuning systems, performance styles and usage of language and poetry in the text. These features display the ways in which this musical

genre has set itself apart from other genres, even if certain components of the music have been derived from other genres.

III

CONTEMPORARY *TEMBANG SUNDA* PRACTICES

CHAPTER 4

Learning Processes in *Tembang Sunda*

Tembang sunda is associated with a certain set of social, cultural, and musical norms that are manifested in its detailed learning processes. The methods and means by which the music is taught, learned, rehearsed and performed, relay those facets of tradition that have been maintained, or conversely, modified. For instance, *tembang sunda* is primarily taught and learned through the oral-aural method. This mode of transmission has been maintained throughout its development despite the increasing popularity of transcription and audiovisual documentation in Indonesian music. Yet, the occasional use of notations and recording devices indicate a parallel sense of conformity towards broader trends present in Indonesian and foreign music. These patterns, amongst many others, reflect the notions of modern *tembang sunda* practitioners, and the social perceptions surrounding music studies in West Java. Hence, I study certain aspects of pedagogy in *tembang sunda* in order to understand the role of learning processes in the evolving context of the *tembang sunda* tradition.

Pedagogical Practice and Social Construction

Various ethnomusicological studies have been conducted on the learning processes of musical traditions.[15] One of the earliest ethnomusicologists to have recognized the importance of studying the learning behavior surrounding various musical traditions was Alan Merriam (Merriam 1964, 145). Merriam thought these learning

[15] For more information on previous studies on learning processes, see Chou (2002, 81-124), Kiyoko (1984, 97-108), Stock (2002, 1-42; 2003, 135-145).

processes to be key to understanding the way music is conceptualized, influencing its structure and presentation. In *tembang sunda*, social processes are mirrored in the learning style, structure and format.

Socialization

A typical feature of the *tembang sunda* learning process is the presence of observers and participants at lessons. Most of my lessons were held either outdoors or in communal spaces inside my teacher's house; they were attended by family members, musicians, and other visitors who engaged in the musical process (see Figure 8). Frequently, these participants sang along, played an accompanying instrument, socialized with one another, or just observed, sometimes offering encouragement and constructive criticism.

Figure 8: Pak Gugum Gumbira and Ibu Neneng Dinar present at my lesson. June 2, 2009

Occasionally, my teacher organized informal *latihan* (literally, "practice") sessions some of which were coordinated in anticipation of an upcoming performance while others were simply intended to enhance my learning experience. Broadly speaking, *latihan* gatherings provide a medium for ensembles of performing artists and community

members to convene and participate in the creative process (see Figure 9). This permits contributors to experience the art form in its entirety while assessing the group dynamic and defining their roles as part of a larger contextual framework. It was through *latihan* that I was able to discern the components of the entire *tembang sunda* ensemble, thereby contrasting but also complementing my knowledge from private lessons in which I was accustomed to a more individualistic mode of applying my musicianship.

Figure 9: *Gamelan Degung Latihan* conducted by Ibu Euis; May 27, 2009.

Hence, learning settings become a medium for interaction between a community of individuals with varied musical backgrounds, and an informal platform on which to "perform" for others. Furthermore, these aspects of practice sessions are a means by which students may gauge their level of progress and adapt their interpretation of music as a response to audience reception.

Lesson Structure

During my two months in Bandung, lessons were fairly regular though seemingly "unstructured" in terms of material covered and duration. We met daily during the week,

which allowed me to make plans for travel or to accompany my teacher to social functions during the weekend. Even though our rehearsal timings were mutually agreed upon in advance, this was mostly subject to change depending on manifold factors which affected my teacher's schedule including visitors, meal times and errands.

During each lesson, my teacher and I began by revising the music I had most recently studied after which we would proceed to new material. When I learned a new piece, she first dictated the text for me to write down. Next, I would read the text aloud for my teacher to perfect my diction; in conjunction, she provided me with explanations of the underlying meaning of the song. Finally, I learned the melodic and rhythmic aspects of each phrase by rote while Ibu Euis provided the basic accompaniment on the *kecapi siter* (flat board *kecapi* often used during rehearsals for convenience and its mobility). Throughout the process, my teacher highlighted and defined certain vocal usages, departures in tuning, melodic ideas and rhythmic features that function as building blocks for other pieces in the *tembang sunda* repertoire.

Typically, lessons were long (sometimes lasting up to eight hours), and were punctuated by breaks for meals and to engage in discussion. Whenever we stopped singing, the intermittent activities that occurred were as important as the formal lessons themselves. For example, while we ate, Ibu Euis sometimes played her old recordings to demonstrate specific techniques, tunings, or repertoire—applications supplementing a previous discourse. Casual conversations were also relevant; these were intellectually focused, and prompted reflection on textual theme, etymology, technique, and associated cultural and religious beliefs. Thereby, rather than relying on strictly theoretical teaching methods or following a well-defined curriculum, a more constructivist pedagogical

approach was adopted whereby I was able to draw my own conclusions from my various exposures to the music of *tembang sunda* and its context. Figure 10 below features scenes from a single lesson during my trip, representing the steps of writing down the text; learning the diction, melody and phrasing by rote; and the role of intermediate breaks for meals and conversation.

Figure 10: A Typical Lesson; June 1, 2009

Significance of the Oral Approach

Transcription

In the initial stages of learning *tembang sunda*, I quickly realized that I was better able to quickly grasp concepts and recapitulate what I was taught by using self-devised notations which employed a combination of solfège syllables, arrows indicating the melodic direction, and symbols for rests, particular ornamentations and vocal techniques. Although my teacher did not emphasize aspects of theory and did not use any form of notation, she was not opposed to my usage of any devices which aided my ability to learn. However, as time passed, I relied increasingly on my ear and less on my notation as I was able to detect the similarities between the new song and previous songs that I

had learned. Moreover, I was able to pay attention to the more minute details which I had previously been unable to "hear" or perceive as important.[16]

During the occasions in which I observed a few of my teacher's advanced students learning *tembang sunda*, I noticed that they relied primarily on their aural skills to learn while referring to lyrics while occasionally using the Sundanese solfège system and simple pictorial representations on their sheet of lyrics as a memory aid to distinguish certain unusual musical details. Hence, the process of learning *tembang sunda* allows students to manipulate their previous knowledge into their understanding of new material, making the oral-aural learning process increasingly easier and more efficient with regard to understanding and recalling new music which is taught.

The Role of Rote in Learning

The rote system is also effective when learning about improvisatory aspects of *tembang sunda*. While certain rhythmic and melodic aspects determine the structure of a piece, contributing towards distinct focal points in the music which must remain unaltered, there is often a variety of ways to sing any given phrase of a song through the manipulation of different vocal techniques and ornamentations. Often, when teaching a new song, teachers first relay its basic framework to the student. Once the student is confidently able to reproduce the same, they are taught different (and often more challenging) ways in which certain parts of the piece may be sung, especially if the piece is a strophic *panambih* or for different verses of the same *tembang*.

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[16] Nazir Jairazbhoy provides a detailed explanation of hearing as a combination of mental, physiological, and behavioral processes; he attributes some discrepancies in perceptions of music to the individuals' selective listening capacity whereby certain aspects are distorted or omitted altogether (Jairazbhoy 1977, 266-67).

These changes can also be adapted to suit the setting in which the piece is performed. For instance, at a more formal *tembang sunda* event, the most complex ornamentations can be featured. Conversely, if the song is being performed during a general social event, the singer might choose to perform only one verse of the song, which potentially avoids the task of modifying and embellishing repeated phrases. Thereby, over the course of their study, students are able to learn multiple ways to sing the same song and can apply these methods to other songs as well, expanding their overall creative abilities and influencing their decisions regarding song choice as appropriate to a particular performance context.

This is reflected in my own performing experiences in Bandung. For my first performance which was featured on local Bandung TV, I sang only a single verse of each *panambih* and *tembang* within each set of songs in order to show the diversity in tunings and repertoire that I had learned thus far while also being mindful of the time constraint––the duration of the television show. However, in preparation for my final performance, a formal *tembang sunda* recital hosted by *Universitas Padjadjaran*, my teacher gradually introduced to me the creative possibilities within the different verses. Hence, via rote, my skills had diversified to include new variations and more refined vocal techniques.

