



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

CHINESE INDONESIAN MUSICAL CULTURE  
IN JAVA: IDENTITY AND MEANING IN A  
LONG-TERM DIASPORA

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## Abstract

For centuries, Chinese immigrants have brought their traditional musical culture to Indonesia and maintained and developed it in their new environment. The representative musical genres include the Chinese Indonesian theatre forms *wayang potehi*, *wacinwa* and *jasen potehi*. Musical activity has been a vital way to construct and maintain a Chinese ethnic and cultural identity in the Chinese diaspora community in Indonesia. However, any expression of a Chinese identity was suppressed under President Suharto's "New Order" regime (1966-98), which resulted in a severe blow to the musical performances of the Chinese Indonesians for nearly 33 years. After the exclusionary policies were lifted, Chinese Indonesian music experienced a revival and further development, eventually generating new musical fusion forms (e.g. *jasen potehi*) combining intercultural elements (Chinese, Indonesian and Western).

This thesis examines these developments through an introduction and four major chapters. Chapter Two maps the historical development of Chinese musical culture in Indonesia under the altered circumstances of political and cultural policies. Chapter Three looks at the way in which dynamic ethnic and cultural identities are constructed and shaped through the practice of Chinese Indonesian musical activities, by analysing the changes of *wayang potehi*. Chapters Four and Five examine fusion and hybrid processes in the performance forms, including the music. Close musical analysis is supported by the use of the new notation system Global Notation. The development of *wacinwa* and *jasen potehi* thus provides revealing case studies in the dynamics of cultural negotiation, identity, hybridisation, modernisation and localisation in the musical culture of a long-established diaspora community.

Overall, the research presents new knowledge in the study of music in a diaspora community. The detailed musical analysis shows how the broader historical and cultural contexts are manifested in actual sound. Beyond its specific geographical and cultural focus, the study engages with broader themes of diaspora, hybridity, identity and revival of concern in the field of ethnomusicology internationally.

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## Chapter 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Background and Research Goals

With 242 million people and more than 300 ethnic groups, Indonesia is one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse countries in the world (Suryadinata et al., 2003: 7). As a major overseas resettlement destination for many Chinese people, Indonesia has hundreds of years of history of immigration from China, and the Chinese have come to account for 3% of the total Indonesian population, having become one of the most numerous ethnic minorities in the country (Mackie, 2005: 101). Throughout this long period, Chinese people have brought their traditional musical culture to Indonesia, inheriting and protecting the roots of Chinese traditional culture through forms such as *wayang potehi* (Chinese traditional puppet theatre, Figure 1-1), *barongsai* (Chinese national lion dance, Figure 1-2), and *nanyin* (a kind of southern Chinese traditional string and wind music, Figure 1-3). They have made efforts to integrate into local Indonesian culture, creating new forms of art which combine Chinese and Indonesian cultural elements (e.g. the Chinese Indonesian shadow puppetry form *wacinwa*, Figure 1-4), and some of these art forms have come to be performed by Indonesians who have no Chinese ancestry.



Figure 1-1: The performance form of *wayang potehi* performed by Fu He An troupe in Malang, 25 January 2017.<sup>1</sup>



Figure 1-2: The performance form of *barongsai* performed by He He Hui troupe in Yogyakarta, 28 February 2018.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Photograph by author.

<sup>2</sup> Photograph by author.



Figure 1-3: The performance form of *nanyin* performed by Yayasan Oriental Indonesia in Jakarta, 11 December 2008.<sup>3</sup>



Figure 1-4: The performance form of *wacinwa* performed by Aneng Kiswanto's troupe in Yogyakarta, 6 October 2014.<sup>4</sup>

However, in 1966, President Suharto (the second President of Indonesia) implemented the “New Order” policy which involved strict rules for the Chinese, outlining a complete prohibition of Chinese language, education, cultural media, political participation, and activities related to religion and folk customs. During this time the social and cultural status and the musical activities of ethnic Chinese in the country

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<sup>3</sup> Photograph taken from online resource <http://www.qznanyin.cn/abroad.html>, accessed 27 February 2020.

<sup>4</sup> Image obtained from video provided and approved by Hanggar Budi Prasetya.

suffered a severe setback. However, although they were living in an adverse political environment, the Chinese Indonesians living in Indonesia never abandoned their music, using some illegal or relatively “flexible” methods to continue practising their musical culture (Tickell, 2009: 274). Following the ending of Suharto’s period of power, President Abdurrahman Wahid (the fourth President of Indonesia) implemented a policy of diversified culture, calling for an end to the discrimination against the Chinese, revoking a series of Chinese exclusionary rules, and adding safeguards to the political rights of the Chinese population. Furthermore, the Indonesian government actively encouraged the Chinese Indonesian population to maintain their own traditional culture and religious customs. In this new, sympathetic climate Chinese culture within Indonesia was able to acquire new vitality (Lindsey, 2005: 59–60). As a result of these political changes, Chinese Indonesian musical culture experienced a revival and rapid development, eventually taking its place among the recognised traditional art cultures of Indonesia (e.g. *wayang potehi*, *wacinwa*). New, fusion art forms were created, adding local culture and Western music to traditional Chinese art forms in order to promote Chinese culture in Indonesia and to appeal to audiences further afield. An example of such a fusion is *jasen potehi*, a Javanised form of *wayang potehi* created by the Chinese Indonesians in Java.

The fate of Chinese Indonesian culture has always been linked to the political and cultural climate in Indonesia, but never more so than during the period from the “New Order” until now. Yet currently there is a lack of knowledge and literature in the field of ethnomusicology about the development of Chinese music in contemporary Indonesia. Chinese culture in Indonesia has undergone great change and development in recent years as a result of the diverse political regimes, and one result has been that in current Chinese Indonesian music, most performers are Indonesians without Chinese ancestry. This is a highly distinctive point in comparison with other diaspora communities. Aiming to contribute a cultural analysis of Chinese Indonesian music, this research will focus on three representative Chinese Indonesian musical forms:

*wayang potehi*, *wacinwa* and *jasen potehi*, which are all forms of musical theatre. The development of Chinese Indonesian theatres has extended throughout the entire history of Chinese culture in Indonesia and continues to the present. The musical theatre has become a very representative form of Chinese Indonesian culture in contemporary Indonesia. For the purposes of a study on culture and identity in a diaspora context, musical theatre also offers the advantage that the various cultural components are represented visually as well as sonically, offering a richer field for analysis. Therefore, I chose to take these three musical theatre genres of Chinese Indonesians as the main research objects, each of which is representative of a different style of development and, consequently, various senses of identity, of the Chinese Indonesian culture in Indonesia.

By describing and analyzing Chinese Indonesian musical theatre forms in contemporary Indonesia, the thesis will draw on concepts of music and identity (both ethnic and cultural), music and diaspora, musical hybridity and musical revivals, yielding insights into the inheritance and development of the Chinese Indonesian musical culture. Additionally, it aims to reveal how ethnic and cultural identity has been constructed and shaped through the practice of musical activities and how Chinese Indonesian musical culture has found a path between the past and present. Finally, the study seeks to explain how the historical and current cultural policies have helped to shape Chinese Indonesian musical forms in contemporary Indonesia. Through the application of ethnomusicological methodologies, it is the hope of the author that this research will contribute to the ethnomusicology of Chinese musical cultures, as well as providing a new case study in the musical development of diaspora communities around the world.

From the standpoint of my own identity, I hope to provide a research perspective that differs from that of either local scholars or Western scholars who have no background in Chinese music. I offer a dual perspective that combines Chinese identity and cultural background with local cultural knowledge acquired by learning and performing Indonesian traditional music in Indonesia. Although I am not a Chinese Indonesian

myself, my Chinese identity and native language has given me access to Chinese sources and contacts, such as historical records and sources on immigration from ancient China, knowledge of the Chinese versions of musical forms that have been brought to Indonesia by Chinese immigrants, and general knowledge of traditional Chinese music and culture. The historical sources fill gaps in Chinese Indonesian history, mapping a more complete picture of the history of Chinese Indonesians and their musical culture. Additionally, knowledge of Chinese musical forms sheds light on the differences between Chinese and Chinese Indonesian versions of related genres. While previous research by local researchers or Western scholars has often focused on the changes in the Chinese musical form after entering Indonesia (e.g. Kuardhani 2012, Seltmann 1976), in my research, more in-depth tracing of the long development process of Chinese Indonesian music reveals a fuller picture as to which traditional Chinese music elements have been retained and which elements have been changed. These details and results will lead to discussion of dynamics in ethnic and cultural identity. Regarding contemporary Chinese Indonesian music with hybrid musical elements (Indonesian, Chinese, Western), my knowledge of traditional Chinese music also supports an in-depth analysis of the process of musical hybridity as manifested in musical sound itself. The results obtained from music analysis, rather than relying solely on interviews and observations, provide a level of specificity in the explanation and understanding of musical phenomena that further distinguishes this research from previous studies. However, in addition to the advantages of Chinese identity and musical knowledge that I describe here, my identity as a Chinese woman seemed to affect the results of my interviews and fieldwork in various ways, as I will discuss in section 1.5.3 and the Conclusion of the thesis.

## **1.2 Literature Review: Chinese Indonesian Music**

The literature available in Chinese Indonesian studies mostly provides a general picture of the immigration process, political and economic situations, and the historical influences in different periods. While these are essential references for any historical overview of Chinese Indonesian culture, there have been few studies specifically about

Chinese Indonesian musical culture.

One such study is Margaret Kartomi's "Indonesian-Chinese Oppression and the Musical Outcomes in the Netherlands East Indies" (2000), which mainly describes the historical development and musical life of Chinese Indonesians during the Dutch colonial period (1602–1945). Another example is Mona Lohanda's MPhil thesis "The *Kapitan Cina* of Batavia 1837-1942" (1994), which discusses the *kapitan Cina* institution (Chinese Indonesian institution) in Batavia during the Dutch Colonial Period. Lohanda mainly describes the special economic, political and social situations of Chinese inhabitants under Dutch colonial policies, and rarely mentions the musical life of Chinese Indonesians. Other sources have also contributed to the study of Chinese Indonesian musical culture, but they are specialized studies on various different forms of Chinese Indonesian music such as research into *wayang potehi* and *wacinwa*. There are three important books related to the study of *wayang potehi*: Purwoseputro's *Wayang Potehi of Java* (2014) in English, Dwi Woro Retno Mastuti's *Wayang Potehi Gudo* (2014) in English, and Hirwan Kuardhani's *Mengenal wayang potehi di Jawa* (Wayang Potehi in Java, 2012) in Bahasa Indonesia. They all briefly introduce the history, performing form, puppets, puppeteers, and accompanying musical instruments of *wayang potehi* in East Java, especially in Gudo. A similar general introduction can be found in other articles, such as Groenendael's research "Po-te-hi: the Chinese Glove-puppet Theatre in East Java" (1993), and "Wayang Potehi: Glove Puppets in the Expression of Sino-Indonesian Identity" by Josh Stenberg (2015). Stenberg outlines the historical development of *wayang potehi* in each period as well as the previous research mentioned above. It is worth mentioning that he has a much broader perspective on the identity of *wayang potehi*, aiming to represent the relevant cultural policies which influenced the development of *potehi* at different times. He also noted that the contemporary *potehi* (of 2015) exhibited characteristics of mixed culture.

In addition, there has been some other research about *potehi* in Surabaya, such as an article on "Yinni Sishui 'Fengdexuan' Budaixi Tuan Yanjiu" (The research of *potehi*

at the Hong Tiek Hian Temple in Surabaya, Indonesia) by Xiao Feifei (2010) in Chinese. In addition to looking at the history of the development, organisation and art form of the *potehi* troupe of the Hong Tiek Hian Temple, Xiao compared the development of Indonesian *wayang potehi* with Taiwanese *budaixi* as both have the same Chinese origin. She hoped through this comparison to develop some new ideas as a way out of the existential crisis that *wayang potehi* was finding itself in. Other pieces of research have focused on the same *potehi* troupe in order to provide a framework through which to investigate the development of *wayang potehi* in different political periods: “A Study of *Potehi*, the Chinese Puppet Theatre in Indonesia” by John B. Kwee (1996), “Perkembangan wayang potehi di Surabaya” (Development of *wayang potehi* in Surabaya, 2014) by Sunariyadi Maskurin and Septina Alrianingrum in Bahasa Indonesia, and “Yinni Huaren Budaixi Lishi, Yanchuxingtai he Yinyue” (History, art form and music of *wayang potehi*, 2015) by Tsai Tsung-te in Chinese.

Compared with the above studies of *wayang potehi*, very little focus has been placed on research into *wacinwa*. The book *Wayang Kulit Cina-Jawa Yogyakarta* (Wayang Kulit of Chinese-Javanese, in Bahasa Indonesia) by Soelarto (1980) and the article “*Wayang Thithi Chinesisches Schattenspiel in Jogjakarta*” (The Chinese shadow puppetry in Jogjakarta, in German) by Seltmann (1976) describe the origin, creation and performing form of *wacinwa* before the “New Order”; since all materials relating to *wacinwa* were burned during the prohibition, these sources have become very precious historical documents for an understanding of the heyday of *wacinwa*. Although I have not been able to read Seltmann’s article because it is in German, I have found references to it in other sources. Additionally, the Museum Negeri Sonobudoyo published a book about *wacinwa* to accompany an exhibition of *wacinwa* in 2014: *Wacinwa: Silang Budaya Cina-Jawa* (*Wacinwa: A cross-cultural study of Chinese-Javanese*, 2014). This book includes many photographs of antique *wacinwa* puppets from the museum’s own collection, and gives a basic account of the historical development, performing form and stories of *wacinwa* before 1966. Another book produced by this museum published in 2015 has similar content: *Kajian Wacinwa*



*Silang Budaya Cina-Jawa: Koleksi Musem Negeri Sonobudoyo (Wacinwa: A cross-cultural study of Chinese-Javanese: The collection of the Sonobudoyo State Museum, 2015)* by Hariwijaya.

Finally, another research contribution comes from an ethnographic film: *As Foreign Land Becomes Home Land* (Tsai Tsung-te 2018), which briefly describes Chinese Indonesian culture through individual interviews with various artists. This film, however, is not specifically focused on Chinese Indonesian musical culture, but is an overview of all kinds of Chinese Indonesian arts in Indonesia through the oral history of famous artists and dignitaries, including both Chinese Indonesians and local Indonesians. I had the good fortune to be invited to participate in this film project as a research assistant by Prof. Tsai Tsung-te from Tainan National University of the Arts, and was involved in the whole process of this project until it was published in March 2018. As a result, I have come to understand that people from different backgrounds have different perspectives in the way they talk about Chinese Indonesian culture, an insight that I have tried to reflect throughout this study.

The above literature has explored the background and development of Chinese Indonesians, and has provided a historical context for Chinese Indonesian music under various Indonesian political regimes. This has enabled me to construct a historical background from which to trace the development of Chinese Indonesian music in Indonesia. However, the existing literature offers only partial answers to my key research questions, such as that of what makes the music of the Chinese diaspora in Indonesia different from other musical diaspora situations. The few previous studies on Chinese Indonesian musical genres provide some reference to their individual developments, but are limited in nature and can only serve as brief introductions. It can therefore be concluded that the contemporary Chinese Indonesian musical culture (post-2015) is flourishing but not being studied, and as a result there is a growing need to construct a framework to enable study and re-evaluation of contemporary Chinese Indonesian musical culture. On the other side, the existing literature does not provide

close analysis of the performance content of Chinese Indonesian musical genres, especially the musical sound organisation itself. Through detailed music analysis, I seek to examine how the broader historical and cultural contexts are manifested in actual sound.

The Chinese diaspora living in Indonesia has been affected by the country's politics, society, economy, and culture in different periods, all of which have been of great importance in determining their status, and there are many studies of the influence of these factors on the Chinese Indonesian community in general, but very few have looked at musical history, and there has been no mention of an aim to provide a theoretical framework to explain the variety of changes in the development of the Chinese Indonesian musical culture caused by the political society and the measures taken. My current research intends to fill these gaps in the research on Chinese Indonesian musical culture and, in so doing, to contribute to the understanding of music in diaspora more broadly.

### **1.3 Explanation of Terms**

Through the long history of the Chinese Indonesian community in Indonesia, degrees of integration and senses of ethnic identity have changed in different political periods. In order to distinguish the relevant groups more accurately, I have chosen to use the local terms by which they are usually designated in Indonesia itself.

#### Chinese Indonesian

The term "Chinese Indonesian" (Indonesia Tionghoa) is a relatively new term used by both scholars and the Chinese Indonesian themselves to refer to people of Chinese descent in Indonesia. Coppel, in his book *Studying Ethnic Chinese in Indonesia* (2002), decided, "I now prefer to use the more inclusive term 'Chinese Indonesians'". Additionally, the Chinese Indonesian Association (Perhimpunan Indonesia Tionghoa or INTI) claims that the term "Chinese Indonesian" was first introduced to Indonesia in 1999 by INTI which used the term in its name (Lembong, 2004: xiv). Hoon stated "The

use of the term may have drawn its inspiration from the labelling of hyphenated identities such as Afro-American, Chinese-American, Hispanic-American and so on in the United States of America” (Hoon, 2006: 8).

In general, the term “Chinese Indonesian” refers to people of Chinese descent who live in Southeast Asia regardless of their nationality, degree of cultural adaptation and social identification (Suryadinata, 1985: 4). Moreover, “Chinese Indonesian” refers to a “group with cultural elements recognisable as or attributable to Chinese culture, whereas socially, members of this group identify with and are identified by others as a distinct group” (Tan M.G., 1991: 119). Sometimes this thesis uses the term “Chinese” alone to refer to Chinese Indonesians, especially when juxtaposed to the non-Chinese or *pribumi* (“sons of the earth”, i.e. indigenous Indonesians).

#### *Totok and peranakan*

Despite their common Chinese ancestry, Chinese Indonesians are culturally heterogeneous and can be divided into different groups in different periods. In fact, they have been divided by scholars into two main groups, the China-oriented *totok* (born in China, or of fully Chinese ancestry) and the acculturated *peranakan* (born in Indonesia or of mixed Chinese and Indonesian ancestry). Living in Indonesia for centuries resulted in intermarriage between ethnically Chinese men and local women, and the *peranakan* accepted the local culture and lost many of their Chinese characteristics. Yet as of 1900, they had still “never been fully assimilated into the native population” (Williams L., 1960:13)

In contrast to the earlier immigrants who were predominantly male, the immigrants that arrived in Indonesia at the end of the nineteenth century included a certain number of women. As a result, many Chinese men were able to marry a Chinese-born wife rather than a local woman or *peranakan*, and these pure-blood immigrants formed the unique *totok* community (Mackie and Coppel, 1976: 8). They were not a unified group as they

came from different areas of China and spoke in different Chinese dialects. The *totok* were generally more politically and culturally orientated to China.

Since then, the distinction between *totok* and *peranakan* has been gradually changed. According to Coppel, the *totok-peranakan* distinction has historically been based on both birthplace and “race” (pure or mix blood). However, the traditional distinction became unrealistic after the Chinese immigration from China to Indonesia ceased during the New Order (Coppel, 2002: 122). Some scholars came to distinguish the *totok* and *peranakan* from a socio-cultural perspective (Skinner, 1963; Suryadinata, 1981; Tan M.G., 1997). In this distinction, *totok* refers to those who have had a Chinese upbringing and speak Chinese dialects as their communication medium even though they were born in Indonesia. *Peranakan* refers not only to the Chinese with mixed ancestry, but also to the those pure-blood local-born Chinese who cannot speak Chinese at all (Coppel, 2002: 123).

After the assimilation policy was implemented during the New Order period, the relevance of the distinction between *totok* and *peranakan* gradually attenuated. Suryadinata notes that under the influence of New Order policy, Chinese schools and organisations were forced to close down and the Chinese were forced to enroll in Indonesian schools and speak Bahasa Indonesia. As a result, most Chinese were “Indonesianised” during that period (Suyadinata, 1978: 32). The Chinese in the post-Suharto period tend to identify themselves as “Chinese Indonesians” since the terms *totok* and *peranakan* no longer represent a division in their identity. This is also the main reason why I use the term “Chinese Indonesians”.

However, for explaining the various identities of Chinese Indonesians, especially identifying their culturally identity, this thesis does use the terms *totok* and *peranakan* based on a socio-cultural distinction. But this distinction also differs from the views of Skinner, Suryadinata and Tan on *totok* and *peranakan* in their time. In this thesis, *totok* refers to ethnically Chinese people in Indonesia who migrated more recently than the

*peranakan*, had a Chinese-orientated upbringing with pure Chinese ancestry, or had a command of some Chinese dialect and were more oriented towards China culturally. The *totok* thus have more “Chineseness”, even though they were born in Indonesia. *Peranakan* then refers not only to the Chinese with mixed ancestry, but also to those pure-blood local-born Chinese who have no command of the Chinese language and display a set of cultural traits neither wholly Chinese nor wholly Indonesian. Most of them have lost any cultural “Chineseness” and are more inclined to towards indigenous Indonesian culture.

#### **1.4 Theoretical Framework**

This study aims to understand the inheritance and development process of the musical culture of the Chinese diaspora in Indonesia; how Chinese Indonesians have used musical activities as a significant means through which to construct their ethnic and cultural identity during different periods, and the complex phenomena of localisation and modernisation which are demonstrated in the musical development and practice processes. The theoretical issues considered in this research emphasise several issues in particular, including music and identity (both ethnic and cultural), music and diaspora (with the related issue of hybridity), and musical revivals. A framework embodying all these themes can help illuminate the complex soundscapes of different times which will shed light on the origins and development of Chinese Indonesian musical culture under different social and political regimes, thus facilitating significant insights into Chinese Indonesian musical culture in contemporary Indonesia. However, attempting to examine all these themes in equal depth could result in a superficial analysis lacking in specificity. As a single overarching theme, I focus on music and diaspora because of the unusual aspects of the Chinese diaspora in Indonesia: namely its long historical timespan and the way many of its cultural products have come to be maintained by performers outside the diasporic community itself. Nevertheless, an in-depth study of Chinese Indonesian musical culture with a focus on music in diaspora requires consideration of the related themes of identity and revival as well.

### 1.4.1 Music and Identity

The term “identity” was first proposed and classified by psychologist Erik Erikson as an important concept in the field of individual psychology in the 1950s. Erikson studied the developmental stages of individuals (1959) and coined the term “identity crisis” (1968). At the end of the 1960s, as issues of ethnicity increasingly intensified in the United States and other countries around the world, anthropologists began to study and debate the theme of “ethnic identity”. To this end, Edward Shils (an influential sociologist), Clifford Geertz (an American anthropologist) and Harold Isaacs (a political scientist) advocated the term “primordialism”, which outlined ethnic identity as mainly derived from emotional “congenital” ties that formed based on kinship and culture. They emphasised the importance of cultural primordial sentiments and ethnic forces, which are derived from the common basic cultural characteristics of an ethnic group (Geertz, 1973: 259).

“Ethnic identity” in Indonesia was defined by indigeneity rather than citizenship (Hoon, 2006:4). Rosaldo mentions that the concept of “cultural citizenship” refers to the power inequalities that are “at play in relation to mechanisms of marginalisation and exclusion”, between different “groups” of citizens in a nation (Rosaldo, 2003: 2). In this way, under Suharto’s New Order regime, the government divided citizens into two groups: *pribumi* (native) and non-*pribumi* (non-native, such as Chinese). This classification was based on “race” and indigeneity, with *pribumi* considered to be the “asli” (true) inhabitants of the land. The term “*pribumi*” was as much an artificial national construct as the term “non-*pribumi*” (Diani, 2006).

Since Indonesianness was defined in terms of *pribumi*-ness, “no one can become ‘true’ Indonesian without first becoming a member of a *pribumi* ethnic group” (Suparlan, 2003: 26). Thus, although the Chinese acquired Indonesian citizenship, they were still seen as “foreigners” or “*pendatang*” (newcomers) and categorised as non-*pribumi*, as “they were perceived to have originated from a land outside the boundaries of the Indonesian nation” (Aguilar Jr., 2001). This racial distinction of *pribumi* and non-

*pribumi* was strictly maintained during the New Order, aiming to marginalise the Chinese as the “essential outsiders” and prevent them from being accepted fully as “Indonesians” (Chirot and Reid, 1997).

Chou explains that “the term ‘Chinese Indonesian’ can be understood as an Indonesian citizen who happens to be (*kebetulan*) of Chinese ethnicity/race...”. In this sense, Chinese Indonesians first recognise themselves as Indonesians and then identify themselves as having Chinese ethnicity; meanwhile, they are inseparable from the Indonesian nation as they “grow, live, work and die in Indonesian land, as Indonesians” (Chou, 2002). However, such a sense of identity as both Chinese and Indonesian was excluded under New Order policy.

In the early 1980s, scholars began to discuss the subject of “music and identity” in the field of ethnomusicology, repeatedly stressing the idea that music contributes to the construction of social identity (Rice, 2007: 25). Following this, ethnomusicologist Thomas Turino (1999) made a further contribution to the study of music and identity by applying the semiotic theory of Charles Sanders Peirce (an American philosopher, logician, mathematician and scientist) to the study of music, as he believed that the emotional power of music is derived from its nature as a sign. Music can construct identity in a “natural” way, in that music can represent the common experiences of a group, which in turn strengthens the emotional power of the music. In addition, music can express different emotions and identities through icons and indexes in a number of specific ways. Therefore, music is a major factor in the construction of social solidarity as well as for participation in events and propaganda (Turino, 1999: 236).

According to Turino’s theory, for the Chinese diaspora community in Indonesia who were living in an environment with diverse and heterogeneous cultures, music would be a kind of cultural sign representing many ethnic characteristics, being a medium for expressing sentiments of “homesickness” for the Chinese living in Indonesia and also

an index of the spirit of the whole Chinese community. Therefore, through the performance of inherited music in “ceremonial” activities such as celebrations of Chinese festivals and other religious activities, the Chinese population living with different cultures in Indonesia could be brought together, making temples places of congregation where the Chinese could feel a sense of “home”, and where their collective sense of ethnic identity could be felt through traditional Chinese culture.

Regarding music and identity, this study intends to mainly discuss ethnic and cultural identity as the concepts of the ethnicity and cultural identity are especially important to any study of a diaspora community. According to Grosfoguel’s conception, “ethnicity is used as a matter of cultural identity of a group, often based on shared ancestry, language, and cultural traditions, which are different from ‘race’. ‘Race’ is applied as a taxonomic grouping, based on physical or biological similarities within groups” (Grosfoguel, 2004: 315), though “race and ethnicity were primarily seen as two aspects of the same thing” (Banton, 2007: 21). For the Chinese diaspora in Indonesia, identity most often means ethnic identity, because of the blurred and complex experiences of nationality among Chinese Indonesians, and the identification of some participants with multiple nations simultaneously in current Chinese Indonesian music. In addition, with the advocacy of the multicultural policy of the Indonesian government, current Chinese Indonesians have gradually come to be accepted as a minority by most people in Indonesia . Furthermore, the term “suku Tionghoa” (ethnic Chinese) is used by Chinese Indonesians for self-identifying as a “group” for which they struggle for official recognition, since they are still not treated by the government as equal with other ethnicities (suku bangsa) in Indonesia.

Stokes mentioned that “ethnicities are violently suppressed and excluded them from the classification systems of the dominant group. When we are looking at the way in which ethnicities and identities are put into play in musical performance, we should not forget that music is one of the less innocent ways in which dominant categories are enforced and resisted” (Stokes, 1994:8). This can be seen in the views of *pribumi* Indonesians



towards Chinese Indonesian culture. Before 2010, most Indonesians still regarded Chinese culture as a foreign culture. This was reflected in the typology system of Indonesian *wayang*, which did not include the Chinese Indonesian *wayang* such as *wayang potehi* and *wacinwa*. More recently, some exhibitions and activities devoted to Indonesian traditional culture have begun to invite Chinese Indonesian musical forms to be performed as a part of Indonesian culture.

Benedict Anderson believed that peoples could be distinguished from each other by their myths, history, cultural attributes and ideologies, and racial ideology. He went on to illustrate how a nation is created by its people based on its national policies (Anderson, 1991: 145) and believed a nation to be an “imagined community” constructed by a society based on how people imagine and perceive their nation (ibid, 6-7). This leads to national complexity and rich national heritage being characterised by intrinsic differences in religion and ethnicity and placed within a hierarchy. However, such diversity can also be regarded as a threat which can undermine the integration of a nation, and therefore, in nations which advocate nationalist ideologies, internally diversified identities are often hidden or suppressed by the homogeneity of the “imagined” state. This allows the “common” ethnic identity to unite and distinguish citizens of one country from those of other ethnic groups, no matter what their internal differences (Handler, 1994: 29).

As a diaspora community, Chinese Indonesians carried unique ethnic and cultural characteristics of China with them when they emigrated, which allowed them to distinguish themselves from other ethnic groups in Indonesia. This has led Indonesian nationalists to continuously push assimilation policies toward the Chinese Indonesians to achieve their integration. In the face of such pressure, the Chinese population of the country have made changes to better adapt to, and integrate with, local society. This led Tan Chee Beng (2001) to suggest that the ethnic and cultural identity of the Chinese in south-east Asia should be formed based on their locally adapted experiences, known as the process of “localisation”, as this influences their ethnic and cultural identity. As

they become increasingly localised and adapt to the local political environment, the awareness of ethnic and cultural identity of Chinese Indonesians is strengthened (Tan C.B., 2001: 218-219).

Sociologist Stuart Hall's article "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" proposes two different views on cultural identity. The first position suggests that our cultural identities reflect common historical experiences and shared cultural codes, that these provide us with a connection between historical origins and our present personal identity, and that this is how the constant development of history shapes the collective cultural identity of a shared society (Hall, 2003: 234). Thus, cultural identity presents a link between the present continuous shared culture and the past discontinuous historical culture as people who have experienced common historical processes will have common cultural experiences. The second view identifies cultural identities as being neither static nor stable, but rather formed through a dynamic process within the discourses of history and culture. In this view, unstable political, economic, social, and cultural forces contribute to the dynamics of identity, unlike stable or predictable processes, as systematic characteristics are formed under different discourses, practices, and positioning (Hall, 1996: 4). Therefore, to analyze dynamic cultural identities, Hall suggested that it is not only necessary to trace their origins, but also to develop an awareness of the influence of historical experiences on individuals or communities through an understanding of their individual experiences, social processes, historical memories, and cultural imaginations.

As a result, in order to understand the complex dynamic identities of Chinese Indonesians, it is vital to understand the influences of political and economic environments in different periods, the development of Chinese Indonesian musical culture during those periods, and the adaptations and musical measures adopted by performers within the political discourse of the time. This will reveal how ethnic identity has been constructed and shaped through the practice of music and how Chinese Indonesian musical culture has developed between the past and the present,

leading to a better understanding of the ethnic identity of Chinese Indonesian performers in contemporary Indonesia.

#### **1.4.2 Music and Diaspora**

The term “diaspora”, derived from the ancient Greek words *dia* (through) and *speirein* (to scatter or sow), refers to a dispersion or spreading of people belonging to a nation or sharing a common culture. The original and restrictive usage of the term Diaspora, with a capital “D”, is commonly used for the dispersion of Jews after the Babylonian and Roman conquests of Palestine, and then the dispersion of Greeks and Armenians (*Collins English Dictionary*, 1986). At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the concept of “diaspora” underwent a relatively big transformation from the narrower definition to a more complex and dynamic perspective (Um, 2005: 2). Several scholars have also sought to find common characteristics to give some understanding of diaspora in the contemporary era.

For instance, Khachig Tölölyan proposed “the term diaspora that once described Jewish, Greek, and Armenian dispersion now shares meanings with a larger semantic domain that includes words like immigrants, expatriate, refugee, guest-worker, exile community, overseas community, ethnic community” (Tölölyan, 1991: 4-5). He later added that “the term diaspora was saturated with the meanings of exile, loss, dislocation, powerlessness and plain pain became a useful and even desirable way to describe a range of dispersions” (Tölölyan, 1996: 9). Marienstras indicated the time factor as a necessary condition for diaspora, because “its reality is proved in time and tested by time” (Marienstras, 1989: 125). Chaliand and Rageau also referred to the time factor. They emphasise forced migration as a main feature of diaspora, suggesting that diasporas transmit collective memory including historical facts and cultural heritage, and that a diaspora community will survive as a minority by inheriting a heritage (Chaliand and Rageau, 1995: xiv-xvii).

The Chinese diaspora community in Indonesia experienced a long history of immigration and development over hundreds of years. It has taken the lives of several generations to establish the Chinese diaspora as a minority in Indonesia, striving to maintain the culture of their home country especially after 1998. Chinese Indonesians have retained a common memory from their homeland over long periods of time, for instance in Chinese temples, festivals and arts. In Butler's sense of diaspora, the temporal-historical span of a diasporic community must extend over several generations, and the community must have a certain relationship with their homeland in reality or imagination (Butler, 2001: 192-5). Indeed, the currently active Chinese Indonesians are the fifth- or sixth-generation descendants of Chinese immigrants. They were born and grew up in Indonesia, and may never have been to China. They have only imagined China through what they have heard from older relatives or from the Chinese cultural activities in temples, seeing, imagining and reshaping China in their minds. Therefore, they have little contact with the real homeland, and relate to it mainly through their imagination.

According to Cohen, the idea of the diaspora varies in different cases and situations. For instance, ancient Greeks regarded the diaspora as an experience of migration and colonisation. For Jews, Armenians and Palestinians, the term diaspora implies a collective trauma. Cohen labels these different situations of diaspora as the "typology of diaspora", which include the "victim diaspora" (African and Armenian), "labour diaspora" (Indian), "imperial diaspora" (British), "trade diaspora" (Chinese and Lebanese) and "cultural diaspora" (Caribbean), among other types. A diaspora group does not necessarily carry one type: some may have dual or multiple types. However, these groups will change their characteristics over time (Cohen, 1997: ix-x). In this sense, the Chinese diaspora in Indonesia represents multiple types of diaspora. With the development and political changes in different historical periods, the main characteristics of the group have changed. Specifically, the Chinese diaspora in Indonesia could be considered as a migration and "trade diaspora" in the original immigration period. During the "New Order" prohibition and the post-"New Order"

period, it could be seen as a collective trauma, because of the force of political assimilation from the Indonesian government. As for the current and future Chinese diaspora in Indonesia, I hope it can be called a “cultural diaspora” as a minority representing their unique cultural characteristics among the other ethnic minorities in Indonesia. In Soysal’s words, “a past [is] invented for the present, and is perpetually laboured into shapes and meanings consistent with the present” (Soysal, 2000:2).

In a book on music in diaspora, Hae-kyung Um mentioned, “it seems to be the case that the different sets of migration and post-migration conditions of each diaspora community shape and revise their idea of homeland and its tradition. For instance, in her book, Giuriati described the Cambodian refugees in the US and France, the traumatic departure and the subsequent radical displacement from Cambodia contributed to their idealized memory of homeland and tradition” (Um, 2005: 129). For Koreans in the former Soviet Union and China, the idea of homeland also had to change when they had to choose South or North Korea as their homeland of allegiance at the end of the Cold War (Um, 2005: 43). A similar situation happened to the Chinese diaspora in Indonesia. During the “New Order” period, the local government cancelled the dual nationality for the Chinese Indonesians. If they preferred to live in Indonesia, Chinese Indonesians had to choose Indonesian nationality. Additionally, in order to unify all ethnic groups in Indonesia, the local government implemented a series of assimilation policies, prohibiting the Chinese language and any Chinese cultural activities. This has led to the disappearance of most Chinese culture and the slow development of a small part of Chinese culture, which undoubtedly makes the idea of the homeland slowly change and weaken, especially for the younger generation of Chinese Indonesians.

The question here is whether the Chinese diaspora in Indonesia has lost all knowledge, consciousness and imagination of their homeland because of the 33-year prohibition policy. In fact, most *peranakan* who are not involved in Chinese cultural activities seem to have no such memory. However, Chinese Indonesians who do engage in or support

cultural activities, especially the *totok*, have never forgotten that their ancestors came from China. Thus, Chinese Indonesians are in a situation that is different from most other diaspora groups. The current performers of Chinese Indonesian music are mostly Indonesian *pribumi*. Can we say that the current Chinese Indonesian music only belongs to the local Indonesian culture, no longer to the Chinese diaspora community in Indonesia? My answer is no, because although the performers are Indonesian *pribumi*, most of them have to follow the wishes of the sponsors, and the sponsors are often Chinese Indonesians who acknowledge their Chinese ancestry. Although some leaders have gradually Indonesianised the musical forms in order to solve the problem of the survival of Chinese Indonesian music, they do not want to Indonesianise it completely. For instance, we can see that Chinese cultural elements are still maintained in the musical form of *wacinwa*. In addition, even Indonesian performers still retain Chinese cultural elements and ritual customs in their performances. They recognise the historical origin of the music in China and will not completely abandon it. Therefore, I believe that contemporary Chinese Indonesian musical culture has a dual identity: it belongs both to the culture of the Chinese diaspora in Indonesia and to the local *pribumi* culture.

In diaspora situations, many immigrants often cherish an ideal vision of their homeland culture and hope to keep this with them after leaving. Brubaker mentioned that most early discussions on diaspora involved the concept of “homeland” and paid attention to certain typical cases, such as the Jewish diaspora. Then he proposed an expansion of the term: “diaspora can be applied to immigrant groups, who continue the events of their homeland in the foreign area, as the long-distance nationalists” (Brubaker, 2005: 2). According to Safran (1991: 85), even when the homeland culture of immigrants has had structural changes or has been suppressed by political and social pressure in the resettlement destination, they will still endeavour to use the cultural idealisation of their homeland in order to keep their self-identity with the home country. Safran defined a “diaspora” community as an ethnic group which leaves its country of origin and scatters to more than two peripheral areas from their original home. This community then

maintains the memory of and myth from their homeland and often believes they are not, or may not be, accepted by their host country. They treat the homelands of their ancestors as residences of eventual return, keeping in touch with people there or returning regularly. This means the collective identity of the diaspora community is defined by their continuous relationship with their home country. In the introduction to her edited book *Diasporas and Interculturalism in Asian Performing Arts*, Hae-kyung Um mentioned that the diaspora will translate, adapt and innovate their imaginary tradition of the homeland in a foreign country, which gives them a hybrid culture and multiple identities crossing political and national boundaries. She also remarked that the performance art of the diaspora can be regarded as a product of the process of cross-cultural exchange. The representing of multiple cultural identities and the political power are negotiated in the context of globalization among diaspora, home country and host country (Um, 2005:6).

The Chinese diaspora in Indonesia exhibits such a relationship with the homeland and has constructed a collective identity relating to their home country simply by regularly practicing Chinese traditional music in their lives. Consequently, this study will discuss how the diaspora community of Chinese Indonesians connect their identity with the home country through the imagination and practice of musical culture. Of particular focus will be the study of how they were able to maintain such a connection under the New Order Chinese exclusionary policy.

#### **1.4.2.1 Musical Hybridity**

Within the topic of music and diaspora, this study will discuss another related issue—that of musical hybridity. In Clifford Geertz's words, "we now live in a globalised world in which there is a gradual spectrum of mixed-up differences" (Geertz, 1988: 148). Ang argued the importance of hybridity in the context of diaspora, proposing that the hybrid context of the global city brings an inherent contradiction locked in the concept of diaspora, as diaspora relies on maintaining a natural essential identity to ensure its imagined status as a coherent community. Ang suggests that "hybridity always implies

an unsettling of identities.... Hybridity is not the only solution, but alerts us to the difficulty of living with differences; hybridity is a heuristic device for analysing complicated entanglement in diaspora contexts” (Ang, 2003:149-150). In a theoretical article on musical culture contact, Margaret Kartomi argues that it is impossible for a culture to completely reject another culture with which it has been in contact for a long time, because a certain degree of symbiotic exchange is inevitable, and all cultures are historically “hybrid”, not “pure” (Kartomi, 1981: 235-6). Moskowitz suggests that the concept of hybridity provides a way to investigate the experiences encountered by co-existing multicultural groups and diaspora communities through exploring musical production and performance (Moskowitz, 2010). In *Beautiful Cosmos*, Tina K. Ramnarine has studied the creative process of memory, performance and production in the Caribbean diaspora and indicates that hybridity can be illustrated through a transformative process that involves music, language and politics. Ramnarine reveals that if we only see cultural contact or cultural exchange in a conventional way—simply viewing how different cultures mix together—we are in danger of over-generalization. She suggests that an alternative way is to look at hybridity on a global scale, and consider the process as it happens by using Bhabha’s concept that “hybridity is not ‘a third term that resolves the tension between two cultures’, but... it presents an interruption to assumptions of difference that mark power stratifications and an intervention in the ‘exercise of authority’” (Ramnarine 2007: 31). Indeed, any cultural contact will constantly present differences that result in new forms and this process is continuous, so that emerging hybridity is due to the power of interventions that involve the unstable, uncertain imbalance of a diasporic context. This study will explain the hybridity in the Chinese diasporic music of Indonesia through the analysis of cultural policies of intervention and the continual process of development.