Vocal Attributes of *Tembang Sunda*

Voice and Instrument

The technical aspects of singing *tembang sunda* reiterate the crucial nature of the vocalist is to *tembang sunda* and offer an explanation for the perceptions associated with the various musicians' roles. While *suling* and *kecapi* players must also exhibit a level of

mastery when accompanying the vocalist, the extent to which they are able to display their skills in terms of improvisation and ornamentation are, to a certain degree, innately unmatched by the scope of a vocalist's capabilities. One example of this is seen in modulatory passages whereby instrumentalists usually cannot precisely follow the vocal part due to the limitations of the instrument itself. Furthermore, social norms from the past continue to apply in present times whereby vocalists are considered to be members of the upper class while instrumentalists are generally middle class, and look at music as a profession rather than an art form (Tran 1982, 712). Due to these social constraints which define musicians' roles from one generation to the next, the methods and aesthetics surrounding training processes for each type of musician vary, placing them in a hierarchy that orders their perceived level of musicianship.

Learning Phases

Sean Williams describes the study of *tembang sunda* as including three "plateaus of learning": The first includes short songs with a few simple ornaments, the second includes *papantunan* and *jejemplangan* songs, and the third includes songs that are considered most difficult due to their length, inclusion of borrowed pitches, extensive pitch range, challenging ornamentations and requirement for immense vocal stamina (Williams 2001, 122).

In my own experience, the first piece I was taught was not a *tembang* but rather a strophic, fixed-metered *panambih* (which would later succeed a set of *tembang* songs) in the *pélog* tuning, "*Soropongan*". Although I was still becoming accustomed to the new style of music and learning, I considered the song relatively straightforward and regular

in terms of its musical components. In the same lesson, I also learned a *tembang*, "*Wani Wani*" in the *pélog* tuning. This took me longer to understand and required many more repetitions for me to accurately emulate my teacher as the song was less predictable in terms of its phrasing and it featured complex ornaments. Hence, as a student in the first lesson itself, I was directly able to distinguish the level of difficulty when singing pieces which comprised the *mamaos* over that of the *panambih*.

Over the course of my following lessons, I learned two sets of songs in *pélog* and *sorog*, followed by a single set each in *saléndro* and *mandalungan*. I was already encouraged by my teacher to perform on stage while learning *saléndro*, reflecting and reemphasizing the relative superiority of *pélog* and *sorog* tunings to the performance of *tembang sunda* music.

Ornamentation and Improvisation

My knowledge was gradually expanded to include a range of vocal ornaments (see Figure 11) which were incorporated into the songs I had learned and heard. This made it easier for me to aurally divide complex passages and allowed me to learn at a faster rate. When teaching me about vocal skills that must accompany the production of an ornamentation, Ibu Euis scarcely delved into the technicalities of the voice but rather, she employed gestures and terminology associated with imagery that best illustrated the concept. For example, when a passage required the *reureueus* ornamentation, a lighter variety of vibrato, she described it as *ngalir*, "to flow like water" and *tanpa beban*,

"without burden".[17] Similarly, when teaching me the *cacagan* ornamentation, which uses a more powerful but choppy vibrato, she made a vigorous chopping motion with her hands while simultaneously singing the ornamentation. As a result of these oral-aural teaching methods, I was able to extend my perceptual dimensions to include a visual component, especially when understanding ornamentations.

It is widely held that the intricate ornamentations are a primary reason for the complex and challenging nature of *tembang sunda*. According to my teacher, many new students are rarely competent in correctly rendering the ornamentations. In fact, even experienced students are found to be lacking in their precision. On one occasion, Ibu Euis commented on the *tembang sunda* vocalist at a wedding we attended, describing her as an average singer because of the lack of complexity in her ornamentations (Euis Komariah, personal communication, May 30, 2009).

[17] It is interesting to note that in Steven Feld's study of song and sentiments of Kaluli people from Papua New Guinea, water is used as a metaphor for ways of expressing the theoretical understanding and performance of their vocal music. (Feld 1981, 22-47).

Figure 11: Frequently employed vocal ornaments in *tembang sunda*.

	Vocal Ornament	**Description**
1.	*Belokan*	Literally, "circle"; a group of four or five neighbor tones sung in succession resembling a circle.
2.	*Buntut*	Literally, "tail"; a single note is sustained and then followed by a short upward departure.
3.	*Cacagan*	Term derived from verb *cacag*, "to cut into pieces". A vocal ornamentation involving heavy vibrato punctuated by "chops" that are created by quick repeated accents on a single note; this results in short, powerful bursts of sound.
4.	*Gedag*	*Vibra* (tremolo) followed by a brief descent to an indistinct pitch which returns to the *vibra* on the original note.
5.	*Jekluk*	Group of usually 3 notes of the ascending scale sung very fast at the end of a phrase.
6.	*Jenghak*	Upward vocal break manipulating both chest and head voice.
7.	*Lapis*	Same as *gedag*.
8.	*Leotan*	Vocal slide that usually descends from a higher to a lower pitch.
9.	*Reureueus*	In the spectrum of vibrato types, the *cacagan* and *vibra* may be considered as the extremes, and *reureueus* falls in between the two. It is lighter and smoother than *cacagan* but more pronounced than the *vibra*.
10.	*Vibra*	A tremolo or very small vibrato

Upon realizing the importance of ornamentations to *tembang sunda*, I developed a deep interest in continually building my musical vocabulary of ornamentations and vocal techniques, and requested her to teach me new and more difficult ways of singing particular phrases. She was very impressed by my learning ability despite not being from a Sundanese background. Following my *tembang sunda* performance at the local

university, *Universitas Padjadjaran* (*UNPAD*), in an interview about her teaching experiences with me, Ibu Euis made a reference to these aspects of my learning ability:

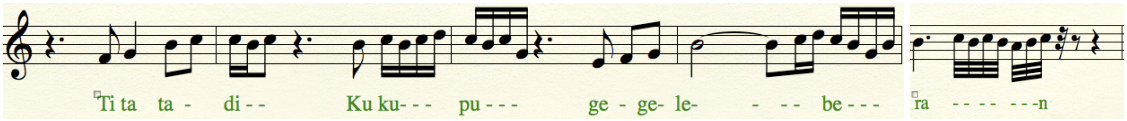
> "In *tembang sunda* there are terms [for vocal ornaments] such as *jenghak*, *cacagan*, *leotan* and *buntut*. Learning these is not easy. But oddly, she [Anita] just says, 'Ibu, which one is even more difficult?' so that she could devour them until she had learned all of them."
>
> (Translation of interview excerpt from article, *tribunjabar*, July 22, 2009).

Throughout my course of study, I received similar comments on my attitude and aptitude in learning *tembang sunda* suggesting the difficulty associated with learning and the overall scarcity of interest in learning *tembang sunda*, even amongst Sundanese people.

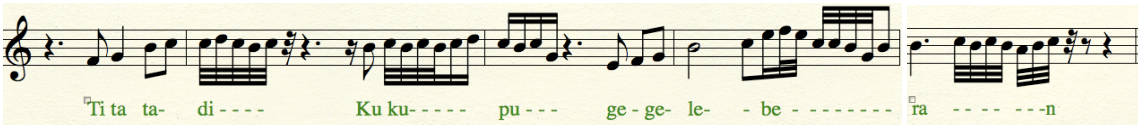
For example, in one strophic, fixed-metered *pélog panambih*, "*Kupu Kupu*", I learned different ways of singing the same melody in the same verse as well as in other verses. Generally, the first verse featured the most basic ornaments and melody lines while the second and third gradually introduce more complex ornamentations and vocal techniques. Besides lending variety, these additions or modifications indicate the vocalist's range of knowledge and versatility in performing *tembang sunda*. To begin with, I learned all the verses in their generic, basic form. Afterwards, I learned ornamented forms to diversify the second and third verses. These differences are transcribed in Figure 12 (based on the first line of the 3rd verse of "*Kupu Kupu*").

Figure 12: Transcription of melody in basic and ornamented form.

Basic Form



Ornamented Form



Hence, students are able to identify the "skeleton" tune of each song as well as the parts of the song which allow for melodic embellishment and rhythmic displacement. Through learning other pieces in a similar way, they broaden their cognition of ornamentations, equipping them with skills to recognize the improvisational phrases from those that are characteristic of the piece itself. Therefore, this teaching method allows students to make decisions regarding whether or not to use ornamentation, and if so, to choose the ones most appropriate to the song, tuning, and performance context.