Such a hybridity phenomenon can be seen in Chinese Indonesian musical culture, as initially, this group inherited most of their musical forms from the traditional music of their Chinese homeland. However, as time passed, and in order to preserve and develop their culture, they had to integrate local cultural elements under the influence of the



social and political environment, thus combining Chinese and Indonesian traditional cultures, as can be seen in *wayang potehi*, whereas *wacinwa* is a new artistic mixture created by the fusion of Chinese Indonesian *wayang potehi* and Indonesian gamelan. By analysing the performance forms and changes in both *wayang potehi* and *wacinwa*, this study will explore how musical hybridity has been embodied in the process of Chinese Indonesian musical practice and how musicians have connected national identity to their performance in different periods.

### **1.4.3 Musical Revivals**

According to Tamara Livingston, music revivals can be interpreted as social movements which attempt to restore a disappearing musical system through recreating a past musical system (Livingston, 1999: 66). Rosenberg further explains that a musical “system” consists of a common repertoire and musical instruments with certain performing styles, and is generally considered to be restricted by class, nation, race, religion, commerce and the arts (Rosenberg 1993: 177). However, Slobin is doubtful about the role of such revivals in the reproduction of ethnic musical genres and instead tends to regard them as the “reshaping” of culture, rather than the restoration of lost customs and cultures (Slobin, 1983: 39-41).

Bithell and Hill edited the book *The Oxford Handbook of Music Revival* providing multiple studies on musical revivals by different authors, including various theoretical concepts relevant to the present research (Bithell and Hill, 2014). This book brings a variety of perspectives on music revival under several research themes, such as musical revival in relation to intangible cultural heritage, the national renaissance and postcolonial futures, innovations and transformations, festivals, marketing and media, and (especially important for this study) the theme of the music revival in diaspora. One chapter, Sean Williams’ “Irish Music Revivals Through Generations of Diaspora” (Williams S., 2014), reveals the extent to which diaspora Irish people rely on sound and visual cues to connect them to each other and their homes. Williams believes that the diaspora identity is based on what is lost in the creation of the diaspora. Then, the

revived musical genres could connect the diaspora with Ireland and its people through specific musical symbols. In another chapter, Simon Keegan-Phipps and Trish Winter offer a deeper understanding of “Contemporary English Folk Music and the Folk Industry” under the theme of innovations. They examine how the increasingly commercial and specialised “folk industry” coexisted and interacted with the folk arts in the context of the revival of British folk music in the early 21st century. They also point out that the folk festival is a key place for the resurgence of the folk industry, and propose that the contemporary situation would be better described as a resurgence rather than a revival in English Folk Music (Keegan-Phipps and Winter, 2014). These studies on musical revivals all helped shape my view of the subject for the Chinese Indonesian musical revival examined in this study.

In the “New Order” period, Chinese Indonesians were prohibited from musical activity for 32 years, meaning that many Chinese Indonesian musicians were unable to perform and had to be engaged in other lines of work to make a living. In addition, the deaths of older performers, and the destruction of scripts, notations, puppets, and musical instruments by some musicians to avoid the bullying and crackdown from the Suharto government, resulted in the disappearance of most Chinese Indonesian musical culture during this time, including *wayang gantung* (the suspended puppet opera), *gambang kromong* (a syncretic musical form which combined Chinese culture with the Indonesian local dance *wayang cokek*), and the aforementioned *wacinwa* and *barongsai*. *Wayang potehi* was also forbidden, though it maintained a kind of underground existence during the period, facilitating its later revival (Purwoseputro, 2014: 29-30). However, when President Abdurrahman Wahid assumed office and advocated multi-culturalism, lifting numerous anti-Chinese policies, Chinese Indonesians were once more allowed to perform their traditional musical culture. This was accepted and recognized by local governments, subsequently leading to the involvement of both Chinese Indonesians and local people in revival activities.

Livingston mentioned that revivalists often insist on using their traditional instruments in performances as a sign of loyalty to their national culture (Livingston, 1999: 71). This is fully reflected by the revivalists of the Chinese Indonesian musical culture, where, for example, the instruments used in the background music of *wayang potehi* have mainly retained the original form of Hainan *Pa-ying*. *Pa-ying* (or *pa tim*, 八音) was originally an instrument classification system from the Chinese Western Zhou Dynasty (1046–771BC), in which instruments were traditionally divided into eight categories: metal instruments, stone instruments, clay instruments, leather instruments, silk instruments, wooden instruments, gourd instruments and bamboo instruments. All of these were later classified into the categories of Chinese traditional wind and percussion instruments and folk musical instruments through a variety of folk customs and religions such as Shanxi *Pa-ying*, Guangxi *Pa-ying* and Hainan *Pa-ying*. The last of these, Hainan *Pa-ying*, stemmed from Chaozhou music, and was used as the background music of *potehi* by Chinese Indonesian performers (Long, 2010: 17). *Pa-ying* in the traditional Chinese Indonesian community was often performed at Chinese festivals or the funeral ceremonies, and used the *suona* as its principal instrument, partnered with flute, *huqin*, cymbals, and drums (Kartomi, 2000: 279).

Therefore, on the issue of music revivals, this study primarily targets the Chinese Indonesian musical forms which suffered under the 32 years of prohibition and how they have been revived and developed since 1998 under the relatively open and democratic political environment following the abolition of the Chinese exclusion policy. To understand the revival process of this music, three case studies will be focused on: *wayang potehi*, *wacinwa* and *jasen potehi*. Developments in these three major musical theatre forms of Chinese Indonesians will be examined along with the development of contemporary Indonesia, through comparison with performances in the past. I will analyze the phenomenon of localisation which takes place in the process of these musical revivals, and the modernisation that has appeared in the musical process since the revival. These elements have not been studied in previous research, but are

vital for the study of Chinese Indonesian musical culture in contemporary Indonesia.

## **1.5 Methodology**

The aim of this thesis is to explore the musical practice of the Chinese diaspora in contemporary Indonesia through the issues of identity, hybridity and revival in music. The methodology includes a literature review, participant-observation, interviews and questionnaires, and music analysis. My research has relied on close participation with, and involvement in, the everyday life of Chinese Indonesian musical communities, such as the *wayang potehi* troupe of Fu He An (福和安) in Gudo, East Java; the *wacinwa* troupe in Yogyakarta, Central Java and the *jasen potehi* group in Mojokerto, East Java. Learning the performing skills of the *dalang* and other musicians as a research technique has provided further insights and enabled me to move from purely being an observer to becoming an actual part of the process.

### **1.5.1 Fieldwork**

My fieldwork for this research was implemented in different regions over four periods from January 2017 to December 2019, amounting to a total of ten months. Research was carried out over three periods in Yogyakarta, Gudo and Mojokerto in Indonesia, and the fourth period took place in Hubei, China. The main tasks of the field trips were to collect literature, to interview participants, and to observe and participate in the performances of Chinese Indonesian musical troupes—which involved learning and performing Chinese Indonesian music.

The collection of literature relating to the historical development of Chinese Indonesian musical culture came from libraries and research participants, and includes academic books, journals, theses, conference articles and other references in the Indonesian, Chinese, and English languages. These include the respective historical development of different Chinese Indonesian musical genres and the overall history of Chinese Indonesians. The collected information and data were analyzed to show the historical development and highlight relevant events impacting on cultural policies in each period.

In addition, I also collected some published materials, such as comic books, story books, DVDs, recordings of compositions, musical programs, posters, and videos of performances.

The first phase of the fieldwork actually took place in early 2017 as a preliminary fieldwork project. I was invited to participate in an ethnographic film project by scholars from Tainan National University of the Arts about “The Arts of the Chinese Community in Indonesia”. I travelled to the country and carried out the fieldwork from January to February 2017. It was this research trip which gave me the foundation for a revised doctoral thesis proposal that has resulted in a study focused on the musical culture of the Chinese diaspora in Indonesia. During that trip to Indonesia, the group working on the film project consisted of six people: Prof. Tsai Tsung-te, Li Chung-ming, Tseng Tzu-yi, and Chen Chun-tien from Tainan National University of the Arts, Azwar Razeld, a teacher from Institut Seni Indonesia Yogyakarta, and myself. Prof. Tsai was the leader of the project and the producer of this film. Li Chung-ming was his student and research assistant. Chen Chun-tien was the director of the film and was responsible for all photography and videography during the project trip. Tseng Tzu-yi controlled the sound recording from performances and interviews. Azwar Razeld, as a local assistant of the project, was responsible for contacting all interviewees and translating Indonesian into English. My main role was to prepare background information about the interviewees and to prepare interview questions, as well as recording the interviews themselves. I also conducted a few interviews myself. As I did not understand Bahasa Indonesia during the period of this preliminary fieldwork, most of the documentary records came from the translations of Razeld, and the few interviews I did were with interviewees who could speak English.

During this project trip, we travelled to four places to interview different types of influential people: Yogyakarta, Gudo, Malang and Jakarta. The interviewees came from various backgrounds and identities. Among them were not only Chinese Indonesians, but also *pribumi* Indonesians, as well as a descendant of the Java Palace royal family.

The interviewees included Didik Nini Thowok, an internationally renowned Chinese Indonesian dancer; Ki Radyo Harsono, a Chinese Indonesian puppeteer of Javanese *wayang kulit*; Sumarsam, a well-known Indonesian ethnomusicologist, who has studied the contributions of Chinese Indonesians in the Javanese performing arts; Tejo Bagus Sunaryo, the prince of K.R.A.T.K. Keraton Surakarta family from the Mangkunegaran Palace; Taufik Sutanto, a successful entrepreneur and a third-generation Chinese Indonesian who advocates Javanese philosophy and traditional arts; Hanggar Budi Prasetya, an associate professor in the department of puppetry art at Institut Seni Indonesia Yogyakarta, whose main study field is the theory of Javanese shadow puppetry (*wayang kulit*), and who is now dedicated to the revival of *wacinwa*. Therefore, we could hear different views about Chinese Indonesian culture from different perspectives. Our interviews mainly focused on four areas: the migration history of Chinese Indonesians, the developing history of Chinese Indonesian arts, the social and artistic status of Chinese Indonesians in different historical periods, and the perspectives of both Chinese Indonesians and *pribumi* Indonesians on Chinese Indonesian culture.

This film includes all Chinese Indonesian art forms from the past to the present, and aims to give the audience a comprehensive introduction to this culture. Therefore, the musical genres of Chinese Indonesians are only touched on briefly because there were other arts such as dance, sculpture, painting, and Chinese Indonesian novels that needed to be included. In spite of this, the section about musical culture informed me about historical and existing Chinese Indonesian musical genres, and this is exactly where I saw a research gap. In addition, the historical material provided me with a relatively complete picture of the history of Chinese Indonesians and their arts, as the spoken history from the interviews filled in the gaps in the written historical records. I also learned about the different experiences of the *totok* and *peranakan* families and their different national and cultural identities as reflected in Chinese Indonesian art. More importantly, participating in this project provided a foundation of knowledge and established a network for my follow-up research, which gave me the courage and

inspiration to devote myself to the study of Chinese Indonesian musical culture.

As a result of the film project I changed the focus of my PhD research. The original topic focused on a traditional Chinese genre and would have involved fieldwork in my home country, China. But after the film trip and when I was back in the UK, I discussed changing the research direction of my thesis with my supervisor, Andrew Killick. He agreed that this topic would enable me to make a more significant contribution through its connection with issues of growing concern in ethnomusicology internationally, including music in diaspora, music and identity, music and hybridity, and musical revivals. I started to learn Bahasa Indonesia so that I could not be hindered by a language barrier in my next piece of fieldwork. After passing the confirmation review with this topic in October 2017, I made my first personal fieldwork trip to Indonesia from January to March 2018. Aiming to gain more information about musical genres in Chinese Indonesian culture, this fieldwork was conducted in three different regions in Java: Yogyakarta, Gudo and Mojokerto, where Chinese Indonesian musical activities are relatively prevalent. The main objects of the fieldwork were *wacinwa* and *wayang potehi*. The fieldwork relating to *wacinwa* was mainly in Yogyakarta, because Yogyakarta was the birthplace, and has become the center of the revival, of *wacinwa*. The main tasks for the *wacinwa* fieldwork were the collection of literature materials and interviewing participants. The research started with the collection of historical literature on *wacinwa* from the Museum Negeri Sonobudoyo Yogyakarta and from informants. Due to the prohibition period, most materials about *wacinwa* had been burned. Only some puppets from *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang* theatre that had not been destroyed were collected and preserved in the Museum Negeri Sonobudoyo. So I went to the museum to learn about the history of *wacinwa*, where I saw and photographed the antique *wacinwa* puppets displayed in the museum. In addition, I obtained a copy of the guide from the 2014 *wacinwa* exhibition in the museum; it was a brief introduction to *wacinwa* for those who came to visit the exhibition.

In order to understand the revival of *wacinwa*, I went to the Institut Seni Indonesia

Yogyakarta (ISI) to interview two major revivalists, Prof. Hanggar Budi Prasetya and Prof. Aneng Kiswanto. These professors have much knowledge and personal experience in *wacinwa* and its revival, though they have not published detailed research on *wacinwa* but only provided information and editing for a brochure on *wacinwa* in the revival exhibition of Museum Negeri Sonobudoyo. Therefore, I used the interviews of these two professors for “oral history” and personal perspectives on *wacinwa*. Prasetya is an associate professor in the shadow puppetry department of the university, teaching the theory of Javanese *wayang*, and has been reviving and researching *wacinwa* since 2014, when he was invited to participate in preparing the *wacinwa* exhibition at the museum. His work was to identify the names of the puppets. Because there was no record of the name of each puppet, as the person who made them did not write their names, and the former owner, the Chinese Institute, did not provide the names either, it was a challenge to find the proper name for each puppet before the exhibition. This led him to start to research *wacinwa*. I did three in-depth interviews with him, and he gave me more complete detail about the historical development of *wacinwa*, as well as his reasons and ideas for the revival of *wacinwa*. An unexpected gain was that he lent me Soelarto’s book *Wayang Kulit Cina-Jawa Yogyakarta* and Seltmann’s article “*Wayang Thithi Chinesisches Schattenspiel in Jogjakarta*”. These sources are currently difficult to obtain, but they are very precious historical sources, and were the main materials for his research on *wacinwa*.

I also interviewed the other revivalist Prof. Aneng Kiswanto, who is an associate professor in the same shadow puppetry department of ISI as Prasetya. He mainly teaches the performance skills of Javanese traditional shadow puppetry (*wayang kulit* and *wayang purwa*), and he is also a famous *dalang* of Javanese *wayang*. He was invited by Prasetya to take part in the revival of *wacinwa* in 2014, where he participated in the first performance of *wacinwa* after disappearing for many years. From him, I got some information about performing details and the puppets of the revival, recordings of performances, and his perspective on *wacinwa*. These were also valuable resources to enable me to understand the thinking of revivalists and to compare current *wacinwa*



with previous versions from the past.

I continued my *wayang potehi* fieldwork in Mojokerto and Gudo, where, in addition to collecting literature, I also carried out a number of interviews and observed rehearsals and performances of *wayang potehi* in person. The interviewees included members of two *wayang potehi* troupes: Fu He An in Gudo and the Yensen Project in Mojokerto. Fu He An was chosen because it is widely considered to be the *wayang potehi* troupe that best preserves the tradition of Chinese *budaixi*, whereas the Yensen Project is an innovative *wayang potehi* troupe that has adapted *potehi* and integrates elements of local contemporary Indonesian arts in performance. Investigating these two troupes would give me a comprehensive understanding of contemporary *wayang potehi*. Therefore, I interviewed various people connected to these two groups, including patrons, agents, *dalangs*, musicians, and makers of puppets, in order to understand the history and the consequent changes in *wayang potehi* through different periods, including the countermeasures during the “New Order” period, as well as the role of *wayang potehi* in Chinese Indonesian culture. I was also interested in their views about the future development of *wayang potehi*. These interviews provide much useful material to help make my analysis of *wayang potehi* more thorough and comprehensive. In addition to the interviews, I also observed and recorded the performance of Fu He An in Malang and their performance at the Chinese New Year event in Yogyakarta. From Malang, I followed them back to Yogyakarta, and accompanied them throughout the week-long performance series, participating in their lives and observing various performance arrangements. On the other hand, during the trip in Mojokerto, I also watched their performance of *potehi* and recorded it. In conversation with the patron, Yensen, I heard about his plans to create a new *potehi* with more Javanese elements, which he called *jasen potehi*, a kind of Javanese *potehi*. He was planning to organise a performance of this new form at the end of the year, and this became an important opportunity for me to go to Indonesia for a third fieldwork trip.

My second fieldwork trip had yielded many new insights and contacts, but a longer

period of fieldwork in Indonesia was a crucial requirement, and due to the limited duration of my tourist visa, it would be necessary to make another trip in order to complete the research. During my second fieldwork trip I had made contact with the Department of Ethnomusicology at the Institut Seni Indonesia Yogyakarta, where staff were enthusiastic about my research and gave me an invitation to apply for a longer research visa with their support. With this invitation, I would be able to study the music of Chinese Indonesians through personal fieldwork in Indonesia for six months, starting in August 2018. My third fieldwork trip could then involve intensive participation in the musical life of the Chinese Indonesian community, including participant-observation, learning, practicing, performing and interviewing. As my most important research experience, the third fieldwork trip started in August 2018 and ended in January 2019. Thanks to the long-term visa, I could go deeper into a study of the local area, becoming a part the world of my research object, systematically recording what I saw and heard—living with my research subjects for a long time and observing all aspects of their lives and culture, day after day, in order to understand the soil in which the musical culture grows. This life helped me to change my research perspective from that of an outsider to becoming more of an insider, allowing me to re-examine the musical culture from a dual perspective. In my research on *jasen potehi* and *wacinwa* I used various processes, such as participant-observation, one-to-one interview, group discussion, informal interview, in-depth interview, questionnaires, etc., and these were supplemented with other data, such as records, manuscripts of participants, photographs and videos.

Moreover, the analysis of music itself was of great value in this research, filling gaps in the study of Chinese Indonesian music culture by other researchers. In this fieldwork trip, in addition to participating in observation and recording, using interviews, questionnaires and other research data, I myself also learned and performed the music that I was studying, thus gaining “bi-musicality”. To gain knowledge and performing experience of gamelan music became an important aim of this trip. During the trip, I learned the skills to play various styles of gamelan, such those of Central Java, East

Java, Surakarta and Bali in Institut Seni Indonesia Yogyakarta (Figure 1-5). In addition to learning gamelan, I also applied to join a senior gamelan composition course, the purpose of which was to enable me to apply my gamelan performing skills and achieve a deeper understanding of the music to help ensure the accuracy of the music analysis in my research. Another important element of this trip was that I also learned the skills of Javanese traditional shadow puppetry. During the learning process, I gained more performing and language experience, and got the opportunity to observe and record a great deal about my research subject of *wacinwa* through my main consultant on the genre, Prof. Kiswanto. The details of my learning and performing experience will be discussed in depth in the next section.



Figure 1-5: Institut Seni Indonesia Yogyakarta.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to my personal learning and performing experiences, I also participated in a rare performance of *jasen potehi* and *wacinwa* at the end of 2018. I observed and recorded the whole process of practice and composition before the performance, and gained insights into every aspect of the creative process. I also had the opportunity to interview and chat with *dalangs*, musicians, singers and composers at various times, combining what I saw with my aim to explore their constantly changing identities in

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<sup>5</sup> Photograph by author.

the practice and creation of the musical process.

The fourth fieldwork trip took place in November 2019, in China. It was a transnational trip of performance, creation, and cultural communication. In June 2019, I was invited by the Wuhan Conservatory of Music to participate in the Music Exhibition “The Sound of the River: Music Intangible Heritage Exhibition of the Yangtze River Valley” (Figure 1-6), and was also invited by the “Oriental Musicology Forum” to speak and teach at an academic lecture and workshop about Indonesian musical culture (Figure 1-7). After receiving the invitation, I made contact with the Indonesian Wulang Tumanggal shadow puppetry troupe, a new, young shadow puppet theater group established by Prof. Kiswantoro and myself during my third fieldwork trip in Indonesia. Most of the other group members were graduate students of Kiswantoro, and there were several young outstanding performers of Javanese traditional *wayang*. I also contacted several other universities in China, Xi’an Conservatory of Music and Central China Normal University, and they all invited us to perform. Before each performance, we did some composition and creative work which was recorded. We planned to show three different forms of contemporary Indonesian shadow puppetry: *wayang kulit* (the Indonesian traditional art), *wacinwa* (the Chinese Indonesian art), and *wayang cinema*.

*Wayang cinema* is a new and modern form of shadow puppetry that we created for the young student audiences of Chinese universities, using Chinese and Javanese shadow puppets to perform Chinese stories, presented in the form of “live movies” (Figure 1-8). Specifically, we made a film using puppets and projected it on the screen as a dynamic background for the performance. The *dalangs* performed with shadow puppets behind the screen, combining with the previously filmed effects. This made the performance vivid, almost like an animated film, though in fact the puppeteer was performing live. For the musical accompaniment, we combined Javanese traditional music with Chinese traditional music, performed on the Javanese gamelan, and so this new kind of show, combining Chinese and Indonesian culture, appeared on the stage for the first time. After the performance, it was warmly welcomed and highly appraised

by the teachers and students in the universities. After the event, I interviewed some audience members, organizers, and performers from our troupe to find out how they felt during the performance. Consequently, I have been able to make a challenging wish come true: to bring the Chinese Indonesian *wacinwa* back to its original place, so that the Chinese traditional theater, which has undergone big historical changes, could return to its homeland and be performed in a different way.

In addition to performance and academic activities in the China trip, I also facilitated cultural fusion between two traditional shadow puppetry forms—*wacinwa* and Chinese traditional shadow puppetry—in a different form but based on the same original roots. I invited a famous shadow puppetry troupe in central China, the Yunmeng Troupe, to participate in joint cultural and performance activities with us, and tried to obtain relevant material for the comparative study of traditional Chinese shadow puppetry and Chinese Indonesian *wacinwa*, from my interview and discussion with Qin Ligang, the leader of Yunmeng Troupe and inheritor of Chinese intangible cultural heritage.

In this fieldwork trip, I gained experience of Chinese Indonesian music as a cultural promoter, bringing the changed traditional Chinese art back to China and presenting it to a Chinese audience, which seemed a meaningful return from Chinese Indonesians. While I did not conduct research on the musical culture of Chinese Indonesians who had moved to China during the “New Order” period, I regard my participation in the creation of the new *wayang cinema* form for Chinese audiences as a kind of applied research. The current Chinese Indonesian art represents the living status of a diaspora community negotiating between its homeland and host country by practicing a traditional Chinese art form. In addition, I learned to look at the music and culture with a dual perspective and cultural identity, especially in the musical creation process of this cross-cultural art form. It was necessary to make the creation and innovation suitable for the audiences based on respect for different cultures. These practical experiences and dual perspectives in my research have helped me to analyse and explain the phenomena and changes in the process of Chinese Indonesian musical

development.



Figure 1-6: The invitation of the Music Exhibition “The Sound of the River: Music Intangible Heritage Exhibition of the Yangtze River Valley” from the Wuhan Conservatory of Music, China, 9 November 2019.



Figure 1-7: The poster of “Oriental Musicology Forum” from Wuhan Conservatory of Music China, 7 November 2019.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> The invitation Figure 1-6 and poster Figure 1-7 were provided by Wuhan Conservatory of Music, China.



Figure 1-8: The performing form of *wayang cinema* performed by Wulang Tumanggal troupe in Wuhan Conservatory of Music, China, 9 November 2019.<sup>7</sup>

### 1.5.2 Learning to Perform as a Research Technique

In Tina K. Ramnarine's article about her research on the role of experiential learning and performance in ethnomusicology courses, she described in detail the role of performance training in the Ethnomusicology course at Queen's University Belfast. She emphasised the learning and teaching process of music as a research method to analyse music performance and understand the process of music production (Ramnarine, 2004). This kind of experiential learning and performance has been advocated by many scholars as a specific method of studying music culture to be applied in the research of ethnomusicology. In his research on Afghan music, for instance, John Baily learned the local musical instruments and found the experience of interacting with local musicians to be a useful research method to gain local views, integrate into the local cultural system, and deepen his understanding of musical performance and culture (Baily, 2001). These ethnomusicologists all advocate practice and performance of music as an important way to understand the musical culture, rather than just observation and data collection in fieldwork. Similarly, my fieldwork involved a large amount of learning and performance experience and I tried to shift my perspective from that of an outside researcher to that of a performer who is integrated into the local culture, thus again

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<sup>7</sup> Photograph obtained from video provided by Wuhan Conservatory of Music, China.

using a dual perspective to reflect on the musical culture.

Mantle Hood proposed the term “bi-musicality” as a research method which can be applied in ethnomusicological research. He claimed that learning to perform is “the crowning achievement” of bi-musicality, and that we need to absorb the “the whole tradition”, including “the related arts ... language, religion, customs and history” (Hood, 1960: 58). For my research, although I have focused on Chinese music in Indonesia, in fact, only the musical background of *wayang potehi* has actually retained traditional Chinese music. The background music of *wacinwa* and *jasen potehi* is provided by Indonesian traditional gamelan, which would require me to have the musical background knowledge of two cultures. My background is in Chinese music, and I am able to play and understand this music, although I did have some experience of learning gamelan in my master’s program, when I conducted an academic exchange in Taiwan and studied gamelan for a year. However, after several years, my performance skills and knowledge had become a little rusty, and I had only learned basic performance skills that did not involve composition and making of music or the philosophy of Indonesian traditional music, all of which are integral elements of Indonesian musical creation and performance. If I was only able to understand and analyse Chinese music, without sufficient knowledge and performing experience of gamelan music, I would not be able to carry out the musical analysis part of my research, and it would lose its distinction from other studies.

Therefore, to gain knowledge and performing experience of gamelan music became an important aim of this trip. During my second fieldwork period, I applied to the Institut Seni Indonesia Yogyakarta for the Foreign Visiting Scholar Program, hoping that I would be able to go to the university to learn to perform gamelan and to study the related theoretical knowledge on my third field trip. The International Office of ISI quickly agreed to my request and allowed me to enter the Karawitan (Gamelan) Department to participate in various gamelan courses, and I experienced five months of study time together with the local students of this department. During these five months, I learned



the skills to play various styles of gamelan, and selected four gamelan performance courses—Central Java, East Java, Surakarta and Bali Island—in order to gain performing experiences as a local performer and to have a better understanding of local musical culture. I also practised and participated in performances in private orchestras organised by the teachers in my spare time. In addition to attending gamelan classes in the university, I also went to the private gamelan orchestra led by the teachers to learn and practice in my spare time; this experience involved different musical skills and performance environments from the academic school. There were many professional performers in the orchestra, who had excellent performance and improvisation skills, and they were able to cleverly integrate local musical elements into our practice instead of simply playing from the notation. In fact, the teacher did not give us any notation at all, but instead taught us in the traditional way through oral methods and demonstration. The teacher said:

There is no notation in the training of traditional gamelan. The player needs to remember the melody with his brain and then copy it by their hand. If you want to play gamelan like the locals, you cannot read the notation. Because the melody is always in our mind, heart, and hands.

I found this very difficult at the beginning, as the Western style of musical training is completely different, but this part of the practice proved the most helpful for improving my performing skills in the end. As more and more material from the melodies filled my mind, I slowly and gradually gained a deeper understanding of gamelan music as the understanding and thoughts in my mind were transferred to my hands. This inner-outward process of memory, understanding and practice was a very profound learning experience in my understanding of the music at different stages of learning. Moreover, through this kind of learning experience I discovered that we need to learn other cultures and music performances in their traditional ways, rather than learning with our own cultural background. We need to respect local traditions and ways of thinking about music so that we can truly understand the music and culture as locals do. As my playing skills gradually improved, I was invited by Asrama to participate in the “Bali

Music Cultural Exhibition”, in Yogyakarta, and performed the famous Balinese music “Gegilakan1&2” for Balinese gamelan, and through this experience I gained some valuable performing experience on a large stage (Figure 1-9, 1-10).



Figure 1-9: The author participating in the performance of the “Bali Music Cultural Exhibition” organised by Asrama in Yogyakarta, 22 November 2018.



Figure 1-10: The author as a performer with the group of Asrama in Yogyakarta, 22 November 2018.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Photographs Figure 1-9, 1-10 provided by the Asrama group.

In addition to learning gamelan, I also applied to join a senior gamelan composition course, the purpose of which was to enable me to understand the structure and production process of gamelan music, having experienced the performance characteristics of each instrument and learned how to apply them in composition. During this time my performing skills improved day by day, as did my Indonesian language skills. I wanted to accumulate enough knowledge to be able analyze the music in my research. At the end of the semester, I participated in the Competition of Performing and Composing gamelan “24 JAM MENABUH#3” in Yogyakarta (Figure 1-11). My original composition “Lancaran Untuk Burung” won the prize and I was awarded the title of “Gamelan Pemusik” (gamelan musician) in the competition (Figure 1-12). Such rewards were also an affirmation and recognition of my integration into the local cultural system. In addition, I met many famous Javanese musicians and orchestras from various performances, and some became very good friends, which made my research experience in Indonesia more personal and emotional.



Figure 1-11: The poster of the Competition of Performing and Composing Gamelan “24 JAM MENABUH#3” in Yogyakarta, 12-13 December 2018.



Figure 1-12: The author participating in the competition “24 JAM MENABUH#3” in Yogyakarta, 12 December 2018.<sup>9</sup>

As mentioned above, I also learned the skills of Javanese traditional shadow puppetry in that trip. With regard to the learning and performing of traditional Indonesian shadow puppetry and the Chinese Indonesian *wacinwa*, I have gone through the process of transforming from researcher to learner, performer and promoter. When I was learning gamelan I also joined the *wayang kulit* course to learn the performing skills of traditional shadow puppetry. I wanted to understand all aspects of *wayang kulit*'s performance and creation, which, in turn, would help me to understand the performance form and structure of *wacinwa*. Initially, I thought that I only needed to learn gamelan, because the background music of my research object was gamelan, and understanding the puppetry skills, dialogue and singing did not seem important. I had not intended to learn shadow puppetry as I felt that learning the performing skills of the *dalang* might be too difficult for me, but the head of the gamelan department, realizing that my research also included shadow puppetry, enthusiastically encouraged me to join the Pedalangan (shadow puppetry) department to learn Indonesian traditional *wayang kulit* from my research subject of *wacinwa*, Prof. Kiswanto. During the process of learning about shadow puppetry, I soon realised that these elements were important for any study

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<sup>9</sup> Photographs Figure 1-11,1-12 from recording video provided by the Department of Karawitan, Institut Seni Indonesia Yogyakarta

of the performance style and performance skills of *wayang kulit*, and I was fortunate to be able to learn these skills. In traditional Indonesian shadow puppetry performance, the movement, singing and dialogue of the *dalang* are all performed in combination with the background music of the gamelan. They cannot be separated, and therefore neither could they be left out of my study and research. In my training, as performers of shadow puppetry we were required to learn the performance skills of all positions, the movements and speaking skills of a *dalang*, the instrumental performing skills of a musician, the vocal skills of a singer and the technical skills of a sound engineer.

With regard to my gamelan learning experience, in addition to learning *wayang kulit* performance at the university, I learned and practiced *wacinwa* performing skills at the Arts Center of Prof. Aneng Kiswanto every day (Figure 1-13). Although the movement skills were the same, the characters, and the shape and size of *wacinwa* puppets were different from *wayang kulit*. With the excellent guidance of the teachers, my skills in puppetry and singing improved to the point where I could take part in a personal performance of *wacinwa* before leaving Indonesia. In addition, I also learned some Javanese language, because the dialogue of traditional Indonesian *wayang kulit* is performed in Javanese. I needed to practice and speak Javanese as much as possible in the learning process, including singing in Javanese. Of course, the most important thing for my research was the observation and the recording of all the details about Kiswanto's work and life, including his thoughts on music. All this would help me understand his thinking in creating contemporary *wacinwa*. I practised these skills at the art center on the other side of the village every day in order to be familiar with them, and eventually I performed in the *wayang kulit* Exhibition "Sang Gathukaca" in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, held by Pendapa Dalem Yudaningratan (Figure 1-14). This was my first stage experience of performing Indonesian traditional shadow puppetry. After a month of promotion, I then held a personal performance of *wacinwa* at the Student Castle of Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta, and became the first female Chinese performer to perform *wacinwa* in Indonesia (Figure 1-15, 1-16). The performance won much praise from Chinese Indonesians and local audiences, and I was interviewed by



local Indonesian TV stations.

In this performance, as a *dalang*, I performed a Chinese story in the traditional performing form of Indonesian *wayang kulit* using Chinese dialect, accompanied by Javanese gamelan but combined with the Chinese instruments erhu, huqin and Cucurbit flute (Figure 1-17, 1-18). This process of creating and playing music gave me a deeper understanding of this musical culture, and enabled me to realize that every musical element in the creation process represented a strong personal expression and identity on the basis of respecting both cultures. Indeed, such performance achievements would broaden my research path in the future, so that I did not just remain at the understanding stage of my fieldwork. My continuous practice and creativity has brought me new experiences and understanding while also providing materials for my academic research.



Figure 1-13: The author practising *wacinwa* in the Arts Center of Prof. Aneng Kiswanto.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Photograph was provided by Aneng Kiswanto.



Figure 1-14: The author participating in the *wayang kulit* Exhibition “Sang Gathutkaca” in Yogyakarta, held by Pendapa Dalem Yudanigratan, 18 November 2018.<sup>11</sup>



Figure 1-15: The poster of the author’s personal performance of *wacinwa*.<sup>12</sup>

Figure 1-16: The author standing in the front of the performance stage in the Student Castle of Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, 22 December 2018.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Photograph provided by a member of Pendapa Dalem Yudanigratan.

<sup>12</sup> Poster by author.

<sup>13</sup> Photograph provided by Aneng Kiswanto.



Figure 1-17: The author performing the puppets in the *wacinwa* performance in the Student Castle of Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, 22 December 2018.



Figure 1-18: The author performing the puppets and singing the Javanese song in the *wacinwa* performance in the Student Castle of Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, 22 December 2018.<sup>14</sup>

### 1.5.3 Theory and Practice of Ethnography

Hammersley proposed that ethnography is a research method in the field of social science that uses a wide range of information resources and where researchers have been involved in people's lives over a long period of time in order to observe what is

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<sup>14</sup> Photographs Figure 1-17, 1-18 provided by Aneng Kiswanto.



happening, to listen to what people are saying, and to ask questions, thereby collecting all the data that they can to explain their findings (Hammersley, 1990: 17). As John Van Maanen mentioned: “When used as a method, ethnography typically refers to fieldwork (alternatively, participant-observation) conducted by a single investigator who lives with and lives like those who are studied, usually for a year or more” (Maanen, 1996:263). This implies that the researcher has “experienced the environment” by going deep into the fieldwork experience, understanding the daily life of the research subject(s), and paying attention to micro-processes, thereby transliterating the culture and language of other ethnic groups in a foreign land and expressing an understanding of the meaning and subjectivity of indigenous culture, which should give a holistic perspective. The purpose of ethnographic research is to describe the way of life of people in a group, and analyze the process of interaction between people, events, time, place, and things in the culture. Researchers must “participate for a long time” or collect data in “one-on-one interviews”, pay attention to the features of the culture, and describe how people act, finding out how to interact, how to construct meaning, how to interpret and other issues. The aim is to discover the subjects’ beliefs, values, opinions and motivations, and to understand how these beliefs and values develop and change from the perspectives of members of the group.

The methodology of ethnography is particularly important for research into diasporic musical culture, as the research pays attention to the overall analysis of the dynamic process. Indeed, the musical culture is fundamentally a dynamic process that changes with time, place, economy, politics, and the background, thoughts and identities of the musicians. Therefore, we cannot simply focus on individual facts, but rather, there needs to be a kind of interactive research between the researcher and the research participants. This requires us to participate in, observe, record and describe “on the spot”, which helps to obtain comprehensive information about the musical process and explain musical phenomena and changes in depth and with accuracy. Therefore, some scholars believe that ethnographic research is both a product and a process (Hammersley, 1990: 21). As far as the product is concerned, it is the product of research,

which is typically presented in the form of a book; as far as the process is concerned, it is a long-term observation from within the group, along with one-on-one interviews in order to study the interaction between behavioral intentions and cultural sharing.

Harry Wolcott also had some thoughts on ethnography, saying that the most typical approach is to let researchers live in a community of four to five hundred people for more than one year, while studying all aspects of their lives and culture. In this community, researchers can get to know all the people in the area, study and experience local life and customs, use the local dialect to conduct investigations, and go beyond the general impression (Wolcott, 2008 10: 11) My fieldwork also used this research method of “long-term participation”. I tracked a selected group for observation and lived with them. My observation subject was Aneng Kiswantoro, a revivalist of *wacinwa*. I lived in Jln Karso Tinggal Village in the Bantul region of Yogyakarta, Indonesia, an art and cultural center in southern Yogyakarta (Figure 1-19). There were many performers of Javanese shadow puppetry and gamelan in the village, along with actors and actresses. My research subject, Aneng Kiswantoro, and his art center are based here. I lived in the village with them for five months, learning, practicing, and performing music with them. I recorded the words and actions and details of the lives of the research participants, without interfering or attracting their notice more than necessary, immersing myself in the world of the research subjects and systematically recording what I saw and heard. Methods of data collection in my fieldwork included participant-observation, interviews, conversations, and document analysis. Documents included musical practice records, musical learning records, academic fieldwork logs, daily diaries, etc. In addition, I used photos, audio and video recordings of the musical process, the language, conversation, and actions and gestures of the participants. Therefore, my fieldwork data included speaking, asking, seeing, hearing, and feeling. These records became the original data for the later analysis in my research.



Figure 1-19: Jln Karso Tinggal Village in the Bantul region of Yogyakarta, Indonesia.<sup>15</sup>

Genzuk remarked that it is difficult to provide a precise set of rules and procedures for fieldwork. The operation of the researcher depends on the situation, the purpose of the research, the nature of the setting, and the skills, interests, needs and perspectives of the observer. He did, however, mention some general guidelines for using ethnographic methods in fieldwork. One of them is the emphasis on fieldwork notes. He proposed that descriptive note-taking can help capture accurate views of participants in the observation process by using the language of the observer (Genzuk, 1999: 2). I used two types of text record in my fieldwork: in addition to records related to music practice, I also wrote two text records of my own observations and feelings in the fieldwork. The first was the academic fieldwork log, which was in relation to my academic field of study; it recorded musical phenomena and views related to my research and can be linked to certain theories and issues in ethnomusicology. The second type was a diary, to record daily life, study, mood, and all my feelings about what I was seeing and hearing. This kind of daily diary allowed me to see constant development in my understanding of other cultures by recording my process of transition from outsider to

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<sup>15</sup> Photograph by author.

insider. It also helped me to understand all the closely related aspects of the music to a certain extent.

It is easy to see the benefits of becoming an insider by living with the research subjects, learning and performing the music with them. This makes it easier to access source material while having more opportunities to interview informants. Before conducting my fieldwork, I was very worried that *pribumi* Indonesians might still have some prejudice and hostility towards Chinese Indonesians or Chinese people due to historical reasons. This would be a great hindrance to my fieldwork, or might even put me in danger due to my Chinese identity. After beginning my fieldwork, however, I received a warm welcome, and they were willing to help me and treat me very well as a foreigner. In their words, they were more curious about me, because they rarely saw Chinese scholars in their lives after the Chinese exclusion. They felt that this was a rare opportunity to show and communicate the contemporary Chinese Indonesian music to a researcher with a Chinese identity and musical background. During the practice process, I learned the music skills and cultural background from them, and learned more about the local musical culture every day.

Meanwhile, my research subjects would also ask me about Chinese cultural and historical knowledge on the performed stories and characters, as well as the tone and tuning of Chinese musical instruments. In the process of sharing, I found that they had relatively little knowledge of Chinese history and culture, and even the names of many fictional characters would be confused with the corresponding historical stories. Sometimes, they would add their favorite Chinese songs into their performances, but they didn't understand the meaning of the songs. For example, they might use a song that expresses a love story as the musical background of a military scene, or play the famous Chinese erhu piece *Erquan Yingyue* (二泉映月) as the musical background music for a love scene. The erhu piece describes the thoughts and emotions of a blind artist who has experienced the bitterness and pain of the world throughout his life. This

use of Chinese music without understanding of its meaning was very strange to me, and after I mentioned it, the musicians would accept my explanation and ask me for more suitable Chinese songs. Thus, interacting with a researcher of Chinese identity made a difference to what was actually performed, and it became clear that I was casting my own “shadow in the field” (Barz & Cooley, 2008).

Indeed, this kind of interaction gave me the impression that my Chinese identity would not be a hindrance to my research in contemporary Indonesia. Instead, it seemed to benefit my fieldwork and collaboration, because the musicians needed input from my Chinese musical background which was difficult for them to obtain. However, I also encountered some unexpected situations and dilemmas whilst carrying out my interviews. I found that my informants were not as receptive to my questions related to politics if I was recording the interview or even taking notes. They would deliberately avoid controversial issues such as politics, morals, or emotions because of my Chinese identity. Faced with this challenge, I advised my interviewees in advance that I would be taking notes as well as recording their words, and they were given an opportunity to review the notes after the interview. I had to reassure some of them that their real names would not be recorded in my research if they requested anonymity.

My gender identity as a Chinese woman also seemed to make a difference in my interviews and fieldwork, becoming especially apparent in the practising and performing process of *wacinwa* as a Chinese female *dalang*. It is well known that the *dalang* is the main figure of traditional *wayang kulit* performances and is revered in Indonesian society both as a master and spiritual leader. In the past, it was thought that only men could inherit the art of the *dalang*, which was passed from father to son or another boy in the village (Goodlander, 2016: 51-52). Until recently, the *dalang* was always male, but women are now able to train as *dalang*, especially at the University.

Although there have been several successful female *dalang* in Indonesia, this trend has not flourished as it has for women participating in other traditional performing arts such as gamelan or dance, where women performers are quite common. Some traditional artists have always questioned whether women are capable of undertaking the arduous physical and spiritual tasks of performing *wayang kulit* (Goodlander, 2016: 52). Also, the female *dalang* often face greater obstacles, for in addition to achieve the abilities and undertaking the activities of a *dalang*, they must also balance their family responsibilities, taking the time to take care of their children and husband.

Currently, although female Indonesian students can learn *dalang* skills, few of them wish to become *dalangs*. As a result, female *dalangs* are still a rarity in the performance of *wayang kulit* in contemporary Indonesia. Aiming to get more information and knowledge for my research objectives, I participated in the training of *wayang kulit* in ISI and held a personal performance of *wacinwa*, which attracted great interest among Javanese traditional artists and the Javanese media. This interest came not only from my gender identity as female, but also from my Chinese identity. I was told, “you are the first female *dalang* with Chinese identity and from China”.

Amid so much attention, my personal performance of *wacinwa* quickly found a sponsor. He was a Chinese Indonesian businessman in Yogyakarta, and really hoped to see a woman from China present a different performance of *wacinwa* to both Chinese Indonesians and *pribumi*. In the process of creation for this performance, discussions among the sponsor, the leader of troupe and myself explored various aspects of performance relevant to cultural identity, such as the language of performance, the musical background and the performing costume. In my performance, I used the Chinese dialect for spoken parts, and sang the songs in the Javanese language. This was because my limited knowledge of Javanese made me unable to undertake the large number of words in the spoken part of the performance. Therefore, the leader suggested that I could change the Javanese language to Chinese dialect only for spoken parts, just as Hokkien is used in *wayang potehi*. But he asked me to sing the Javanese songs in

Javanese, using gamelan as the main accompanying instruments, although he encouraged me to add several traditional Chinese musical instruments as well. He thought that the fusion of different performing languages was very interesting, and believed that it could attract more audiences, whether young or old, Indonesian or international, but he felt that Indonesian traditional elements must be retained as the main elements in the performance.

On the aspect of visual presentation, in order to present a different performance of *wacinwa*, I initially preferred to wear the Chinese traditional costume, hoping that more Chinese elements could be seen and attract more attention from young audiences. Unexpectedly, my proposal was opposed by the sponsor. He preferred to see a female *dalang* from China wearing the traditional Javanese female costume to perform *wacinwa*. He asked me to wear a traditional Javanese female costume, which was not the traditional costume of a *dalang* and was also different from the gamelan players' clothing. It was the traditional costume of a Javanese woman attending a grand occasion. It was clear to me that my participation as a Chinese woman made a difference to my research subjects, while it could be seen that there were limits to their acceptance of a "Chinese" version of *wacinwa*, even although they didn't mind my use of Chinese language and instruments in the performance. In addition, due to my female and Chinese identity, I was followed and interviewed by the local Indonesian TV station, which called me an "envoy of cultural exchanges" and asked for my perspectives on the relationships between *wayang kulit* and *wacinwa*, *wacinwa* and Chinese *piyingxi* theatre, and my reasons for learning *wayang kulit*. In the eyes of the Indonesian media, I broke the tradition as a female *dalang*, while bringing a cultural exchange with a Chinese identity.

#### **1.5.4 Approach to Notation**

In this research, I chose to use two different notation systems to represent the musical sound and support the music analysis. This is different from most other music analysis studies in ethnomusicology in the past, which have used a unified notation system to

transcribe and represent music. The choice of using two notation systems was based on the musical genres and the forms I have studied, as well as different objectives in different chapters of the thesis, and although it was a challenge, it will hopefully be a worthwhile contribution to the field of ethnomusicology.

The two notation systems I have used are Western staff notation and a new notation system called “Global Notation” proposed by Andrew Killick (Killick, 2020). Staff notation is a transcription method commonly used in the study of ethnomusicology, and seems to be the general transcription language for representing music of various traditions, including the sounds of different musical tunings and cultural systems. I have used it in my discussion on *wayang potehi* in Chapter 3, though this chapter does not focus on analysis of musical sound itself: I am mainly using the musical development of *wayang potehi* as an example to illustrate musical practice as an important way to construct the national and cultural identity of Chinese Indonesians. The musical notation here is mostly based on the memories and examples of interviewees during the interviews, and is used to verify and represent the statements of interviewees and for comparative research. It should be noted that the comparative research here was not a comparison of the two kinds of music analysis, but the comparison of two similar musical melodies to interpret the cultural phenomena. Therefore, for the notation in Chapter 3, I indicated only the main melody of the singing, and did not include any instrumental accompaniment, so there was no need to consider for instance the complexities of representing gamelan tuning in staff notation. In this context, I found staff notation adequate to present the facts of musical changes and to analyze the choices of musicians in various historical environments.

Although Western staff notation is the most common method of musical transcription, it is difficult to use it to accurately represent music that is not based on the Western tuning system. Traditional musical genres often have their own unique performance techniques and notation systems, which are different from the Western equal-



temperament and staff notation system, and do not adapt well to Western notation. In particular, there is the difficulty of representing different musical instruments using different tuning systems within the same space, as Western notation can only present notes in one tuning system at a time. However, the accompanying music of my research objects, *wacinwa* and *jasen potehi*, comprised cross-cultural compositions combining Chinese, Indonesian and Western musical elements to represent the musical hybridity in the Chinese Indonesian culture. Chinese instruments were added to the performance of Javanese gamelan, as well as Western instruments. As we know, China and Indonesia have their own traditional musical notation and tuning systems—Chinese notation and the Indonesian cipher notation. However, during the process of th musical fusion, traditional musical tunings have not been altered to match the other tuning systems, especially in the case of the gamelan. It is difficult to change the tuning system of the gamelan to match the other instruments due to the way the instruments are made. Therefore, to represent the process of musical integration in a cross-cultural composition, I needed a form of notation that could treat different tuning systems equally and not assume one system as the norm. For this purpose, I found that none of those three notation systems (Chinese notation, Indonesian cipher notation or Western staff notation) were able to render the process of musical hybridity effectively. Although they are able to show many aspects of sound, such as pitch, tempo, rhythm and other musical elements, they all have limitations. None of them can show the musical blending process of different tuning systems in the same space, nor can they accurately capture other musical elements that I need to explain, for example, interval relationships and inflections of pitch and timing. Consequently, Global Notation has become my best choice for presenting my music analysis in the chapters on *wacinwa* and *jasen potehi*. Global Notation allows these aspects to be represented precisely with the aid of software which can create a “pitch-time graph” and waveforms. It can also represent the playing of different instruments at the same time within the same visual space. For the purpose of representing the musical analysis of both *wacinwa* and *jasen potehi*, the Global Notation system enabled me to gain information from the sound itself, and obtain a clearer picture of what is actually happening in the music. The process of

visualizing the music provides useful evidence to support my analysis and to illustrate the sound structure of the music, rather than just relying on a textual explanation.

Global Notation is a relatively new system, first publicised in 2018 through its dedicated website which has since been continually updated. As this is the first study to use Global Notation for in-depth analysis of a particular musical culture, I see this as a contribution to ethnomusicology and world music analysis on a methodological level.

### **1.6 Structure of Thesis**

This thesis consists of six chapters including a conclusion. The research conducted in this thesis provides an understanding of the music culture of the Chinese diaspora in contemporary Indonesia by analysing the dynamic development of history, culture and policy in that country.

Chapter 1 presents an overview of the research and includes the cultural context of Chinese Indonesians, a literature review, theoretical framework, methodology, and the structure of this thesis.

Chapter 2 constructs a basic background for understanding the historical development of Chinese Indonesian musical culture, and summarises the literature and my own interviews related to the Chinese Indonesian diaspora and its musical culture. The immigration experience of Chinese Indonesians is explored to find the original sources of their musical culture. The chapter also looks at the development of different Chinese Indonesian musical genres in different historical periods, and contemporary musical forms in Chinese Indonesian culture are described in brief.

Chapter 3 maps the different Chinese Indonesian identities in contemporary Indonesia through their music. The chapter mainly focuses on a representative traditional Chinese Indonesian art, *wayang potehi*, to explore the developing process of Chinese Indonesian musical culture. It analyzes the changes and looks at the significance of *wayang potehi*

in understanding the transition of dynamic cultural and ethnic identity in different political periods, as well as how it reflects musicians' sense of their own ethnic identity while going through an ongoing process of musical development and integration. Finally, Chapter 3 looks at the way in which dynamic ethnic and cultural identities are constructed and shaped through the practice of musical activities.

Chapter 4 presents an ethnography of *wacinwa* and looks at how this genre demonstrates musical hybridity in Chinese Indonesian music. It shows how hybridity has been variously embodied in the process of the genre's initial formation, disappearance and revival, and in various aspects of contemporary *wacinwa*, including the puppets, plot, performance format, and especially the music. Aiming to clearly represent the musical hybridisation process between the Chinese and Indonesian culture, I use a new notation method (Andrew Killick's "Global Notation") to examine how two different kinds of musical instruments (Chinese traditional instruments and Javanese gamelan) are able to play together despite using different tunings and modes. This close musical analysis sheds light on how the ethnic and cultural identity of Chinese Indonesians has been constructed and expressed through a process of musical hybridity.

Chapter 5 explores the Chinese Indonesian musical revival following the lifting of the prohibition policy, especially focusing on the emergence of a new form, *jasen potehi*, a typical example of the revival of Chinese Indonesian musical culture in contemporary Indonesia. I will attempt to explain the changes and reasons leading to these musical revivals by gaining an understanding of the cultural negotiations between Chinese Indonesians and *pribumi*, and will discuss the phenomena of modernisation and localisation in the creation process of *jasen potehi*. The process of music making will be notated using Global Notation in order to demonstrate how the various musical elements merge into a single fused form despite using different tunings. Details revealed by musical analysis will shed light on how music is involved in negotiating particular representations of identity through the twin processes of musical localisation and modernisation, suggesting that in a diaspora context the two processes may really

be one.

The Conclusion draws together all issues discussed in this thesis to emphasise how Chinese Indonesian music has developed and is developing in contemporary Indonesia; how Chinese Indonesian music has become a symbol for self-representation and a cultural bridge for enhancing relationships within the Chinese diaspora community in Indonesia, improving the social status of Chinese Indonesians and narrowing the divides between them and the *pribumi*. Chinese Indonesian music shows unique and hybrid characteristics compared to other local communities, and is a result of cultural fluidity and of ethnic identity. Ultimately, Chinese Indonesian culture strives to maintain a multiple identity in relation to the cultures of China and Indonesia—a broad field which has been challenged by the influences of ethnicity, hybridisation, localisation and modernisation. This research will not only provide new knowledge about the musical culture of a community that has so far been studied very little by either Chinese or Western scholars, but will situate that knowledge in relation to broader issues and debates in the field of ethnomusicology, making it relevant to an international audience.

## **Chapter 2: The Origin and Development of Chinese Indonesian Musical Culture in Indonesia**

### **2.1 Introduction**

It is well known that Chinese Indonesians are active in economic and business activities, and although the 7,000,000 Chinese Indonesians make up merely 3% of the total Indonesian population, they control most of the economic resources (Liao 2002: 15). Even in the early nineteenth century, Thomas Stamford Raffles noted that Chinese Indonesians had already become the heart and soul of the Indonesian economy (Raffles 1982: 75). However, Chinese Indonesians, being long-time settlers in Indonesia, not only brought traditional Chinese musical culture with them, but they also learned the indigenous Indonesian traditional musical culture. Moreover, they blended their Chinese musical roots with local Indonesian music to create a new Chinese Indonesian form of music. Chinese Indonesians still maintain their Chinese music traditions while embracing Indonesian music traditions and continue to develop a new Chinese Indonesian musical style. For Chinese Indonesians, these traditional and “new traditional” musical activities involving both Indonesian and Chinese cultures are not only concerned with the preservation of traditions, but also play an important formative role in the identification and construction of Chinese Indonesian identity. Some activities have been the products of business ventures, while others were products of the social environment of Chinese Indonesians.

This chapter aims to construct a basic historical background for understanding Chinese music in Indonesia, including both historical and modernised music. I will summarise the literature and my own interviews related to the Chinese Indonesian diaspora and their musical culture to investigate the immigration process of Chinese Indonesians and the original sources of their musical culture. This history will be divided into five periods: the pre-Dutch colonial period, the Dutch colonial period, the post-war and the early republic period, the “New Order” period, and the post-“New Order” period. Finally, contemporary Chinese Indonesian musical culture will be described in brief.

## 2.2 Pre-Dutch Colonial Period (131-1601)

It is unknown when the Chinese first made contact with Indonesia, though Chinese immigration to some islands of what is now Indonesia can be traced back to the Tang Dynasty (618–907). Further evidence of contact between the two can be found after the middle of the seventh century, when the monks Hui Ning and Yi Jing of the Tang Dynasty arrived in Indonesia to engage in Buddhist missionary work (Tang, 1995: 1). Furthermore, in 131, during the Eastern Han Dynasty, Yavadvipa (today's Java) paid tribute to China, and trade between the city and Guangzhou was recorded in the book of *Houhan Shi* (后汉史, The History of the Later Han Dynasty), Volume Six, *Xinan Yizhuang* (西南夷传, The Biography of the Southwest Han), by Ye Fan. This states: “永建六年(公元 131 年), 日南南徼外叶调王便遣使贡献, 帝赐调便金印 紫绶” (quoted in Feng, 1937:1–3). This sentence describes how the King of Yavadvipa sent ambassadors to pay tribute to China. The Chinese emperor rewarded the ambassador with a golden seal to form a trade relationship.

During the Eastern Jin Dynasty (317–420), a most famous monk, Fa Xian (343–423), who went to India to study Buddhist scriptures, passed through Yavadvipa and Sumatra (Feng, 1937: 21–28). In his book *Faxian Zhuang* (法显传, The Biography of Faxian, 416), he recorded that he stayed in Yavadvipa for five months, and saw the transportation of goods between Guangdong (China) and Yavadvipa (Wang, 1952: 19). Later in the Tang Dynasty (618–907), the book *Huanghua Sida Ji* (皇华四达记, The Biography of Huanghua Sida), edited by Jiadan Tang, records that the Chinese permanent community had prospered in northern Sumatra and elsewhere, and coexisted peacefully with indigenous tribes during the later eighth century and the beginning of ninth century (Li, 2015: 39). Further historical records include a Javanese account of a Chinese ship sinking near Semarang, Java in the year 924, the crew of which was washed up on the shore. The captain then sent treasure to the Tegal King asking for

permission to settle, which was granted. This is considered the start of Chinese settlement in Java (ibid, 44).

At the end of the ninth century, *Muruj al-Dhahab* (known in French translation as *Les Prairies D'or* and in English as *Meadows of Gold*), a Central Asian history written by Abu'l-Hasan Al-Masudi (a medieval Baghdadi historian), mentions some Chinese settlements established near Palembang in order to avoid the Huang Chao Rebellion (875–884) (Li, 1960: 46). At the end of the Northern Song Dynasty (960–1127), the book *Pingzhou Ketan* (萍洲可谈, The Record of Pingzhou), edited by Yu Zhu, focuses on the records of the Chinese who lived in the countries of Southeast Asia. The book recorded important information in Chinese: “Zhufan Shinian Gui, Ze Lixi Yizeng (住番十年归, 则利息亦增)”, which means the Chinese had lived in *Du Po* (闍婆, today's Java) for ten years since 977 (Li, 2015: 51). Moreover, during the Southern Song Dynasty (1127–1279), the flow of trade between China and Indonesia was frequent, until the Mongolian, Khagan, and the later founder and first emperor of the Yuan Dynasty following the conquest of China, Kublai Khan, requested the King of Java to surrender to him, which was rejected, leading to troops being dispatched (1292–1293). From the record of *Song Shi* (宋史, The History of the Song Dynasty), the second volume *Sanfo Qi* (三佛齐, The Record of Palembang) and *Du Po* (闍婆, The Record of Java) :

“三佛齐(Palembang), 国在南海之中, 诸藩水道之要冲也。东自闍婆(Java) 诸国, 西自大食(Arabia), 顾临(Quilon)诸国, 无不由其境而入中国者”。

“闍婆国(Java), 又名莆佳龙(Pekalongan), 在海东南, 势下故曰下岸。广州自十一月, 十二月发船, 顺风连昏旦一月可到” (quoted in Feng, 1937: 159-163)。

These words could prove that the Chinese people consecutively entered into *Sanfo Qi* (三佛齐, Palembang) and *Du Po* (闍婆, Java), and lived there in order to trade.

Towards the beginning of the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644), the Yongle Emperor, Zhu Di, initiated the construction of a treasure fleet to demonstrate China’s prosperity and power to foreign countries. Admiral Zheng was commissioned to command the treasure fleet for various expeditions (1405-1433). After Zheng arrived in Java, the numbers of Chinese living in Java and Sumatra increased greatly beyond the previously limited number (Yang, 2004: 27). This movement can be divided into three main phases of large-scale Chinese immigration to Indonesia: Zheng and his followers in the early fifteenth century; Chinese immigrants who travelled to avoid the fighting, poverty, famine and disaster during the Opium Wars (1840-1860); and during World War II (1939-1945). Because these Chinese immigrants were mostly uneducated, largely belonging to the agricultural and industrial classes, they often became farmers and mine workers when they came to Indonesia, and were known as the *Zhuzai Kuli* (“pig labour”) and were treated as slaves (Reid, 1970: 291).

The first examples of a “mixed blood” Chinese Indonesian population occurred when many early Chinese immigrants married Indonesian natives. These people were called *peranakans* (“descendants”), the name given to any foreign ethnic group which was mixed with indigenous Indonesians. The existence of *peranakans* can be traced back to the sixteenth century and possibly earlier. They were more likely to integrate into the local Indonesian lifestyle than their immigrant parents, and spoke “Market Malay-Chinese”—Indonesian mixed with the Fujian dialect (Coppel, 2002: 108). Their appearance was similar to that of indigenous Indonesians, but they kept their Chinese surnames, and while the layout of their houses maintained the importance of Chinese ancestor worship, showing that they considered themselves Chinese, family life exhibited a mix of Chinese and Indonesian elements. Men wore the robes of the Ming Dynasty, while women dressed as native Indonesians with long gowns, and families practiced the habits and customs of the indigenous people. As for musical records before the Dutch colonial stage, there is only mention of the *peranakan* local folk tunes played on the Chinese *huqin* (Skinner, 1967: 104–105). On the other hand, there was a second group of Chinese Indonesians, the *totok*—a term used in Batavia from the



eighteenth to the nineteenth century (created by the Indonesian indigenes) to describe new immigrants with a purely foreign ancestry. The *totok* were culturally Chinese: they spoke Chinese or a Chinese dialect, and many were born in China or were studying in Chinese schools within Indonesia (Mackie and Coppel, 1976: 8).

### **2.3 Dutch Colonial Period (1602–1945)**

Between 1602 and 1945 Indonesia became a Dutch colony and during this period, the newly-installed Dutch government divided the Indonesian citizenship into three main categories: “European,” “Foreign Orientals” (*Vreemde Oosterlingen*), and “Natives” — Inlanders, now called the *pribumi*, meaning “sons of the earth” (Kartomi, 2000: 271). The “Foreign Orientals” were comprised of Chinese, Japanese and Arabs; the Chinese supported the Dutch rule of Indonesia which led to a certain level of estrangement between the Chinese and the Indonesian “Natives”. In addition, the Dutch saw the Chinese as an intermediary to persuade the local people to surrender to their regime (Purcell, 1965: 395), and also encouraged them to engage in agricultural production and manufacturing so that they need not rely on locals for the supply of food and necessities. Moreover, as the Chinese were considered to be good at management and to have characteristics of industriousness and stamina, some Chinese Indonesians were allowed by the United East India Company (*Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, VOC) of the Dutch colonial government to engage in jobs which were less popular with locals, such as leasehold operations of the land, financial lending and pawnshops. Thus, this group gradually gained control of the agricultural management of rural areas. Furthermore, with the promotion of the VOC’s scope of monopoly rights and the import and export business, the Chinese began to engage in various types of business management, and became an important intermediary between the VOC and Indonesian rural areas (Kartomi, 2000: 273).

However, although the mediating effect of the Chinese Indonesians increasingly gained the approval of the Dutch government, the Dutch also held a dislike for the Chinese. The Dutch made full use of the Chinese for their business and communication skills,

but feared the resulting increase in influence and economic power, and saw the potential threat it could become to themselves. As a result, they started to spread the impression of the Chinese as a group who were cheating the Indonesians of their wealth. So although the Dutch colonial government in Indonesia led to the development of Chinese commercial interests, these were often considered by the Indonesian natives as exploitative—the Dutch using a variety of methods to deceive the Indonesians (Purcell, 1965: 389). Despite these attempts to discredit the Chinese, their increasing numbers and influence greatly affected Dutch interests in Indonesia, resulting in the Angke Massacre of 1740 (Li, 2015: 222–223), when, on 9 October, under the guise of searching for weapons, the Dutch slaughtered Chinese inhabitants in Batavia. More than 10,000 Chinese were killed and their properties looted (Purcell, 1965: 408). This meant that although the Dutch government gave the Chinese influential status in Indonesia, it led to them living in an extremely difficult and dangerous environment. In this context, the Chinese attempted to safeguard their own culture with efforts to establish a Chinese community cultural system while, at the same time, making efforts to integrate into the local cultural system of Indonesia, creating special cultural elements specific to Chinese immigrants.

These elements often grew from religious activities as, in the Chinese Indonesian community (other than a few who converted to Islam and integrated into the local religious and artistic activities of the country), the central place in the lives of most Chinese immigrants in Indonesia was the *klenteng* (Chinese temple). Therefore, various related art forms emerged, including sculpture, painting, music, dance, and drama. One example is the *barongsai*, a kind of lion dance practiced by temple leaders at religious ceremonies, often to help raise funds for poor *peranakan*. Chinese Indonesians have continued to attend and enjoy festivities at the Chinese temple, especially Chinese New Year when lion-like heads held by a number of boys visit Chinese households accompanied by firecrackers in order to drive away devils. In the procession of *barongsai*, one or two men move under the body and tail of the *barongsai*, and chase a big fireball made of strips of silk along the street. The movements of the *barongsai* are

accompanied by three or four musicians playing percussion music on Chinese drums, gongs, and cymbals (Kartomi, 2000: 278, 285, 291, 297). In addition, there are examples of other art forms exhibiting a mixture of traditional Chinese and Indonesian culture. *Wacinwa*, one such example, was formed when Chinese living in Yogyakarta combined the Indonesian gamelan with Chinese puppet art. This kind of shadow play used Chinese traditional stories, but was performed with a Javanese gamelan orchestra (Pausacker 2005: 194–5).

Examples of Chinese Indonesian performance include the tradition, seen between 1602 and 1605, which involved roadside performances in the Banten province whenever a ship arrived in Indonesia from China or went back (Salmon and Lombard, 1985: 104). In an interview for the film project *As Foreign Land Becomes Home Land* (Tsai Tsung-te 2018), Mrs Fuling Huang (an instructor of the *nanyin* ensemble in Yongan Temple, Malang) describes this form: the *nanyin* ensemble, established in the 1960s, was organized by her father when they immigrated to Surabaya, Indonesia, and they would meet to practice every Saturday. *Nanyin* is a kind of southern Chinese string and wind music, originating in Quanzhou, Fujian. Also, the Chinese Indonesian Liem Thian Joe describes how, when a new temple was built in Semarang as early as 1770, a *wayang potehi* troupe, a folk Chinese glove puppet group, was invited from Batavia (now Jakarta) to perform for two months in celebration of the completion of the new temple, events in which both locals and the Dutch community would participate (Liem, 1931-33:50).

A form of traditional Chinese puppet play, *wayang potehi* was intended to drive out or avoid evil spirits and redeem vows to a god. Thus, it was mainly performed as part of religious ceremonial and activities in Chinese temples, although it was also sometimes used in other festivals and activities. The use of *pa-ying* instruments as background music in *wayang potehi* was adopted in the early 1770s. (*Pa-ying* is further explained in the Musical Revivals part of the Introduction.) By the late colonial period, with the development of the performance stage, the making of puppets and costumes and the

integration of *dalangs* (puppeteers), musicians and the Chinese orchestra, along with the development and promotion of the art form, this genre had formed into a complete art system (Kartomi, 2000: 279).

An integrated performance of *wayang potehi* required a master *dalang*, an assistant *dalang*, 3–5 musicians, and 1–2 sound controllers. The master *dalang* was the head and key figure of the group who had to manage the overall performance and ensure a high level of personal performance while in charge of the manipulation of puppets during spoken sections. The assistant *dalang* had to assist the master *dalang* and prepare all the puppets and props necessary for the performance in advance. In addition, the assistant *dalang* needed to help play musical instruments when a group was short of musicians and thus, commonly, assistant *dalangs* first learned to play musical instruments (Purwosequtro, 2014: 7–8). The musicians of *wayang potehi* were divided into three levels. The first-level musicians were those who played percussion instruments within the Wu Chang (military scenes), such as Chinese drums, the *pan* (Chinese wooden clappers), and *sio luo* (a small Chinese gong). These musicians would have to pay more attention to, and work in cooperation with, the master puppeteer than the second- and the third-level musicians, who mainly played wind and string instruments within the Wen Chang (civilian scenes), but who would sometimes help first-level musicians to play percussion instruments. Finally, the sound controller was responsible for the sound equipment and the control of the sound during the whole performance (Kartomi, 2000: 300–303; Purwosequtro, 2014: 8–9).

There is a saying concerning *wayang potehi*: “An excellent performance consists of 30% stage performance and 70% background music”. This implies that the spoken parts, and the various roles and the instrumental performance behind the stage, all play an important role within the whole performance. One of the spoken parts is the *suluk*, also known as the *Si Nianbai* in Chinese; composed of four lines from an ancient verse form with five or seven characters per line, it is used at the opening of a performance. This is an important characteristic of *wayang potehi* performance, and is mostly recited by

*dalangs* to introduce the story of the characters the puppets represent, explaining who they are and what their intentions are. This serves the purpose of illustrating the identity, situation, skills, career, and objectives of the characters, allowing audiences to quickly recognise the roles and understand the plot of the performance (Purwosequtro, 2014: 59). Moreover, the *dalangs* must know the gender, age, personality, and social position of every figure in the performance, as this will change how they present those characters in the spoken parts, since such factors will change the way people speak, represented by changing sounds in *Hokkien* (a dialect spoken in the southern Chinese province of Fujian) (ibid, 28).

Toward the end of the Dutch colonial period, the Second Sino-Japanese war (1940) broke out when Japan invaded China. This led to a Chinese boycott of Japanese goods, the purchasing of Chinese government bonds, and other activities to raise money. During this time, many Chinese troupes in Indonesia performed to raise money, and performers of *wayang potehi* were influenced by Beijing opera and thus integrated many melodies and gong-drum rhythms characteristic of that style into the background music of *wayang potehi* (Li, 2015: 332).

Finally, Kartomi (2000) divided all kinds of Chinese performing arts activities of the Dutch colonial period into three categories. The first of these were the Chinese temple arts, including street processions, temple ceremonies, and puppet plays, which tended to be performed with minimal change in what was believed to be the authentic Chinese musical style and which served as a point of psychological refuge and retreat for *peranakan* communities when under siege, including *barongsai* and *wayang potehi* and *pa tim* (the Chinese *pa-ying* orchestra, accompanying the puppet performance). The second was the secular, professional, music and dance, and the theatre which represented a new, syncretic, creative impulse and style as the result of sustained contact between Chinese and local Indonesian cultural elements. *Wayang thithi* (now known as *wacinwa*), *gambang kronmong*, and *lenong* theatre were classified within this category. *Gambang kromong* developed in the eighteenth century from Chinese origins, and was

used to accompany performances of the local *wayang cokek* to attract drinking customers (Kartomi, 2000: 278–281, 308). *Lenong* theatre, which appeared in the 1930s, was a commercial synthesis associated with *wayang cokek* and *gambang kromong*, which, by the early twentieth century, had developed into a Eurasian-Malay “opera” form which absorbed Perso-Arabic, Chinese, Indian, and Indonesian elements (Grijns, 1976: 179–185). The third category was the secular commercial music, dance, and theatre genres which developed out of the sustained three-way contact between the Chinese, Indonesian, and Dutch, or artists performing syncretic Western and popular music. *Tanjidor*, *stambul*, and *kroncong* are examples of this, as a combination of Malay, Western, Chinese, and even Indian-Muslim elements from the late nineteenth century (Kartomi, 2000: 309).

Overall, during the Dutch colonial period, all Chinese art forms were found around four areas of Indonesia: Wangon, Malang, Bangka and Singkawang. Within Wangon in Central Java, *barongsai* and *wacinwa* were common; in Malang (Eastern Java) *wayang potehi* was the main Chinese art activity; *tanjidor* was mostly found on the island of Bangka, and the suspended puppet play accompanied by a *pa tim* orchestra (*wayang gantung*) prevailed in Singkawang, in West Kalimantan. It should be noted, however, that although *wayang potehi* and *wayang gantung* were both forms of puppet play and needed *dalangs* to manipulate each puppet, the puppets were very different, with the latter featuring twelve-string puppets with moving arms, hands, feet, and other parts (Kartomi, 2000: 297-305).

During the Dutch colonial period, Chinese music culture gradually developed and continued to adapt to the Indonesian social and political environment. Most Chinese music was centred on the activities of Chinese temples (*klenteng*) (Salmon and Lombard, 1985: 100), performing traditional Chinese music with few changes from the music of the Chinese homeland, for the religious ceremonies of *klenteng* and traditional Chinese festivals. In terms of the development of Chinese culture, the Dutch did not pose many restrictions; indeed, they supported Chinese agriculture and manufacturing

so that they did not have to rely on the local people for food and daily necessities. However, seeing the increasing influence of the Chinese, the Dutch soured relations between the Chinese and the locals by spreading detrimental rumours about the Chinese which resulted in Chinese communities being under some degree of racial pressure. Under these circumstances, the Chinese tried to reduce public expressions which were different from those of the local culture, and looked for strategies to bypass the oppression. As a result, some Chinese started to integrate into the local community, and took part in and attended performances reflecting both local Indonesian and Chinese musical cultures. Kartomi summed up Chinese music in the Dutch colonial period as follows:

Thus the story of the Indonesian Chinese musical experience in the Netherlands East Indies was one of constant creative adaptation to changing social and artistic conditions and the search for workable musical solutions to the racial and socio-economic dilemmas which they encountered. (Kartomi, 2000: 309)

#### **2.4 Post-war and the Early Republic Period (1945–1965)**

During World War II (1939–1945), Japan launched the Pacific War, which began on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1941. They first attacked the British colony of Malaysia and the American colony in the Philippines, landing in Java in March 1942. The Japanese occupied Sumatra, and controlled the country for more than three and a half years. During this period, most white Dutch and leaders of the Chinese communities were arrested; both *peranakan* and *totok* were cruelly treated, being beaten and killed. In addition, the treasures of Chinese communities were plundered by Japanese troops and Dutch schools were closed, leading the Chinese to turn to Chinese schools for study purposes (Heidhues, 1974: 76). When Japan officially surrendered on 15 August 1945, the Dutch re-emerged with the support of British troops; however, this resulted in a strong resistance from Indonesian troops led by Sukarno (the first President of Indonesia). Based on a common desire to overturn the Dutch colonial domination and to establish an independent country, the Indonesian people established a battle line of nationalism,

resulting in the Indonesian War of Independence which lasted for four years (1945–1949).

At the start of this post-war period (1945), the Chinese people in Indonesia numbered about 2.5 million. In Java and Borneo, 70% of them were *peranakans* while in Sumatra and other external islands, the *totok* were in the majority (Fitzgerald, 1973: 36–37). During the Indonesian War of Independence, Chinese Indonesians generally held one of three different stances, supporting either Indonesian independence, Dutch colonialism, or China. Some *peranakans* who lived in areas controlled by the Republican Forces participated in Indonesian political activities, while some of those who inhabited areas controlled by the Dutch tended to support re-establishing the political community organisations which were present before the war. The majority who tended towards China, and thus were more neutral in the war, were *totok*, as well as a few *peranakans* (Liao, 2002: 31). During the four-year war between Indonesia and the Dutch, the Indonesian Republican forces massacred many Chinese, resulting in a total of 3,000 casualties and large loss of property (Heidhues, 1974: 101–102). Furthermore, the Dutch, using “divide and conquer” tactics, instigated violence between the Chinese and Indonesian peoples. However, in 1946, the Republic of Indonesia stipulated the right of automatic citizenship for Chinese who had been born in Indonesia, and if someone eligible for Indonesian citizenship was born in China, they would be allowed dual nationality with Indonesian citizenship, as long as they didn’t refuse it (Coppel, 1976: 21). On 27 December 1949, the Dutch relinquished control of Indonesia, ending more than 330 years of colonial dominance, and allowing the Republic of Indonesia to manage its affairs independently.

Following Indonesian independence, the Chinese population were generally divided into three political groups. The first was comprised of those who advocated maintaining the cultural traditions of the Chinese or *peranakans*, but were willing to accept Indonesian nationality. They participated in local political activities, integrating into the Indonesian native culture, but did not consider assimilation urgent. The second group



consisted of those who approved of complete assimilation with Indonesian society, culture, and race. They adopted Indonesian names, intermarried with Indonesian people, and participated in political parties and activities. The third group maintained their status as overseas Chinese. These people did not participate in local politics, preferring to remain active only in the political, social, and cultural community organisations within Chinese communities. They retained traditional Chinese life habits, and identified politically with China (ibid, 44–46).

The position of these three groups saw a great change following September 1965 when a military coup occurred in Indonesia, with Sukarno being overthrown by the next president of Indonesia, Suharto. Sukarno had maintained a positive relationship with the Soviet Union and China and had provided support and protection to the Communist Party of Indonesia (Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI), founded in 1914 as the Social Democratic League of East India, and renamed in 1924). Meanwhile, Chinese Indonesians had founded an organisation called Baperki (the Consultative Council for Indonesian Citizenship) to engage in various activities in politics, society and culture. According to Somers, “Baperki’s alliance with Sukarno, its left-wing orientation and its cooperation with the PKI made it quite influential in the Indonesian political scene” (Somers 1964: 8-18). In contrast, Suharto, the commander of the strategic reserve force of the land army, was more inclined towards the West. He dismantled the PKI and oversaw the mass murder and imprisonment of thousands of suspected communists throughout the archipelago, and also broke ties with China. In this uprising, a large number of communists were killed, and many Chinese were executed due to the close relationship between the Indonesian Communist Party and the Chinese Communist Party. This upheaval displaced many Chinese people, who were forced to leave Indonesia and live in other countries (Mackie, 1976: 61–62). Under the New Order, “Chinese” was no longer a self-determined identity but one that was constructed by the Suharto government.

Although the government adopted many severe measures to suppress Chinese identity,

this was never completely eradicated (Hoon, 2006: 118). Before the coup, the first group—those who participated in Indonesian culture and society while maintaining Chinese traditions—had dominated, forming the Baperki organisation. After the coup, the second group—those who wanted to fully integrate with *pribumi* Indonesians—formed a new power supported and protected by the Indonesian government through representative organisations such as the “Contract Body for Chinese Affairs” (BKUT, founded in 1967) and the “Institute for Promotion of National Unity” (LPKB, founded in 1963). Though these were nominally institutions for connectedness, they were in actuality authorised to convey the views of the generally anti-communist regime. The third group, who maintained their overseas Chinese status, found themselves in an adverse position as Indonesia ideologically aligned itself against China (Coppel, 1976: 51–55).

However, no matter what the Chinese attitude and practice towards the new independent Indonesia, most Indonesian people considered the Chinese as a singular, homogeneous entity. In general Indonesian opinion, the Chinese were outsiders and unwilling to be assimilated with Indonesian culture and society, who controlled the Indonesian economy and pushed Indonesians aside, and who didn’t like Indonesia. As a result, the Chinese were thought to harm Indonesian safety and economic prosperity, and so, to eliminate these threats, the Indonesian government aimed for complete, forced, assimilation of the Chinese, issuing a series of rules and regulations which intended to gradually assimilate Chinese Indonesians, weaken their economic power, and bring small- and medium-sized commerce dominated by the Chinese under Indonesian control (Mackie, 1976: 13–14).

The Chinese continued to be keen to promote Chinese culture in Indonesia, however, and in addition to retaining their own language, their religion, lifestyle and various art forms became an important way to spread Chinese culture in Indonesia. Many books pertaining to Chinese culture were published at this time, becoming a channel for

Chinese Indonesians and Javanese to heighten their awareness of Chinese culture and history and providing the primary sources for the stories told through *wayang potehi* and *wacinwa* performances (Liao, 2002: 38).

The trajectory of Chinese arts in the post-war period saw constant development of all forms in their respective fields, especially *wayang potehi* and *wacinwa*. The former saw its most prosperous development between 1930 and 1960, according to Professor Mastuti of the National University of Indonesia. Mastuti notes that there were more than fifty *dalangs* of *wayang potehi* in Indonesia, each with their own troupe, who regularly performed in various Chinese traditional festivals, in temples, or in commercial shows for Chinese businessmen. The repertoire of these shows was mostly comprised of ancient Chinese classic legends, such as *Nu Wa Bu Tian* 女娲补天, *Qi Xia Wu Yi* 七侠五义, *Xue Rengui Zhengdong* 薛仁贵征东, *Wu Song Da Hu* 武松打虎, and *Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai* 梁山伯与祝英台 (Mastuti, 2004: 16).