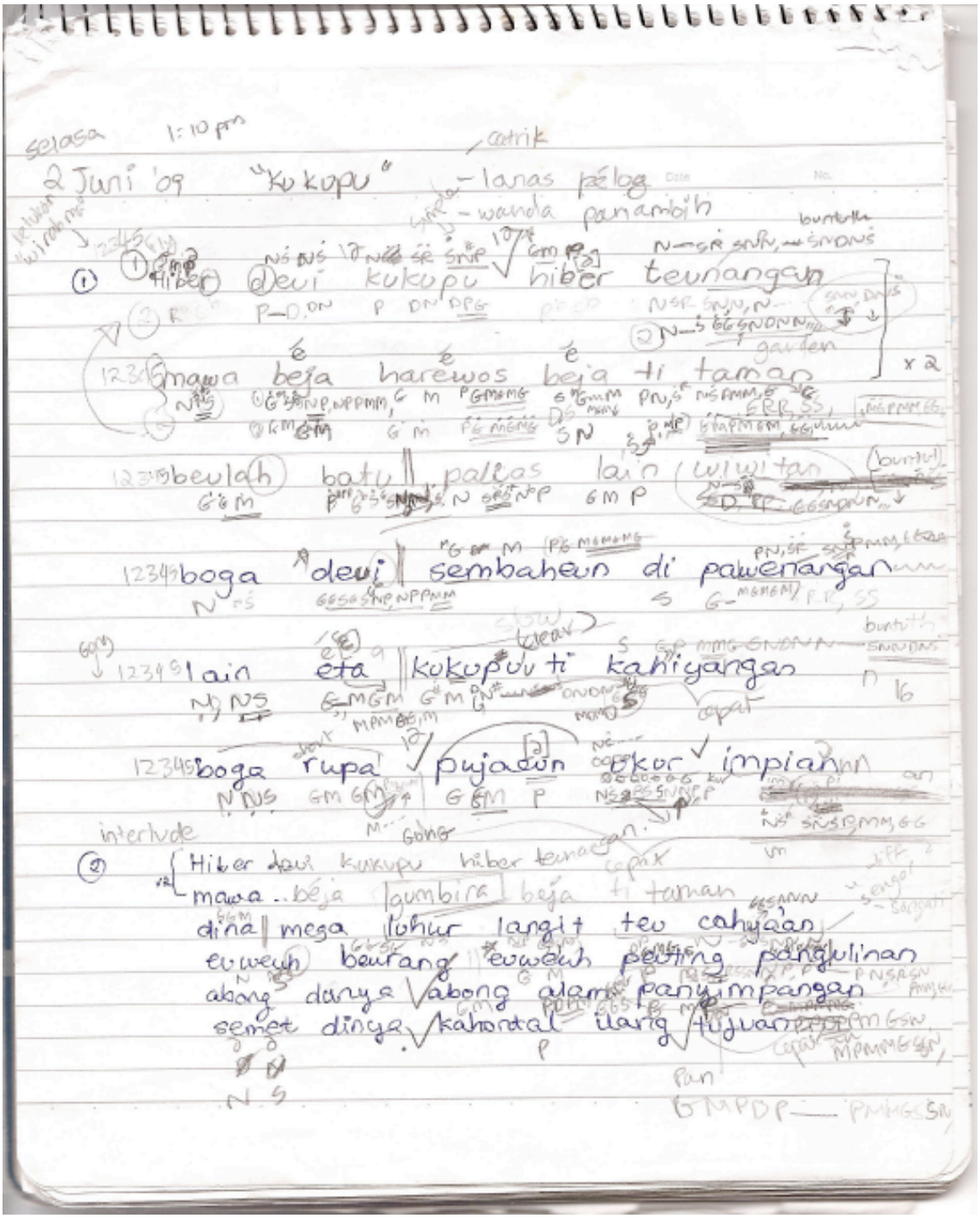
Kupu Kupu (*Butterfly*)

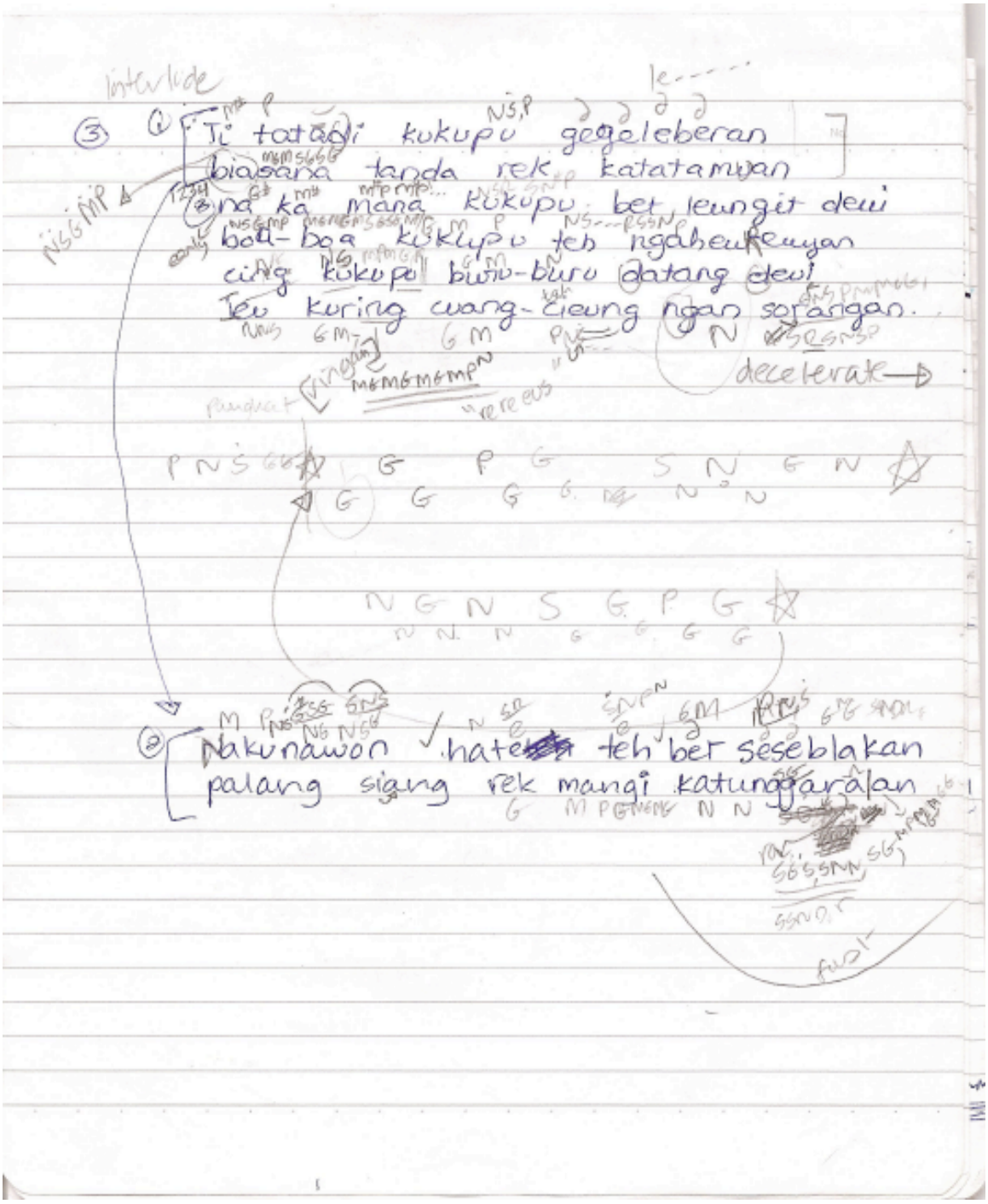
As an example of the preceding discussions in this chapter, I will use the *panambih*, "*Kupu Kupu*", to demonstrate a combination of the various processes involved in learning *tembang sunda*. Prior to learning this piece, I had already picked up five *tembang* songs and three *panambih* songs. However, this was the first *panambih* I learned in the sixteen-beat cycle (*dua wilet*) which I found to be challenging since I had previously only learned fixed-metered pieces in the simpler eight-beat cycle (*sawilet*).

The nature of this piece itself was more challenging in terms of its ornamentations and variations between verses. As a result, I learned the piece in stages such that my teacher could add different layers to my understanding of the piece. Over the lessons, she discussed the text, introduced substitutes for certain ornamentations, and called my attention to more specific musical details.

At the first lesson, my teacher handed me her songbook for me to copy the lyrics. When I had finished, she read aloud each sentence for me to repeat after. In this way, she corrected my pronunciation errors and confirmed that I had copied the lyrics accurately. Next, she sang short phrases, pausing for me to repeat and to make quick notations on my music. Since my primary musical background is in classical South Indian (Carnatic) music, I employed most of my notations from this tradition. Occasionally, I used Western markings such as IPA (International Phonetic of Alphabet) and breath/phrase marks. I also used Sundanese or Indonesian terms when naming or describing a specific ornamentation. I used this combination of methods to draw from my own musical experience to achieve the closest notational equivalent of my aural interpretation of *tembang sunda* (see Figure 13). After learning a few phrases by rote, we would periodically start back at the beginning to recapitulate all the material. In this way, I gradually learned the entire melodic content of *Kupu Kupu*.

Figure 13: My notation of *Kupu Kupu*




interlude
③
Ti tatadi kukupu gegeleberan
biasana tanda rek katatamuan
ina ka mana kukupu bet leungit deui
bodo-boa kuklupu teh ngabeukeunyan
cing kukupu biru-biru datang deui
Teu kuring cuang-cieung ngan sorangan.
deceleratē
②
Nakunawon hate teh bet seseblakan
palang siang rek mangi katunggaralan

The next step was to be able to sing the piece such that the phraseology coincided with the sixteen-beat cycle, the structure of which was provided by the *kecapi*. In my private lessons, we only used the *kecapi siter* and my teacher usually accompanied me. To indicate the structure, Ibu Euis sang through the song in order for me to understand how the phrasing and inner rhythms were aligned with the larger cycle. Following this demonstration, she requested that I sing along with her throughout the piece, paying attention to the *kecapi* accompaniment. After a few repetitions, she asked me to sing by myself while she only played the *kecapi*. At this point, she corrected my mistakes and indicated how to alter my phrases.

The next day, while we rehearsed the piece again, Ibu Euis explained the emotions and messages conveyed in the text (see Figure 14).

Figure 14: Text and Translation of *Kupu Kupu*

Hiber deui kukupu hiber teunangan	The butterfly flies beautifully
mawa beja harewos beja ti taman	Bringing some news, whispers from the garden
Beulah batu palias lain wiwitan	The stone is broken, like a bad instinct
boga deui sembaheun di pawenangan	I have other things to do in this world
lain eta kukupu ti kahiyangan	But the butterfly is not from the heavens
boga rupa pujaeun ukur impian	The beautiful face is only in the dreams
Hiber deui kukupu hiber teunangan	The butterfly flies again
mawa beja gumbira beja ti taman	Bringing good news from the heavens
dina mega luhur langit teu cahyaan	The sky is not bright and shiny
euweuh beurang euweuh peuting pangulinan	Not in the day, not at night, no place to play
abong dunya abong alam panyimpangan	The world is only temporary
semet dinya kahontal ilang tujuan	We fulfill our wishes afterwards

Ti tatadi kukupu gegeleberan	The butterfly has been flying for a long time
biasana tanda rek katatamuan	It's a sign of what may come
nakunawon hate teh bet seseblakan?	But why does my heart beat?
palang siang rek mangi katunggaraan	It's as if there will be sad moments
na ka mana kukupu bet leungit deui?	Where has the butterfly gone?
boa-boa kukupu teh bgaheureuyan?	Is the butterfly making fun of me?
cing kukupu buru-buru dating deui	Please butterfly, come back again
ieu kuring cuang-cieung ngan sorangan	I'm all alone, feeling lonely

This text suggests romantic longing through various elements—the imagination of a beautiful face in the poet's dreams (rather than in reality), the racing heartbeat provoked by the butterfly and the allusions to loneliness. At the same time, the usage of imagery such as the butterfly, the garden and the sky invokes nature. Furthermore, there is a spiritual connotation implied by the emergence of the butterfly from the heavens and the ephemeral nature of the world. These themes are typical of many songs in the *panambih* genre, where the boundaries between secular and sacred concepts are blurred. This interpretation may also be used to understand the frequent invocation of *Pajajaran* in *tembang sunda* texts—*Pajajaran* was a Hindu kingdom but it continues to play a large role in the Sundanese people's affirmation of their identities despite the fact that West Java is predominantly Muslim. Here, it is possible to understand how the ambiguity between sacred and secular beliefs allows the Sundanese people to create their own syncretic culture, and to reinforce their sense of identity.

In broad terms, pedagogical methods in *tembang sunda* relay the importance of the basic melodies that underlie different songs as they provide the fundamental identity of each piece and set of pieces. Ornamentations and other melodic or rhythmic devices are used to identify and distinguish singing styles. Furthermore, the implementation of

these musical tools to embellish *tembang sunda* music is a means to evaluate the musician's quality of knowledge and therefore, his/her capability to perform in different contexts.

There are many purported precursors for mastering *tembang sunda*, including cultural and social background, academic lineage, and talent. While many consider that being Sundanese is an integral part of understanding the importance of *tembang sunda* music to the maintenance of Sundanese heritage and culture, this background can only inspire interest in an art form that preserves their sociocultural roots. It is an undeniable fact that this interest must be accompanied by a certain level of technical proficiency and aural awareness. These aspects of musicianship might be attributed towards individuals' learning aptitudes, their listening and performance exposure to *tembang sunda* as well as the status and proficiency of their teachers. However, as Pak Gugum pointed out to me on various occasions during my studies, *tembang sunda* is only sung well when both the music and the context and purpose of the music is fully understood by the singer. Hence, learning processes are reflective of these components of *tembang sunda* due to their emphasis on both the technical and sociocultural aspects of the music, thereby portraying the uniqueness linked to the Sundanese identity.

CHAPTER 5

Performance Parameters in *Tembang Sunda*

Most established musicians that practice and perform *tembang sunda* currently reside in Bandung. As a result, this urban city environment actively promotes *tembang sunda* through cultural performances, competitions, educational institutions, and media. These different contexts together represent the social organization of *tembang sunda* practitioners and audiences.

Presently, there are no explicit typecasts or status indicators that distinguish Sundanese community members from one another; yet, the historical notions of aristocracy continue to remain deeply rooted and implicit in the construction of social structures in Bandung. Societal systems are pervaded by the concepts and structures of sociomusical organization in the context from which they develop (Becker 1979, 97). Hence, music is one vehicle through which this subtext of aristocratic descent and status levels is spread. This propels disparities between the various performance contexts in terms of the associated attendees, patrons and musicians. The social organization of each performance context, thereby, makes Sundanese communities themselves hierarchical; along with different performance contexts are different categories. These categories are dictated by the aesthetics, knowledge, expectations, and behavior associated with each performance situation. This becomes evident in contexts as varied as *malam tembang sunda*,[18] formal recitals, music contests (*pasanggiri*), media broadcasts (*siaran*), social

[18] *Malam tembang sunda* is literally, a "*tembang sunda* evening", and is considered the quintessential context for performing the music of *tembang sunda.* See Williams (2001, 60-61) for a more comprehensive description.

functions involving celebrations of life-cycle events, weddings, circumcisions; and organized rehearsal sessions (*latihan*).

Outward Presentation and Inward Disposition: Performers on Stage

In understanding the aesthetics of performance contexts in *tembang sunda*, it is important to recognize the norms regarding practice and performance and the distinctions between the two. The primary differences between rehearsal and performance may be seen in the way that musicians present themselves to audience members in terms of attire, seating arrangement and overall attitude (see Figure 15).

Figure 15: Stage Presentation- My Recital at *Universitas Padjadjaran*. July 16, 2009

In terms of attire, male and female performers wear traditional Sundanese clothing as a symbol of Sundanese aristocracy. Generally, the vocalist occupies the centre of the stage (either in front of the instrumentalists or on an elevated platform), seated in a kneeling position while the instrumentalists take their places on either side of the vocalist. Since *tembang sunda* is a vocal genre, the vocalist naturally becomes the center of attention. As a result, vocalists take special attention to what they wear. Occasionally, the *rebab* player might only assume position on stage to accompany the particular song set(s)

featured in *saléndro* tuning, and will participate in the audience for the remainder of the performance. Nowadays, vocalists often bring their song lyrics on stage for reference and in case of unexpected changes in the program. Communication on stage between performers is appropriate between song sets.

From my observations of other performers and from the preparation and execution of my own performances, I have noticed how musicians generally maintain a calm and composed temperament, overall treating performance as a means to provide relaxed entertainment and experience musical enjoyment. Regardless of the formality and prestige associated with the setting, apart from scheduling a *latihan* session prior to the performance and if necessary, making arrangements for transportation and meals, there are few changes or interruptions in the daily lives of *tembang sunda* musicians and students. Despite the seeming rigidity of performance ensuing from the stipulations for external presentation and other formalities as appropriate to the particular performance context, this unperturbed and agreeable attitude of performers reflects the nature and role of performances as an extension of rehearsals.

Structure and Organization of a *Tembang Sunda* Performance

Performer-Audience Interactivity

Formal greetings, intermediate commentary and concluding speeches are a common feature in Sundanese society and hence, many performance contexts of *tembang sunda*. In media-sponsored events, these communications are provided by the television or radio show host who routinely entertains the audience. When *tembang sunda* is presented during social functions such as weddings, if the performing ensemble is hired,

there is usually no official introduction as the music generally serves as background music and is used to temporarily entertain guests during pauses between wedding rituals. However, if talented and knowledgeable guests are present, they may be invited to perform on stage, in which case a member of the party coordinating the event will make the appropriate acknowledgements.