*Wacinwa* finds its roots in both the Chinese *wayang potehi* and the traditional Indonesian *wayang kulit*, which were combined in 1925 by Gan Dhwan Sing (1885–1967), a third-generation Chinese immigrant from a *totok* family (Pausacker, 2005: 195). This form, also known as *wayang thithi*, had its origins in *wayang potehi*. When *wayang potehi* first became known in Indonesia, the Javanese didn't know what the play was, but always heard a “*thithi*” sound transmitted by the drum board (*pial ko*) as accompaniment in *wayang potehi* performances. Thus, *wayang potehi* also became known as *wayang thithi*. The use of the term “*cinwa*” developed later, when the *thithi* version was developed by the Chinese to combine *wayang kulit* and the Javanese *gamelan* with the Chinese stories of *wayang potehi*. Because the origins of this new form came from the Chinese *wayang potehi*, people tended to call this Chinese shadow puppetry *wayang thithi* (Seltmann, 1976: 54). Hanggar Budi Prasetya, a professor at the Institut Seni Indonesia Yogyakarta, mentioned in an interview that during the late Dutch colonial period (1930–1942) and the Japanese colonial period (1942–1945), the

Javanese were not allowed a military force. During that time, all armed forces were disbanded and converted into artists with different barracks responsible for learning different art forms, an approach the colonial governments agreed with. As a result, the barracks became artists' villages, with the soldiers from the Jogonegaran area mainly learning *wayang kulit* shadow puppetry. Thus, when Gan Dhwan Sing moved to the Yogyakarta Jogonegaran area, the form of *wayang cinwa* was well-developed and popular. Two scripts which were highly popular with both the Chinese and the locals were created: *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang* (Sie Djin Koei's Expedition to the East) and *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng See* (Sie Djin Koei's Expedition to the West) (interview with Hanggar Budi Prasetya in ISI Yogyakarta, 1<sup>st</sup> February 2017). Gan Dhwan Sing spent his whole life creating new Javanese shadow puppetry, making puppets (Figure 2-1, 2-2), and writing stories until his death in 1967. His great success in promoting *wayang cinwa* was a testament to his outstanding performance achievements and contributed greatly to the combination of Chinese and Indonesian culture (Pausacker, 2005: 197).



Figure 2-1: An unfinished puppet of *wacinwa*.<sup>16</sup> Figure 2-2: A finished puppet of *wacinwa*.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Photograph provided by Hanggar Budi Prasetya.

<sup>17</sup> Photograph provided by Museum Negeri Sonobudoyo.

## 2.5 The “New Order” (*Orde Baru*) Period (1966–1998)

Following the 1965 coup, Suharto gradually gained control of Indonesia and established the “New Order” government, being voted provisional president in March 1966, replacing the Sukarno government. From 1965 to 1967, there was a series of aggressive acts from the new government towards the Chinese which took place in quick succession, including attacks, robbery, and slaughter. In this period, the three-million-strong Chinese community (including ethnic Chinese Indonesians and Chinese of other foreign nationalities) became the scapegoats and cash cows for the new Indonesian government (Heidhues, 1974: 83). Because of the Dutch “apartheid” policies which had sown dissension between the Chinese and Indonesian locals from the Dutch colonial period to the Indonesian War of Independence, the historical seeds of prejudice produced tension between Chinese and Indonesians. The Chinese were often targeted as scapegoats, especially in any time of national crisis. As Pramoedya Ananta Toer describes, “They came here since the time of our ancestors. They are actually Indonesians who will live and die in Indonesia. Because of the political element, they suddenly became the foreigners who are not foreign” (*Mereka sudah ada sejak nenek-moyang kita. Mereka itu sebenarnya orang-orang Indonesia, yang hidup dan mati di Indonesia juga, tetapi karena sesuatu tabir politik, tiba-tiba menjadi orang asing yang tidak asing*) (Toer, 1998:54). During the 32 years that Suharto held office, the government aimed to unify all ethnicities, and an aggressive assimilation policy was launched towards the Chinese. Suharto closed all Chinese schools (including primary schools, middle schools, high schools and universities), prohibited Chinese politics and cultural organisations, refused entry of the Chinese to governmental departments, army headquarters, and military schools, and stopped the Chinese press and Chinese newspapers (Setiono, 2001: 365). Moreover, the issuance of Executive Order No.14 in 1967, and the launching of the “New Order” policy after which the period is named, to strictly control the religion, language, and education of the Chinese and prohibit the holding of all rites related to Chinese traditional cultural customs in public, resulted in a complete disappearance of such activities. Under these circumstances, Chinese traditional culture was greatly impacted and damaged (Coppel, 2002: 22–23).

Facing such a brutal political environment, the Chinese turned to “illegal” or “relatively flexible” ways of expressing Chinese culture while still appearing to be part of the Indonesian social environment (Tickell, 2009: 274). For example, *wayang potehi*, despite its favourable development during the Dutch colonial period, was forbidden, so the number of troupes who specialised in this art form declined, and fewer people learned the skills. Although the art form would eventually start to gradually recover when President Abdurrahman Wahid came into power in 1999 and cancelled the No.14 Executive Order of Suharto (Purwosequtro, 2014:48), the damage suffered by *wayang potehi* in the “New Order” period was huge. Between 1976 and 1978, even up to early 1980, in Surakarta, Yogyakarta, and Semarang, few people knew about *wayang potehi* (Groenendael, 1993: 17).

However, while the Suharto government prohibited the development of Chinese culture, they were not able to suppress it completely. For instance, on 7 February 2017, at Hong San Kiong temple in Gudo, I interviewed Purwosequtro, a Chinese Indonesian writer who had always promoted *wayang potehi* even under the “New Order” regime. He was able to do this because Indonesia is composed of a great number of islands, making it difficult for the government to strictly control those other than the main island of Java. This was compounded by dialectical and linguistic differences. For example, many Chinese communities in Sumatra communicated in Hokkien while the Chinese communities in Kalimantan Singkawang generally used Hakka. Thus, even under attack from the Suharto government, some Chinese cultural systems were still able to remain (interview with Li Zengxiang, 20 January 2017). Moreover, as Purwosequtro mentioned, some Chinese Indonesian organisations in East Java were able to bribe the Indonesian military and government officials to give them opportunities to perform *wayang potehi*, including in temples such as Hong Tiek Hian in Surabaya, Hong San Kiong in Gudo, and Bao An Gong in Blitar. According to Sukar Mudjiono, a master *dalang* (Figure 2-3) from Hong Tiek Hian:

If *wayang potehi* performers wanted to perform, they had to apply for permission from the Indonesian military region and police, but such an application was often not approved. However, the Hong Tiek Hian temple enjoyed favourable treatment. The *wayang potehi* performances at the temple were never disturbed and it had no need to apply for permission in advance, because it was located in a narrow lane. In addition, Chinese Indonesians often gathered in the Surabaya region, meaning the audience at the temple were comprised primarily of Chinese. This differed from performances of *wayang potehi* in other areas, such as Kediri, where there were many Indonesian onlookers. Thus, the performances of Hong Tiek Hian in Surabaya were relatively secret. (Interview with Sukar Mudjiono in Hong Tiek Hian of Surabaya, 5 February 2017).



Figure 2-3: The *dalang* Sukar Mudjiono with *wayang potehi* puppet in Hong Tiek Hian, Surabaya, 5 February 2017.<sup>18</sup>

These were the “illegal” or “relatively flexible” countermeasures taken by the oppressed Chinese in this area. As for other areas, Chinese temples often had to apply specially for permission for a performance. Occasionally this was granted, but more often it was prohibited. As a result of these limited opportunities, some temples were able to host performances of *wayang potehi*, but the content could not involve social or political criticism, or any reference to historical wars. In addition, because the Chinese language was prohibited, and *wayang potehi* gave priority to Hokkien, while the spoken

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<sup>18</sup> Photograph by author.

parts used in *potehi* had to be performed in Indonesian, the poetry and lyrics were performed in Hokkien because they were not easy to translate into Indonesian. However limited these opportunities were, they did allow for some development of the form, as Sesomo (a *dalang* from Hong San Kiong) says:

*Wayang potehi* was oppressed by the Indonesian government and was forced to be performed in Indonesian. Suharto's "New Order" policies aimed to resist the Chinese culture, but they accidentally caused the Chinese *wayang potehi* to settle in Indonesia as a specific practice of localisation. (Interview with Sesomo in Hong San Kiong, Gudo, 8 February 2017)

As a result of *wayang potehi* being performed in Indonesian, local people began to learn and perform it. Even those who could not understand the traditional usage of Hokkien were able to participate in and enjoy *potehi*. Therefore, in an attempt to remove Chinese culture from Indonesia, Suharto actually caused an adaptation in the art form, leading to an unexpected result: the beginning of Indonesian participation in Chinese culture.

*Wacinwa*, on the other hand, had a greatly contrasted trajectory following the issue of "New Order" policies and the death of its founder Gan Dhwan Sing, who had no successor in the field (as his son Gani Lukito had little interest in the art form, instead learning violin), as well as the strict control of artists and the destruction of many works by the Suharto government (Coppel, 2002: 34–35). Gani Lukito was also afraid of trouble under the Suharto regime and did not want to be associated with *wacinwa*, and after Gan Dhwan Sing passed away, many scripts and music scores were burnt. Although Gan Dhwan Sing had trained four apprentices, a Chinese Indonesian and three Javanese, one, Pawiro Buwang, died before Sing, and the remaining three, Gao Tianxin, Raden Mas Pardon, and Megarsemu, were averse to performing following the "New Order" Chinese exclusionary policies. This resulted in no performance of *wacinwa* for nearly 40 years. (This information derives from an interview with three granddaughters of Gan Dhwan Sing: Gan Xiaolan, Gan Xiaoying, and Gan Xiaoyin in Yogyakarta, 18 January 2017.) A similar trend could be seen in the development of



*wayang gantung*, performances of which, following the “New Order” policies, were almost impossible to see with only Chinese communities in Kalimantan suburbs occasionally able to perform. This has continued to the modern day, where it is difficult to find *wayang gantung* performances and young Chinese have often never heard of such a performance (Purwoseputro, 2014: 18). As for *nanyin* in this time, in Huang’s words, the *nanyin* ensemble moved into the temple and was protected by becoming part of the religious ceremonies, like *wayang potehi*.

This period ended following the Southeast Asian financial panic of 1997, which spread from Thailand to Indonesia, resulting in a turbulent economy and society. Under attack from a reactionary force, the Suharto government collapsed on 21 May 1998. During the years before the collapse of Suharto, the destructive consequences of the financial crisis had brought further anti-Chinese sentiment. Many of the *pribumi* communities began to make use of the adverse situation to attack the Chinese as scapegoats for the national crisis. With such increasingly flourishing anti-Chinese sentiments, racial and cultural conflicts rose rapidly (Hoon, 2006: 113–115). A key event of this period was the anti-Chinese riots between 13 and 14 May 1998 in Jakarta, often referred to as the “May Riots”, in which many Chinese residences and stores were destroyed and looted, and unarmed Chinese women were raped and killed, leading to around 70,000 Chinese fleeing to foreign countries. These riots violated basic human rights and were condemned around the world. Many middle-class families escaped to foreign countries, and took refuge in safer, overseas regions. As a result, there was a large outflow of capital, which brought increased economic hardship to Indonesia and impeded the recovery from the economic crisis (Setiono, 2001: 366).

## **2.6 Post- “New Order” Period (Revival) (1998—)**

Following the riots, Suharto was forced to resign from his position in 1998, being succeeded by Vice President Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie (the third president of Indonesia). However, this brought further unrest to Indonesia as B.J. Habibie continued

Suharto's policies of discrimination against the Chinese, and was busy dealing with the previous wave of national unrest. Thus, during his short period in power (21 May 1998 – 20 October 1999), the issues faced by the Chinese were not solved, and no progress towards cultural diversity was made (Liao, 2002: 29).

Following this transitional period, in October 1999, Abdurrahman Wahid became the fourth president of Indonesia, holding power until 23 July 2001. Unlike his predecessors, Wahid was a governmental head who promoted ethnic diversity and advocated multiculturalism. In her research on Indonesian music after the fall of Suharto, Kartomi pointed out that the cultural policies of Wahid were “the first real signs of a thaw” towards Chinese Indonesian culture. Wahid showed his desire to enhance his relationship with Chinese Indonesians, especially their business leaders, in order to gain their support for rebuilding the economy. He also persuaded some Chinese Indonesians who had fled Indonesia after suffering injuries in 1999 to return to live in Indonesia again (Kartomi, 2002: 122-3). As a result, after the prohibition policies of President Sukarno and B.J. Habibie, Wahid's government ushered in a new respect for cultural and ethnic diversity, and Chinese Indonesian music returned to the Indonesian stage.

In a Ph.D. thesis, *Reconceptualising Ethnic Chinese Identity in Post-Suharto Indonesia*, Hoon attributes this to Wahid's traditional Muslim education in Java and subsequent experience of Western culture in Germany, France, and Holland, thus forming his multicultural world view—having knowledge of both Western and Eastern cultures. In addition, some of Wahid's ancestors had been from Fujian in China, and could even speak Hokkien, thus Wahid was more favourable towards the Chinese than either Suharto or B.J. Habibie. These forefathers had arrived in Indonesia with Zheng on the westward voyage of 1417, settling in the Surabaya region of Java. Because of his political leanings, after he took office, Wahid implemented diversified policies and declared an end to discrimination against the Chinese, decreeing that they constituted part of the Indonesian society and were thus an official minority who should enjoy equal

rights. He changed many policies regarding the Chinese and abolished various regulations for Chinese exclusion, thus fundamentally changing the situation of racial discrimination in the country: allowing the Chinese to use their Chinese names and have freedom of religious belief, declaring Chinese Confucianism legal, and lifting the complete ban on Chinese-language media. On 17 January 2000, Wahid signed Executive Order No.6, announcing the cancellation of the previous No.14 Executive Order which had restricted the open celebration of Chinese festivals, allowing Chinese Indonesians to celebrate the Chinese New Year in 2000 for the first time in 35 years. In addition, President Abdurrahman Wahid and his Vice President Megawati Sukarnoputri (daughter of Sukarno) had dinner with hundreds of Chinese on the Eve of the New Year, dressed in traditional Chinese costume (Hoon, 2006: 121–123).

Up to this point the Chinese had not been involved in Indonesian politics and policy making, in part due to the Chinese exclusionary policies of the Suharto era. However, in the post-“New Order” period they took more positive political countermeasures, with some directly participating in national political parties, which, in comparison with the situation during the period of Suharto, reflected considerable progress (Li, 2015: 553).

Following Abdurrahman Wahid, the fifth president, Megawati Sukarnoputri, and the sixth president, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, extended Wahid’s tolerant attitude and continued the friendly policy towards Chinese Indonesians and made further progress. For instance, Megawati revived the usage of terms of respect for Chinese Indonesians, referring to them as *Orang Tionghoa* (Chinese), instead of the disrespectful term *Cina* used under the New Order. She also worked to promote the relationship with China and encouraged Chinese art performances in Indonesia (Kartomi, 2002: 123). Additionally, in February 2002, Megawati officially declared the Chinese New Year as a national public holiday. In the fields of culture and education, in addition to being allowed to publish Chinese newspapers and periodicals, Chinese language schools and other language schools were permitted, as was the opening of Chinese language departments

in universities. This led to numerous Chinese language training schools being set up in larger cities like Jakarta and Bandung, and those who learned the language included both ethnically Chinese people and Indonesians (Purwosequtro, 2014: 31).

In October 2014, President Joko Widodo (the seventh and current president of Indonesia) gained power, continuing the trend of advocating the coexistence of multiple nationalities, stressing the importance of developing international political and economic relations, and establishing a comprehensive strategic partnership with China. He adopted policies of equality, and continued to improve the status of minorities in Indonesia, including the Chinese. As a result, Chinese influence in politics, economics, and the culture of Indonesia has grown (Purwosequtro, 2014: 32), but with limited success. Kartomi explained that the measures of the later presidents brought artistic freedom for Chinese Indonesian culture, but did not lead to a complete revival of Chinese Indonesian musical culture, because Chinese Indonesians still held a wary attitude to performing their music, especially after they experienced the trauma of 1999. They were afraid that the violence would recur as before (Kartomi, 2002: 124).

With the democratisation of Indonesian politics since 1999, the transformation of the economic and social status of Chinese Indonesians, and the political activity and ideology of minorities now allowed, many were able to strive to protect their rights and interests as citizens following the events set in motion by President Abdurrahman Wahid, which, in turn, led to the further development of traditional Chinese culture in Indonesia (Lindsey, 2005: 59–60). The “New Order” policies that so strictly prohibited Chinese culture for more than 32 years had led to many performers switching to other lines of work, while others had passed away, causing many Chinese art forms, including *wayang gantung*, *wacinwa*, *gambang kronmong*, and *barongsai* to disappear, but *wacinwa* and *barongsai* saw a revival and development after the restrictions were lifted. Moreover, *wayang potehi* and *nanyin*, which had fared much better under the restrictions, saw their previously slow development improve after the exclusionary policies were lifted (Purwosequtro, 2014: 29).

After Abdurrahman Wahid abolished the Chinese exclusion policy, some well-known phrases and popular songs from China were again acceptable for use in *wayang potehi*, and thus it became acceptable to use *pa-ying* and Beijing opera in *wayang potehi* once more. Moreover, *wayang potehi dalang* Sesomo said, though traditional *pa-ying* was not the mainstream accompanying music of modern *wayang potehi*, most current forms continued using the instruments and personnel size of the early forms. According to Purwanto, head of the *wayang potehi* group in Gudo, the music of the art form can be divided into four types: traditional *pa-ying* music, Beijing opera and Chinese folk songs, Chinese popular songs and Indonesian folk songs. Of these, the music for the Chinese folk and popular songs were provided by Chinese *dalangs* and local Indonesian Chinese people (interview with Purwanto in Yogyakarta, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2018).

As for *wacinwa*, after the Chinese exclusion policy was lifted, Gan Dhwan Sing's *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang* (Figure 2-4) became highly popular in 2000. This story had actually been maintained during the "New Order" period when some Javanese adapted the scripts and performed it in the form of the traditional Javanese folk historical stage theatre *ketoprak*, changing many of the names to Javanese to avoid government interference, reducing cultural connections, and making it more acceptable. In 2001, the story of *Sie Djin Koei* was adapted as an opera *Sang Senapati*, which was popular among the public and was performed by the Sayembala Ketoprak troupe live on television. In 2004, Sugiarto again adapted this story, but this time into a *ketoprak* opera *Sudira Sukma Macam* which had 25 parts. In 2010, the Teater Koma troupe adapted this into three acts (the *Sin Jin Kwie Trilogy*), and then into *Sie Jin Kwie Kena* (2011) and *Sie Jin Kwie di Negeri Sihir* (2012) (Museum Sonobudoyo 2014: 11–12).



Figure 2-4: The *wacinwa* puppets from *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang* in Indonesian Museum Negeri Sonobudoyo, Yogyakarta.<sup>19</sup>

In 2011, the originator of *wacinwa*, Gan Dhwan Sing, was posthumously awarded the highest artistic honour in Indonesia, “The Cultural Hero Medal”, by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, for his achievement in shadow puppetry, his contribution to the inauguration of *wacinwa*, and the development of *wayang kulit* (Hariwijaya, 2015: 8). This award both acted as an affirmation of the artistic value of *wacinwa*, and represented the spread of a positive attitude towards Chinese Indonesian culture in contemporary Indonesia, as well as providing a good environment for transmitting and developing Chinese Indonesian artistic culture in contemporary Indonesia. This attracted the attention of folklorists and the academic community, with Mastuti (a professor at the Indonesian National University) beginning to research *wacinwa*, and in October 2017, core revivalists Professors Hanggar Budi Prasetya and Aneng Kiswanto from the Shadow Puppetry Department at the Institut Seni Indonesia Yogyakarta prepared and performed *wacinwa* in Yogyakarta, the first such performance since 1967.

## 2.7 Conclusion

Wang Gungwu describes Chinese Indonesians as “unique”, with a more complex ethnic

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<sup>19</sup> Image provided and approved by Museum Negeri Sonobudoyo, Yogyakarta.

identity and development than those of the Chinese living in other Southeast Asian countries (Wang, 1976: 200). They have suffered a great deal of persecution for many years and across many different periods and, although the Chinese have lived in Indonesia for many generations, and some of their ancestors can be traced back to the 1600s, many Indonesian *pribumi* still regard them as outsiders or foreigners (Yang, 2001: 47). As a diaspora community, during the long-term immigration process, Chinese Indonesians have brought their familial, religious, traditional customs and Chinese culture to Indonesia. During the colonial period, through the encouragement of the Dutch colonial powers, who saw them as a capable intermediary between themselves and the *pribumi*, Chinese Indonesians gradually increased their economic power and influence in Indonesia. This power led to the first ethnic cleansing of the Chinese Indonesians by the Dutch in Java in 1740. For safety and unity, the Chinese Indonesians continued with their religious activities, customs, and culture regarding the *klenteng* as the core of their life and entertainment in a discreet manner. Despite the persecution, various musical and cultural forms related to religious activities emerged, such as *barongsai*, *wacinwa* and *wayang potehi*. They were performed along with religious ceremonial activities of the *klenteng* and traditional Chinese festivals, and greatly developed between 1930 and 1960. During this period, in addition to *barongsai* and *wayang potehi* which, at their core, were temple activities, Chinese Indonesian musical forms began to include new, syncretic and creative styles which combined Chinese and Indonesian cultural elements, including *wacinwa*, *gambang krong* and *lenong*. In addition to this, a third type of music developed which integrated music of Chinese, Dutch and Western bands and local popular music, such as *tanjidor*, *stambul* and *kroncong*. Moreover, a Chinese traditional *nanyin* ensemble was established during that time. All these forms continued to develop during the Dutch colonial and the post-colonial period.

One of the largest influencing factors on the development of Chinese Indonesian music was the rise to power of Suharto in 1966, and the implementation of aggressive assimilation policies towards the Chinese Indonesians. Of particular significance was

the 1967 “New Order” policy which prohibited Chinese religion, culture, and education and the promulgation of Executive Order No.14 which strictly controlled various ceremonies, cultural and art activities related to Chinese traditional culture, and customs in any public occasion, making it impossible for Chinese musical performance to be held, so that increasingly fewer people learned it. This meant musicians had to look for other jobs and many Chinese Indonesian musical and cultural forms almost disappeared. However, such inescapable measures led to unexpected consequences as, when faced with such a harsh political environment, *wayang potehi* took localisation measures to adapt to the systems of the Indonesian social environment: for instance, replacing Hokkien in the spoken parts of *wayang potehi* with Indonesian. This led to locals participating in and appreciating the performance of *wayang potehi*. In addition, *nanyin*, having transferred to the religious activities in the temple, was able to be performed behind closed doors. Despite this, overall, Chinese Indonesian musical culture suffered greatly destructive damage during the “New Order” period and saw no revival until President Abdurrahman Wahid took office after 33 years, implementing more multicultural policies and abolishing previous policies of discrimination against Chinese Indonesians from the “New Order” period. In this post-“New Order” period, Chinese Indonesians were provided with channels through which to express themselves, and they took the opportunity to regain their sense of ethnicity, reviving and developing traditional Chinese culture. However, while *wacinwa* and *barongsai* saw a revival and *wayang potehi* and *nanyin* expanded their previously slow development, because of the severe and long-term nature of Suharto’s prohibition, other Chinese Indonesian musical forms disappeared entirely due to the impossibility of performing them and passing them on.

In contemporary Indonesia, the four major existing Chinese Indonesian musical forms of *wayang potehi*, *wacinwa*, *nanyin* and *barongsai* are developing in Central Java and East Java, but it has been difficult to see any practice and performance of *nanyin* in recent years. *Barongsai* has developed in Malang of East Java. *Wacinwa* sees most performances in Yogyakarta of Central Java, and *wayang potehi* in Gudo of East Java,



but there are very few troupes in Central Java. In order to continue the culture, a new fusion form of *wayang potehi* has been created in recent years: *jasen potehi*. This is discussed in detail in chapter 5.

## **Chapter 3: Constructing Ethnic and Cultural Identity through Practicing Chinese Indonesian Music**

### **3.1 Introduction**

In the view of local scholars, the Chinese Indonesians who live in Indonesia have played an important and crucial role in the economic success of the country. Consequently, the influence of Chinese Indonesians on the country's performing arts is inevitably overshadowed by their focus on business. However, from the perspective of the Indonesian ethnomusicologist Sumarsam, "The art and literature of Java is passed down with the Chinese publishers. On the other hand, the Chinese also do their best effort to support and save traditional music and theatre arts" (interview with Sumarsam in ISI Yogyakarta, 3 February 2017).

Ang defined the term diaspora as "the transnational, spatially and temporally sociocultural formations of people, creating imagined communities whose blurred and fluctuating boundaries are sustained by real and/or symbolic ties to some original homeland" (Ang, 2001: 25). Accordingly, for Chinese Indonesians music is not only music, but a symbol of their cultural identity, and musical activities have become part of their cultural landscape in Indonesia. Indeed, many Chinese Indonesians have a strong connection to their original homeland and want to retain the main characteristics of Chinese culture. Although their homeland might have changed since they left, or they might have been influenced by the political and social pressures of their new home, many Chinese Indonesians still maintain an idealized view of their homeland culture and feel a cultural identity with China. Chinese Indonesians are using this cultural memory to maintain a relationship with their homeland and to construct the identity of their homeland through forms such as *barongsai*, *wacinwa* and *potehi*. These genres are maintained in the soundscape of Chinese Indonesians, through their collective memory, so that they can maintain their place in Indonesian society while retaining a relationship with the culture of their homeland, albeit something that has developed into a somewhat idealized cultural concept. As Stokes stated:

The point is surely that music is itself a potent symbol of identity; like language (and attributes of language such as accent and dialect), it is one of those aspects of culture which can, when the need to assert “ethnic identity” arises, most readily serve this purpose. Its effectiveness may be twofold: not only does it act as a ready means for the identification of different ethnic or social groups, but it has potent emotional connotations and can be used to assert and negotiate identity in a particularly powerful manner. (Stokes 1994: 48)

This chapter will not only show how the Chinese Indonesians devote themselves to local cultural development, but will also look at how they keep their own traditions of performance art in a foreign society. I will focus on the developing process of *wayang potehi*, a traditional Chinese glove-puppet theatre in Indonesia. A study of the changes and traditions in *wayang potehi* is necessary for understanding the transition of musical and national identity through different political periods. Firstly, I will show how the origins and development of *wayang potehi* were influenced by different political and economic environments. I will also examine the adaptations in musical measures adopted by performers within the political discourse of the time, and how this reflects the musicians’ sense of their own national identity while going through an ongoing process of musical negotiation. Finally I will reveal how diverse dynamic ethnic and cultural identities have been constructed and shaped through the practice of musical activity, and how *wayang potehi* became a potent symbol of Chinese Indonesian culture which enabled a strong sense of ethnic identity in the Chinese diaspora in Indonesia. The analysis of my fieldwork data regarding musicians’ sense of ethnic identity thus provides an insight into the understanding of contemporary *wayang potehi* in Indonesia.

## **3.2 Origin and Development of *Wayang Potehi* in Indonesia**

### **3.2.1 Original form of *Potehi* from China to Indonesia**

As the Chinese emigrated to Indonesia, they brought their own traditional culture with them, thus inheriting and protecting the roots of Chinese traditional culture in a foreign country; *wayang potehi* is a typical example of this process. *Wayang potehi* can be traced to the southern Fujian area of China, and originated from the traditional Chinese

puppet theatre *budaixi*布袋戏. Because Fujian is located on the southeastern coast of China, people from Fujian were among the first Chinese to migrate to Southeast Asia. Through this migration process, they brought the traditional folk beliefs and culture of Fujian to their various destinations. As an important theatre form in the southern Fujian area of China, *budaixi* spread to Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and other places after Chinese immigrants settled in these countries (Zhou, 2001: 36).

*Budaixi* is a traditional Chinese regional theatre originating in the Fuzhou and Quanzhou areas of China, later spreading mainly to Quanzhou and Zhangzhou in Fujian province, Chaozhou in Guangdong province and Taiwan (Wu, 2006: 25). In China, *budaixi* can be translated as “cloth bag theater”, and is also known as *muouxi* (木偶戏, “the theatre of wooden puppets”), *longdixi* (笼底戏, “the theatre of the cage”) and *zhangzhongxi* (掌中戏, “the theatre of the palm”). The three Chinese characters are *bu* (布, cloth), *dai* (袋, bag) and *xi* (戏, theatre). The basic material to make a puppet was a piece of cloth or fabric made into a glove, which was then decorated according to the character the puppet represented. As for the origin of *budaixi*, there is no clear record of a timescale, but according to a story in Mastuti’s book (2014), *budaixi* was first created by five prisoners who had been sentenced to death during the Tang Dynasty (618-907). While waiting to be executed, they passed their time by playing with a square-shaped piece of cloth. One of the ends of the cloth was tied to form a knot to represent a person’s head. To animate the puppet, they put a finger into the knot, and moved it according to the character portrayed. Music to accompany the movements of the puppets was made using eating and cooking utensils. The king, who eventually heard about their puppet performances, decided to pardon the prisoners in return for their contribution of a new art form (Mastuti, 2014: 35). Stenberg mentioned that while “there is evidence for the great antiquity of Chinese puppetry as a whole, specific evidence for southern Fujian puppetry only becomes very strong in the Song Dynasty (960-1279). ... Puppetry of some kind was popular in southern Fujian as early as the

Song Dynasty, with records of troupes exceeding one hundred members” (Stenberg, 2015:394).

### 3.2.2 Origins of *Potehi* in Indonesia

There is no definite record of when *budaixi* first appeared in Indonesia. Brandon’s *Theatre in Southeast Asia* suggests that *budaixi* was not introduced to Indonesia before the early twentieth century (Brandon, 1967: 49). However, according to legend, it was brought when the Chinese immigrated to southeast Asia in the sixteenth century. *Zhangzhou Wenhua Zhi* (The Cultural History of Zhangzhou, 1999) noted that “During the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), the people of Zhangzhou, who entered Taiwan with the troops of Zheng Chenggong, brought *gezai* (歌仔戏, “the opera of gezai”), *zhuma* (竹马, “the opera of bamboo horses”), *chegu* (车鼓, “the opera of the handcart drum”), *nanci* (南词, “southern lyrics”), *tixianmuou* (提线木偶, “string puppetry”), *budaixi* (布袋戏, “cloth bag theatre”) and *zhiyingxi* (纸影戏, “shadow puppetry”) of Zhangzhou to Taiwan, from whence they spread overseas and throughout Southeast Asia, thus disseminating Zhangzhou’s culture” (*Zhangzhou Wenhua Zhi*, 1999: 13). As noted in the previous chapter, Salmon and Lombard also mentioned the roadside Chinese performances in the Banten province between 1602 and 1605, whenever a ship arrived in Indonesia from China or returned (Salmon and Lombard, 1985: 104), while Liem Thian Joe described *wayang potehi* performers being invited from Batavia (now Jakarta) to perform for two months in celebration of the completion of a new temple in Semarang as early as 1770 (Liem, 1931-33: 50). Batavia, founded in 1619, was the main trading port of the Dutch East India Company. At the end of the eighteenth century, many Chinese business owners who held opening ceremonies near the Batavia Palace Temple enthusiastically sponsored the performance of *wayang potehi* at the temple fair (Kartomi, 2000: 279). According to the reseach of Groenendael, however, the popularity of *wayang potehi* in Java occurred no earlier than the latter half of the nineteenth century. Groenendael also mentioned that in 1869 in East Java, the Chinese temple invited the *wayang potehi*

troupe to perform for a full month (Groenendael 1993: 16).

### **3.2.3 Growth in Popularity: Later Dutch Colonial and Heyday Periods (1900-1965)**

During the Dutch colonial period, puppet theater became popular as Chinese temples around the country often invited troupes of *wayang potehi* performers to take part in various kinds of birth ceremonies for the gods. Each performance could continue for several months, and sometimes troupes were even invited from China. Zhang Zhongyi remembers that when he was a child, he often saw various performances by Chinese troupes of Beijing opera, *budaixi* and Chaozhou opera in the Dajue Temple of Semarang, especially during the anti-Japanese period in China, when there were often performances of Beijing opera by troupes from China in order to raise money. In 1938, Jo Kie San, a puppeteer in Sulawesi, raised money for the Second Sino-Japanese War by performing *wayang potehi* in the New Year and Lantern Festivals (Wirawan, 2013: 197). From the seventeenth to the early nineteenth centuries, the spread of *wayang potehi* was largely in the major Javanese port cities on the northern coast such as Banten, Batavia and Semarang, and later, Surabaya; these cities became the gateway for its expansion into other parts of Java. Details of the development of *wayang potehi* during the nineteenth century are largely unknown because of a lack of data (Purwoseputro, 2014: 41).

The years from 1900 to 1965 were a golden era for *wayang potehi*, as it had spread and become popular in almost every city in Java, especially East and Central Java, West Java, Jakarta, and even in Bali and Sumatra. The majority of the puppeteers were Chinese Indonesians usually from the Hokkien subgroup, thus the Hokkien dialect was often used in performance as well as Malay. During the first quarter of twentieth century, many puppeteers who emigrated from China to Java brought their instruments with them. At that time, there were two types of *wayang potehi* artists: *totok* and *peranakan*. *Totok* refers to puppeteers who were born in China and who arrived in Java in the early twentieth century; in other words, the *totok* were pure-blooded Chinese. On the other hand, *peranakan* puppeteers were second-generation Chinese who were born in Java.

Salmon opined that *wayang potehi* was still performed by “*enchik-enchik*” (a father’s younger brother, or uncle), referring to the *totok* and *peranakan* artists who are still regarded by contemporary *wayang potehi* performers as artists who upheld the original Chinese traditions. Puppeteers from this period were the last generation of Chinese Indonesians to play a key role in preserving the art of *potehi*, and they were the teachers and mentors who became the role models for today’s puppeteers (Salmon, 1981: 15).

### **3.2.4 Revival and re-negotiation, post 1998**

As described in the previous chapter, *wayang potehi* was severely oppressed along with other expressions of a Chinese Indonesian cultural identity under the “New Order” regime of 1966-1998. Subsequently, however, *wayang potehi* enjoyed a new freedom when President Abdurrahman Wahid revoked the Executive Order No.14 of 1967 by issuing Presidential Decree Number 6 of 2000. This allowed *wayang potehi* to be freely performed in temples and other public places (Hoon, 2006: 121-123). As the “New Order” policies had so strictly prohibited Chinese Indonesian culture for more than thirty-two years many performers had switched to other lines of work, and others had passed away; however, *wayang potehi* had fared much better than other Chinese Indonesian arts under the restrictions, and saw its previously slow development improve after the exclusionary policies were revoked (Purwosequtro, 2014: 59).

After 2000, *wayang potehi* could be found in malls, hotels, restaurants, campuses and other entertainment venues. Many temples also revived the puppet shows after a long hiatus. Some *peranakan* puppeteers and puppet makers who had previously abandoned the craft were emerging on the scene again, and other groups began to learn about these performance forms. By 2013, however, there were only three groups, namely, Fu He An of Gudo which was revived in 2001, Lima Merpati of Surabaya which was established in 2005 and the Tulungagung group. As for the musical aspect of *wayang potehi*, after Wahid abolished the Chinese exclusion policy, it became acceptable to use *pa-ying*, Beijing opera, and Chinese folk and popular song in *wayang potehi*. After several years of development, musicians also started to add some Indonesian folk and

popular music into the performances which became very popular among *pribumi*, such as the Indonesian folk song *Bengawan Solo*.

### **3.3 Performing Music as a Significant Way to Construct the Ethnic and Cultural Identity of Chinese Indonesians**

Ang noted that elements such as folklore, language, literature, drama, and music have always played a major role in the construction of an identity system in diaspora communities (Ang, 2001: 39). Thus, Chinese Indonesian music is not only about music itself, but music as a symbol of cultural identity. Music clubs and activities have become part of the cultural landscape, with *wayang potehi* as the most representative art form, a symbol of diasporic cultural identity that combines cultural and artistic forms from both communities.

As the social, political and cultural environment of the Chinese diaspora in Indonesia changed, so did some of the performance elements of *wayang potehi*. Although the Chinese Indonesians strove to maintain the traditional Chinese culture of their homeland, they still could not ignore the impact and changes of social culture. So when President Suharto launched the “New Order” policy to strictly control the various forms of Chinese religion, writing, and education and to prohibit public performance of Chinese folk arts, it caused great impact and much harm to Chinese traditional culture. In order to survive, *wayang potehi* had to change and adapt. In recent years, Chinese Indonesians have gained a certain economic and social status in Indonesia. In addition, as President Wahid lifted the discriminatory laws against the Chinese Indonesians, the development of Chinese traditional culture has been encouraged. This has prompted Chinese Indonesians to reconsider the development of Chinese Indonesian culture, and has resulted in the promotion and growth in popularity of *wayang potehi*. Through this process of change, impacted by historical, social, economic and cultural factors, *wayang potehi* has gradually developed into a specific Chinese Indonesian art form which is different from the traditional theatres of China and Indonesia.



To reveal how Chinese Indonesians established their ethnic and cultural identity through music during different periods, I will focus on one *wayang potehi* troupe, Fu He An, in detail. The Fu He An troupe originated from Hoon San Kiong *klenteng* (Chinese temple) in Gudo (East Java) (Figure 3-1, 3-2). According to Mastuti, the most authentic form of traditional Chinese *budaixi* to be found in Indonesia was at Gudo (Mastuti, 2014: 62). In addition, the Fu He An troupe continued to perform without interruption throughout the “New Order” years (Purwoseputro, 2014: 50). Ki Bejo of Kediri thought that New Order restrictions created a trend in which the practice of Chinese performances became more common in East Java, where policy was less stringently enforced (cited in Groenendael, 1993: 18), and audiences and performers in Gudo also have confirmed that performances took place in the 1970s and 1980s. Ki Sesomo began performing as a musician in 1964, and became a *dalang* in 1968, arriving in Gudo in 1971 specifically to perform *potehi*. Toni Harsono told me that the ascension and birthday of the temple god Guangze Zunwang, with its biannual month-long puppet performances, was an even greater festival during the New Order years, since none of the other temples of East Java dedicated to that god could celebrate the festival, and so all the worshippers came to Gudo (interview with Toni Harsono in Yogyakarta, 20<sup>th</sup> February 2018). It seems reasonable to assume that the effect of anti-Chinese measures would be detrimental for the performance of *potehi*, but in practice these measures were unevenly applied, resulting in a move towards temple performance. Under New Order religious policy, Taoist practice was subsumed into a definition of Buddhism rather than suppressed (Koji, 2012: 394). Hence, *klenteng*, as places of religious worship of a recognised religion, were permissible, even when Chinese culture and language were formally banned. So, Fu He An’s *potehi* experienced several different regimes and therefore is representative of the cultural identities in the whole history of Indonesia. This is the reason why I chose it as a case study of national identity in this section.



Figure 3-1: Hoon San Kiong *klenteng* (Chinese temple) in Gudo (East Java), 25 January 2018.



Figure 3-2: The *wayang potehi* stage of Fu He An in Hoon San Kiong, Gudo (East Java), 25 January 2018.<sup>20</sup>

Fu He An is the hereditary troupe of the Harsono Tok family, now represented by the local gold merchant Toni Harsono (Figure 3-3), the grandson of Tok Su Kwie and son of Tok Hong Kie, both *potehi dalangs*. From them he inherited traditional stages (one of which is from China), and puppets (thirty of which are from China). He has also preserved his father's performance notes and various Malay/Indonesian-language Chinese novels—mostly from the 1930s through to the 1950s—from which his father

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<sup>20</sup> Photographs by author.

drew material. Harsono was only 13 when his father died, and so his interest in and knowledge of *potehi* was obtained to a great extent from friends of his father such as the *dalang* Liem Sing Tjwan and the musician Tan Ping Han. Harsono and an employee, the carver Supangat, a 48-year-old former furniture sculptor, who moved to Jombang in order to help make *potehi* according to Harsono's designs, are among the most prolific producers of *potehi* puppets (Harsono's own collection now numbers around two thousand), and of *potehi* stages. Seeking to spread *potehi*, Harsono has donated *potehi* puppets to the Quanzhou Museum, the US consulate in Surabaya and several Western museums. His own collection of older puppets, many of them from China, has been exhibited in both Yogyakarta and Surabaya.



Figure 3-3: Toni Harsono, the patron of Fu He An troupe in Hoon San Kiong, Gudo, 25 January 2018.<sup>21</sup>

At the beginning of the twentieth century, *potehi* plays were mainly found in Central Java and East Java, and were mostly performed in conjunction with religious ceremonies in *klenteng*. In addition, they were also performed at the invitation of Chinese businesses, communities or families. At that time, most of the performers were Chinese puppeteers, and the audience was mainly Chinese. The performing stories involved mainly traditional puppetry from Chinese scripts, performed in Hokkien. From the 1960s, because of the New Order policy of the Suharto government, any

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<sup>21</sup> Photograph by author.

widespread performance of *potehi* was banned. Because of this the Chinese were generally reluctant to learn *potehi*, and *dalangs* did not dare to perform in Hokkien. In order to avoid the government scrutiny, the performance language was changed to Javanese or Bahasa Indonesia. There have been many changes and the performance of *potehi* has evolved in terms of performing form, venue, visual presentation and musical content. However, in all the developments and changes, certain traditions have always be retained, and it is the hope of current supporters and performers of *potehi* that this will continue to be the case.