Formal speech is not characteristic of the most traditional performance context considered best suited for *tembang sunda*—the *malam tembang sunda*. These performances are not officially sponsored or hosted by anyone in particular, and the divides between "performer" and "audience member" are absent since the participants' roles are continuously rotated amongst the attendees who take turns to contribute towards the creative experience (Williams 2001, 60). Notwithstanding the multifarious factors (described later in the chapter) that distinguish and hierarchize the participating musicians, this larger structure of the *malam tembang sunda* serves to highlight the communality and uniformity that is reinforced through the collaborative efforts taken by the *tembang sunda* community.

In the traditional setting of a recital, which is solely aimed at showcasing the main artist while propagating the music of *tembang sunda*, a pre-appointed master of ceremonies properly welcomes the audience members, introduces the performing artists, and announces each subsequent set of songs that is about to be performed. This person may be the event organizer, sponsor, or a person known to the performing ensemble. Speeches might be made by certain chief guests and accomplished musicians, in praise of the central performer. Although these might be perceived as social formalities, dialogues

in these contexts are often insightful and educational to all present. This facet of performance is highlighted in my own recital experiences in Bandung.

Ibu Euis was the host for my formal concert in her home. After the concert, verbal exchange between the audience and myself was structured to include a question-answer session with a guest followed by his/her comments. Other guests approached me after the performance to personally convey their well wishes, ask questions and provide feedback.

At another performance in the auditorium of *UNPAD*, Dian Hendrayana—editor for Bandung TV and alumnus of *UNPAD*—was the presenter for the evening. This event was coordinated and attended by the arts community from two local universities, *UNPAD* and *Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia* (*STSI*) *Bandung*. Before the last quarter of the performance, Pak Iyus (H.M. Yusuf Wiradiredja), an established *tembang sunda* performer and Chairman of the *Karawitan* (traditional music) Department at *STSI Bandung*, made a congratulatory speech. Since Pak Iyus had also previously attended a few of my rehearsal sessions, he described these encounters and relayed his perceptions of my musical development to the audience. After the next song set, my teacher formally addressed the audience and conducted a short demonstration on the nature of our teaching-learning process to substantiate Pak Iyus's earlier comments. When the performance ended, two guests engaged in a more light-hearted discourse regarding both my aptitude in learning as well as Ibu Euis's aptitude in teaching. Finally, I myself was called upon stage to say a few words regarding my experiences of learning and performing *tembang sunda* after which I was presented with a certificate on behalf of both universities for my achievement.

Apart from offering encouragement and praise to the vocalist based on their achievements, dialogues in the recital context constitute social commentary that illuminates audience members with information regarding current trends and the less known attributes and obscurities of *tembang sunda*. Essentially, a performer's success is a result of a student's rapid learning curve; this, in turn, emphasizes the musician's interest and dedication towards *tembang sunda*, and reflexively reinforces Sundanese spirit and cultural identity as brought out by the music of *tembang sunda*.

Programmatic Elements

Tembang sunda performances traditionally follow a particular format based on the various features of the repertoire. Each set of songs usually comprises two or more free-metered *tembang* pieces (or two verses of a single *tembang*) followed by a fixed-metered *panambih*. If more than one vocalist participates in the performance, each may sing a verse of the *tembang* and/or *panambih* (which are often strophic), or they may alternate between different songs within the set, or entire sets.

With respect to the progression of tunings, songs always begin in the *pélog* tuning, followed by *sorog*, occasionally *saléndro,* and even less often, rarer tunings such as *mandalungan* and *mataraman*. Some songs may feature modulatory passages to other tunings but this is most commonly a trait of *saléndro* song sets. Before a song set in a different tuning, the instrumentalists take a few moments to retune the *kecapi*, replace the *suling*, or for the *rebab* player to take position on stage depending on the repertoire. Once settled, they play an instrumental introduction, or *bubuka*, to establish the next tuning in the program. The *bubuka* is also played at the beginning of the performance before the

first set in *pélog*. Alternately, vocalists may themselves sing certain songs such as "*Sekar Manis*" (in *sorog* tuning) in order to transition into the next tuning.

Most compositions performed nowadays fall into the *rarancagan* and *panambih* categories as they are continually evolving and growing since they are considered to have an open repertoire. Furthermore, song in these categories are deemed appropriate in a larger number of performance contexts as the lyrics do not involve historical references to Sundanese aristocracy and other such subject matters which serve to segregate rather than unite Sundanese people with one another. However, in traditional contexts such as *malam tembang sunda* and recitals, performances always start with *papantunan* pieces followed by *jejemplangan*, *dedegungan* and *rarancagan*. Often, the first *tembang* sung in these contexts is an invocational piece such as "*Papatet*" which is in the *papantunan* style. Figure 16 details the ordering of my program and the various features of the repertoire that I performed during my recital at *UNPAD*.

Figure 16: Repertoire from my *tembang sunda* recital at *UNPAD*.

	Song	**Tuning**	**Genre**	**Song Category**	**Composer**
1	*Papatet*	*pélog*	*cianjuran*	*papantunan*	-
2	*Mupu Kembang*	*pélog*	*cianjuran*	*papantunan*	-
3	*Kupu Kupu*	*pélog*	*cianjuran, kawih,*	*panambih*	RTA Sunarya
4	*Wani Wani*	*pélog*	*cianjuran*	*rarancagan*	-
5	*Ligar*	*pélog*	*cianjuran*	*rarancagan*	-
6	*Kembang Bungur*	*pélog*	*cianjuran, kawih,*	*panambih*	Karya Mang Engkos
7	*Sekar Manis*	*sorog*	*cianjuran*	*panambih*	Ibu Saodah Harnadi N.
8	*Kakawen Putri*	*sorog*	*cianjuran*	*rarancagan*	Euis Komariah, Etti R.S.
9	*Mayang Sunda*	*sorog*	*cianjuran*	*panambih*	Euis Komariah, Etti R.S.
10	*Sungkawa*	*sorog*	*cianjuran*	*rarancagan*	Ibu Saodah Harnadi N.
11	*Kagagas*	*sorog*	*cianjuran*	*rarancagan*	Ibu Saodah Harnadi N.
12	*Jangji Asih*	*sorog*	*cianjuran*	*panambih*	Apung S. Wiratmadja
13	*Dangdanggula*	*mandalungan*	*cianjuran*	*rarancagan*	Bakang Abubakar
14	*Serat Kalih*	*mandalungan*	*cianjuran*	*rarancagan*	Bakang Abubakar
15	*Pageuh Tekad*	*mandalungan*	*cianjuran*	*panambih*	R. Achmad, Bakang
16	*Ciawian*	*saléndro*	*cianjuran, celempungan*	*rarancagan*	-
17	*Bajigjag*	*saléndro/ sorog*	*cianjuran*	*rarancagan*	Odik
18	*Macan Ucul*	*saléndro/ sorog*	*cianjuran, kawih, gamelan saléndro, jaipongan, ketuk tilu, kliningan*	*panambih*	-

Performance Situations

Tembang sunda performance situations differ from one another in terms of the social and musical connotations associated with each. Hence, numerous factors become play a role in forming the sociomusical hierarchies that represent *tembang sunda*. These include the artistic caliber and musical lineage of musicians in the performing *tembang sunda* ensemble, the social status of audiences and their knowledge of *tembang sunda*, formality, the importance of featuring *tembang sunda* in the particular setting, repertoire selection (number of songs, tuning, style, ornamentation/elaboration).

Malam Tembang Sunda

As described previously in the chapter, the *malam tembang sunda*, literally "an evening of *tembang sunda*", is believed to be the quintessential performance context for the music of *tembang sunda*. Often lasting through the night, these events are characterized by an intimate gathering of *tembang sunda* musicians who collaboratively participate in the roles and processes of music-making.

Tradition dictates the practice of certain norms which serve to distinguish different facets of the music and the musical community. Based on Sean Williams descriptions of the *malam tembang sunda*, I have organized these aspects of the performance such that they are played out as a musical organization of time (see Figure 17).

Figure 17: *Malam Tembang Sunda*—A Musical Organization of Time

Tuning	Time	Vocal Style	Social Traits
Pélog	Early evening	1. *Lagu Rajah* (Song of Invocation) 2. *papantunan* 3. *jejemplangan* 4. *dedegungan* 5. *rarancagan*	Senior Male Female/Male Female/Male Female Junior
Sorog	Late evening/ early morning	*rarancagan*	Junior
Saléndro	Early morning/dawn	*rarancagan*	Junior

Hence, it is evident how both the musical and social structures surrounding *tembang sunda* directly influence the hierarchical organization of a *malam tembang sunda* performance.

Competitions (Pasanggiri)

In the Sundanese region, competitions have been a primary mode of endorsing Sundanese culture since the 1960's (see Figure 18).[19] Competitions, or *pasanggiri*, are generally themed according to a specific artistic genre. Winning a *tembang sunda pasanggiri* can provide aspiring musicians with numerous career opportunities. Hence, preparation for these competitions is taken quite seriously and starts many months in advance.

[19] For more information on competitions, see Williams (1999, 27-42)

Figure 18: Fusion group rehearsing for a competition at *STSI* June 5, 2009.

Social Functions

Traditional cultural functions contribute towards a large part of social life in West Java and the preservation of Sundanese culture. The role of music is in direct accord with the norms associated with each of these settings. For example, music may serve to provide background sound while other festivities occur, or it may be a special entertainment feature of the event. Sometimes, *tembang sunda* might be featured during an event to provide a high-class atmosphere due to the genre's aristocratic roots.

Latihan

Although a *latihan* is primarily beneficial for the singer and accompanying instrumentalists, other members such as students, family members, friends and interested *tembang sunda* musicians are also invited to attend and share in the music-making process, thereby enhancing the overall rehearsal experience for the performer. A *latihan* is considerably rigorous, occasionally stretching from early afternoon to late night. Yet,

it also provides a time and venue for members to bond, share humor and wisdom, partake in meals, and experience a overarching sense of unity. The *latihan* is more than a mere rehearsal and is often the only context through which one may understand the plethora of performance situations subject to a *tembang sunda* musician. This is further discussed later in the chapter.

Context and Setting as Determinants of Artistic Progress

Performances in *tembang sunda* may occur in traditional or modern environments; each maintains a particular level of conservatism and highlights aspects that are significant and suitable for those settings. More traditional performances are a part of events such as the *malam tembang sunda* and formal recitals planned by recognized members or affiliates of the *tembang sunda* community. Towards the other end of the spectrum, modern contexts for performances include live broadcasting and certain social functions. In such contexts, *tembang sunda* is encouraged from a more general outlook as a genre that contributes towards the overall knowledge of Sundanese cultural arts.

A comparison between my formal recital (see Figure 19) and an impromptu performance at a wedding specifies these differences between traditional and modern performance settings. For example, the types of questions raised and comments made by audience members reflected their detailed perceptions about my interpretation of the music, suggesting their level of knowledge and appreciation for *tembang sunda*. This represented the significance of *tembang sunda* to the individuals present, and the specific characteristics to which they attributed this significance.

Figure 19: My *Tembang Sunda* Recital; July 11, 2009

My recital on July 11th 2009 at Ibu Euis's home, was attended exclusively by established members of the Sundanese musical community, especially those in the *tembang sunda* circle. The performance was followed by a session in which the oldest and most musically accomplished audience members shared their thoughts, observations and queries with me. These dialogues were focused on specifics such as my reproduction of certain ornamentations, the influence of my musical background on my rendition, and my understanding of the text, and context of this art form.

The two different Sundanese weddings that I witnessed were attended by a spectrum of the Sundanese community. At one wedding, it was performed by a hired ensemble of musicians during the interval between the wedding ceremony and reception, while most guests were still socializing and chatting. Thereby, it functioned as background music with the purpose of setting a certain ambience. At the second, a hired *pop sunda* band played, following the reception. Between songs, the host (a relative of the wedding couple) unexpectedly invited me on the stage to sing *tembang sunda*, after hearing about my learning progress from my teacher. Due to the spontaneous nature of the circumstances, I sang a cappella, neglecting the imperative role of the *kecapi* in accompanying a *tembang sunda*. Following my teacher's cue, I went on stage without

removing my footwear and I adopted the standing position while singing rather than the typical kneeling position associated with *tembang sunda* performance. In compliance with Ibu Euis's instructions, I sang a verse of a free-metered *tembang* as a standalone instead of observing the more conventional configuration—a suite of free-metered and fixed-metered songs—within which this piece should have been assembled. My demonstration was followed by a sequence of *pop sunda* songs presented by guests, including my teacher. Audience members in such environments regard *tembang sunda* loosely as another cultural art forms to enjoy rather than one that was attached to a detailed history that regulated the specificity of its musical and performance behaviors.

In more traditional settings such as *tembang sunda* recitals, performers adhere to prescribed rules and listeners intimately engage in the music, assimilating the sounds and honoring the historical and cultural depths of *tembang sunda*. Conversely, when *tembang sunda* is featured in weddings and other social functions, repertoire choice, stage conduct, preparation and instrumentation become subsidiary aspects of the overall presentation. Moreover, the performance of *tembang sunda* as a background music suggests its homogeny with other musical genres and cultural activities.

Hence, it is possible to place the different performance contexts of *tembang sunda* within a hierarchy that associates each context with a specific level of significance (see Figure 20). This "significance" is attributed to the facets of the *tembang sunda* that are preserved and highlighted through performance in a particular context. Hence, *malam tembang sunda*, the most ideal performance context is placed at the top, while the common rehearsal context of *latihan* is placed at the bottom.

Figure 20: The Hierarchy of Performance Contexts

However, it is also possible to distinguish these performance contexts on another plane—in terms of their emphasis on socialization, or a high level of musicianship (see Figure 21).

Figure 21: Socialization Versus Level of Musicianship in Performance Contexts

In this scenario, it is relatively straightforward to categorize the role of *tembang sunda* in social functions and media broadcasts as more focused on socialization since *tembang sunda* plays a subordinate background role, or it entertains audiences or it promotes knowledge regarding Sundanese culture. Similarly, contexts such as *malam tembang sunda,* recitals and competitions, are certainly oriented towards the musical-technical aspects of *tembang sunda* itself. However, the *latihan* is neither biased towards the social nor musical aspects of *tembang sunda*. The intensive nature of the music session and the encouraged participation of observers demonstrate the importance placed on both socialization and musicianship, and how both are equally imperative to the success of the *latihan*. Hence, *latihan* itself may be considered the most ideal context in which to experience *tembang sunda*.

CONCLUSION

Tembang Sunda as an Affirmation of Sundanese Identity

Sundanese culture is multifaceted in its blend of tradition and modernity. Limited documentation of the Sundanese pasts and continually evolving trends in the present factor into the misguided perceptions regarding a unified cultural identity shared by the Sundanese people. However, through the preservation of traditional musical genres such as *tembang sunda*, it is possible to comment on the constitution and development of Sundanese identity. To comprehend the overall function of music in signifying a particular cultural identity, Philip Yampolsky relays the following:

> "Not only is music a powerful symbol of ethnic identity (and all the other identities), it is an intangible one, one that can retain its power when other more tangible proofs—such as a society's autonomy, its land, its forests, its religious practices, its economy, its settlement patterns, its traditional modes of clothing—have been arrogated or crippled or outlawed by authorities or abandoned by the society itself. In the face of many pressures toward social integration and uniformity, intangible symbols such as music are sometimes all that people can retain of their identity" (Yampolsky 2001, 179).

Yampolsky's views on the symbolism and intangibility of music in portraying an ethnic identity are indeed fitting to describe *tembang sunda*, given the several expansions and redundancies in various dimensions of Sundanese culture.

In retrospect, *tembang sunda* is unique due to the pedagogical and performance practices that characterize its traditions. Other Sundanese musical traditions such as *gamelan degung* have experienced change and innovation in theorizing their musical

processes; yet, as the locus of *tembang sunda* activity relocated from its origins in the ancient Cianjur regency to the modern capital city, Bandung, in the 20th century, it continued to maintain traditional pedagogy as a central and inherent component of its learning processes.

A prime example of this is seen in the structure of the *karawitan* program at *Universitas Pasundan* (*UNPAS*). Typically, all students enrolled in the *karawitan* program take basic vocal courses for the first two semesters. In the third semester, the students must take a basic course on *tembang sunda*. By the fourth semester, they will have the option of selecting their concentration in a preferred field of *karawitan* study. Should they choose to specialize in *tembang sunda*, they must have scored a grade of "A" in all preceding basic vocal courses. This enables them to take up *tembang sunda* as their focus for four semesters (between fourth and seventh semester) and they work with a faculty of musicians that exclusively teach *tembang sunda*—Iyus Wiradiredja, Rina Sarinah and Kari Mulyana. However, only in the final seventh semester are the students eligible to work with prominent *tembang sunda* singers such as my teacher, Euis Komariah, who are teaching affiliates of the university (Indra Ridwan, personal communication, November 24, 2009). This indicates the degree of importance assigned to the maintenance of the long-established traditions of *tembang sunda* albeit within a more formulaic scholastic setting.