### **3.3.1 Fluidity of Changes in the Representation of Cultural Identities in *Wayang Potehi***

#### **3.3.1.1 Changes in Performing Language**

As Chinese immigrants came to Indonesia, performances were initially given in the Chinese local language known to most Chinese people in that region. Since most of the *dalangs* were from Quanzhou or Zhangzhou, Hokkien became the main language used in performance of *potehi*. During the New Order period, when Chinese language and publications were banned, many Chinese schools were forced to close. Even Chinese books were regarded as pornographic and were banned. As *potehi* had always been performed in Hokkien, except for a few poems that could not be translated, all the narrative used in performances was changed to Bahasa Indonesia or Javanese (interview with Ardian Purwoseputro in Yogyakarta, 20 February 2018). Stenberg notes that “during Orde Baru (New Order), the linguistic shift to Indonesian became all but complete (with Hokkien fragments retained for *suluks* as well as for interjections, wishes of good fortune, stock phrases, and ritual elements)” (Stenberg, 2015: 404). Indeed, in my interview with Purwanto, he spoke only one sentence of *suluk* in Hokkien, “Fengtiao Yushun, Guotai Minan” (风调雨顺, 国泰民安. Pray for the fine weather and peace of the country) (interview with Purwanto in Yogyakarta, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2018) (Figure 3-4).



Figure 3-4: Purwanto, the head of Fu He An troupe in Hoon San Kiong, Gudo, 25 January 2018.<sup>22</sup>

As reported by Purwoseputro, Zhang Zhongyi recalled that his career bridged the shift from Hokkien to Indonesian, which he explained as necessary to maintain audience interest, although he also reported harassment from the authorities to remove Hokkien *suluks* and lotus flower imagery. In his own performances, the change occurred when he was in his forties and fifties, i.e. in the 1970s and 1980s. In Surabaya, at roughly the same time, the language shift also occurred in one teacher–student relationship: Gan Co-Co was an old Chinese man who could only speak a few simple words of Indonesian. Because he saw that the young people were enjoying the *potehi* show, he brought Zhang backstage and showed him how the performers manipulated the puppets. At the same time, new puppets were beginning to be made in Indonesia, especially in Tulungagung and Surabaya, supplementing those that had been brought from China. Zhang dates the wider interest of *pribumi* Indonesians in *potehi* from that time, just as the genre was becoming linguistically, performatively and materially more independent from Chinese sources (Purwoseputro, 2014: 50-52). Indeed, although the linguistic shift could be seen as damaging to *potehi*, it also gave *potehi* a chance to change. Performances in the local language attracted *pribumi* audiences to watch the performance, which promoted the spread and popularity of *potehi* among the Indonesian *pribumi*. The change of performing language turned into an effective tool to enable the integration of Chinese

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<sup>22</sup> Photograph by author.



*potehi* into Indonesian culture.

As Purwanto notes, most Chinese Indonesians were from Fujian and Guangdong, and most had business and financial success as their main goals (Figure 3-5). So many Chinese Indonesians had no time for, or interest in, learning to perform *potehi*, or even watching *potehi* performances, because they were focused on business concerns. Interestingly, many *pribumi* had already learned to play *potehi* instruments as there was no language barrier; however, the skill of performing with puppets involved the Hokkien language, which caused difficulties. Therefore, when the Suharto government decreed that *potehi* should be performed in Indonesian, it allowed the Indonesian locals to understand and learn the narratives from watching performances, and eventually even allowed Indonesians who did not understand Hokkien to be able to take part and appreciate *potehi* in a new way (interview with Purwanto in Yogyakarta, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2018). In this way, *pribumi* were not only able to assimilate traditional Chinese *potehi*, but some of them became performers themselves, which also further expanded the general popularity of *potehi*, enabling it to become a kind of traditional Indonesian theatre. This turned out to be an unexpected result of the Suharto government oppression.



Figure 3-5: Map showing the location of Java and the movements of Chinese immigrants.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> The map is reproduced from the website of Wikimedia Commons: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map\\_of\\_Southeast\\_Asia.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_Southeast_Asia.png), accessed on 2 September 2020.

### 3.3.1.2 Changes in Performance Venues

In the past, most *potehi* performances had taken place in the context of Chinese religious ceremonies in the temple, such as the birthdays of gods, other Chinese traditional festivals, ceremonies to drive out evil spirits and the votive ritual. In *Diaspora and Identity: The Sociology of Culture in Southeast Asia*, John Clammer noted that:

When ethnic Chinese immigrate to a new region, they always establish some organisations to construct their social network: such as a temple, secret gang institutions from China, clansmen associations, trade associations, entertainment and cultural institutions, and religious institutions not based on the temple. Within these institutions, the most important one is the temple. (Clammer, 2002: 187-188)

For many Chinese Indonesians, temples have always been the main core of the most important social and cultural activities, so no matter where they migrate, temples have always been the first institutions they felt they must establish after they settle. Temples were important for the spiritual wellbeing of the settlers and were also an important symbol of inheritance and Chinese culture. Consequently, Chinese Indonesian art forms such as *potehi* often rely on various temple activities to exist. As Harsono said:

The Chinese Indonesian have a strong sense of identity and mission for Chinese culture. Chinese temples are part of Chinese traditional culture. They are places for Chinese Indonesian to worship gods and ancestors. Chinese statues in temples are also a symbol of Chinese traditional culture, which could arouse the identification and feelings of the Chinese Indonesian towards their own nation and homeland. Therefore, we must defend the existence and development of Chinese temples. *Wayang potehi* is not just a theatre, but also has the spirit and educational significance of the Chinese culture. Thus, Hoon San Kiong insists that the performance of *potehi* in the temple should not be interrupted regardless of whether there are audiences or not. (Interview with Toni Harsono in Yogyakarta, 20 February 2018).

Therefore it can be seen that, in addition to meeting religious and spiritual needs, the

new Chinese Indonesian community also used *potehi* to build a connection with the culture of their homeland, and even to this day, the inheritance of Chinese culture in Indonesia comes with a strong sense of responsibility.

The temple remained the primary place of performance for most *potehi* troupes even as alternative venues became available (Koji, 2012: 296). As described above, under the New Order cultural and religious policies *potehi* venues were largely restricted to the temples, where *potehi* did and does indeed play a ritual role in Taoist belief (Groenendael, 2014: 18). But even though the temple association is no longer necessary for the genre's existence—for instance, the Mojokerto troupe is centred around the patron's residence—the temple, as a centre of religion and a community gathering point, continues to provide the principal focus for *potehi* performance (interview with Yensen in Malang, 15 December 2018).

In recent years, there have been growing opportunities for the exhibition of Chinese Indonesian culture, and this has brought *potehi* into diverse venues, such as shopping malls and art galleries. In addition, if exhibits and performances are one manner of raising the profile of *potehi*, then publications and research by academics is another. By sponsoring publications and the travel of *potehi* scholars, patrons are helping to create a network of academics and specialists on Chinese Indonesian arts. In all of these endeavours—exhibits, publications, performance promotion—the “Indonesianness” of the genre is highlighted: the book of Hirwan Kuardhani is called *Mengenal wayang potehi di Jawa* (About *wayang potehi* in Java), the report of Dwi Woro R. Mastuti is titled *Wayang Cina di Jawa sebagai wujud akulturasi budaya dan perekat negara kesatuan Republik Indonesia* (Chinese *wayang* in Java as a feature of cultural acculturation and adhesive for the national unity of the Republic of Indonesia), and Purwoseputro's book is *Wayang potehi of Java*, to name a few examples.



### 3.3.1.3 Changes in the Mode of Transmission

Before 1967, most *dalangs* of *potehi* were either *totok* of pure Chinese descent or *peranakan*, descended from intermarriage between Chinese Indonesians and *pribumi*. Traditional troupes tended to be run by family groups. However, after 1967 as these *dalangs* of Chinese descent got older and no longer performed in person, they taught young *pribumi* the skills of *potehi*, and the inheritance was preserved through a system of apprenticeship. Because most Chinese Indonesians were engaged in business, although they attached great importance to Chinese Indonesian culture, they had no time to learn and watch the performance of *potehi*. Moreover, because very little money could be made from *potehi*, Chinese Indonesian parents discouraged their children from learning the skills of *potehi*. On the other hand, because of their personal interest in the form, many *pribumi* were able to make some money from it to supplement other incomes. This, along with the consequences of the New Order regime, has encouraged *pribumi* to participate in the performance and making of Chinese *potehi* puppets, thus unintentionally creating a bridge for cultural communication between Indonesian and Chinese Indonesian communities.

### 3.3.1.4 Changes in the Musical Accompaniment

#### Instrumentation Past and Present

Over time, the musical background of *wayang potehi* has evolved from the original *pa-ying* orchestra to the adoption of Beijing opera music since the 1940s, and in recent times, since the abolition of discriminatory policies against the Chinese, various Chinese folk and popular songs have been included in the music of *potehi*. According to Margaret Kartomi, the traditional use of the *pa-ying* orchestra in *wayang potehi* dates back to the early 1770s. In traditional Chinese Indonesian communities, *pa-ying* was often used in Chinese festivals or funeral ceremonies. The musical instruments mainly consisted of *suona*, accompanied by flutes, *huqin*, cymbals, and drums, but in the present day, traditional *pa-ying* is rarely seen in the Chinese Indonesian community (Kartomi, 2000: 279). Tsai noted from his research that there was only one traditional

*pa-ying* group still operating in Gudo. They were occasionally invited to Jakarta, Surabaya, Yogyakarta, and other places to take part in performances, but for the majority of the time they performed for festivals and funeral ceremonies in Gudo (Tsai, 2015: 85). As the *dalang*, Purwanto, notes, although traditional *pa-ying* is no longer the main musical form in *potehi*'s background music, today's instrumentation is still based on *pa-ying*, and most current forms have continued using the instruments and the same number of performers as in the early forms (interview with Purwanto in Yogyakarta, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2018).

Regarding the current instruments used in *potehi*, from my fieldwork observations during 2017–2018, I noted that there were three musicians in most performances of *wayang potehi*. On 25 January 2017, I observed a performance by Fu He An for the Chinese New Year Festival in Eng An Kiong 永安宫, Malang City (Figure 3-6). Fu He An was invited to perform *potehi* for about two months, led by the *dalang* Widodo Santosa (Figure 3-7). Notices posted on both sides of the stage stated that during these two months, the performance of *potehi* would be held twice every day (Figure 3-8). The performance schedule was from 15.30 to 17.00 in the afternoon and from 19.00 to 21.00 in the evening. The script was from the ancient Chinese story *Hong Kiauw Lie Tan* 烽火李氏唐朝, the serialized story from *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang* (Figure 3-9). The story mainly tells how Boe Tjek Tian (武则天, Wu Zetian) won political power and became the first female empress in Chinese history. Wu Zetian was the empress of the Tang dynasty from 690 to 705. She was notable for being the only female Chinese sovereign in the history of China (Chen, 2000: 225). The story of Boe Tjek Tian was performed continuously for nearly two months and followed the tradition of the stage facing the gods, thus continuing the traditional ritual of performing for the gods. Regarding the musicians in this performance, the traditional combination method was maintained, where the three musicians were divided into three levels: the first-musician played *thong-koo* (通鼓 : the Chinese small drum), *piak-koo* (梆子: the wooden percussion instrument at the right side of *thong-koo*), and *phek* (拍板 : the Chinese wooden clappers); the second-level musician played *toa-lo* (大锣 : the large flat Chinese gong)

and *toa-poah* (大钹 : the large Chinese cymbals), the third-level musician played *sio-lo* (小锣 : the Chinese small flat gong) and *sio-poah* (小钹 : the Chinese small cymbals). Besides playing these percussion instruments, the three musicians took turns in playing the melodic instruments, such as *erhu*, *jinghu* (京胡 : another bowed string instrument), *sona* (唢呐 : shawm) and *phin-siau* (笛子 : a vertical flute).



Figure 3-6: Eng An Kiong, the Chinese temple in Malang, 25 January 2017.



Figure 3-7: Widodo Santosa, a *dalang* of Fu He An performing *wayang potehi* in Eng An Kiong, Malang, 25 January 2017.



Figure 3-8: Notices on both sides of the stage showing the program of a *wayang potehi* performance in Eng An Kiong, Malang, 25 January 2017.



Figure 3-9: A performance of the ancient Chinese story *Hong Kiauw Lie Tan* 锋剑李氏唐朝, in Eng An Kiong, Malang, 25 January 2017.<sup>24</sup>

I attended another *potehi* performance of Fu He An which was led by the *dalang* Purwanto to celebrate the Chinese Lantern Festival in Yogyakarta (20 February- 5 March 2018) (Figure 3-10, 3-11). Again, there were three musicians behind the stage. The first-level musician was responsible for *thong-koo*, *piak-koo* and *phek* (Figure 3-12). The second-level musician played the melodic instruments *jinghu*, *sona* (Figure 3-13), and percussion instruments *sio-lo* and *sio-poah* and the third-level musician played

<sup>24</sup> Photographs Figure 3-6, 3-7, 3-8, 3-9 by author.

*lang-khim* (扬琴 : the Chinese dulcimer), *phin-siau* (Figure 3-14), *toa-lo* and *sio-poah* (Figure 3-15). It is interesting to note that the *lang-khim* have never appeared in previous traditional performances of *wayang potehi*. Purwanto explained this:

In the past performances, there were no *lang-khim*, *sam-hia* (三弦: the Chinese plucked three-stringed instrument) or even *guzheng* (古筝: the Chinese zither), because these Chinese musical instruments were relatively large and inconvenient to transport. In addition, no one could play these instruments in Indonesia, we could not learn it. In the modern time, the transportation industry, information and media are highly developed. We can easily buy musical instruments from China, we can learn the instruments by ourselves through the Internet. So we added some traditional Chinese musical instruments into the performance. We hope that we can learn as many traditional Chinese instruments as possible and add them to the future performances. (Interview with Purwanto in Yogyakarta, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2018)

A *guzheng* musician named Soni added:

After the *guzheng* was bought by my boss, Mr. Harsono, I started to watch the instructional video on YouTube and learn the playing skill by myself. I have also learned a lot of Chinese songs, most of them are famous Chinese pop songs. Then I will intersperse them in the performance of *potehi* based on my own understanding. (Interview with Soni in Yogyakarta, 2 March. 2018)

From Soni's words, we can see the perspective of a contemporary *wayang potehi* musician on the choice of musical instruments. The aim was to maintain traditional Chinese music in the accompaniment, and also to create an "imaginary" Chinese style in their mind. Though he had little knowledge of Chinese music in China, even this local Indonesian had a strong sense of inheritance.





Figure 3-10: The celebration of the Chinese Lantern Festival in Ketandan, Yogyakarta (20 February- 5 March 2018).



Figure 3-11: The stage of a *wayang potehi* performance in the Chinese Lantern Festival in Ketandan, Yogyakarta (20 February- 5 March 2018).



Figure 3-12: The first-level musician (left) playing the Chinese instruments *thong-koo*, *piak-koo* and *phek* in *wayang potehi* performance, Yogyakarta, 2 March 2018.



Figure 3-13: The second-level musician playing the melodic instruments *jinghu*, *sona*, and percussion instruments *sio-lo* and *sio-poah* in front of him, Yogyakarta, 27 February 2018.



Figure 3-14: The third-level musician playing *lang-khim* and *phin-siau* in *wayang potehi* performance, Yogyakarta, 27 February 2018.



Figure 3-15: The third-level musician playing *toa-lo* and *sio-poah* in *wayang potehi* performance, Yogyakarta, 2 March 2018.<sup>25</sup>

In a modern performance, behind the stage, the first-level musician usually sits behind the *dalangs*, because he can see the performance of the puppets playing and control the

<sup>25</sup> Photographs Figure 3-10,3-11,3-12,3-13,3-14,3-15 by author.



rhythm of the drum beats when the roles change. Other musicians determine the next musical piece and drum beats depending on the gestures of the first-level musician. When encountering a fierce martial arts scene, the main *dalang* would slap the ground with his feet to create an atmosphere of conflict, while the musicians would also help by shouting out words such as “hou, ha, hey”. According to Widodo Santosa, the downsizing and the mixture of music in the accompaniment to the current *potehi* is actually a way of saving money. In addition, due to limited space in the venue, this way used the available space more efficiently. Therefore, each group member is able to play three to six musical instruments and can therefore be flexible enough to downsize if necessary for the performance. However, if the invitation includes sufficient performance fees and is at a suitable venue, Fu He An will use all their resources to perform in a different way and use differing instruments for military scenes and civilian scenes (interview with Santosa in Eng An Kiong, Malang, 28 January 2017).

#### The adoption of other musical elements in the music

It is likely that *wayang potehi* began to be influenced by the music of Beijing opera during the period of the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945) when a large number of Chinese Beijing opera troupes went to Indonesia and performed in order to raise funds. Although there were serious identity problems among the *pribumi* and Chinese Indonesian communities, Chinese Indonesians still had a special sense of identity with China, and “new immigrants” in particular had profound feelings towards their home country, China. At the end of the Dutch colonial period, the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War led to the Chinese boycotting Japanese goods, purchasing Chinese government bonds, and fundraising for donations to support China. During this time, many Chinese troupes performed in Indonesia to raise money, and it is likely that performers of *wayang potehi* became influenced by the performance of Beijing opera and thus integrated many melodies and gong-drum rhythms characteristic of the latter style into the accompanying music of *wayang potehi* (Li, 2015: 332).

*Pribumi dalangs* and musicians found it difficult to sing or perform Beijing opera and therefore incorporated only certain elements of Beijing opera in the gong-drum part of the performance. However, there were a few *dalangs* who were able to use it in civilian scenes and in singing. An example of this can be seen in the work of Zhang Zhongyi, a master *dalang* in Semarang, who adopted melodies from Beijing opera and re-composed the lyrics performed in *wayang potehi* (Figure 3-16). Figure 3-16 shows a melody that Zhang Zhongyi said he had adopted from Beijing opera having re-composed the lyrics for his own performance, and performed them in Hokkien. This melody he adopted from the excerpt *Wu Jia Po* 武家坡 from the famous Chinese Beijing opera *Hongbin Liema* 红鬃烈马 (Figure 3-17). From the comparison of these two notations, the melodies and lyrics are not exactly the same, but they are quite similar. On this matter he remarked:

Many Beijing opera troupes performed in Indonesia before 1942. I fell in love with Beijing opera, and always watched their performances. Influenced by them, I gradually learnt Beijing opera by myself and tried to sing Beijing opera in Hokkien. After this, I always applied melodies seen in Beijing opera or other Chinese songs in the performance of *wayang potehi*. Sometimes, I would directly change the Mandarin into Hokkien or Indonesian for the spoken parts of *wayang potehi*. (Interview with Zhang Zhongyi in Semarang, 11 February 2017)

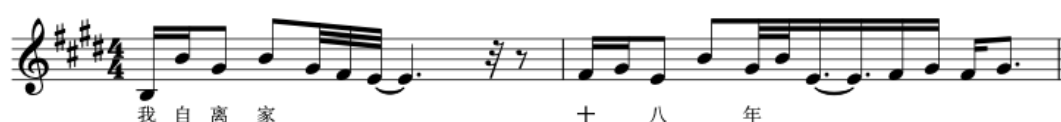


Figure 3-16: The melodic fragment “*Wumu mas*” in *wayang potehi*, transcribed by the author from the singing of Zhang Zhongyi.<sup>26</sup>



Figure 3-17: The melodic fragment of “*Hongbin Liema*” from Chinese Beijing opera.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> The melody was sung in conversation by Zhang Zhongyi, 11 February 2017. He only hummed the melody, so I subsequently asked him for the lyrics.

<sup>27</sup> The notation was transcribed by the author from the online video resource: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BHmkrUpruL8&vI=zh-Hans>, accessed 21 August 2020.

As mentioned above, many Chinese Indonesians have a certain nostalgia for China, and these feelings towards their homeland were further strengthened as a result of the oppression during the Suharto regime. Therefore, many Chinese Indonesian parents wanted their children to return to China to study or learn the culture of their homeland. Wu Jinzhong, a person in charge of Eng An Kiong, remarked:

My father is a leader of the Chinese community in Indonesia, he really loves Chinese culture. During my childhood, he asked me to learn various Chinese cultures and even arranged for me to learn the performing skill of *erhu*. He hoped that someone could teach Chinese musical instruments in Indonesia. Then, some apprentices of Chinese Indonesian musicians inherited the skill of instrument performance and the spirit of inheritance. They started to learn various Chinese music, including Chinese folk songs. Some popular Chinese folk songs were used in the performance of *wayang potehi*. (Interview with Wu Jinzhong in, Eng An Kiong, Malang, 26 January 2017)

According to Purwanto, head of the Fu He An group in Gudo, the current accompanying music of *wayang potehi* can be divided into four types: traditional *pa-ying* music, Beijing opera and Chinese folk songs (e.g. *Honghu Shui Langdalang* 洪湖水浪大), Chinese popular songs (e.g. *Xiaocheng Gushi* 小城故事, *Yilian Youmeng* 帘幽梦; *Siji Ge* 四季歌) and Indonesian folk songs. Of these, the melodies for Chinese folk and popular songs were transmitted by Chinese *dalangs* and local Chinese Indonesian people (interview with Purwanto in Yogyakarta, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2018). For example, for the celebration of the Chinese New Year and Lantern Festival held in Yogyakarta in 2018, the play *Se Yu* (*Xi You*, 西游记, *Journey to the West*) performed by the *wayang potehi* troupe of Fu He An adopted the accompanying melody from the Chinese popular song *Siji Ge* 四季歌, changing the lyrics and singing in Hokkien, Indonesian, and Javanese (Figure 3-18), while keeping the melody mostly the same as the melody of original Chinese *Siji Ge* 四季歌 (Figure 3-19). Purwanto recalled that his Chinese Indonesian teachers loved watching Chinese movies and loved the songs in the movies. They often sang these songs to express their longing for their homeland and the relatives and

friends in their hometown. Consequently, they would choose the melodies of these Chinese songs and re-compose the lyrics for their own performances. Besides expressing their feelings for their homeland, this also presented an imaginary Chinese style in the performance (interview with Purwanto in Yogyakarta, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2018). “*Siji Ge*” 四季歌 is a popular song from the classic Chinese film *Malu Tianshi* (马路天使, Angels on the Road, 1937), with lyrics by Tian Han and music by He Luting, and the original singer was Zhou Xuan. It is also one of the most familiar movie songs in China.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 2/4 time, transcribed in treble clef. The first staff is followed by three lines of lyrics in Hokkien, Indonesian, and Javanese. The second staff is followed by three lines of lyrics in Hokkien, Indonesian, and Javanese.

Hokkien: 1. 旺 来 喽 岬 就 剖 边 坐 船 出 外 去 落 兵 落 兵  
 Indonesian: 2. Sa-ya i-ni dari Sema-rang ko-ta Ber-ma in-wa yang ambil ce-ri-ta Ji-ka -sa-  
 Javanese: 3. Yea la- ku laku-mese pur Ke-ri ger-boe- ge geri n- da- se Wong a-

Hokkien: 娘 子 真 标 致 娶 去 唐 山 做 细 姨  
 Indonesian: lah sa- ya pu- nya ka- ta Min- ta maaf dengan se- ren- tak  
 Javanese: gu a yu- ne pu- pur l- lang pu- re ge- ri ka- da- se

Figure 3-18: *Wayang potehi* adaptation of Chinese popular song “*Siji Ge*” (四季歌).<sup>28</sup>

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 2/4 time, transcribed in treble clef. The first staff is followed by Chinese lyrics. The second staff is followed by Chinese lyrics.

Chinese: 春 季 到 来 绿 满 窗 大 姑 娘 窗 下 绣 鸂 鸯 忽 然  
 8  
 一 阵 无 情 棒 打 得 鸂 鸯 各 一 方

Figure 3-19: The notation of the original Chinese popular song “*Siji Ge*” (四季歌).<sup>29</sup>

However, although these songs are very popular among Chinese Indonesians, the *pribumi dalangs* and musicians were not familiar with their context, which made them seem rather stilted and disconnected when used in performances. For example, in the performance of *Hong Kiauw Lie Tan* by Fu He An at Eng An Kiong in 2017, during a

<sup>28</sup> The notation was transcribed by the author from the video recording of Fu He An’s *wayang potehi* performance for the Chinese New Year and Lantern Festival held in Yogyakarta, 2 March 2018.

<sup>29</sup> The notation was transcribed by the author from the online video resource: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hEaDvb05ssw>, sung by Zhou Xuan, accessed 23 August 2020.

scene in which a soldier reports military information to the general, the musicians used the accompaniment melody of *Xiaocheng Gushi* 小城故事; they also used the melody of *Yilian Youmeng* 一帘幽梦 as the background music for the general's defeat in the battlefield. However, these two Chinese pop songs both describe beautiful love stories, so their use in a battlefield context will have seemed odd to those who knew the meaning of the song. However, the *pribumi* musicians were more interested in a good melody to accompany the theatre performance than the meaning of the lyrics.

In *wayang potehi* performances, in addition to the use of *pa-ying*, Beijing opera, Chinese folk songs and Chinese pop music, sometimes local Indonesian folk songs or pop songs have also been used for special effects. The adoption of local Indonesian folk songs and popular music in *wayang potehi* has been a result of *pribumi dalangs* and musicians being familiar with them and wanting to use them in their performance in order to attract local audiences, encouraging them to take part in the art form as onlookers or even inspiring them to become performers. In the words of Purwanto, after President Suharto banned the expression of Chinese culture, and as the *dalangs* of *potehi* gradually evolved from Chinese to native Indonesians, not only did the language change from Hokkien to Indonesian and Javanese, but local cultural elements began to be integrated into the performance of *potehi*, such as well-known Indonesian folk songs and pop music that were familiar to *pribumi dalangs* and musicians. The use of Indonesian content has been popular with *pribumi* audiences as the use of Indonesian folk songs and pop songs made the performances more appealing to them (interview with Purwanto in Yogyakarta, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2018). The *totok dalang*, Zhang Zhongyi, believed that there were more *pribumi* audiences than Chinese Indonesian audiences, as when Indonesian folk or pop songs were used, the *pribumi* audience would be able to identify with the performance. For example, Zhang Zhongyi often sang an Indonesian *dangdut* piece, “*Malam Minggu*”, in his performances which the audience enjoyed, and he remembers that they would sometimes even sing along with him (interview with Zhang Zhongyi in Semarang, 11 February 2017). Purwanto, playing the

main character Sie Djin Koei, sang the Indonesian folk song “Bengawan Solo” in the performance. Purwanto recalled: “You can imagine what a fun scene it was when Sie Djin Koei sang the Indonesian folk song ‘Bengawan Solo’, it had a certain dramatic effect. When the local audiences saw this scene, it brought smiles to their faces” (interview with Purwanto in Yogyakarta, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2018).

### **3.3.2 Preservation of Culture as a Link with the Homeland**

For a diaspora community in a new land, there is always a danger that the culture of their homeland could be lost. So, in order to maintain the relationship between themselves and their homeland, they construct a cultural and spiritual identity through their own collective memory. Cultural and religious systems and traditions become the symbol of the diaspora community’s connection to their national cultural identity, and in order to strengthen ties to the homeland, diaspora communities often place great emphasis on the original cultural and artistic forms of the homeland (Taylor, 1994:38).

Although Chinese Indonesian *potehi* in recent years has been mostly performed by *pribumi* Indonesians, they have not ignored the traditions of the Chinese *budaixi*. On the contrary, they have emphasised the significance of these traditions in order to maintain the link with Chinese culture:

All cultures must be respected because we are not Chinese, so we must follow the rules left by our *sehu* [the Chinese master of *potehi*]. This is the characteristic of each culture. It is our responsibility as a puppet *dalang* to preserve it. (Interview with *pribumi* musician Asih Santoso from Fu He An, 2 March 2018)

For this reason, *pribumi dalangs* and musicians follow the basic performance rituals, rules and taboos of the original Chinese *budaixi*. Consequently, in temple performance, the aspect of ritual is prominent. In Gudo, for instance, at the beginning of a performance, a *potehi* puppet will announce the date and occasion of the show (e.g. a god’s birthday), and will usually include good wishes for the health and fortune of the sponsor’s family and business (Kwee, 1996: 49). The selection of plays for performance

typically occurs through a process of consultation with the temple gods through use of divination by means of crescent-shaped pieces of wood. Ki Mudjiono, although a Muslim, describes other particular rituals after performances, such as the burning of joss paper decorated with images of the characters after each performance. He is also quoted in a newspaper report as having learned from Gan Co Co that boiling puppet hairs could exorcise an evil spirit. In addition, *potehi* musicians are expected to accompany the arrival and departure of important visiting gods during festivals (Xiao, 2010: 254-6).

### **3.4 The Different Self-representation and Identities of *Potehi* in Contemporary Indonesia**

Kartomi noted that, as a result of her research, she had found that it had been common for Chinese *totok* to support performances of Chinese music, ceremonies and theaters in or near Chinese temples since around 1770 (Kartomi, 2000: 279). However, in later times, patrons played an increasingly important role in *wayang potehi* performance. In the heyday period of *potehi*, they used their financial resources to maintain the theatre traditions that they brought from their homeland, aiming to create social cohesion among Chinese Indonesians within their communities and to maintain an emotional connection with the homeland. During the prohibition of the “New Order” era, they tried their best to use their influence and financial resources to obtain additional permits for performance, so that *potehi* could be preserved and not disappear completely. After the ban was lifted, they continued to lead, promote and expand the influence of the *potehi* troupes in Indonesia and throughout the world. According to Stenberg, in today’s Indonesia, patronage seems to have become a trend in the development of the Chinese Indonesian culture, representing various senses of identity towards China and Indonesia from different people (Stenberg, 2015: 412).

From my Indonesian fieldwork (2017-2019), I have observed that for current *wayang potehi* performances, patronage and sole proprietorship are indeed the main systems of support. The operation of a troupe depends almost entirely on the support of patrons

and temples, and the patron of the temple and that of the troupe is often the same person. There are two well-known troupes of *wayang potehi* in Indonesia today, both of which have been sponsored: Fu He An in Gudo and the Yensen Project in Mojokerto. The two cities are adjacent, and the two sponsors, having gone through a period of co-operation, are currently in a state of competition. The performing systems they sponsor and the purpose of their sponsorship are quite different. These two different development models illustrate two possible ways in which different ethnic and cultural identities among individuals and Chinese Indonesian communities can be expressed. I will explain these different identities by using two examples of Chinese Indonesian patrons (Toni Harsono and Yensen), who have chosen different ways of developing *wayang potehi*.

Fu He An has been passed down through generations of the Harsono *totok* family and has now been taken over by the third generation Chinese Indonesian, Toni Harsono. His grandfather Tok Su Kwie, a *dalang* of *budaixi* from Fujian, China, was the first person to bring *budaixi* to Gudo, and he remained in Gudo to perform *budaixi* in the Chinese temple. His father Tok Hong Kie was also a *dalang* of *potehi*, and inherited the excellent skills of his grandfather, continuing to perform *potehi* all his life. However, although two generations of this family have been committed to the performance of *potehi*, they did not pass the skills on to their grandchildren including Toni Harsono. From Toni Harsono's description of his childhood, it seems that although he grew up in the world of *potehi*, his father did not want his children to become *dalangs* because he knew that they would not be able to earn much money. At that time the fees received for performing *potehi* depended on donations from the audience and the temple which would not be enough to bring up a family. Toni's family encouraged him, rather, to study business and hoped that he would become a businessman. Eventually, Toni lived up to expectations and did indeed become a successful businessman, running a jewellery store. However, he has retained a keen interest in *potehi* and has extensive knowledge about the performance of *potehi*, though he is not able to perform on stage himself (interview with Toni Harsono in Yogyakarta, 20 February 2018). After his



father's death, Toni inherited the traditional stage and the puppets, along with the performance notes and the Chinese novels used by his father as inspiration for performance stories from the 1930s to the 1950s. As a descendant of a family of *potehi dalangs*, Toni has invited all the *dalangs* of *potehi* and musicians to establish an organisation similar to the one established by his grandfather, and this organisation is called Fu He An, which means good fortune, harmony and safety.

The troupe is based in Hong San Kiong temple and Toni is both the chairman of the temple and the patron of the *potehi* troupe. The performances he sponsors continue his family tradition, maintaining their role as part of temple ceremonies—to fulfill religious obligations or to express the requirements of the gods—rather than as a form of entertainment. He has always required the *dalangs* to complete the appropriate ceremony before every performance, a tradition that has remained unchanged over many years. Performances may take place around the festival of the temple gods, or Chinese New Year, and commonly last for thirty to forty days. The performances use traditional Chinese stories passed down from previous generations, and are performed twice a day, narrating different episodes from the same Chinese story. In addition, Toni has insisted on using a traditional Chinese musical orchestra based on *pa-ying*, in order to retain as many Chinese elements as possible, and, other than the change of language and having a *pribumi* Indonesian as the *dalang*, he believes that the current form of *potehi* is basically as true to the previous, traditional form as possible. He has accepted that the language changes and the use of *pribumi* performers have been essential in order for *potehi* to survive as a performance form in a sometimes difficult environment. It is an example of integration, but is by no means assimilation.

Regarding the future development of *wayang potehi*, Toni would like to insist on carrying forward the traditional form even if the circumstances are not sympathetic and few people in the younger generation are interested in it. He has plans to build a training school and workshops for the promotion of *wayang potehi*, and intends to encourage

the younger generation to take part and learn about traditional culture, especially those descendants of Chinese Indonesians who may be losing their sense of ethnic identity towards their Chinese homeland. He told me:

I need to pass on the traditional Chinese things in Indonesia, not only for the Chinese Indonesians, but also for my ancestral career. This is a mission in my lifetime. I also hope that one day Chinese Indonesian *wayang potehi* can go out of Indonesia and have the opportunity to communicate and cooperate with Chinese *budaixi* troupes. (interview with Toni Harsono in Yogyakarta, 20 February 2018)

For the Chinese diaspora the issue is not just one of a strong identity with the homeland, but it is also about an emotional bond with the homeland and their ancestors. As Purwoseputro wrote: “*wayang potehi* is the uniting force and that bond is in our childhood regardless of race and religion” (Purwoseputro, 2014: 11).

Yensen (Figure 3-20), on the other hand, takes a very different perspective and identity from the traditional view of Fu He An, and has developed a completely different model for the development of *wayang potehi* with the intention to appeal to a broader public in contemporary Indonesia. This view is reflected in Yensen’s own background and family occupation; he is a fifth-generation Chinese Indonesian from a *totok* family. When his ancestors came to Indonesia in the mid-nineteenth century, they settled in Mojokerto and established coal and sugar businesses. Because they loved to watch and perform *wayang potehi*, the family began to collect puppets and to sponsor rituals and activities at the Chinese temple, including *wayang potehi*, *barongsai*, *liong* and other Chinese art performances. Yensen has continued his grandfather’s interest, and has gradually expanded the scope and the quantity of the collection. He has collected a sufficient number of puppets to build a puppet museum in the local area which opened in August 2015, called the Museum Gubug Wayang Mojokerto (Figure 3-21). There are not only Chinese puppets in the museum, but also a wealth of traditional, Indonesian puppets, and regular performances are held in the museum itself, celebrating both

Chinese Indonesian culture (*wayang potehi*, *barongsai*, *liong*) and traditional Indonesian culture (*wayang kulit*, *wayang golek*, gamelan, Javanese traditional dance and theatre).



Figure 3-20: Yensen operating the Javanese traditional puppet Boneka Unyil in his museum, Mojokerto.



Figure 3-21: Museum Gubug Wayang Mojokerto built by Yensen in Mojokerto.<sup>30</sup>

After the “New Order” period ended, Yensen wanted to revive Chinese Indonesian

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<sup>30</sup> Photographs Figure 3-20, 3-21 were taken by author in Mojokerto, 9 February 2018.

culture, and set out to collect antique puppets that had been hidden or damaged during the prohibition (Figure 3-22). Having paid considerable sums of money, he decided to keep the puppets in his museum, where he hired experts to repair any damage and to restore them to their original condition. He commented:

Many contemporary Chinese Indonesians or locals got these ancestral puppets. They did not cherish them. They did not know that they were antiques. They were not just puppets, they carried the stamp of the culture. They did not keep them well, which led to the fact that many puppets could not be restored. That is a pity. My museum wants to keep these antiquities for the next generation, so that culture and memory will never disappear. (Interview with Yensen in Malang, 15 December 2018)



Figure 3-22: Antique puppets of *wayang potehi* displayed in the Museum Gubug Wayang Mojokerto.<sup>31</sup>

In addition to collecting puppets, Yensen has also established eight art centres for different kinds of culture in various areas of Indonesia in order to support performance and training. Each of the eight arts centres has a different director who is responsible for the training and performance of different art forms. Yensen has sponsored the performances and training in all of the centres, and hopes to encourage contemporary Indonesian culture, as well as creating an inheritance through these centres which are scattered in different places throughout Indonesia.

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<sup>31</sup> Photograph taken by author in Mojokerto, 9 February 2018.

From Table 3-1, it can be seen that in addition to Chinese art forms, there are also many traditional Indonesian art forms in these various art centres. In addition to hosting performances in the various centres themselves, Yensen also supports large-scale events at other specific locations, which include many different styles of performance, and the director of each local centre is responsible for leading their team to arrange the performance. It is not difficult to see that he is not only supporting his inherited Chinese culture, but is also promoting traditional Indonesian culture, in equal measures. He told me that although his ancestors were from China and he has Chinese blood in his body, he was born and grew up in Indonesia, and is also a true Indonesian. He loved watching performances of Chinese culture when he was a child, but was also interested in the traditional Indonesian culture. More importantly, he feels that because the Chinese have migrated to Indonesia so many years ago, the Chinese have become an established minority in Indonesia, and that Chinese Indonesian culture now should also be part of traditional Indonesian culture. His desire was to let all Indonesians accept and appreciate the Chinese Indonesian culture, and even let more Indonesians inherit it and treat it as their own culture (interview with Yensen in Malang, 15 December 2018).

Table 3-1: The eight art centres organised and sponsored by Yensen.

Name	Place	Art Form	Director
Sanggar Yensen Project Indonesia	Bantul, Jakarta	<i>jasen potehi, wayang kulit, wayang golek, gamelan</i>	Aneng Kiswantoro
Sanggar Senjoyo Budoyo	Kasongan, Yogyakarta	<i>wayang potehi, Javanese theater, gamelan</i>	Hirwan Kuardhani
Yensen Project Indonesia	Semarang, Central Java	<i>barongsai, kilin, sam si, peingsai, liong</i>	Tris
Yensen Project Indonesia	Gudo, East Java	<i>barongsai, kilin, sam si,</i>	Teguh

		<i>peingsai,</i> <i>liong</i>	
Yensen Project Indonesia	Tulungagung	<i>wayang potehi,</i> <i>barongsai,</i> <i>liong</i>	Giok Sam
Yensen Project Indonesia	Jakarta	<i>wayang golek</i> Sunda, <i>wayang golek</i> Betawi	Reza Purtaya
Klampus Ireng	Sawo, Mojokerto	gamelan, <i>wayang kulit</i>	Mulyadi
Yensen Project Indonesia	Losari	gamelan, <i>wayang kulit</i>	Setu

Although Yensen and Harsono are both members of the Chinese diaspora in Indonesia, their different backgrounds and family environments have contributed to their different cultural identities. Harsono primarily values the Chinese identity of *wayang potehi* as a way for Chinese Indonesians to connect with their ancestral homeland. Yensen, on the other hand, emphasises the connection with the local culture while acknowledging the roots in Chinese culture, and has therefore chosen a different route to developing *wayang potehi* to that of Harsono. He has made many new versions of *potehi*, and has led it out of Chinese temples, to be appreciated by *pribumi* Indonesians. He is constantly trying to negotiate and integrate Chinese and indigenous Indonesian art. For example, he held a one-month “Roadshow *Wayang Potehi*” from December 2012 to January 2013 which traveled to eighteen villages in Mojokerto, where, unlike the past audiences of *potehi* which were almost entirely made up of Chinese Indonesians, the audiences were largely *pribumi* (Figure 3-23). As Yensen remarked:

If you want to introduce *wayang potehi* to the local people, you must bring it before their eyes instead of letting them walk into the Chinese temple. However, many interested local people dare not enter the Chinese temple because of religious factors. (Interview with Yensen in Maland, 15 December 2018)



Figure 3-23: The poster of “Roadshow *Wayang Potehi*” in Mojokerto, January 2013.<sup>32</sup>

Indonesia is indeed a multi-religious country; the government recognizes six official religions: Islam, Protestant Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism. Most Chinese temples, where most of the worshippers are Chinese Indonesians, encompass three religions: Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. As the vast majority of Indonesians follow Islam, although a few follow other religions, it seems that religion is indeed one of the factors that have hindered the expansion of *potehi*. Therefore, in order to eliminate religious obstacles, Yensen took *potehi* out of the Chinese temple and into the lives of the *pribumi*, so that they would no longer be daunted by it. He deliberately chose the time of an indigenous Indonesian festival to hold the roadshow, and integrated *potehi* into local celebrations, thus narrowing the distance between Chinese and indigenous culture, and hopefully reducing conflict between the two ethnic groups by using cultural communication. During the performance, Yensen also set up a lucky prize draw to encourage more *pribumi* people to participate and to expand the audience. In addition, as these were not temple performances, some of the content of the ceremony before the performance was

<sup>32</sup> Poster provided by Yensen.

removed, which undoubtedly weakened the traditional rituality of *potehi* and added a degree of secularity. Donny Maryono, a main *dalang* in Yensen's troupe, described the roadshow as a new performance model of *wayang potehi* for locals, aiming to promote Indonesian culture. Although he is a Chinese Indonesian from a *totok* family, he did not stress the origin of Chinese *budaixi* in *potehi*, but felt that connecting with Indonesian culture was more important (interview with Donny Maryono in Yogyakarta, 13 December 2018).

After the initial roadshow, Yensen held many other such performances in East Java, where the venues were not Chinese temples but schools, shopping malls and his own museum. He began to add traditional Indonesian dance and Indonesian singers who performed Indonesian folk songs to the *wayang kulit* shadow-puppet performance. Over the years, he has worked hard to integrate the Chinese and Indonesian cultures, and has recorded many performances onto DVDs that were widely available. Yensen has labelled these DVDs and performances of *potehi* as "100% Indonesian", implying that the Chinese cultural component did not prevent them from being fully Indonesian, since a contemporary Indonesian identity was intrinsically multicultural. In recent years, Yensen has moved further in this direction by creating a real sense of musical fusion through *jasen potehi* or *Java seni potehi*—meaning "Javanese art *potehi*"—for *pribumi* and Chinese Indonesians of the younger generation. *Jasen potehi* is performed using Chinese puppets and stories, but is accompanied by Javanese gamelan. Many Javanese art elements have also been incorporated into the performance, such as *wayang kulit*. I will examine *jasen potehi* in more detail in Chapter 5, and discuss how it is presented to the Indonesian public as a new art form of contemporary Chinese Indonesian culture, or Javanese culture.

To sum up, obviously, the current *wayang potehi* has developed along two different paths, reflecting different ethnic and cultural identities of Chinese Indonesians. Fu He An adheres to the traditional route where *wayang potehi* is seen as a symbol of national culture which can unite the Chinese diaspora community in Indonesia by practicing



inherited Chinese traditional culture and spiritual views. Moreover, in addition to satisfying the religious ritual needs of the Chinese Indonesian community, a connection with their homeland and ancestors is created through the musical activities of *wayang potehi*. Indeed, Fu He An put more emphasis on the origins and traditions of their culture and hope to grow stronger through their connection with their roots. On the contrary, the Yensen Project has brought more new ideas and possibilities to *potehi*, and has tried to integrate Chinese and Indonesian culture. Efforts to promote *wayang potehi* as part of local Indonesian culture in order to reach out to *pribumi* audiences represent a different kind of patriotism based on local history and culture, rather than ethnic identity based on nationalism. The theme of cultural integration runs through all of Yensen's cultural activities and his aim is to develop *potehi* into a cross-cultural product to promote the cultural communication of two ethnic groups. It can be seen as a kind of cultural bridge, shortening the distance between the Chinese diaspora and the *pribumi*, seeing Chinese Indonesians as a distinct group within contemporary Indonesia rather than a foreign ethnic group. Yensen hopes that *wayang potehi* will be able to represent Indonesian traditional culture to a broader public in the future.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

In Stenberg's view, the growing public performance space of Chinese Indonesian culture and the development of *potehi* can be considered a positive and comprehensive, relatively new expression of Chinese Indonesian identity. It illustrates an available strategy for mixed cultural diaspora communities in contemporary Indonesia (Stenberg, 2015: 404). Indeed, in a country of such diverse cultures and religions as Indonesia, it seems that the culture of a diaspora community can only survive by mixing with other cultures, as culture not only needs to present patriotism by integrating with local elements in exchange for safety and acceptance, but also needs to represent a link with the homeland based on original history and culture.

In my opinion, *potehi* should be regarded as a combination of two traditional

components, Indonesian *wayang* and Chinese *xiqu*. It is not enough to consider the diaspora community from only one perspective (that is, only from the perspective of either China or Indonesia). Because the centre of the diaspora community is now ambiguous, identities are constantly going through a dynamic process of change. The language, performers and performing processes of *potehi* make it a hybrid genre and a local product that symbolises the extensive interaction between the performing art forms of Indonesia and China. Although the language and performance form of *potehi* has changed and developed, in my view, this should not be called “assimilation”, but rather, it is an inevitable integration and negotiation that occurs in a diaspora group. Certainly, it belongs to the local culture, but not completely, because *potehi* still retains some original cultural elements from the homeland. Therefore, there is a place in the local Indonesian culture for this art form, but it lies in expressing a kind of distinction from other cultures in contemporary Indonesia. It is also a symbol, representing harmony across the religions and races between the diasporic community and the host country.

Although *wayang potehi* originated from Fujian in China, with the migration of Chinese immigrants *potehi* has been developing in Indonesia for hundreds of years. It has gone through the Dutch colonial period, dissemination and development in various areas of Java, Suharto’s suppression of Chinese culture during the “New Order” period, and President Abdurrahman Wahid’s opening up of Chinese culture, which has prompted *potehi* to become integrated with other local cultural elements. From a traditional Chinese performance in Hokkien at a Chinese temple for festivals and gods’ birthdays, it has developed into a type of performance that can be produced and watched by local Indonesians, and which uses Bahasa Indonesia and Javanese in temples, malls, schools and on TV. Modern *wayang potehi* not only represents the process of acculturation between Chinese and Indonesian, but also highlights a diaspora phenomenon of Chinese Indonesian people moving between the culture of their homeland and the local culture of Indonesia. In recent years, due to the rise of the Chinese economy and the opening up of the Indonesian government towards Chinese culture, various cultural and

artistic forms from China have gradually received due respect and attention. On the basis of promoting multi-culturalism, Chinese Indonesians have tried to revive, promote and raise the profile of original Chinese cultural systems in Indonesia. *Potehi* is a symbol of a dual culture: traditional Chinese culture, but also a traditional local theatre accepted by indigenous Indonesians. Because of this characteristic of *potehi*, it has become a cultural heritage shared by both Chinese Indonesians and *pribumi*, while becoming a unique multicultural art form in contemporary Indonesia.

## Chapter 4 Musical Hybridity: Chinese Indonesians as a Diaspora Community

### 4.1 Introduction

Papastergiadis identifies the concept of hybridity within diaspora discourse, revealing cultural mixtures where one community has contact with others in a dominant society. He argues that some members of migrant communities can become relatively important in the culture and political circles of the dominant society, thus approving new methods of cultural interaction while highlighting the negative effects of suppressing representation forms of diverse cultural identities (Papastergiadis, 2000: 3). From Papastergiadis's perspective, the process of promoting a multiculturalism in the dominant society enables cultural integration and interaction to become a new way of connecting local and other societies with the diaspora community. The hybridity of culture can also become an indispensable characteristic in the dominant society. For Chinese Indonesians, not only does musical cultural activity act as a medium for preserving the traditional culture from their homeland, but musical culture-crossing also plays an important social role in building a harmonious society and enhancing the relationship between the *pribumi* and themselves.

An ethnographic study of *wacinwa* will show this hybridity phenomenon in Chinese Indonesian musical culture. *Wacinwa*, a hybrid form of puppet theatre using Chinese traditional stories but performed with a Javanese gamelan, was created in Indonesia during the 1920s by a member of the Chinese diaspora, Gan Thwan Sing (1885-1967). However, any expression of a Chinese identity was suppressed under President Suharto's "New Order" regime (1966-98), which resulted in no performance of *wacinwa* for nearly forty years. Later, President Susilo posthumously granted Gan Thwan Sing the Cultural Hero Medal for bringing *wacinwa* back into public consciousness. At the beginning of *wacinwa*'s reappearance, the revivalists kept the original performing stories and musical accompaniment, but changed the puppets' shape and performing structure. However, in recent years, musicians have added

Chinese instruments into the musical accompaniment, playing alongside Javanese gamelan instruments.

This ethnographic study of *wacinwa* reveals how hybridity has been variously embodied in the process of the genre's initial formation, disappearance and revival and in various aspects of contemporary *wacinwa*, including the puppets, plot, performance format, and especially the music. As a new contribution to the study of musical hybridity, I have used a new notation method (Andrew Killick's "Global Notation") to examine how two different kinds of musical instruments (Chinese traditional instruments and Javanese gamelan) are able to play together despite using different tunings and modes. This close musical analysis sheds light on how the ethnic and cultural identity of Chinese Indonesians has been constructed and expressed through a process of musical hybridity. The development of *wacinwa* thus becomes a revealing case study of the dynamics of cultural negotiation, acculturation, identity and hybridity in the musical culture of a long-established diaspora community.

## **4.2 The Hybrid Process of *Wacinwa* in History**

### **4.2.1 Origin and Initiation of *Wacinwa* (1925-1930)**

*Wacinwa*, also known as *wayang cina java*, means "Chinese Javanese shadow puppetry" referring to the Chinese diaspora community in Java. The name itself demonstrates the genre's hybrid nature. *Wacinwa* is a shadow puppet theatre combining the Chinese *wayang potehi* and the Indonesian *wayang kulit*, using Chinese traditional puppets and stories but performed with a Javanese gamelan. It was created by Gan Thwan Sing (a third-generation member of the Chinese diaspora from a *totok* family, 1885-1967) in Indonesia in 1925 (Mastuti, 2008:21).

Gan Thwan Sing was a very skillful puppeteer and an expert in puppetry (Figure 4-1). He was born in Jatinom, Klaten (central Java) in 1885 and lived with his grandfather, Gan Ing Kwat, who strongly held to Chinese tradition. His grandfather retained the language, the Chinese characters and various classic legends of China, and the young

Gan Thwan Sing was familiar with the various shapes and faces of characters in the Chinese legends from constant reading of his grandfather's books. Social interaction with the local people shaped a more intimate relationship with the lives of indigenous people, and one of his hobbies was to watch all-night shadow puppetry performances (Museum Sonobudoyo 2014:19-20).

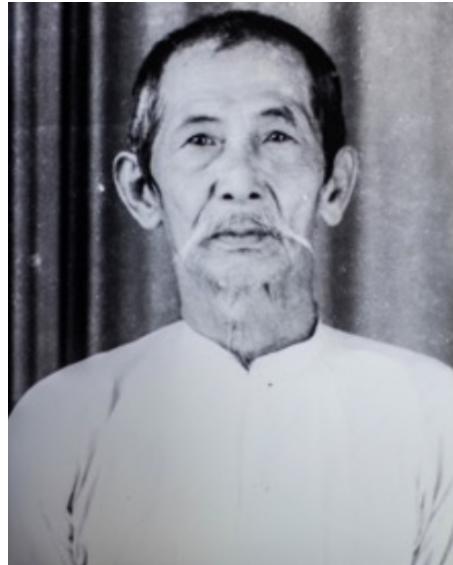


Figure 4-1: Gan Thwan Sing, a third-generation Chinese Indonesian who created *wacinwa* in 1925.

At the beginning of twentieth century, Gan Thwan Sing moved to Yogyakarta. In contrast with his peers, Chinese descendants who had made a living by trading, he preferred the performing arts. In Yogyakarta, he developed his talent for performance by studying the art of puppetry and gamelan music, and his naturally outgoing personality resulted in a wide range of social interaction. Eventually, he succeeded in becoming an actor in an amateur theatre organisation run by the Chinese descendants' community in Yogyakarta. When he had enough knowledge about the art of puppetry, Gan Thwan Sing created a new type of shadow puppetry which was a combination of both Chinese and Javanese cultures (Figure 4-2). The Javanese style was used in the Javanese gamelan music while the performing story and roles were taken from Chinese legends (Museum Sonobudoyo 2014: 68, 70). In the words of Prof. Hanggar Budi Prasetya, a professor in the department of Pedalangan (shadow puppetry), ISI

Yogyakarta (Institute Seni Indonesia Yogyakarta):

It could be said that the Chinese-Javanese shadow puppetry was the end of Gan Thwan Sing's wandering in the world of performing art. Later, it resulted in the idea of combining Chinese and Javanese tradition where both traditions had lived within him. Maybe, Gan Thwan Sing could not choose one of them because his living reality followed both of them. Thus, the idea to unite them was a solution for him. (Interview with Hanggar Budi Prasetya in ISI Yogyakarta, 1 February 2017)

Professor Prasetya's words show the importance of both traditions for Gan Thwan Sing, resulting in a combination of the two traditions in one form of puppetry, *wayang cina java*, abbreviated as *wacinwa*.



Figure 4-2: An original performance of *wacinwa* during Gan Thwan Sing's period.<sup>33</sup>

#### 4.2.2 Transformation of *Wacinwa* (2004-2013)

As described in chapter 2, the novelty of *wacinwa* attracted the interest of many Chinese Indonesians and *pribumi*, and the form became more and more popular in Yogyakarta, with Gan Thwan Sing continuing to create new puppetry performances, make puppets

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<sup>33</sup> Photographs Figure 4-1, 4-2 were provided by Hanggar Budi Prasetya.

and write stories until his death in 1967. Then, under President Suharto's "New Order" policy, *wacinwa* was banned along with other expressions of a Chinese cultural identity. However, because its performing story *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang* had been made highly popular in Indonesia by Gan Thwan Sing, some Javanese performers adapted the scripts and performed it in a form of Javanese traditional folk stage theatre known as *ketoprak*.

*Ketoprak* is a Javanese traditional folk stage theatre from Surakarta, which can be performed on site or presented on TV, radio or other communication media. Blending theatre with storytelling, it typically features several performers who tell stories together and simulate the characters' speech and emotions. *Ketoprak* spread to Yogyakarta in the era of Mataram (801-900 A.D.) and gained great popularity in the local area. Therefore, *ketoprak* was also known as *ketoprak Mataram* in Yogyakarta. When performed at the palace, this genre was accompanied by gamelan, but when it was performed among local people, it was accompanied by a wooden percussion instrument called *lesung* at the start of the performance, during scene transformations, or at the end of the performance. Thus, this type of *ketoprak* was known as *ketoprak lesung*. Traditionally, most of the performance content of *ketoprak* was Javanese historical stories (Soelarto, 1980: 16). In the present day, legendary stories and novels and even Chinese stories such as *Sampek Engtay* (*Shanbo Yingtai* in Chinese) are also performed in the form of *ketoprak*. This performing form is no longer limited to the stage but is now often presented on TV, radio, or other communication media (Museum Sonobudoyo 2014:11).

During the "New Order" period, in order to avoid interference by the government's exclusion policy by reducing any links with Chinese culture, and also to make this form more acceptable to Javanese people, many of the names of *wacinwa*'s characters were changed to Javanese names in the *ketoprak* adaptation. For example, *Sie Djin Koei* was changed to *Sudiro*, *Sie Dingshan* was changed to *Sutrisno*, and *Fan Lihua* was known as *Waryanti*. In 2000, after the Chinese exclusion policy was lifted, the *wacinwa* story of *Sie Djin Koei* was further developed in the form of new *ketoprak* versions. In 2001,



the story was adapted by Sang Senapati into an opera that became popular with the public and was performed by the Sayembala Ketoprak troupe live on television. In 2004, Sugiarto again adapted this story, but this time into a *ketoprak* opera, *Sudira Sukma Macam*, which had twenty-five parts. In 2010, the Teater Koma troupe adapted this, yet again, into three acts (the *Sin Jin Kwie Trilogy*), and then into *Sie Jin Kwie Kena* (2011), and *Sie Jin Kwie di Negeri Sihir* (2012) (Museum Sonobudoyo 2014: 12).

Interestingly, most Indonesians do not know that the performing story of *wacinwa* is from the Chinese *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang*. They usually think that this story is from the *ketoprak* tradition. This requires clarifying with regard to *wayang potehi*, *wacinwa* and *ketoprak*, as well as their mutual relationships (interview with Hanggar Budi Prasetya, 24 January 2018).

Before 1967, the performing story of *wacinwa* came from *wayang potehi*. With the arrival of the “New Order”, both *wacinwa* and *potehi* were banned, but performance of *ketoprak* still continued. Performances mainly centred around the historic stories of Majapahit and Brawijava, from when Islam came to Indonesia, which were very popular with *pribumi*. At that time, there were also many Chinese performers performing *ketoprak* and Chinese stories were integrated into *ketoprak* in order to continue the Chinese culture. In order to avoid political interference, however, they changed the names of the characters of the Chinese story *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang* to Indonesian names, and played for many years in the prohibition period. At that time, the performance of *ketoprak* was divided into two types. One was live stage theatre, which performed not only Indonesian local stories, but also *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang*. The other form was that of a radio play in serial broadcast performed at LLE (Indonesia National Radio). In this radio performance form, *ketoprak* artists performed with sound only. For example, there were thirty-three episodes in the story of *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang*, which was broadcast every night or twice every day, and related cassette tapes were even available. These two forms were both popular among *pribumi*, and they were not only performed in Yogyakarta but also in many other places in Indonesia, such as

Surakarta. Therefore, *pribumi* audiences have been familiar with this story for many years due to radio plays, cassettes, and stage plays, but they do not usually know that this story is actually from China, because the characters' names have been changed to Indonesian names (interview with Aneng Kriswantoro, 23 January 2018).

However, many years ago, there was a very similar legend in Java. For example, in the Chinese story, Sie Djin Koei is a very capable general and a big eater, who can fly, drill into the ground, and has unlimited powers on the battlefield. There were also similar legends in the Indian epics *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, which had spread to Indonesia and were widely known there, and even some of the storylines were similar. Therefore, when Javanese people saw the performing story of *wacinwa*, they were reminded of the Indian epics that had become part of local Indonesian culture, as well as the long tradition of *ketoprak* performance. For these reasons they never knew that the story came from China, and it has always been considered to be Javanese (interview with Hanggar Budi Prasetya in ISI Yogyakarta, 24 January 2018).

When Prof. Prasetya revived *wacinwa* in 2014, he thought that it was necessary to restore the form of *wacinwa* from the period of Gan Thwan Sing, so he insisted on restoring the Chinese names of the characters, such as Sie Djin Koei, instead of the Indonesian names used in *ketoprak* performances. However, because most of the audiences were *pribumi*, and Chinese Indonesians rarely watched it, although Prasetya's group used Chinese names to perform Sie Djin Koei's story, the audience was so familiar with the *ketoprak* version that they continued to regard the story as Indonesian and not Chinese (interview with Hanggar Budi Prasetya, 24 January 2018).

#### **4.2.3 Revival of *Wacinwa* (2014-present day)**

Except through these *ketoprak* adaptations, *wacinwa* completely disappeared during the "New Order" period and only returned when President Susilo posthumously granted Gan Thwan Sing the Cultural Hero Medal (Figure 4-3). This led to the art form returning to people's consciousness and attracted the attention of local musicians and

scholars who started to work on returning it to its original form. However, because all the scripts, puppets, instruments, and recordings were burned during the “New Order” period, those working to revive it could only do so according to the oral testimony of the surviving *dalangs* and those who had seen it performed live. In addition, the phenomenon of acculturation which took place during this revival raises the issue of whether the contemporary restored performance of *wacinwa* is an accurate reproduction of its original form: the performance by the core revivalists of *wacinwa*, Professors Kiswanto and Prasetya, in 2014 was based on interviews and the few materials left behind by previous performers (interview with Aneng Kiswanto in ISI Yogyakarta, 10 February 2017).



Figure 4-3: The grant of the Cultural Hero Medal to Gan Thwan Sing in 2011, Yogyakarta.<sup>34</sup>

### 4.3 The Hybridity in the Performance of *Wacinwa*

#### 4.3.1 The Hybridity of Puppets, Stage Properties and the Performance Itself

In addition to the cultural hybridity in the musical background of *wacinwa*, there are several other aspects where hybridity is evident, such as in the puppet shape, the stage

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<sup>34</sup> Photograph provided by Hanggar Budi Prasetya.

properties and the performance conventions. The puppets used in *wacinwa* are neither Javanese nor Chinese *potehi* puppets. The *wacinwa* puppet is made of buffalo leather, in the Javanese tradition, while the changeable head and costumes are characteristic of Chinese *potehi* puppets. The story is adapted from Chinese legend, while the way it is performed is generally in the Javanese tradition, using gamelan along with *wayang kulit* and *kelir* (stage screen) staging. The two sets of gamelan instruments, *pelog* (heptatonic), and *slendro* (pentatonic), are both used in the music of *wacinwa*. In addition, *suluk*, a verse element of *wayang kulit*, traditionally recited by the *dalangs*, is also used in *wacinwa* performance. *Suluk* signifies the start of the performance and is delivered in the Javanese language, as in the example below:

*Anenggih nagari pundi ta ingkang kacka adi dasa purwa. Eka marang. Sanadyan kathah titahing bahtera ingkang oratiwi, kaingkulan ing akasa, kapit samodra laya, kathah ingkang semaya anggana raras, nanging datan kadi nagara Tat Tan Kok. Arum- Arum, Burat wangi, Lir banjaran, Sari.*

(My translation: Which country is the oldest of the ten ancient tribes? Eka is one of them, although there are many origins of the ark, conquering the sky. There are still many living creatures in the ocean, originated from the country of Tat Tan Kok. You can see the flowers in the mountains, overflowing with fragrance.)

#### **4.3.1.1 Hybridity of *Wacinwa*'s Puppets**

##### Before the arrival of the "New Order" period

All through his life Gan Thwan Sing was inspired by the *wayang potehi* puppets, and this led him to create two sets of puppets for the *wacinwa* plays *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang* (Sie Djin Koei's Expedition to the East) and *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng See* (Sie Djin Koei's Expedition to the West). The surviving *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang* puppets, made in 1925, are kept in the Museum Sonobudoyo Yogyakarta. In addition, there are four other sets, which are copies, in collections at Yogyakarta, Jakarta, Bandung and Bali Island. The *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng See* script and puppets were taken to Stuttgart, Germany

in 1965 by Dr. F. Seltmann, who had received them from Gan Thwan Sing when he visited Yogyakarta. After Dr. Seltmann's death in 1995, Dr. Walter Angst bought the puppet set and they were kept in the Uberlingen Museum in Bodensee, Germany (Mastuti 2008: 21). Gan Thwan Sing's granddaughter Gan Xiaolan told me: "It has been very fortunate that the script and puppets of *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng See* were preserved and brought to Germany. Otherwise, they would be like the script and puppets of *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang* and other relevant information about *wacinwa* that was burnt decades ago" (interview with Gan Xiaolan in Yogyakarta, 18 January 2017).

In terms of when they were made, Gan Thwan Sing's puppets for *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang* were even earlier than those of *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng See* and were based on the puppets of *wayang potehi*, which were influenced more by Chinese culture. However, the *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng See* set does have some of the characteristics of *wayang kulit* puppets (Museum Sonobudoyo 2014: 14). The set of *wacinwa* owned by Museum Sonobudoyo contains more than 200 figures and hundreds more character heads which were made of buffalo leather. Compared to *wayang kulit* puppets, in general, the size of *wacinwa* puppets is relatively small. The biggest size is 68cm in height including the stick, the same size as *kidangkencanan* children's puppets (Museum Sonobudoyo 2014: 10).

The *wacinwa* puppets have a very unusual characteristic, influenced by the puppets and performing form of *wayang potehi*, in that the puppet head can be changed according to the emotions of the character (Figure 4-4). A connector is placed in the neck or parallel to the shoulders. The end point of the connector is loose so that there is a space to attach the head. In this way, the head of the figure can be changed for each part of the action as desired by the puppeteer. The puppet remains the same but the heads are interchangeable, in different colours, but still in the same size. The different colours represent the different emotions of the character, or can represent the different characters of twins. This type of performance was known as *wanda* among puppeteers

and was used in *wayang kulit* (interview with Aneng Kriswantoro in ISI Yogyakarta, 23 January 2018).



Figure 4-4: The interchangeable heads of *wacinwa* puppets from *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang* in Museum Negeri Sonobudoyo, Yogyakarta.<sup>35</sup>

The creation of the puppets for *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng See* was affected by World War II (1939-1945). The price of goods rose rapidly, and buffalo leather became very expensive, which increased the production cost. Therefore, Gan Thwan Sing only used buffalo leather to make some parts of the puppets, while the other parts were made of cardboard. In spite of this, the quality of the cardboard puppets produced by Gan Thwan Sing was no less than that of the buffalo leather puppets (Mastuti 2008: 22). In addition to materials used in the making of the puppets, there was a big difference between those used in *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang* and those of *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng See*, which were influenced by a different, traditional culture. The puppets of *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang* were largely imitations of *wayang potehi*'s puppets (Figure 4-5). However, the *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng See* puppets were similar in shape to those of *wayang kulit* (Figure 4-6), and they were bigger than the puppets of *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang* (Figure 4-7). Also, the

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<sup>35</sup> Photograph provided and approved by Museum Negeri Sonobudoyo, Yogyakarta.

length of the puppet arm was increased in order make it easier to manipulate the puppets.

In Professor Prasetya's words:

The puppets of *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang* presented some drawbacks when Gan Thwan Sing performed them. The space of the action of the puppets became smaller, and the expressive force of the performance became worse due to the shorter arm. Gan Thwan Sing is also an outstanding puppeteer of *wayang kulit*. He discovered this phenomenon after he finished the production of *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang*. Thus, he changed the size of puppets of *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng See* referred to *wayang kulit*, lengthened the length of the puppet arms. (Interview with Hanggar Budi Prasetya in ISI Yogyakarta, 24<sup>th</sup> January 2018)

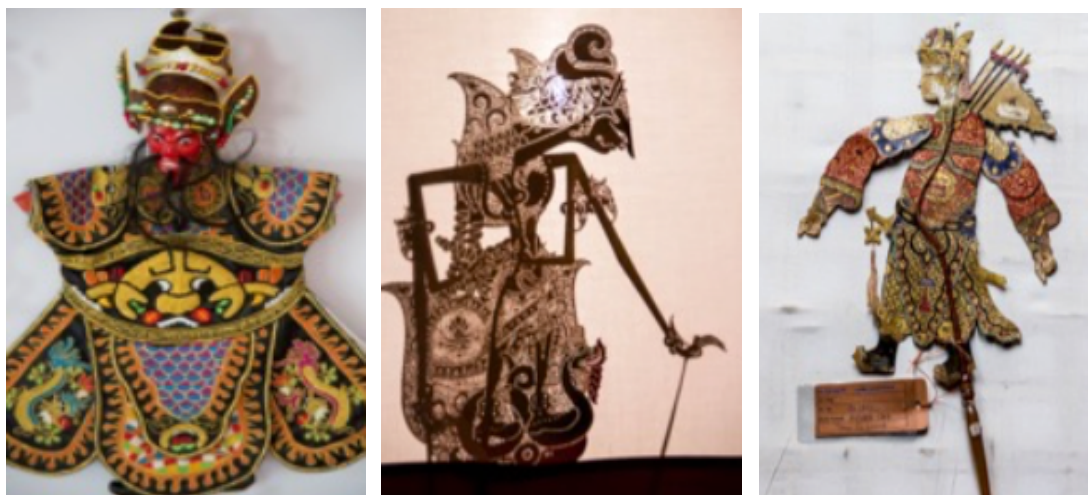


Figure 4-5:Wayang potehi puppet; Figure 4-6:Wayang kulit puppet; Figure 4-7:Wacinwa puppet.<sup>36</sup>

With regard to the costumes and colouring of the *wacinwa* puppets, the iconography of the *wacinwa* collection in the Museum Sonobudoyo is interesting. Great skill and expertise are evident in designing various costumes with Chinese traditional patterns. This is seen in the ornamental variety and the colouring; the costumes are decorated with lotus flowers, pagodas, grouse birds, storks (Figure 4-8, 4-9), dragons (Figure 4-

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<sup>36</sup> Photographs Figure 4-5, 4-6 by author; photograph Figure 4-7 provided and approved by Museum Negeri Sonobudoyo, Yogyakarta.



10), peacocks and tigers, etc., and show a variety of Chinese traditional patterns. However, there is also some Javanese influence, such as in the head of the dragon which is similar to Kala of Indonesia (Figure 4-11, 4-12, 4-13).

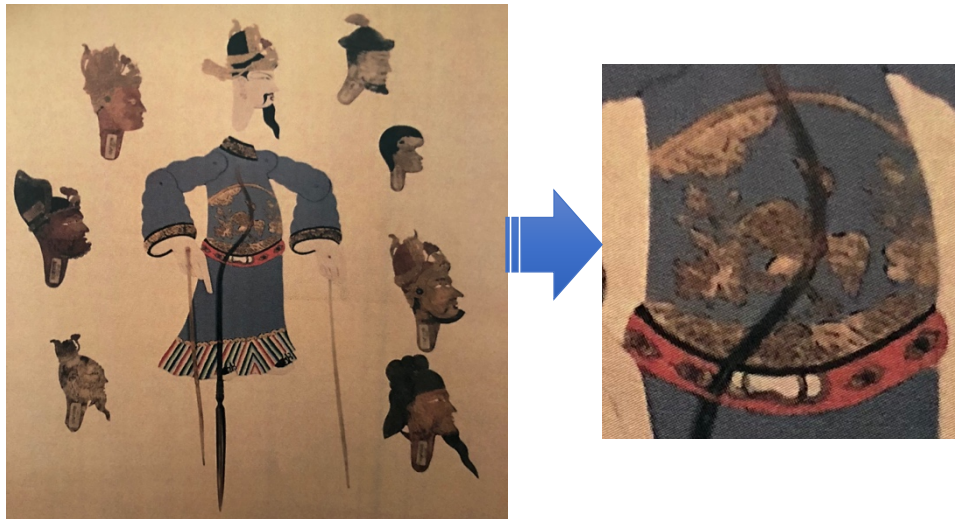


Figure 4-8, 4-9: The stork ornament on a *wacinwa* puppet.



Figure 4-10: The dragon ornament on a *wacinwa* puppet.





Figure 4-11, 4-12: Another dragon ornament on a *wacinwa* puppet; Figure 4-13: Indonesian Kala.<sup>37</sup>

### The puppets in the revival period and contemporary Indonesia

Following the death of Gan Thwan Sing in 1967, *wacinwa* was not performed, despite the fact that Gan Thwan Sing had trained four apprentices: a Chinese Indonesian and three Javanese. Of these, Pawiro Buwang died before Sing, and the remaining three—Kho Thian Sing, Raden Mas Pardon, and Megarsewu—did not want to perform following the “New Order” Chinese exclusionary policies. However, the spirit of *wacinwa* was maintained in other forms like *ketoprak* and comic books. The story of *Sie Djin Koei*, in Yogyakarta, was transformed into *ketoprak* by Mujiman Atmo Prayitno and performed by Saptamandala Ketoprak troupe in the 1970s (Museum Sonobudoyo 2014: 12). In 1983, after the success of this *ketoprak* version, one artist of Chinese descent, Siauw Tik Kwie (Oto Suastika), created a comic telling the pictorial

<sup>37</sup> Images Figure 4-8, 4-9, 4-10, 4-11, 4-12 provided and approved by Museum Negeri Sonobudoyo, Yogyakarta. Image 4-13 obtained from online resource: <https://www.dreamstime.com/royalty-free-stock-images-indonesia-bali-sculpture-kala-image4275799>, accessed 1May 2020.

story of *Sie Djin Koei*. The comic included both parts of the story, *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang* and *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng See*. The figure portraits in the comic became the main reference for the design of Aneng Kiswanto's *wacinwa* puppets in the revival period, as most of the original scripts and music scores had been burnt in "New Order" period. The other reference was the original puppets of Gan Thwan Sing from Sonobudoyo Museum (interview with Aneng Kiswanto by WhatsApp, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2018).

Siauw Tik Kwie was born on 21 June 1913, and lived in Surakarta, in central Java, with his mother, Poa Tjin Nio. When he was young, he studied at the Tiong Hoa Hwe Kuan school (the Eastern Chinese-Foreign school) in the Dutch era, and he could speak Chinese and Indonesian. At the school, Siauw Tik Kwie started to learn painting and grew very fond of it. Additionally, reading Chinese legends and mythologies translated into Javanese was his second interest, and he read many famous Chinese legends before the "New Order", such as *Hong Sin (Hong Xing)*, *Sam Kok (San Guo)*, *Sie Djin Koei (Xue Ren Gui)*, *Si Teng San (Xue Ding Shan)*, *Si Kiong (Xi You)*, and *Sa Yu Ki (Sun Wu Kong)*. He also had a hobby of collecting pictures of the characters from cigarette packs, whether Chinese or Javanese characters. However, the biggest influence on the design of the Chinese pictorial figures in the comic was his mother, who loved *wayang potehi*, and often took him to watch it. Over time, he became familiar with the puppet style of *wayang potehi*, its costumes and colourings, which influenced the creation of the characters in his comic. Following the good development of the story of *Sie Djin Koei*, in 1952 the editors of the Star Weekly magazine Tan Hian Lay, Auwyong Peng Kun, and the leader of the *Daily Kompas*, asked Siauw Tik Kwei to paint a pictorial story of *Sie Djin Koei*. During the making of this comic, Siauw Tik Kwei invited his friends Herry Ashari to make and design of the front cover and layout, and Aggi Tjetje Sm Hk to edit, correct and improve the grammar and spelling. After a long process of creation, on 30 July 1979, the chairman of National Tridarma, Indonesia, Harian Lensa visited Siauw Tik Kwei's house to convey the intent of publishing the comic of *Sie Djin Koei*'s story. Finally, the comic *Sie Djin Koei* was published by Gungan Tridarma Indonesia in 1983 (Figure 4-14) (interview with Aneng via WhatsApp, 15 June 2018).



Figure 4-14: The publication of *Komik Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang* (6 volumes) by Gabungan Tridarma Indonesia.<sup>38</sup>

In 2011, Gan Thwan Sing was posthumously awarded the highest artistic honour in Indonesia, The Cultural Hero Medal, which attracted the attention of the traditional arts world and the academic community. Meanwhile, Mastuti (a professor at the Indonesian National University) was beginning to research *wacinwa*, and in October 2014, core revivalists, Professors Prasetya and Kiswanto from the Shadow Puppetry Department at the Institut Seni Indonesia Yogyakarta, planned to revive and perform *wacinwa* in Yogyakarta, the first such performance since 1967. Kiswanto was the main maker of *wacinwa* puppets in this revival process, and he started to design the puppets in 2014 based on the few materials left behind by previous performers, along with interviews, the comics of *Komik Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang*, and the puppet collections of Gan Thwan Sing from the Sonobudoyo Museum. However, when compared with the images

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<sup>38</sup> Photograph provided by Aneng Kiswanto via WhatsApp on 20 June 2018.

of *Sie Djin Koei* from the comic, the current puppet made by Aneng is not very similar (Figures 4-15 and 4-16).



Figure 4-15: A picture of *Sie Djin Koei* character (right) in the comic *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang vol.2*

Figure 4-16: The current puppet *Sie Djin Koei* made by Aneng Kiswanto.<sup>39</sup>

Kiswanto described the process of making the *wacinwa* puppets as follows:

The first step is to create the simple outline of the image of the *wacinwa* character on paper in advance [Figure 4-17], then the image is copied onto the buffalo skin [Figure 4-18]. The last step is to perform sculpture and dyeing to produce the puppets of the desired character [Figure 4-19]. In the making process of *wacinwa*'s puppets I was assisted by two sculptors from Pucung Village, Bantul named Siswanto and Itukijan. (Interview with Aneng Kiswanto, 23 January 2018)

<sup>39</sup> The comic and photograph were provided by Aneng Kiswanto.





Figure 4-17: Kiswantoro drawing the outline of the image of a *wacinwa* puppet on paper.



Figure 4-18: The *wacinwa* puppet Sie Kim Lyan (Xue Jin Lian) carved in buffalo skin.



Figure 4-19: A finished puppet of *wacinwa*, Li Si Bin (Li Shi Ming, the Chinese emperor in Tang Dynasty).<sup>40</sup>

#### Hybridity of current *wacinwa* puppets

In the process of creating the puppets, Kiswantoro tried to include many Indonesian cultural elements and some ideas from the puppets of *wayang kulit* (in which he was also an outstanding *dalang*), such as changes in the size and shape of the puppets, the face and head and the fixing of the legs.

#### The changes of the size and shape of puppets

Gan Thwan Sing's puppets for Sie Djin Koei were sculptured using buffalo skin, based on the story *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang* (Figure 4-18). With regard to the original puppet Sie Djin Koei in the Museum Sonobudoyo, the height of the figure A= 46cm, the shoulder length B=10.5cm, the width of arms C= 3.5cm, the whole length of arms D= 17cm, the length of the front and back foot E=12cm. The proportions of Sie Djin Koei's original puppet were very different from the *wayang kulit* puppets, which were much bigger. Thus, it was difficult for the puppeteers to move the *wacinwa* puppets, because the shorter arms narrowed the space of the action of the puppets. Aiming to reinforce

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<sup>40</sup> Photographs Figure 4-17, 4-18, 4-19 by author.

the expressive force of the performance, Aneng Kiswantoro increased the size of the *wacinwa* puppets, referring to *wayang kulit*, but still based them on the original proportions of *wacinwa* puppets. For example, the height of this figure in point A equals 55cm, shoulder length or point B equals 19cm, the width of arms or point C equals 3.5cm, the length of arms or point D equals 25cm, while the length of the front and back foot or point E equals 19cm. The size of the current puppet is obviously bigger than the original (Figure 4-20).

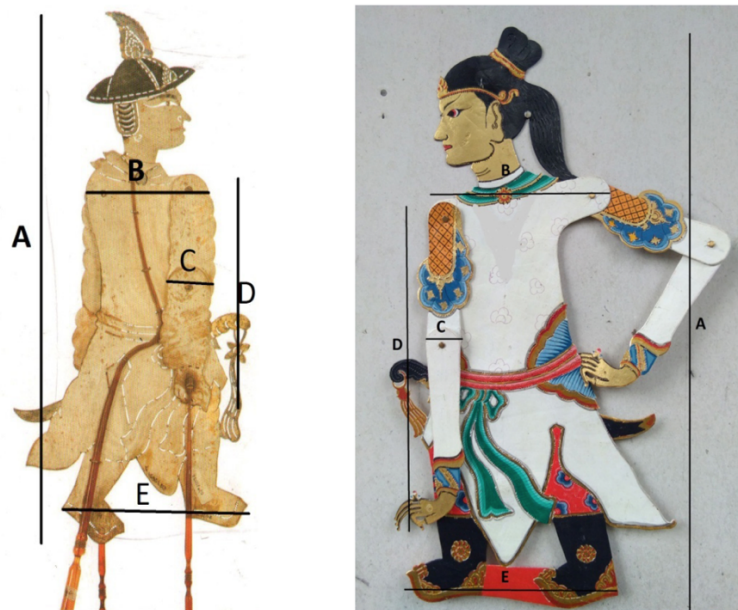


Figure 4-20: The puppet Sie Djin Koei from Sonobudoyo Museum (left); the current puppet Sie Djin Koei designed by Aneng Kiswantoro (right).

#### The changes of the face and head of the puppets and the fixing of the legs

In the two figures below, it is not difficult to see the different faces on the same figure. Aneng Kiswantoro combined episodes in the story of this Khai Sou Bun character to design the puppet. At the end of the story, Khai Sou Bun was defeated by Sie Djin Koei, and then flew away as a green dragon, so Kiswantoro designed the puppet like the dragon—very different from the original Khai Sou Bun in the Sonobudoyo Museum (Figure 4-21). As for the face of the puppet, he integrated the character of a *wayang kulit* puppet (Figure 4-22) into the current Khai Sou Bun puppet (Figure 4-23).