Therefore, despite the institutionalization of music education in contemporary Bandung in post-independence Indonesia, the traditional oral transmission method is still the primary mode of teaching and learning *tembang sunda*, largely because of its rich and varied performance contexts. Each of these different performance contexts requires

technical knowledge and performance adaptability, which influences the pedagogy of *tembang sunda*. Hence, while learning *tembang sunda*, students also learn its social organization as played out in the different performance contexts, and by extension, about its role in reflecting and shaping Sundanese history and culture.

Constructing a Relationship

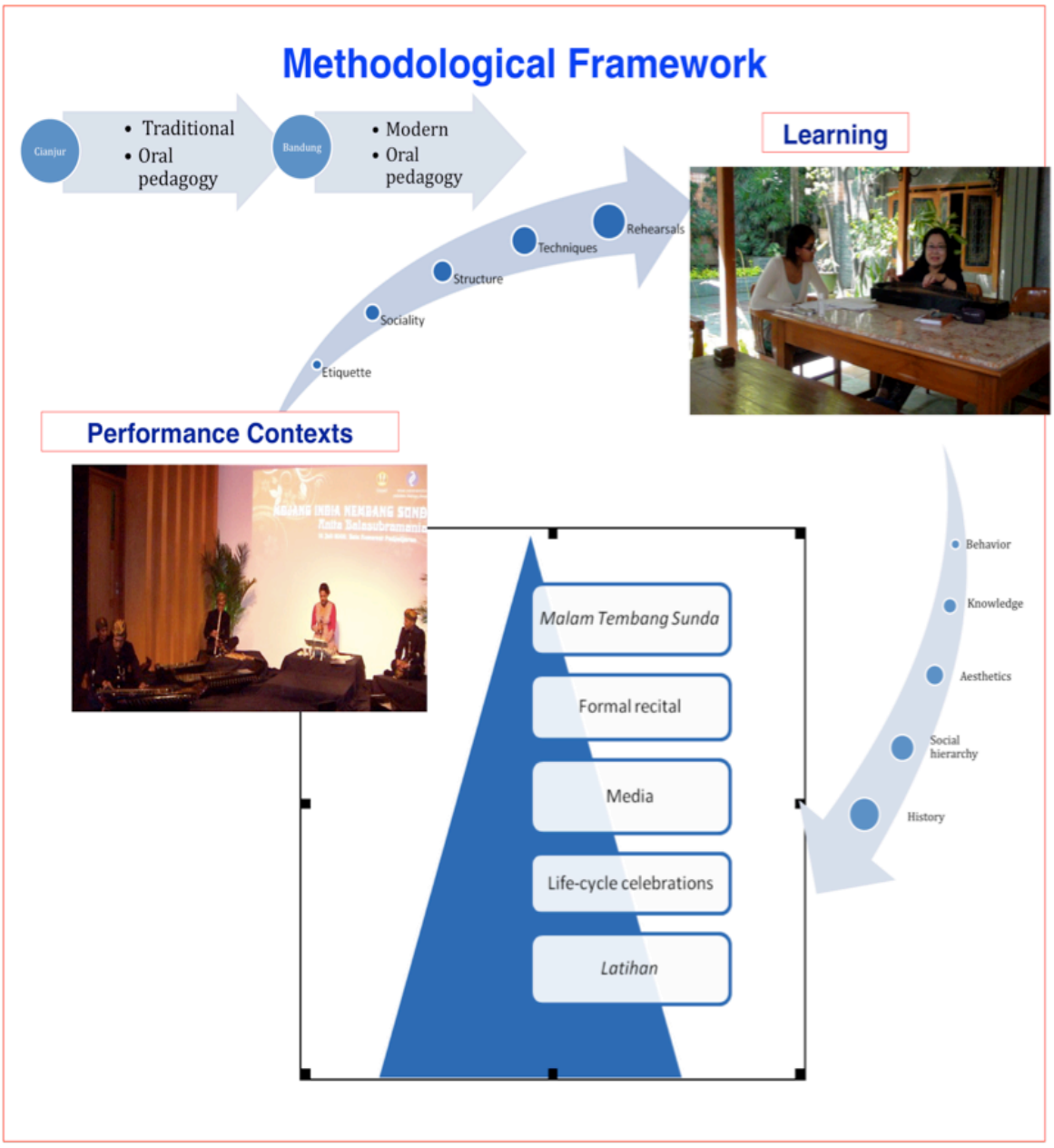
On two levels, learning experiences are directly associated with performance in *tembang sunda*. Firstly, rehearsals are open to participation so students are constantly exposed to objective audiences, preparing them for performance in general. Also, the indirect pedagogical approaches of encouraging students to listen to recordings and engaging in discussion, act as preparatory devices that teaches students what to expect in a performance. Secondly, the performative aspect of thrusting students into diverse and increasingly formal performance situations, in parallel with their studies, provides real-life experiences in which the student gains direct contact with different situations. This, in effect, helps students comprehend the disparities and hierarchies within the different performance contexts, and associated matters of significance to consider in future situations.

The hierarchy of performance contexts (see Figure 20) serves to order different musical settings in terms of the prestige and skill level typically associated with each, influencing the performer's own status, the type of audience members, and the frequency with which such events are hosted. Yet, the *latihan* is not to be misconstrued as unimportant to the development of a *tembang sunda* musician. Rather, it challenges the notion of "practice" and "performance" since students are able to gain the kind of

experience that prepares them for all possible contexts for performance. Thereby, in a certain sense, the *latihan* inverts the hierarchy of performance contexts. It is within this context that the boundaries of practice and performance are blurred, and when knowledge of learning and performing music intersect to reflect, negotiate, and shape social identities.

To a degree, the relocation of *tembang sunda* from Cianjur to Bandung involved processes of urbanization. Yet, the traditional oral method of teaching and learning has been preserved even within a modern context. It is this feature that fuels the pedagogy of *tembang sunda*, in effect, creating the foundation of learning-performance relationships. In understanding the methodological framework underlying these relationships, we can deduce that both learning processes and performance contexts influence and inform one another (see Figure 22). The broad learning format of *tembang sunda* includes music lessons, discussions, and attendance in various performances. Through these forums, students are educated about the history, social hierarchies, aesthetics, knowledge and behaviors surrounding *tembang sunda*. In turn, gaining exposure to a variety of performance contexts allows students to understand the norms behind the etiquette, sociality, structure, technique and rehearsal format that defines pedagogy in *tembang sunda*.

Figure 22: Performance-Learning Framework



In conclusion, the teaching and learning of *tembang sunda* are intimately connected to the different performance contexts of this musical tradition. Varying aesthetics, knowledge, expectations, and behavior are associated with dissimilar performance contexts. Each of these contexts is important in maintaining the social organization distinctly framed by *tembang sunda*, informed by Sundanese history; hence,

it is important to perform according to context. The traditional learning process prepares a student performer to adapt to each of these different contexts.

GLOSSARY

asmarandana	One of the four primary *pupuh* meters used in *tembang sunda.* It features seven lines of poetry; the syllabic count in each line follows the pattern 8, 8, 8, 8, 7, 8, 8; the ending syllable for each line is organized as: i, a, é/o, a, a, u, a.
bahasa sunda	The Sundanese regional language
bahasa jawa	The Javanese regional language
belokan	Literally, "circle"; a group of four or five neighbor tones sung in succession resembling a circle.
bubuka	Instrumental opening to a suite of *tembang sunda* songs in one tuning, played by *kecapi*, *suling* (or *rebab*).
buntut	Literally, "tail"; a vocal ornamentation in which a single note is sustained and then followed by a short upward departure.
bupati	Regent, head of a regency.

cacagan	Derived from verb, *cacag*, or "to cut into pieces". A vocal ornamentation involving heavy vibrato punctuated by "chops" that are created by quick repeated accents on a single note. This results in short, powerful bursts of sound.
carita pantun	Epic narrative oral tradition which combines narrative and song.
carita parahyangan	Text on the history of Sundanese kings and kingdoms in the pre-Islamic period.
celempungan	Sundanese musical genre involving various musical instruments—*kecapi*, barrel drum (*kendang*), gong (*goong*), *suling* (or *rebab*) and singer (*juru kawih*). The ensemble maintains its tempo and rhythmic meter as gestured by the drum player.
cianjuran	Another term for *tembang sunda*, literally meaning "that which comes from Cianjur".
dangdanggula	One of the four primary *pupuh* meters used in *tembang sunda.* It features ten lines of poetry; the syllabic count in each line follows the pattern 10, 10, 8, 7, 9, 7, 6, 8, 12, 7; the ending syllable for each line is organized as: i, a, é/o, u, i, a, u, a, i, a.

dangdut Indonesian popular music genre developed in the 1970's, featuring Malay, Arabic, Hindustani and Western influences.