Figure 4-21: The puppet Khai Sou Bun from Sonobudoyo Museum (left); the current puppet Khai Sou Bun designed by Aneng Kiswantoro (right).



Figure 4-22: Four famous puppets of wayang kulit; Figure 4-23: The current puppet Khai Sou Bun made by Kiswantoro.<sup>41</sup>

As described in a previous section, the original puppets had the unique characteristic of interchangeable heads, characteristic of the puppets and performing form of wayang

<sup>41</sup> The images and photographs Figure 4-20, 4-21, 4-22, 4-23 were taken and produced by the author.



*potehi*. However, this characteristic was changed by Kiswantoro in the revival process. He changed the separable heads into the unseparable. Kiswantoro explained the reason of this change as follows:

This change referred to the concept of the head being attached to the body from *wayang kulit*, which aims to reduce the risk of accidents in the show. One example is where the head is detached from the body because of the yarn of the head hooks sticking to the other puppet figures. If that happens then this is a serious accident in the show. (Interview with Aneng Kiswantoro via WhatsApp, 15 June 2018)

The same change was also applied to the two separable legs of the original puppets, as the current puppets have fixed legs (Figure 4-24).



Figure 4-24: Adding the fixing between the two legs of a current puppet (Ang Ba Ban).<sup>42</sup>

#### 4.3.1.2 Hybridity of the Stage properties of *Wacinwa*

Dwi Woro Retno Mastuti, in her report, explains that the equipment for *wacinwa* is the same as that of the *wayang kulit*. One item is the *kelir*, the 130cm x 300cm wide white screen which is stretched and attached to two poles. It was used in both *wacinwa* and

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<sup>42</sup> Photograph by author.

*wayang kulit*, with the shadows of puppets being cast on the white screen using the light of a kerosene lamp (*blencong*). The *kelir* made by Gan Thwan Sing is signed in the Malay language in the middle bottom and reads, “Terbikin Gan Thwan Sing- Djogdja, 27 November 1942” (Made by Gan Thwan Sing in Yogyakarta on November 27, 1942).

The *wacinwa* puppets were usually kept in a wooden box called a *kotak*. To strengthen the theatricality of the performance, the *dalang* would beat the *kotak* using a *cempolo*— a piece of wood used by the puppeteer to strike the *kepyak* (four iron plates that make a tinkling sound when hit by the *cempolo*), giving an instruction to the singer, the instrumentalists and the puppeteer’s assistant, with the sound of “*thok thok*”. A sheet of metal played by the foot of the *dalang* created the sound of “*cek cek*”, thereby reinforcing particular effects, such as tension, fear, solemnity, and joy (Mastuti 2008: 26).

#### **4.3.1.3 Hybridity of the Performance Structure of *Wacinwa***

##### Performance structure of *wacinwa* in Gan Thwan Sing’s period

It is also explained in Mastuti’s report that the performance structure of *wacinwa* was not different from that of *wayang kulit*. Each was divided into three parts: the first was the opening scene, accompanied by *gendhing* (songs) *pathet nem*; the second was the middle scene marked by the puppeteer’s instruction to the *niyaga* (musicians) to stop playing *gendhing lindur* and to continue playing *gendhing pathet sanga*; the third is the final scene which is accompanied by *gendhing pathet manyura*. And for the ending, the gamelan music performs the *gendhing ayak-ayakan pamungkas* (closing song) (Museum Sonobudoyo 2014: 23).

The show usually lasted for 6–7 hours, and could be held during the day or at night. If it was held at night, it usually started at 9.30 p.m. and ended at 4.30 a.m. (Museum Sonobudoyo 2014:23). The performance procedure of *wacinwa* was nearly the same as that of *wayang kulit*. There would be fixed-use mode (*patet*) systems in different times. Therefore, the performance time of musical forms could vary due to the use of different

modes. As in *wayang kulit*, the performance of *wacinwa* was roughly divided into three phases. The first phase usually started at 9 or 10 p.m. and ended at 12 a.m. *Patet Nem* was used as the musical mode system in this phase with emotional and powerful music, which aimed to attract the audience. In the opening (*pambuka*), the musicians played music similar to *Gending Talu* from *wayang kulit* (interview with Hanggar Budi Prasetya ISI Yogyakarta, 24 January 2018).

The first phase could be sub-divided into three parts. The first part was known as *Janturan/Jejeran Nem*. The *dalang* would signal to the audience that the performance was about to begin by showing the puppet *Gunungan* (also known as *Kayon*—the original meaning was “tree”, and the extended meaning was "tree of life"), which marks the beginning of the story. Then, all of the characters would appear on the stage. Most of the scenes portray dialogue taking place in the palace in this section. After the appearance of the puppet *Gunungan*, the music changed to play *Gending-Gending Ayak-Ayak*. During this first section, the music was performed at a steady tempo in order to calm the audience and prepare them to see the play, so that they would not leave in the middle (interview with Hanggar Budi Prasetya in ISI Yogyakarta, 24 January 2018).

The second part was the *Paseban Jawi*, which contained scenes such as the emperor commanding his troops to attack another country, and dialogue between the prime minister (*patih*) and generals discussing the combat strategies, followed by the departure of marching troops. At this moment, the music used the *Gending-Gending Lancaran*, portraying action and power. In addition, the musicians could add some improvisation, to present the spectacular scene. This was the time for musicians to show their performing talent and dazzling virtuosity to draw the audience’s attention and win their affection.

*Perang Gagal*, the third part, depicted the heroes and warriors fighting in the war. The music, *Gending Gending Srepeg/Sampak Sampak*, used in this part was still active and

powerful, and had a distinct rhythm. These fighting scenes and the movements of the puppets were accompanied with unique sound effects by the musicians (interview with Hanggar Budi Prasetya in ISI Yogyakarta, 24<sup>th</sup> January 2018).

The second phase usually lasted from 12 a.m. to 3 a.m. and the *Slendro Patet Sanga* or *Pelog Patet Lima* were used as the musical modes in this phase. The music reflected a mood of quietness (*wingit*), sacredness (*sakral*), and tranquillity (*hening*) that was likely to make the audience drowsy. In this phase, speech, chant and the puppet manipulation of the *dalang* played a big part, whereas both the proportion and the volume of accompaniment music played by the *gamelan* were reduced. The middle phase could also be subdivided into two parts. *Gara-Gara*, the first part, was a comedy featuring four famous gods (buffoons) from traditional Javanese beliefs: *Semar* (*Semar Dewa Bumi*, meaning “God of the Land”), *Petruk*, *Gareng* and *Bagong*. This conveyed a certain spirit of entertainment in a jocular manner. *Gara-Gara* was a customary part along with these four characters, who had important roles, in the *Punakawan* of *wayang kulit*. Although this was a piece of comedy, it was accompanied by a quiet musical atmosphere (interview with Hanggar Budi Prasetya in ISI Yogyakarta, 24<sup>th</sup> January 2018). Moreover, we can find a hybrid element from the performing figures and puppets. The four traditional Javanese buffoons in the performance of this part of *wacinwa* were not Chinese figures. However, the main characters and story were from China and *wayang potehi* of Gan Thwan Sing’s period. According to Mastuti, *Gara-Gara* was not included in *wacinwa* when *wacinwa* was originally created by Gan Thwan Sing. Instead, it was replaced by a ten-minute intermission. Gan Thwan Sing would allow the players to take a rest every time the buffoons started performing. At this point, a “notice board” with “ten-minute break” was shown around. Nevertheless, in its development, Gan Thwan Sing created the figures resembling the *Punakawan*: *Petruk*, *Gareng*, and *Bagong* without *Semar*, but the buffoons were dressed in Chinese clothing with Chinese hairstyles. Unfortunately, the most important buffoon character *Semar* was absent (telephone conversation with Mastuti, 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018). The absence

of *Gara- Gara* in the performance of *wacinwa* and *wayang kulit* was a big difference, as Mastuti explains:

Gan Thwan Sing created the figures resembling the *Punakawan* who wear the costumes decorated with Chinese classic pattern, except for *Semar*. The figure of *Semar* was not created because Gan Thwan Sing understood the essential meaning of *Semar* for Javanese society. *Semar* is the symbol of dignity for the Javanese people. (Mastuti 2008: 33)

*Perang Kembang* was the second part of the middle phase and shows *Gending-Gending Srepeg/Sampak Patet Sanga*. It tells of the debate and confrontation between good and evil in the play. In Hanggar Prasetya's interpretation, the con represents the desire of the pro, for which the pro must always triumph over the con. In other words, one must overcome his desires (interview with Hanggar Prasetya, 24<sup>th</sup> January 2018).

Normally, the end phase of *wayang kulit* would run from 3 a.m. to 6 a.m.. However, as Muslims started their prayers (*Adhan*) early at 5 a.m., the timing of the performance was inappropriate, and is the reason why *wacinwa* ended at 5 a.m. In this phase, *Slendro Patet Manyura* and *Pelog Patet Barang* used magnificent and solemn musical modes. Similarly, the end phase also consists of three parts. The first part was *Janturan Manyura*, and was usually set to take place in a protagonist's palace. *Perang Ampyak*, the second part, means "ending of the war", and is accompanied by *Srepeg/Sampak Patet Manyura*. The third part, *Tutup Kayon*, marked the end of the whole play, and all the characters would be presented again on the stage. At this point, *Gending Ayak-ayakan Pamungkas* would be played as the ending music.

#### Performance structure of *wacinwa* in contemporary Indonesia

According to Aneng, the current performance structure of *wacinwa* is nearly the same as the original form, because it is similar to *wayang kulit*. In addition, Aneng is also an outstanding puppeteer of *wayang kulit* and very familiar with the form, so he closely

followed the performance procedures of *wayang kulit* in the process of his performance. There is only one change: the show time is reduced from 6–7 hours to 1–2 hours in order to make it easier for young people to accept it. Accordingly, the content of the performance has also been reduced (interview with Aneng Kiswanto in ISI Yogyakarta, 23 January 2018; interview with Kiswanto via WhatsApp, 28 May 2020).

#### **4.4 Musical Hybridity of *Wacinwa***

With regard to the musical hybridity of *wacinwa*, I am mainly focusing on the form of *wacinwa* from after the revival period. Before the “New Order” regime (1966–98), Javanese *gamelan* was not combined with other instruments, which means that *gamelan* was the only musical accompaniment in the performance of *wacinwa*. However, since the revival, some traditional Chinese instruments such as the *erhu* have been embedded into the performance along with Javanese traditional *gamelan*, an indication of musical hybridity.

##### **4.4.1 Exploring Musical Hybridity through Global Notation**

To reveal how hybridity has been variously embodied in the process of *wacinwa*'s music, I had to choose one notation system to examine how two different kinds of musical instruments (Chinese *erhu* and Javanese *gamelan*) are able to play together despite using different tunings and modes. Should I use Indonesian cipher notation, Chinese notation, or Western staff notation? I found that none of those three notation systems demonstrated the process of musical hybridity effectively. Although they are able to demonstrate pitch, tempo, rhythm, and other musical elements, they could not accurately capture the elements I needed to examine, including interval relationships and inflections of pitch and timing. As we know, Western staff notation is the most common way of visualising musical sound. However, it has difficulty in representing music that uses non-Western tuning systems, while Chinese and Indonesian notation systems have other cultural biases.

An alternative is Global Notation, as proposed by Andrew Killick. This allows the

notator to specify whatever information about the sound is wanted for the purposes of the notation, and it can represent any form of tuning equally easily. To investigate musical hybridity in *wacinwa*, I needed a form of notation that could treat different tuning systems equally and not assume one system as the norm. Fortunately, Global Notation allows these aspects to be represented more precisely with the help of software for producing a “pitch-time graph” and waveform. It can also represent the playing of different instruments in the same space for ease of comparison. So for the purposes of this research on musical hybridity, the Global Notation system was able to help me read more information from the musical sound itself.

### Application of Global Notation

A sample of *gamelan saron*

The principles of Global Notation can be illustrated with a typical sample of the *gamelan (saron)* part in a piece of *wacinwa* music (Figure 4-25). Software tools for the melodic transcription from musical recordings include Tony and Sonic Visualiser, which can determine the pitches of individual notes, and from these the intervals in a scale can be notated with a continuous horizontal line representing each pitch of the scale.

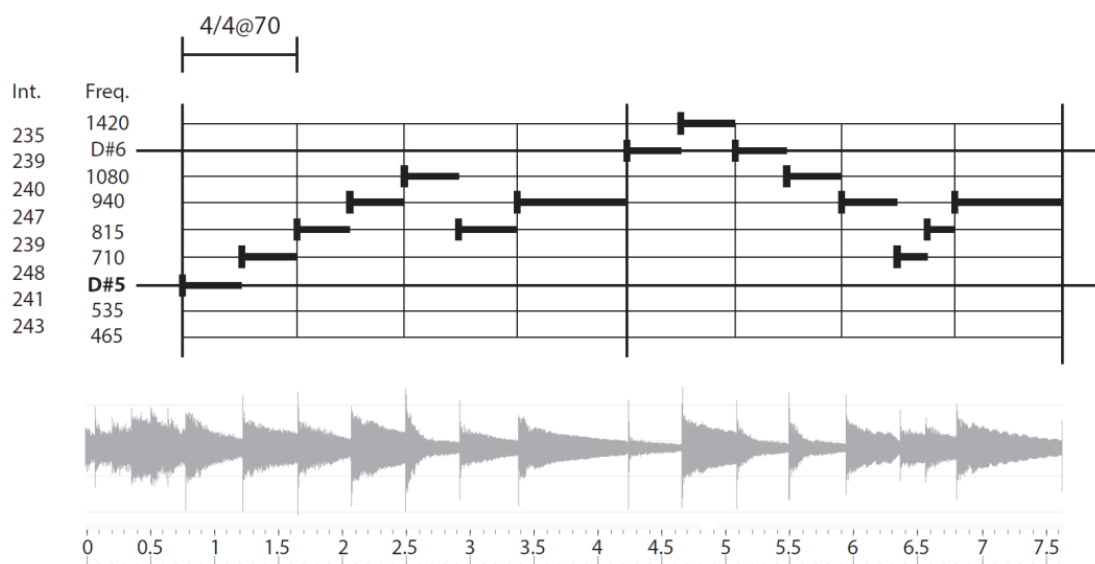


Figure 4-25: A sample of *gamelan (saron)* part.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Notation transcribed from the recording of *wacinwa* music provided by Aneng Kiswanto (See Audio Example 4-1).

Based on the recording of the *gamelan saron* part using the software Sonic Visualiser, I was able to ascertain the frequencies and interval relationships here. This graph shows nine horizontal lines to represent the musical pitches of the *saron*. There are two sets of numbers at the left: one of them is the frequency represented by the pitch of individual notes; the numbers at the far left are the intervals in cents which are calculated from the frequencies of two notes. The interval relationship is the crucial data that I needed for the analysis of musical hybridity.

The musical interval between two musical notes is determined by the frequency ratio between them. In Western equal temperament, the octave is divided into twelve equal intervals called half-steps or semitones. For the purpose of measuring other intervals, a half-step is defined as 100 cents, so that an octave is 1200 cents. The frequency of a given tone relative to a fundamental note can be expressed as:

$$u_n = u_0 2^{\frac{n}{1200}} \quad (1)$$

where  $u_0$  is the fundamental frequency and  $n$  is the interval in cents from the fundamental note. To express the cents value of an interval, the equation (1) can be become:

$$n = 1200 \log_2 \left( \frac{u_n}{u_0} \right) \quad (2)$$

If  $n$  is negative, it means the melodic interval is descending relative to the fundamental note, and if  $n$  is positive the melodic interval is ascending (Hammond, 2011: 9). Using this equation, the interval in cents between any two pitches can be calculated once their frequencies are known.



The software enables the production of a melodic waveform in the form of a graph to describe the pitch flows. To identify a pitch scale one simply has to calculate the intervals between each pair of adjacent pitches in the scale. Figure 4-23 shows the nine lines representing the musical pitches of this particular *gamelan*. The intervals can be computed using equation (2) and the corresponding frequencies of the scale degrees represented by the pitch lines.

To specify the duration of a sound, Global Notation uses a symbol resembling a rotated letter T with its ‘stem’ extended in proportion to duration (Figure: 4-26). Although the sounds of gongs and metallophones are ‘impulsive’ and die away without the player’s control, their decay is slow enough for their duration to be specified.

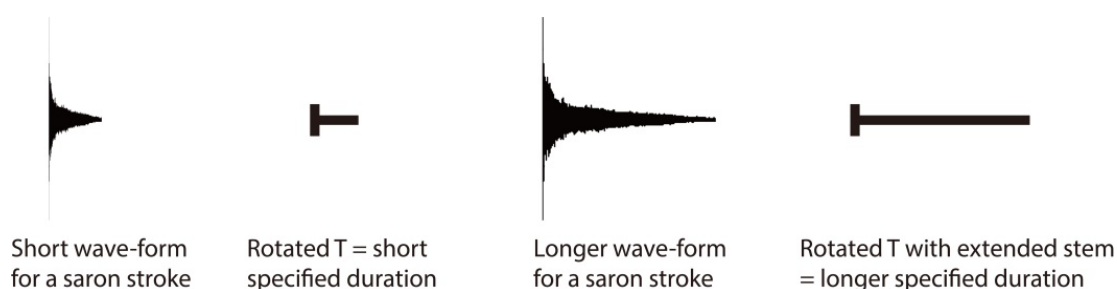


Figure 4-26: The symbol of *gamelan* (*saron*) specified duration.

The tonic in this example is approximately D#5, shown with a thicker, extended horizontal line. The octave above the tonic is marked D#6 and indicated with a similar thick and extended pitch line. This may help us see where the tonic is in each octave, and get a sense of how wide the intervals are in relation to an octave.

The metre is 4 beats per bar, each divided into 4 pulses, at a tempo of 70 beats per minute. The ‘at’ sign @ indicates the number of beats per minute. Beat lines are drawn vertically with the same thickness as pitch lines, which are thinner than the T lines for sounds specified duration. The spaced beat lines can be used to specify a time scale,

but the example of the *gamelan* part is structured by more than one rate of regular pulsation of musical time. Here, there are four beats to a bar, and the bars are indicated with extended vertical lines of the same thickness as the tonic pitch lines.

#### A sample of *gamelan suling*

The pitches available on the *saron* are determined by the tuning of its metal keys, so that its scale is fixed and stable. However, the melodic instruments, *suling* and *erhu*, are flexible in pitch, and can produce varying intervals, vibrato and pitch slides. Current software can produce a pitch-time graph that helps us to determine these pitches precisely. Figure 4-27 shows that the melody line of the *suling* looks very different from that of the *saron*, but it exactly describes what the instrument is playing. The wavy black line indicates “pitch-bending”. The beats and scale degrees are still shown on the grid lines: the scale degrees are inferred from relatively level segments of the melody line which indicate stable pitches to which the melody keeps returning. The pitch-bending graph is more effective with melodic instruments, especially with more complex melodies that need more flexibility, because it can visually represent every single detail of the melody.

The pitch-time graphs of the *saron* and *suling* parts reflect the different pitch characteristics of the instruments, while the overall contour and timing unites the two. To interpret the musical hybridity of *wacinwa*, it is useful to compare these different forms of the same melody:

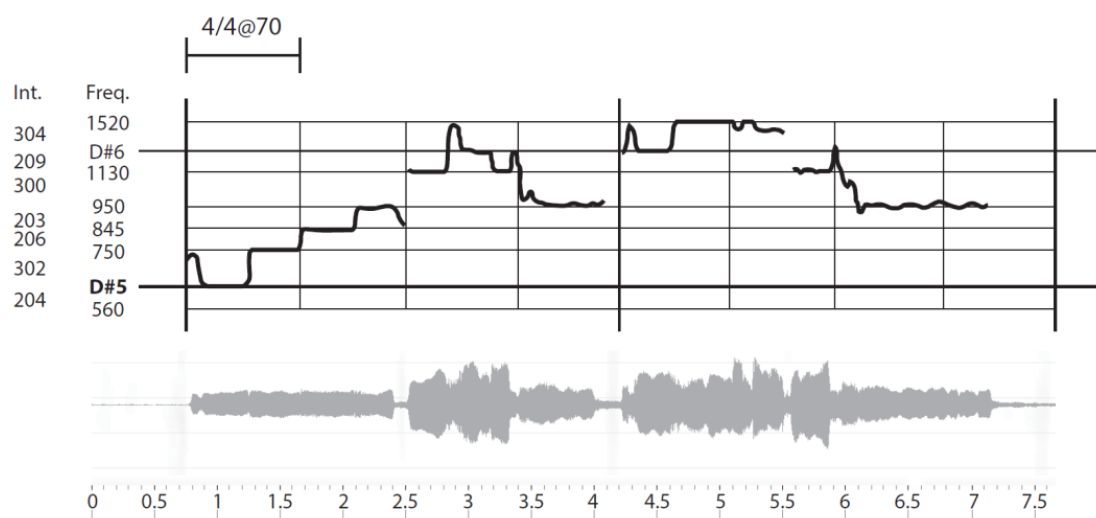


Figure 4-27: A sample of *gamelan (suling)* part.<sup>44</sup>

#### 4.4.2 An Example of the Analysis of Musical Hybridity in *Wacinwa*

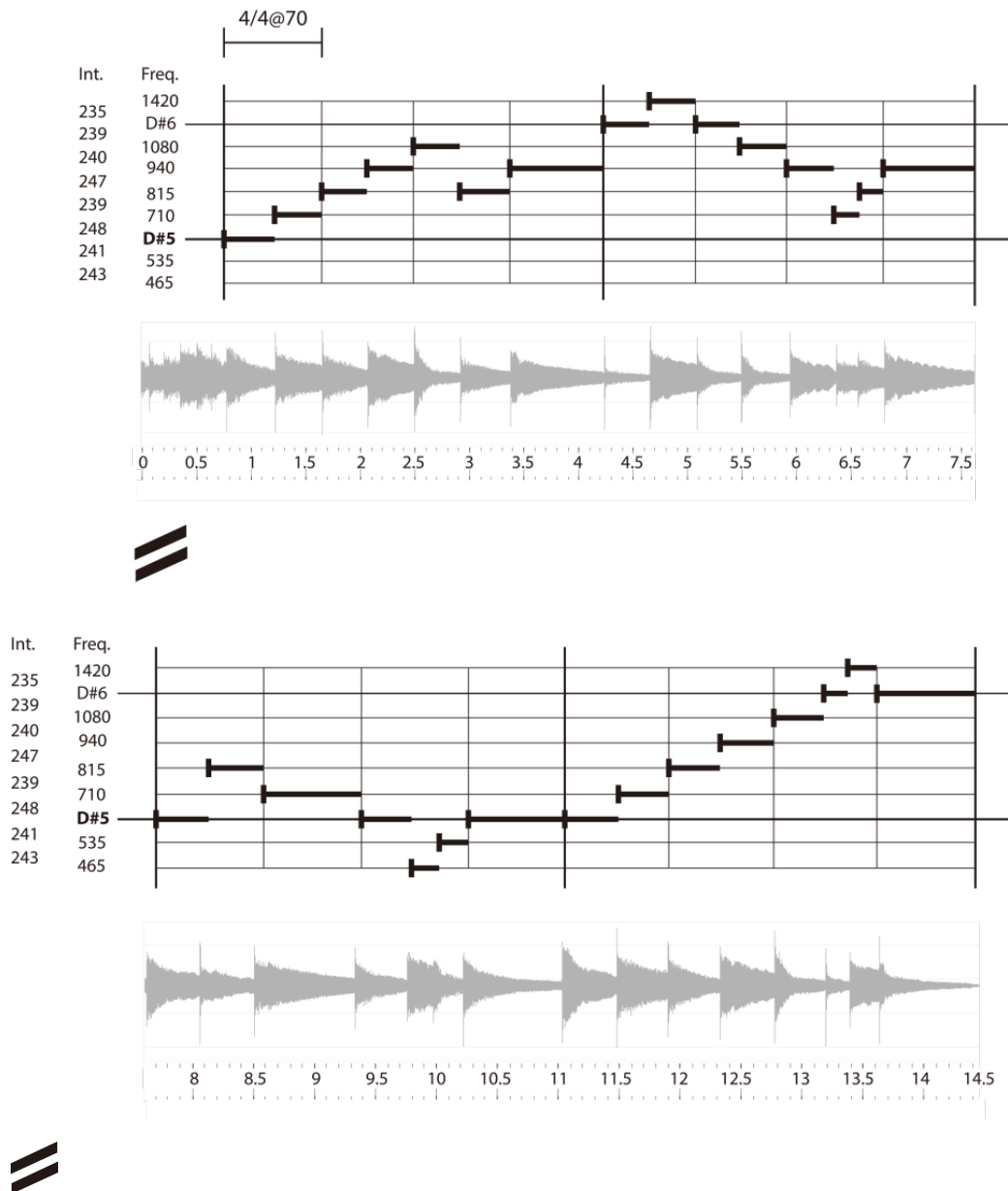
To reveal how music can be analysed using the Global Notation system, and how musical hybridity is embodied in the musical process of *wacinwa*, I decided to analyse the relevant musical elements of the opening song in a performance of *wacinwa* in 2018. From the opening song, there is a combination of Javanese *gamelan* and a Chinese traditional instrument, the *erhu*. In the recording, the main melody is played by *saron*, *suling* and *erhu*. To help produce the pitch-time graphs, I recorded each instrumental part separately.

According to my interview with the composer, Aneng Kiswantoro, on 15 October 2018, the percussion instruments of the *gamelan* lack flexibility because their tuning is fixed. Kiswantoro therefore decided to combine the *gamelan* with the *erhu* to bring more variety to the performance. Because the *erhu* is an instrument of flexible pitch, I assumed that it would adjust its traditional Chinese pentatonic tuning to coordinate with the *gamelan*. To test that theory, I imported the recordings of *saron*, *suling*, and *erhu* into the software in order to produce pitch-time graphs.

<sup>44</sup> Notation transcribed from the recording of *wacinwa* music provided by Aneng Kiswantoro (See Audio Example 4-2).

Saron

I have made a complete notation for the *saron* rendition of the opening song by using the Global Notation system. In the opening performance, the *gamelan* uses the *slendro* pentatonic scale. The *slendro* scale divides the octave into five roughly equal intervals, giving scale degrees of approximately 0, 240, 480, 720, 960 and 1200 cents above the tonic. Hence, in this notation (Figure 4-28), the pitch lines are equally spaced at an interval of approximately 240 cents:



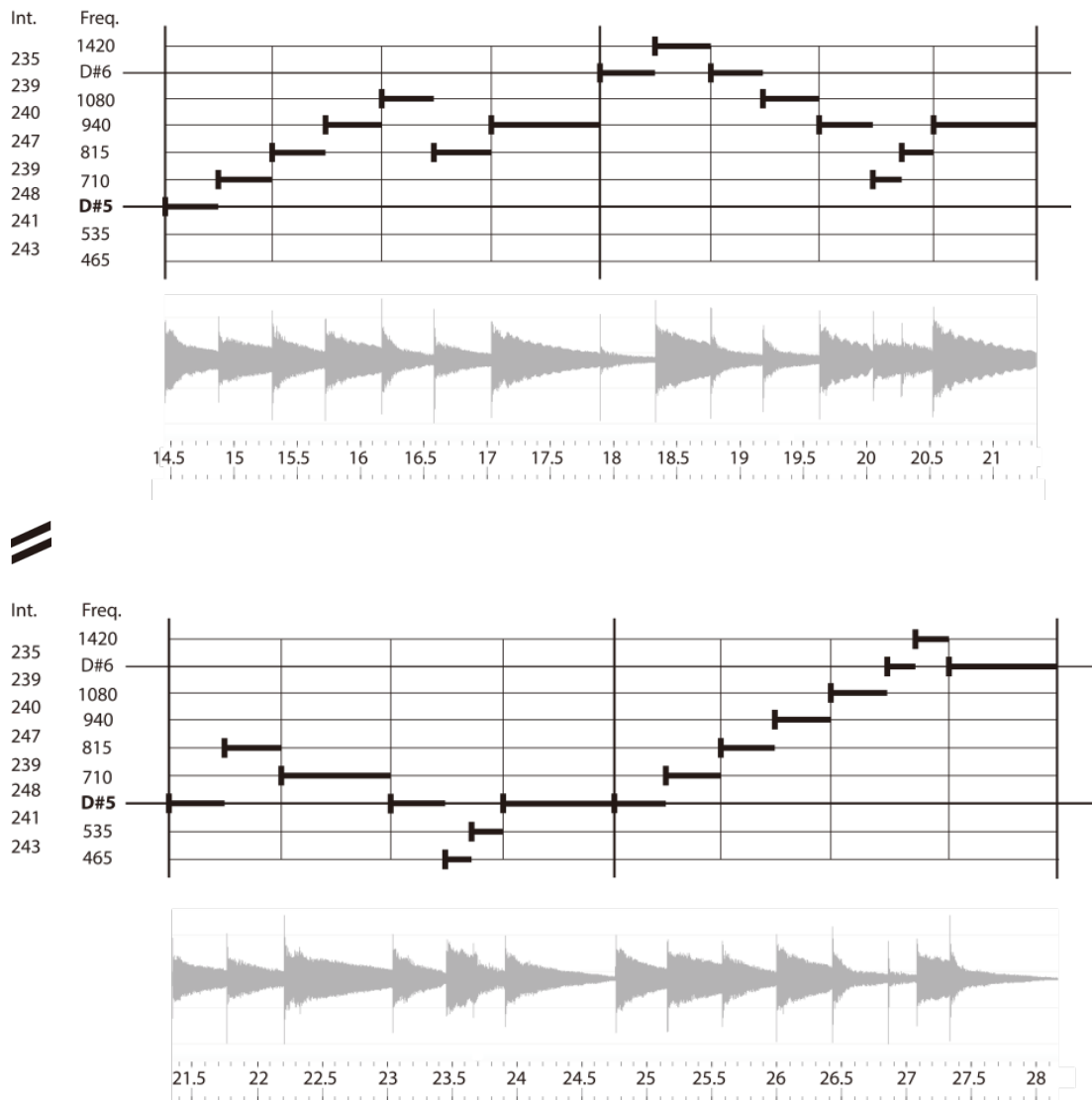


Figure 4-28: The pitch-time graph of *gamelan saron*.<sup>45</sup>

### Erhu

Before a performance, the two strings of the *erhu* need to be tuned to the key, a process known as “*ding xian*” in Chinese. When I measured the pitch in my recording (Figure 4-29), I found that the pitches of the two strings were C#5 and G#5, which in the Chinese notation system would be written (#1 #5). In traditional tunings, the strings are tuned C-G, D-A, F-C, G-D, or A-E, so, surprisingly, the tuning in my recording was not one of the traditional tunings: the lower string is tuned to C# and the tonic is D#.

<sup>45</sup> Notation transcribed from the recording of *wacinwa* music provided by Aneng Kiswanto (See Audio Example 4-3).

Thus, the *erhu* is tuned in a non-traditional way so that its lower string will produce the lowest note of the melody (which happens to be around 200 cents below the tonic). I brought the result to the composer, and he told me that he had adjusted the tuning of the *erhu* by a semitone in order to match the pitch of the *gamelan*.

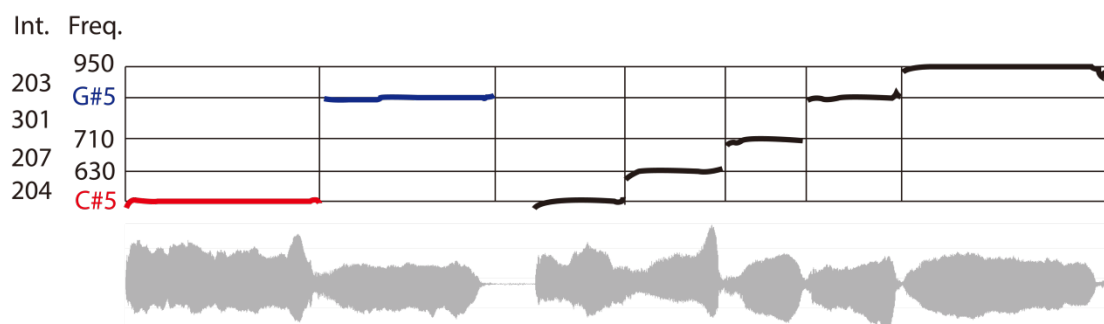


Figure 4-29: The pitch graph of the *erhu* and its two strings.<sup>46</sup>

With this knowledge, I started analysing the recording of the *erhu* part using Tony software. The pitch-time graph (Figure 4-30) revealed that my assumption about the *erhu* adjusting its intervals to those of the *gamelan* was invalid. The intervals produced by the *erhu* were roughly 300, 200, 200, and 300 cents, which is the same as the Chinese pentatonic scale. Although the tuning of the strings was adjusted to match the pitch of the *gamelan*, the intervals of the scale were those which the *erhu* would traditionally play. So, although the *erhu* is capable of playing in the *slendro* scale like the *gamelan*, the composer wanted the *erhu* to retain the Chinese pentatonic scale to add a stronger Chinese element into the main theme.

<sup>46</sup> Notation transcribed from the recording of *erhu*'s two strings played by Aneng Kiswantoro.



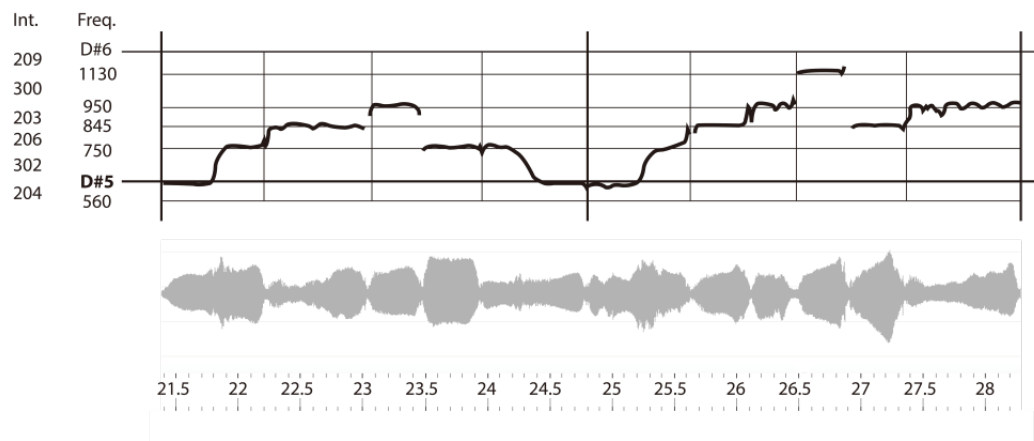


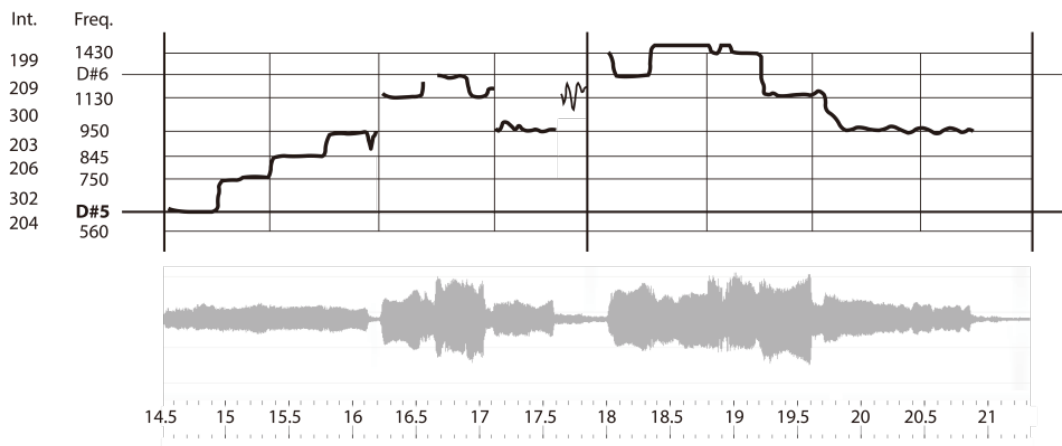
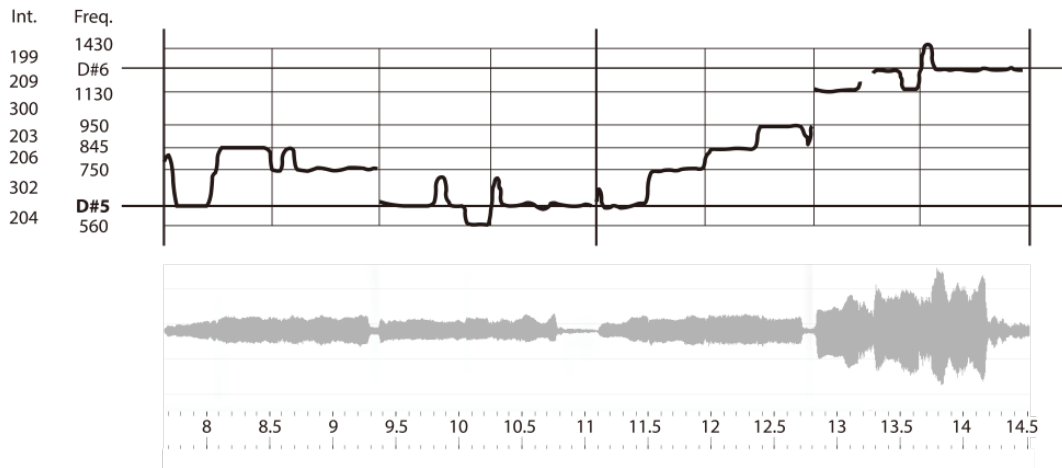
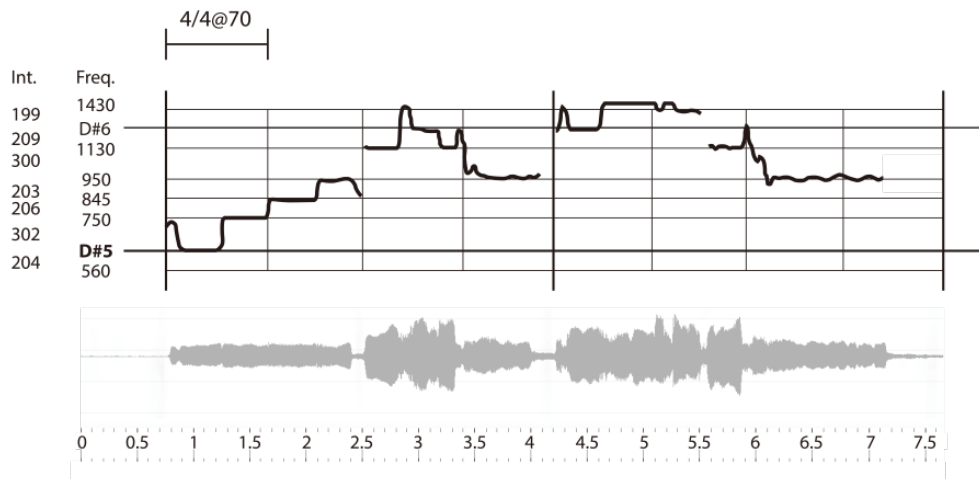
Figure 4-30: The pitch- bending graph of the Chinese *erhu*.<sup>47</sup>

### Suling

When I imported the recording of the *suling* part into the Tony software, the result was even more unexpected. Its intervals appeared as roughly 300, 200, 200, and 300 cents (Figure 4-31). *Suling* is a melodic instrument of the *gamelan*, and normally plays in the same tuning as the other instruments, which in the case of *slendro* gives intervals of approximately 240, 240, 240, and 240 cents. However, in this case the *suling* has changed from the traditional *gamelan* tuning to Chinese pentatonic tuning. After I had shown the composer the result, he told me that he had actually changed the position of some of the finger-holes on the *suling* so that it would be able to perform the Chinese theme using the Chinese tuning system.

<sup>47</sup> Notation transcribed from the recording of *wacinwa* music provided by Aneng Kiswanto (See Audio Example 4-4).