dedegungan One of five categories of *tembang sunda* compositions, considered to have a closed repertoire and always performed in *pélog*. *Dedegungan* is very similar to *rarancagan* as both comprise free-metered pieces that use *pupuh* (poetic meters).

degung kawih A genre in which *kawih* songs are sung (usually by a female vocalist) to *gamelan degung* accompaniment.

degung klasik *Gamelan degung* played in a purely instrumental style.

dua wilet Sixteen-beat gong cycle.

gamelan Gong-chime ensembles. Sundanese gamelan ensembles include *gamelan degung*, which was created for local Sundanese regents during the early 20th century, and *gamelan saléndro*, used to accompany theatre, dance and songs in *saléndro* tuning.

gedag A vocal ornamentation featuring *vibra* (tremolo) followed by a brief descent to an indistinct pitch which returns to the *vibra* on the original note. Also known as *lapis*.

gelenyu	Instrumental sections interspersed throughout a suite of *tembang sunda* songs.
gunung	Mountains
ibu	Literally, “mother”, a respectful way of addressing older women in Indonesian societies.
jaipongan	A social dance and musical style that gained popularity in the 1980’s; it is adapted from the village tradition, *ketuk tilu*.
jejemplangan	One of five categories of *tembang sunda* compositions, considered to have a closed repertoire. *Jejemplangan* pieces are free-metered with prosaic text and are always sung in *pélog*.
jekluk	A vocal ornamentation in which a group of (usually) three notes of the ascending scale sung very fast at the end of a phrase.
jenghak	Vocal ornamentation involving an upward vocal break manipulating both chest and head voice.

juru kawih	Generic term for a female vocalist. Also known as *juru kawih*.
kabupaten	Regency—a level of government lower than that of a province and equivalent to that of a county, headed by a regent (*bupati*).
kacapian	A Sundanese popular genre that prevailed from the 1950's to 1980's. It incorporates vocals accompanied by various instruments, including *gamelan* and *kecapi siter* (flat board *kecapi*).
kakawen	Mood songs in *saléndro*, sung as fixed-metered section in *saléndro* song sets in *tembang sunda*, adapted from Sundanese *wayang golék* repertoire.
karawitan	A term generally referring to the traditional music repertoire.
kawih	A type of accompanied vocal music in fixed rhythm and style of *kecapi* accompaniment. These songs contain less ornamentation than *mamaos* and are not composed using strict poetic forms. May be added onto *gamelan degung* music, in the *degung kawih* genre.
kecapi	Zither used to accompany *tembang sunda.*

kecapi indung Literally, "mother *kecapi"*. Eighteen-stringed, boat-shaped zither that is the primary accompaniment for *tembang sunda* vocals.

kecapi rincik Smaller, fifteen-stringed, boat-shaped zither which accompanies the fixed-metered sections of *tembang sunda* song sets.

kecapi siter Flat board *kecapi* used often in experimental music and also during *tembang sunda* rehearsals, for its convenience and portability.

kecapi-suling An instrumental genre developed in 1960's-1970's in which the *kecapi* and *suling* play alone (in the absence of a vocalist), featuring certain *panambih* tunes.

kejawen An animistic ethnic religion with strong influences from Hinduism and Buddhism.

kendang Drum used to accompany various Sundanese music and dance genres including *gamelan*, *kacapian* and *ketuk tilu*.

ketuk tilu A Sundanese ceremonial village dance tradition accompanied by a simple instrumental ensemble of gong (*goong*), barrel drum (*kendang*) and *rebab*. The genre gained disrepute due to the

evocative movements of the singer-dancer (often also a prostitute) and the involvement of mixed dancing between males and females.

kidung sunda — Old Javanese poem that narrates the events at Majapahit involving the Sundanese-Javanese clash.

kinanti — One of the four primary *pupuh* meters used in *tembang sunda*. It features six lines of poetry; the syllabic count in each line follows the pattern 8, 8, 8, 8, 8, 8; the ending syllable for each line is organized as: u, i, a, i, a, i.

kliningan — A vocal genre accompanied by *gamelan saléndro* characterized by its strident, nasal tone and high pitch. It is associated with a lower status than that of *tembang sunda* and *degung kawih.*

kraton — Palace or court.

lagu — General term for tune or melody.

lapis — A vocal ornamentation featuring *vibra* (tremolo) followed by a brief descent to an indistinct pitch which returns to the *vibra* on the original note. Also known as *gedag*.

laras Tuning system

latihan Literally, “to practice”. It may also refer to a practice session.

leotan Vocal slide that usually descends from a higher to a lower pitch.

macapat Poetic meter derived from Central Java; it gave rise to the *pupuh* meters.

malam tembang sunda

Literally, “*tembang sunda* evening”; it is considered the most ideal performance of *tembang sunda*.

mamaos Another term for *tembang sunda*; free-metered portion (the *tembang*) of a *tembang sunda* song set.

mandalungan A musical mode which transposes the pitches from the *sorog* scale.

mataraman A musical mode which transposes the pitches from the *pélog* scale.

narangtang Opening line for *papantunan* and *jejemplangan* style pieces.

ngalir To flow like water.

Pajajaran	Ancient Sundanese Hindu kingdom (1333-1579) located within the Priangan highlands. The Sundanese continue to revere Pajajaran as it is symbolic the most glorious period of Sundanese history.
pak	Literally, "father"; a respectful way of addressing older men in Indonesian societies.
panambih	Fixed rhythm latter portion of a tembang sunda song set, following a suite of tembang songs. Also known as *lagu ekstra* (literally, "additional song").
papantunan	Considered the earliest of the five song categories to have developed and is believed to have a closed repertoire. *Papantunan* features prosaic text, modeling the *pantun* (epic narrative) tradition in style and content and is always sung in the *pélog* tuning.
Parahyangan	Literally, "the abode of the gods"; the highland plateau that traverses the central and southern parts of West Java, often linked to the Pajajaran kingdom. Also known as Priangan or de Preanger.
pasanggiri	Sundanese term for music competition.
pasinden	Generic term for a female vocalist. Also known as *juru kawih*.

pélog	The most important of the three main tunings used in *tembang sunda*.
pélog degung	Often seen as synonymous with *pélog* since it uses the same intervals between the tones in the scale, but it is higher in pitch.
pop sunda	Popular Sundanese vocal genre developed in the 1960's in Bandung, West Java.
pupuh	Poetic meter used to specify the number of lines and ending syllables of each line in *tembang sunda* texts; it is derived from *macapat* (set of poetic forms) of Central Java.
rarancagan	One of five categories of compositions in *tembang sunda*, considered to have open repertoire; *rarancagan* pieces are free-metered, text is based on *pupuh* (poetic meters) and featured in any of the tunings.
rebab	Two-stringed bowed lute used (in the place of the *suling*) to accompany songs in the *saléndro* tuning.

reureueus — In the spectrum of vibrato types, the *cacagan* and *vibra* may be considered as the extremes, and *reureueus* falls in between the two. It is lighter and smoother than *cacagan* but more pronounced than the *vibra*.

rincik — See *kecapi rincik.*

saléndro — One of the three main tuning systems in *tembang sunda*, derived from Central Java. The five tones in the *saléndro* scale are more or less equidistant.

sawilet — Eight-beat gong cycle.

siaran — Media broadcast.

sinom — One of the four primary *pupuh* meters used in *tembang sunda.* It features nine lines of poetry; the syllabic count in each line follows the pattern 8, 8, 8, 8, 7, 8, 7, 8, 12; the ending syllable for each line is organized as: a, i, a, i, i, u, a, i, a.

sorog — Also known as *madenda*. One of the three main tunings in *tembang sunda;* five-tone scale identical to *pélog* except for the raised third note (*panelu*) of the scale.

STSI Bandung	*Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia—Bandung* (Indonesian Arts College in Bandung); it offers a Bachelor of Arts in *karawitan* with focus on either research, composition or performance.
suling	Bamboo flute with 4 or 6 holes; used to accompany *gamelan degung* (*suling degung*) and *tembang sunda* (*suling tembang*).
tanpa beban	Without any burden or weight.
tarawangsa	A type of two-stringed bowed lute that accompanies the vocalist on songs exhibited in the *carita pantun* context.
tembang	Broad term for "song" or the act of singing. Within *tembang sunda*, "*tembang*" refers to the free-metered songs which precede the *panambih.*
UNPAD	*Universitas Padjadjaran* (Padjadjaran University)
UNPAS	*Universitas Pasundan* (Pasundan University)
vibra	A tremolo or very small vibrato.

waas	Nostalgia
wayang	Indonesian for “theatre”, used when referring to different kinds of puppet theatre, e.g. *wayang golék* (Sundanese rod puppet theatre), *wayang kulit* (Javanese shadow puppet theatre), or for the puppet itself.

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