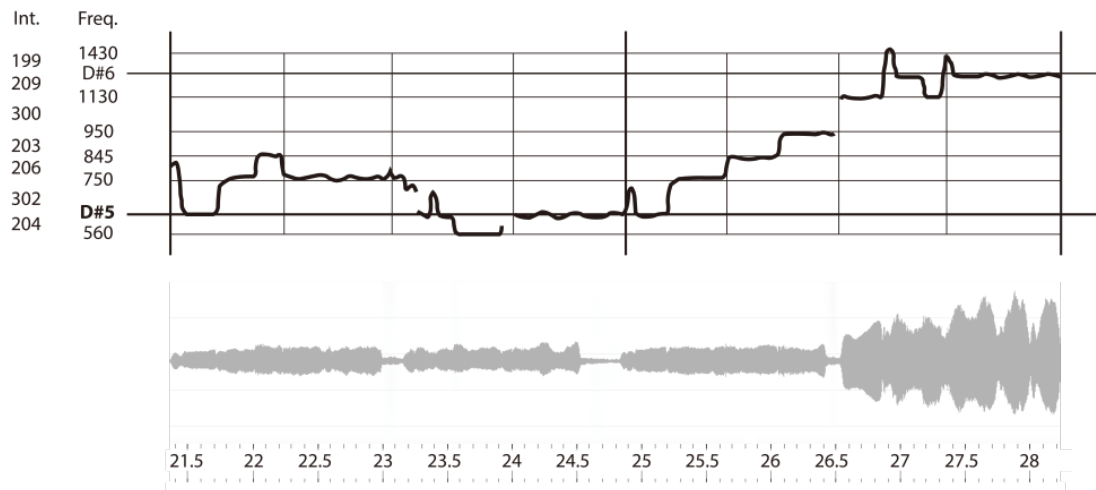


Figure 4-31: The pitch-bending graph of the *gamelan suling*.<sup>48</sup>

### Comparison pitch graph

To show how the three different instruments play together, I have chosen a bar (40.7-44.3 sec.) that contains a similar melody on all three instruments, and have drawn a pitch graph using three different lines to represent them. In Figure 4-32, the *suling* is the red dotted line, the *erhu* is the blue dotted line, and the *saron* is the T-shaped black line. According to this graph, in the first two beats of this bar, the *suling* and the *erhu* are performing the same pitch, with intervals of roughly 300 and 200 cents which corresponds to the tuning of the Chinese pentatonic scale. But the *saron* part looks different, because each interval between adjacent scale degrees is close to 240 cents. This is why the melody line for the *saron* is sometimes lower than the *suling* and *erhu* parts. Although the melody changes in the last two beats, the *suling* still plays the main melody, while the *erhu* and *saron* play different pitches in harmony.

<sup>48</sup> Notation transcribed from the recording of *wacinwa* music provided by Aneng Kiswantoro (See Audio Example 4-5).

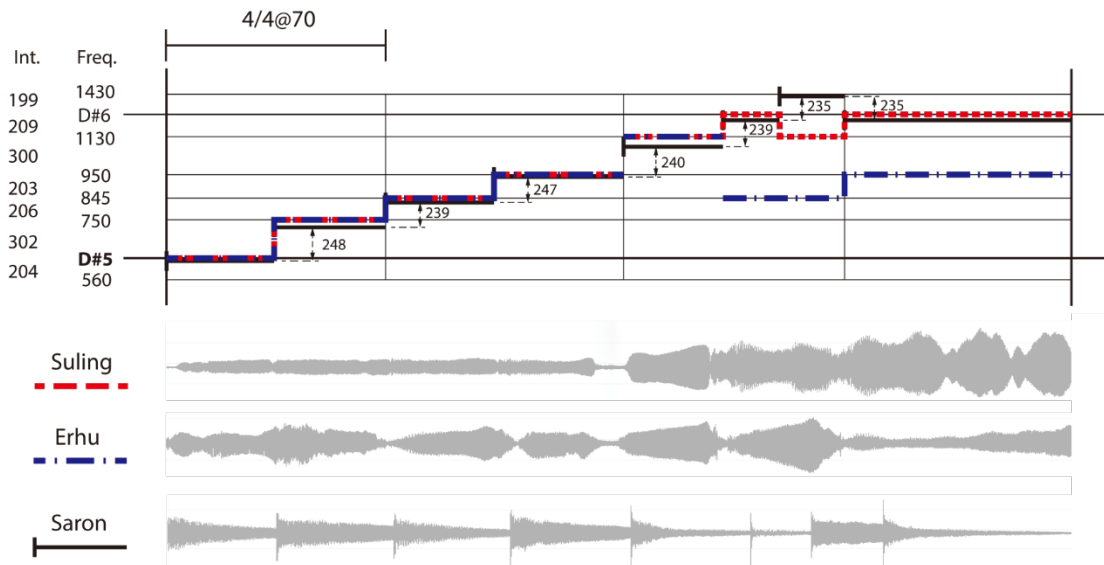


Figure 4-32: The comparison graph of the three instruments.<sup>49</sup>

According to the musical analysis, my assumption that one instrument may change its tuning and scale to follow the other instruments proved unfounded. Although the *erhu* changed the tuning of its strings to match the pitch of the *gamelan*, it still played in the Chinese pentatonic scale, not *slendro*. Additionally, the *suling* was even modified in order to use the Chinese pentatonic scale. Thus it is not a case of one tuning system setting a “norm” which is followed by the others, but rather, it is a process of separate musical and cultural traditions combining on an equal basis.

#### 4.5 The Fluid Identity of *Pribumi* Musicians in *Wacinwa* Music

According to the result of the musical analysis, I was interested in the creative intentions of the composer. Considering that the composer is a local Indonesian, why would he want to transform the traditional *wacinwa* into a new form? Why would he mix Javanese *gamelan* with a traditional Chinese instrument? Why has he used the Chinese pentatonic scale to add the Chinese elements in the musical accompaniment of *wacinwa*? His view is that he realised that *wacinwa* came from traditional Chinese

<sup>49</sup> Notation transcribed from the recording of *wacinwa* music provided by Aneng Kiswantoro (See Audio Example 4-6).

culture, but that it also forms a part of Indonesian culture. Also, the *gamelan* accompaniment was the only element that was not from China, so he would never remove this Javanese traditional representative instrument. Another reason was that the sponsor and most of the audience were Chinese Indonesians, and the composer wanted to bring an emotional resonance to that audience (interview with Aneng Kiswanto by WhatsApp, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2018).

#### **4.6 Cross-Field Creation in *Wacinwa***

Just as the 1970s saw a cross-field creation in the adaptation of *wacinwa* repertoire into *ketoprak* performance, another cross-field creation happened in my fourth fieldwork trip (November 2019) for a big cultural exhibition in China, as I mentioned in the Introduction. In order to present a tailored performance, we created a new fusion form of *wacinwa* to cater to the taste of Chinese audiences. We developed the new form *wayang cinema* to represent *wacinwa* and the Chinese story. *Wayang cinema* is a new form of Indonesian shadow puppetry that combines live performance with film effects (Figure 4-33). It is very different from traditional shadow puppetry: besides combining live with filmed action, multiple *dalangs* operate the different puppets, rather than only one *dalang* as in a traditional performance of shadow puppetry. The second difference is that the puppeteers stand behind the screen, whereas in the traditional form the *dalang* sits and performs the puppets in front of the screen (Figure 4-34). Being aware that most of the audiences were young Chinese, we decided to combine the performing form of *wacinwa* and *wayang cinema*. More specifically, the Chinese story was performed using Chinese *wacinwa* puppets with Chinese names for the characters, but the performance was accompanied by Javanese *gamelan* music and Chinese traditional music, and several *wayang kulit* puppets were added into the performance (Figure 4-35).

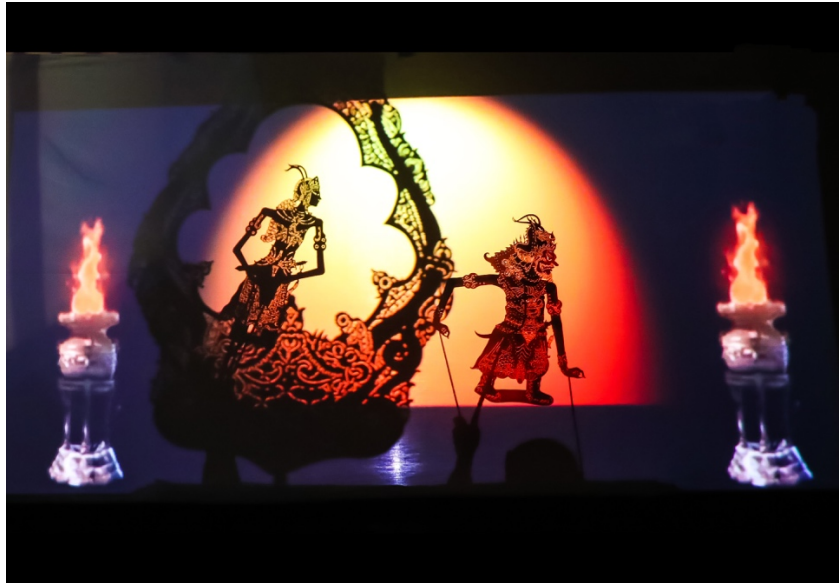


Figure 4-33: The live performance of *wayang cinema* with the film effects playing in China, 9 November 2019.



Figure 4-34: The author participating in the performance of *wayang cinema* with Wulang Tumanggal troupe in China, 9 November 2019.



Figure 4-35: The author participating in the performance of *wayang cinema* with Wulang Tumanggal troupe in China, 9 November 2019.

In the creation process before the performance, I found that it was not only the Chinese Indonesians who wished to bring their musical culture back to their homeland. *Pribumi* that had inherited this culture also wished to return something to China. However, the *pribumi* inheritors were inclined to show the Chinese audience what was different from traditional Chinese art, that is, the “Indonesianised” contents. For me, as a performer and promoter with Chinese national identity, I preferred this art form to be recognised by Chinese audiences at a glance. In an interview with the *dalang* Aneng Kiswanto, we discussed the creative process. He said that he was willing to add Chinese elements into the performance in order to let the Chinese audience understand the performance and to make it feel familiar. However, he was also unwilling to give up the Indonesian elements in this creation of *wacinwa*, because *wacinwa* was born in Indonesia and grew into the current art form there. He believed that the contemporary *wacinwa* represents a more traditional Indonesian art. He said, “even though we are facing a Chinese audience in this trip, we need to make it feel familiar, but for me, show them the Indonesian elements are more valuable. This is what we should do for the current *wacinwa*” (interview with Aneng Kiswanto via WhatsApp, 3 May 2020). In addition, aiming to cater to the taste of young Chinese, using *wayang cinema* is a good way to make the performing form more modern and eye-catching. This is undoubtedly a new concept of *wacinwa*, appealing to Chinese Indonesians and *pribumi*, younger and older

people, and traditional and modern views (Figure 4-36).



Figure 4-36: The author standing in the stage of the Chinese cultural exhibition with Wulang Tumanggal troupe in China, 9 November 2019.

#### 4.7 Conclusion

This chapter shows that the musical hybridisation process was implemented in *wacinwa* by musicians involved in Chinese Indonesian musical culture. The ethnographic data can be drawn on to understand the complex music-making process and musicians' fluid identities in the Chinese Indonesian and local community. The result of the musical analysis shows a balance and accommodation between two different types of music and culture. It is not a case of one tuning system setting a “norm” which is followed by the other. It is a process of separate musical and cultural traditions combining on an equal basis. The outcome is the emergence of dynamic identities that constitute the current *wacinwa* through a continuous negotiation between the imported and the local culture.

According to Stuart Hall, to analyse dynamic cultural identities, it is necessary not only to trace their origins, but also to develop an awareness of the influence of historical experiences on individuals or communities through an understanding of their individual experiences, social processes, historical memories, and cultural imaginations (Hall,

1996: 4). For the composer of *wacinwa*, cultural identity has changed based on his personal experience. Moreover, Indonesian cultural policy has been more and more welcoming of Chinese cultural expressions. The sponsor and the audience in this event belong to a “Chinese diaspora community” in contemporary Indonesia. They want to connect their identity with the home country through the imagination and practice of Chinese musical culture. The Chinese diaspora in Indonesia exhibits such a relationship with their homeland and has constructed a collective identity with the home country simply by regularly practicing or experiencing Chinese cultural music in their lives. Through the analysis of one *wacinwa* recording we have seen how this process of cultural hybridity also takes place through specific ways of organising musical sound.



## **Chapter 5: Musical Revivals of Chinese Indonesians since 1998**

### **5.1 Introduction**

As we have seen, the suppression of Chinese culture and identity during the “New Order” period was followed by President Wahid’s advocacy of multiculturalism and the lifting of numerous anti-Chinese policies so that Chinese Indonesians were once more allowed to perform their traditional musical culture to other Indonesians. This was accepted and recognised by local governments and the public and gained widespread attention, leading to both Chinese Indonesians and *pribumi* devoting themselves to revival activities. In the last two chapters we have seen examples of these activities in the revivals of *wayang potehi* and *wacinwa*.

Lind argues that in the process of musical revival, the main material revived is based on how revivalists imagine music in the past, and how this represents and negotiates specific values in the contemporary musical performance (Lind, 2012: 27). This chapter focuses more closely on the issue of music revivals through a case study on *jasen potehi*, a telling example of the revival of Chinese Indonesian musical culture in contemporary Indonesia. The chapter attempts to identify the changes and reasons leading to these musical revivals by gaining an understanding of the cultural negotiations between Chinese Indonesians and *pribumi*. In this chapter, I attempt to further discuss the phenomena of “modernisation” and “localisation” in the creation process of *jasen potehi*. At the level of musical sound organisation, Global Notation will again be used to examine how the various musical elements merge into a single fused form despite using different tunings. Details revealed by musical analysis will shed light on how music is involved in negotiating particular representations of various identities through the twin processes of musical localisation and modernisation, suggesting that in a diaspora context the two processes may really be one.

### **5.2 The Modernisation of Chinese Music in Contemporary Indonesia**

In chapter 3, we saw how *wayang potehi* was first suppressed along with other

manifestations of a Chinese cultural identity under President Suharto's "New Order" regime (1966-98), then revived and further developed after the exclusionary policies were lifted. However, the growth in popularity of *wayang potehi* in contemporary Indonesia has been slow due to the political environment and historical factors. As the number of older puppeteers and musicians declined, the younger generation started losing interest and the opportunities to know more about *wayang potehi* became fewer. This art form has therefore gone through a serious survival crisis (interview with Toni Harsono in Yogyakarta, 20 February 2018).

In order to boost the survival of *wayang potehi*, a new form called *jasen potehi* has been created by Chinese Indonesians in Java in recent years. "*Jasen*", an abbreviation of "*Java seni*", means Javanese art, while "*potehi*" implies the use of glove puppets, like those of *wayang potehi*, in performance. *Jasen potehi* uses Chinese puppets and stories but with music performed by both a Javanese gamelan and Chinese instruments, sometimes even adding Western instruments, pop music and modern dance to encourage contemporary, young and non-Chinese audiences to accept and participate in this new version of *wayang potehi*. In addition, some puppets used in *wayang kulit*, such as *kayon*, have been incorporated. In this "Javanised" *potehi*, the puppet names have been changed to Indonesian versions instead of the original Chinese names.

The idea of *jasen potehi* originates from the fifth-generation Chinese Indonesian, Nyo Yensen, who is from a *totok* family and is also the sponsor of *jasen potehi*. When I interviewed Yensen on 15 December 2018, he told me about the history of his family and his interest in Chinese culture. He said that the first generation of his family to settle in Indonesia in the mid-nineteenth century moved their business to Mojokerto from Fujian, China. They often went to Chinese temples to see performances of Chinese culture, such as *wayang potehi*, *barongsai* and so on. The second generation began to collect Chinese puppets, but as they didn't have a lot of spare money the number of puppets collected was relatively small. Much of the collection started from the third generation — Yensen's grandfather — who really enjoyed Chinese culture. Since Yensen

grew up with his grandfather, they had a very close relationship and his grandfather often took him to see Chinese performances such as *potehi*. Because of his grandfather's influence, Yensen wanted to continue to collect puppets and support Chinese culture. The puppet collection is now displayed in a museum in Mojokerto Indonesia—Museum Gubug Wayang Mojokerto.

On the other hand, Yensen mentioned the fact that Chinese Indonesians and *pribumi* were living happily together as a result of cultural integration before 1965, and that Chinese culture had already been integrated into Indonesian culture in areas such as food and language. Similarly, Chinese people also participated in Indonesian traditional culture, in areas such as gamelan, *wayang kulit* and traditional dances. However, after 1965, Chinese culture was completely banned and controlled by the government, and ultimately it was politics that led to the separation of Chinese and Indonesian cultures. Because of this political environment, Yensen remembered that when he was a child, he was often bullied by *pribumi* children who called him “Sinke”, “Cina” and other insulting names. Yensen didn't experience the era of cultural integration and the friendly relationship between Chinese Indonesians and *pribumi* of former times, but he hopes to recreate the previous friendship in contemporary Indonesia through cultural integration.

Furthermore, Yensen's view of *poteh* is that it is not only a Chinese traditional cultural element, but also part of Indonesian culture through a long process of history, and helping to stop the decline of *potehi* in Indonesia became his priority. The first thing he did was to develop *jasen potehi* to appeal to *pribumi* audiences and a younger generation. Over time, the number of composers, players and audiences has increased significantly (interview with Nyo Yensen in Malang, 15 December 2018). He held a first performance of *jasen potehi* in Hawaii Water Park, Malang, 15 December 2018 (Figure 5-1, 5-2).



Figure 5-1: The performance venue of *jasen potehi* at Hawaii Water Park, Malang.



Figure 5-2: The performing stage of *jasen potehi* in Malang, 15 December 2018.<sup>50</sup>

### 5.2.1 The Perspectives of “Modernisation” and “Westernisation”

In simple terms, I am talking also about two processes with opposite motivations, designated by terms no longer widely used, but still helpful—Westernisation and modernisation—which represent different ways in which non-Western societies have adapted Western culture, the one representing a kind of “buying into” Western ways, accepting the principles and values of the West, and the other using Western technology and techniques to permit maintenance of the indigenous traditions (Nettl 1983:433).

<sup>50</sup> Photographs Figure 5-1, 5-2 by author.

According to Nettl's words, Westernisation and modernisation can be considered in two different ways: the first, in terms of non-Western societies that have admitted Western culture and which have gradually adapted themselves to Western society; the second, where indigenous traditions have been maintained by using Western technology and techniques.

From the various distinctions that have been made between Westernisation and modernisation, I will adopt the definition by Bruno Nettl, according to whom "Westernisation" can be regarded as "the substitution of central features of Western music for their non-Western analogues, often with the sacrifice of essential facets of the given tradition", whereas "modernisation" is "the incidental movement of a system or its components in the direction of Western musical culture" without bringing about major changes in essential aspects of the non-Western tradition (Nettl 1985: 20). Nettl suggests that the latter also includes an interaction with other cultures.

In other words, "Westernisation" may cause essential changes to traditional principles, whereas "modernisation" is just borrowing some ideas from the Western culture and adding them to traditional forms as an extra component. In *jasen potehi* performance, therefore, it could be considered that *potehi* has been "modernised" because the essential elements of the performance are still based on its tradition. In addition, many of its "modern" elements come from Javanese and Chinese cultures, not Western, which could be considered as "modernisation". One of the reasons for modernisation was to find a way to continue and promote this art form, and indeed, now an increasing number of the younger generation have not only accepted it, but are also learning to perform it as a result of modernisation.

### **5.2.2 The Modernisation of the Performing Form and the Music Itself**

In addition to contributing to the evolution of *jasen potehi* from its musical roots,

“modernisation” also can be seen in performance. Before the main *potehi* performance, a short introduction video followed by some modern dance has been added (Figure 5-3, 5-4). The video introduces and explains *jasen potehi*, and the addition of a modern dance routine performed by two famous Chinese Indonesian dancers dressed in ancient Chinese costume aims to introduce Chinese culture to unfamiliar audiences (Figure 5-5).



Figure 5-3: A introduction video playing before the main *potehi* performance in Malang, 15 December 2018.





Figure 5-4: The images from the introduction video of *jasen potehi*.<sup>51</sup>



Figure 5-5: Two Chinese Indonesian dancers performing a modern dance in the stage of *jasen potehi*.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Image obtained from video provided and approved by Yensen.

<sup>52</sup> The photographs Figure 5-3, 5-5 were taken by the author in Malang, 15 December 2018.

As for the music of *jasen potehi*, there are three different kinds of instruments played in the performance: the Javanese gamelan, various Chinese instruments and Western instruments. To demonstrate the musical “modernisation” of *jasen potehi*, I have analysed the opening song and the Chinese pop music in terms of the rhythm, melody and tuning elements of “modernisation” in the performance. The opening song is recited by *dalangs* at the beginning of the performance to introduce the story of *Gardatajsa Lena* (The War of Khaisobun), and tells which characters the puppets represent, explaining who they are and what their intentions are. This allows the audience to quickly recognise the characters and understand the plot of the performance. The performance story is selected from the thirty-eighth chapter “Khaisobun mistakenly enters the *Longmen* array—Sie Djin Koei destroys the leader of the Eastern Liao regime” from the famous popular novel *Sie Djin Koei Tjeng Tang* (Sie Djin Koei’s Expedition to the East). The performance presents the war between the leader of the troops, Khaisobun from the Eastern Liao regime, and the hero, Sie Djin Koei, during the reign of emperor Taizong of Tang. Sie Djin Koei eventually defeats Khaisobun at the end of story. The opening song is a Javanese melody played by *gamelan*, Chinese *erhu* and *xiao luo*, and Western keyboard and banjo. I will present a musical analysis of the opening song in terms of the Javanisation process in a later section.

The other example is the Chinese pop music selected to illustrate the process of musical modernisation, which appears in the middle of the performance, accompanying the scene of *Gardayaksa Bertapa* (The Meditation of Khaisobun). This scene describes the love story of Gardayaksa, and his thoughts and memories of his dead wife. The particular Chinese pop song chosen for this scene is from a famous Chinese contemporary film *The Myth* (神话) which describes a love story (Figure 5-6). Thus, the musician thought the melody would indicate love in a way that the audience would recognise (interview with Aneng Kiswanto in ISI Yogyakarta, 10 December 2018). In my musical analysis, I have used Global Notation to represent the playing of instruments with different tunings in the same space.





Figure 5-6: Poster of the film *The Myth* (神话).<sup>53</sup>

### 5.2.3 Modern Rhythm in Performance of *Jasen Potehi*: the Opening Song

From the recording of the opening song, I found that the rhythm of the *saron* is no longer a Javanese traditional rhythm, but appears similar to a Western, more contemporary, syncopated rhythm. First of all, the traditional rhythm of the Javanese *saron* is regular. I created a rhythm graph of traditional *saron* using Global Notation which demonstrates this equal rhythm (Figure 5-7). The *saron* rhythm of the opening song is seen in Figure 5-8 which shows that the rhythm of every stroke is not equally spaced, and each beat is syncopated. I asked the composer about this and he said that he didn't want a traditional performance of *wayang potehi*, so he changed the rhythm of *saron* to make it sound more free and contemporary (interview with Aneng Kiswantoro in ISI Yogyakarta, 10 December 2018).

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<sup>53</sup> Image obtained from the online resource: [https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/神话\\_\(电影\)](https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/神话_(电影)), accessed on 12 September 2020.



Figure 5-7: The rhythm of traditional *saron* shows the equal spacing of strokes.<sup>54</sup>



Figure 5-8: The *saron* rhythm of *jasen potehi* is not equally spaced, and each beat has a syncopated rhythm.<sup>55</sup>

#### 5.2.4 Modernisation of Musical Melody and Tuning: the Chinese Pop Music

As an example of musical modernisation in melody and tuning, I analyzed a scene in *jasen potehi* that includes the Chinese pop song *Endless Love* 无尽的爱 from the film *The Myth* 神话.<sup>56</sup> In the recording, the melody was played by Javanese gamelan (*gambang*, *slenthem*, *suling*), Chinese traditional *erhu*, and Western piano. To help produce the pitch-time graphs, I recorded each instrumental part separately. Then, I imported the instruments into the software, Tony and Sonic Visualiser, and chose four bars to transcribe into Global Notation in order to obtain musical data for analysis.

#### Gambang

I have notated the *gambang* part for this song using Global Notation. The musician told me he would traditionally use the *slendro* pentatonic scale, which divides the octave into five roughly equal intervals, giving scale degrees of approximately 0, 240, 480, 720, 960 and 1200 cents above the tonic, and the pitch lines should be equal. But in this notation, the intervals appear as approximately multiples of 100 cents, which is

<sup>54</sup> Rhythm obtained from the recording of *saron* provided by Aneng Kiswanto (See Audio Example 5-1).

<sup>55</sup> Rhythm obtained from the recording of *saron* in *jasen potehi* music provided by Aneng Kiswanto (See Audio Example 5-2).

<sup>56</sup> The song *Endless Love* 无尽的爱 was obtained from the online resource: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BxmtNCoQNNI>, accessed on 12 September 2020.

indicative of Western equal temperament, although the scale is still (minor) pentatonic (Figure 5-9).

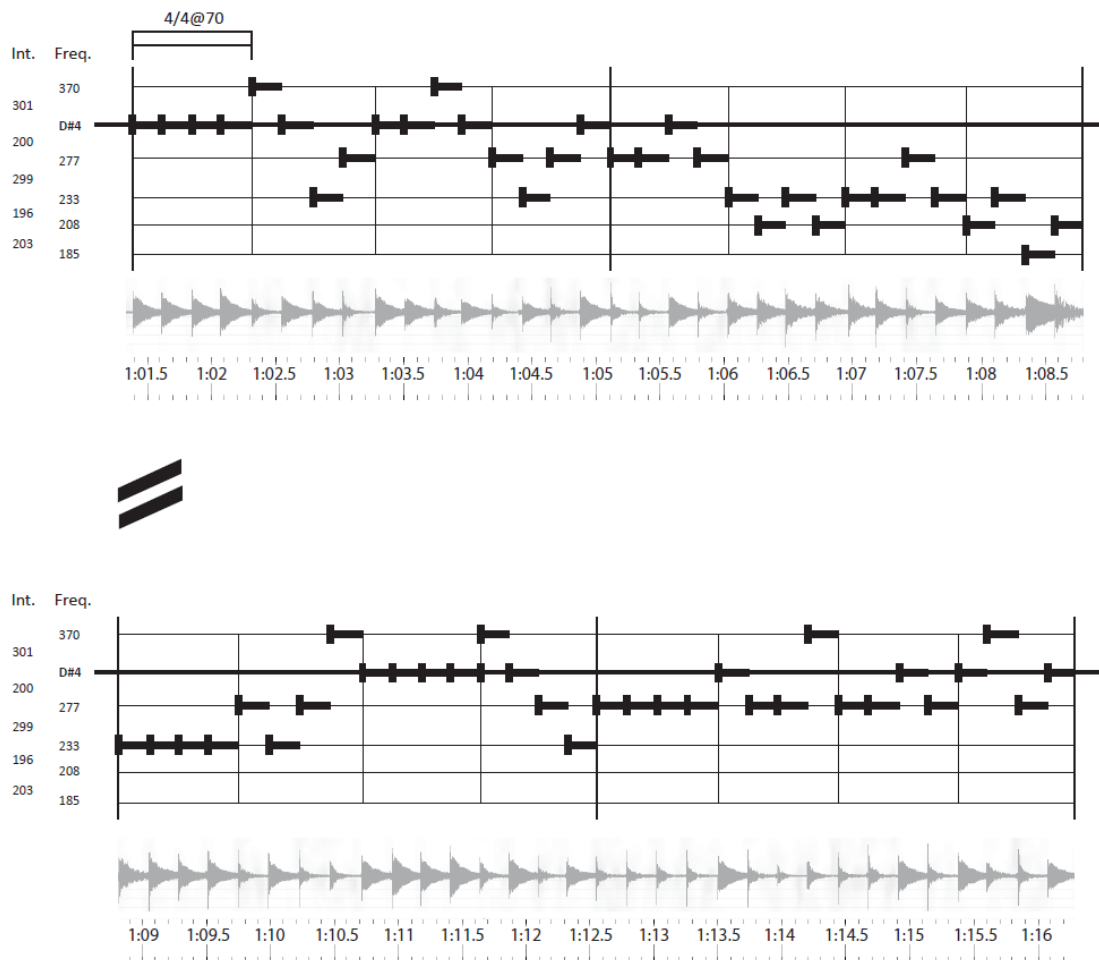


Figure 5-9: The intervals of the *gambang*'s melody appear as roughly 300, 200, 200, 300 and 200 cents.<sup>57</sup>

### *Slenthem*

I also made a pitch time graph for the *slenthem*, and we can see the same thing occurring in the *slenthem* part. The interval relationship shows as roughly multiples of 100 cents (Figure 5-10).

<sup>57</sup> Notation transcribed from the recording of *jasen potehi* music provided by Aneng Kiswantoro (See Audio Example 5-3).

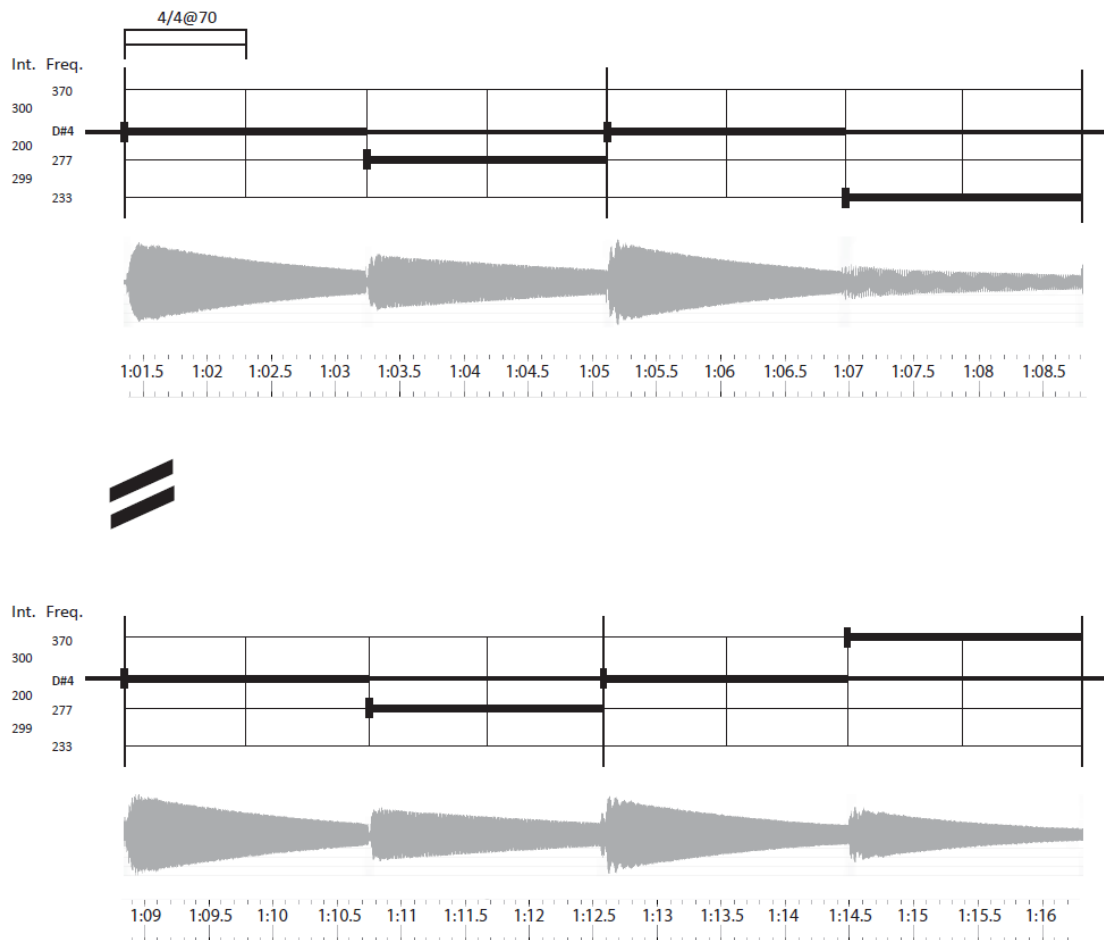


Figure 5-10: The intervals of *slenthem*'s melody appear as approximately 300, 200, 200, 300 and 200 cents.<sup>58</sup>

### Suling

When I imported the recording of the *suling* part into Tony, the result was similar, with intervals of roughly 200, 100, 200, 200, (100), 200 and 200 cents, which is, again, the same as equal temperament. However, in this case the scale is a seven-note minor mode (technically the Aeolian mode), as is used in the Chinese pop song. However, the *suling*, a melodic instrument of the gamelan, normally plays in the tuning of the gamelan, which in the case of *slendro* gives intervals of 240 cents. So the *suling* part has changed from traditional gamelan tuning to that of equal temperament (Figure 5-11).

<sup>58</sup> Notation transcribed from the recording of *jasen potehi* music provided by Aneng Kiswanto (See Audio Example 5-4).

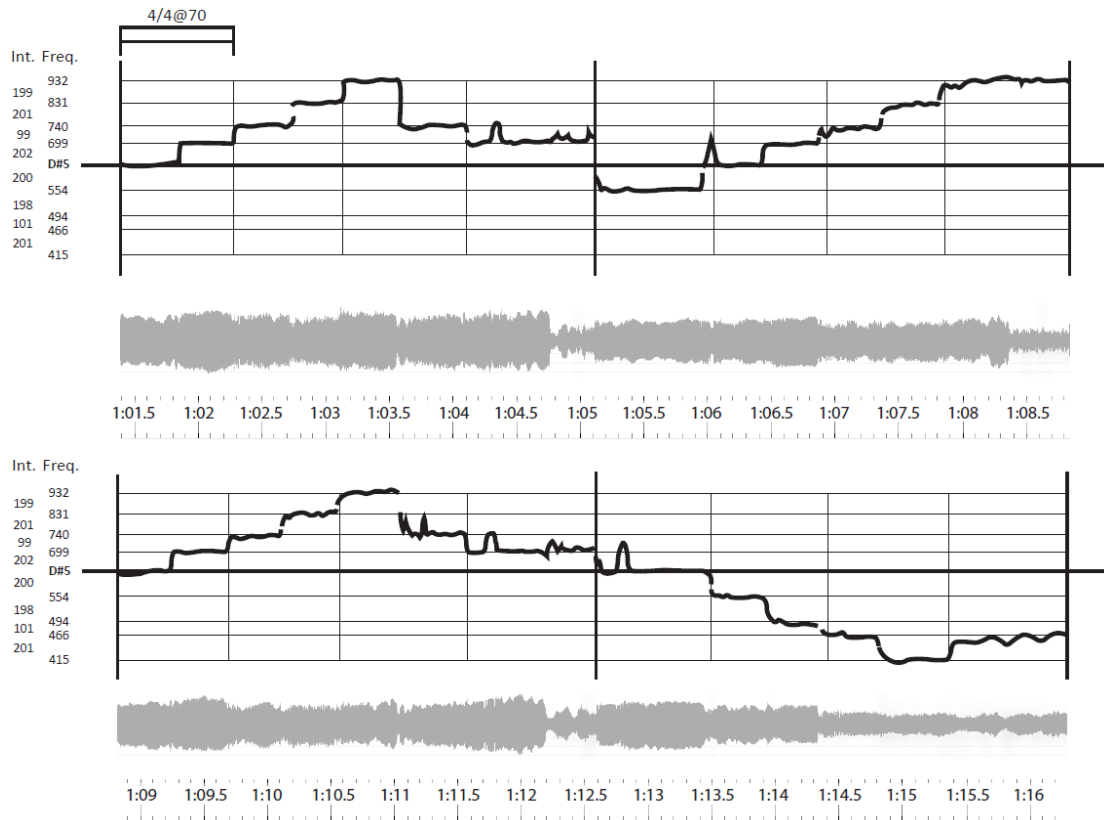


Figure 5-11: The intervals of the *suling*'s melody appear as roughly 200, 100, 200, 200, (100), 200 and 200 cents.<sup>59</sup>

After I had shown the result to the composer, he told me that he had actually modified the pitch of the *gambang* and *slentem*, and changed the position of some of the finger-holes on the *suling* so that it would be able to perform the Chinese pop song using the equal temperament tuning system (interview with Kiswanto in ISI Yogyakarta, 10 December 2018).

### Erhu

After analyzing the recording of the *erhu* part, the pitch-time graph revealed a result that was even more unexpected. The intervals were the same as the *suling*, showing roughly 200, 100, 200, 200, (100), 200 and 200 cents (which is the same as the equal temperament scale), but the *erhu* is a Chinese traditional instrument and normally plays in the Chinese pentatonic scale, which should give intervals of roughly 200, 200, 300

<sup>59</sup> Notation transcribed from the recording of *jasen potehi* music provided by Aneng Kiswanto (See Audio Example 5-5).

cents. There is no evidence of Chinese pentatonicism here. The reason is the same as with the previous three instruments: the composer wanted the *erhu* to perform the Chinese pop song in a way in which it could match the accompaniment of the piano (Figure 5-12) (interview with Kiswanto in ISI Yogyakarta, 10 December 2018).

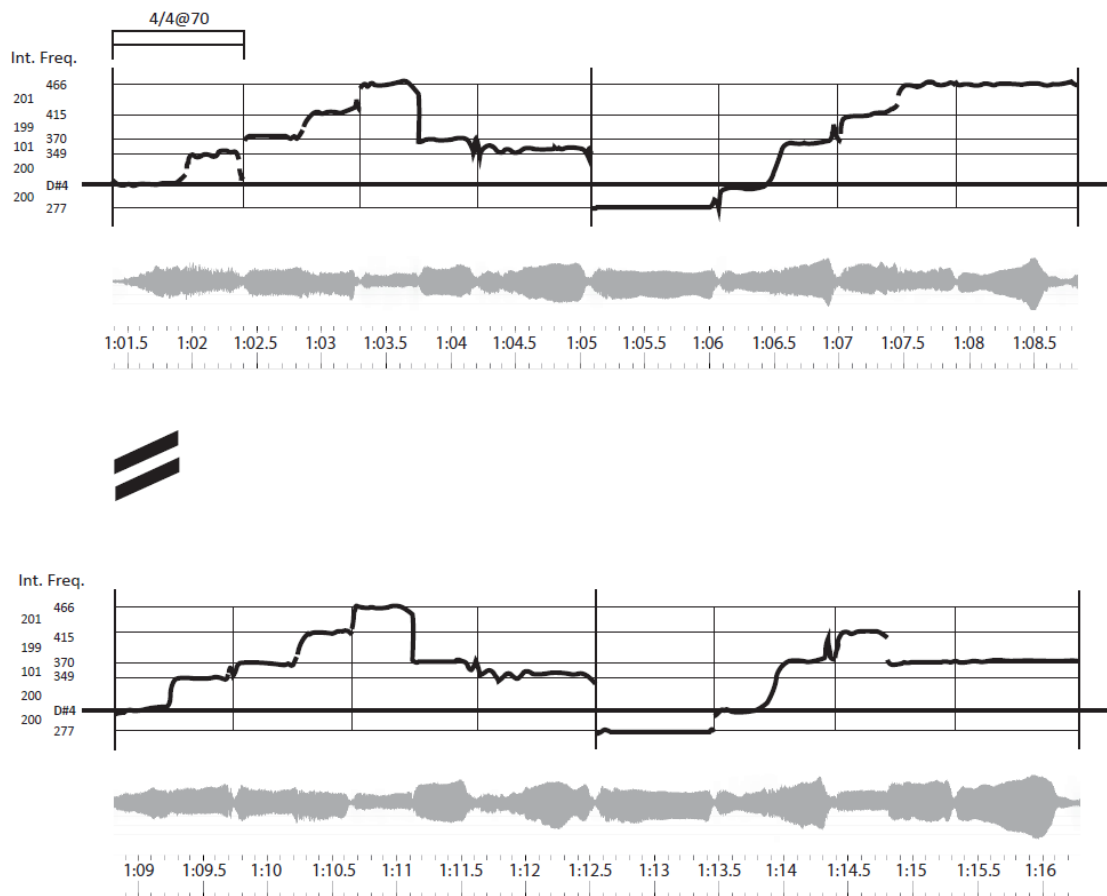


Figure 5-12: The intervals of the *erhu*'s melody appear as approximately 200, 100, 200, 200, (100), 200 and 200 cents.<sup>60</sup>

### Piano

The last pitch-time graph is the piano. It has the accompaniment part of this song, but the tuning of a piano is difficult to change, and as expected, its intervals appeared as roughly 200, 100, 200 and 200 cents, showing the equal temperament scale (Figure 5-13).

<sup>60</sup> Notation transcribed from the recording of *jasen potehi* music provided by Aneng Kiswanto (See Audio Example 5-6).

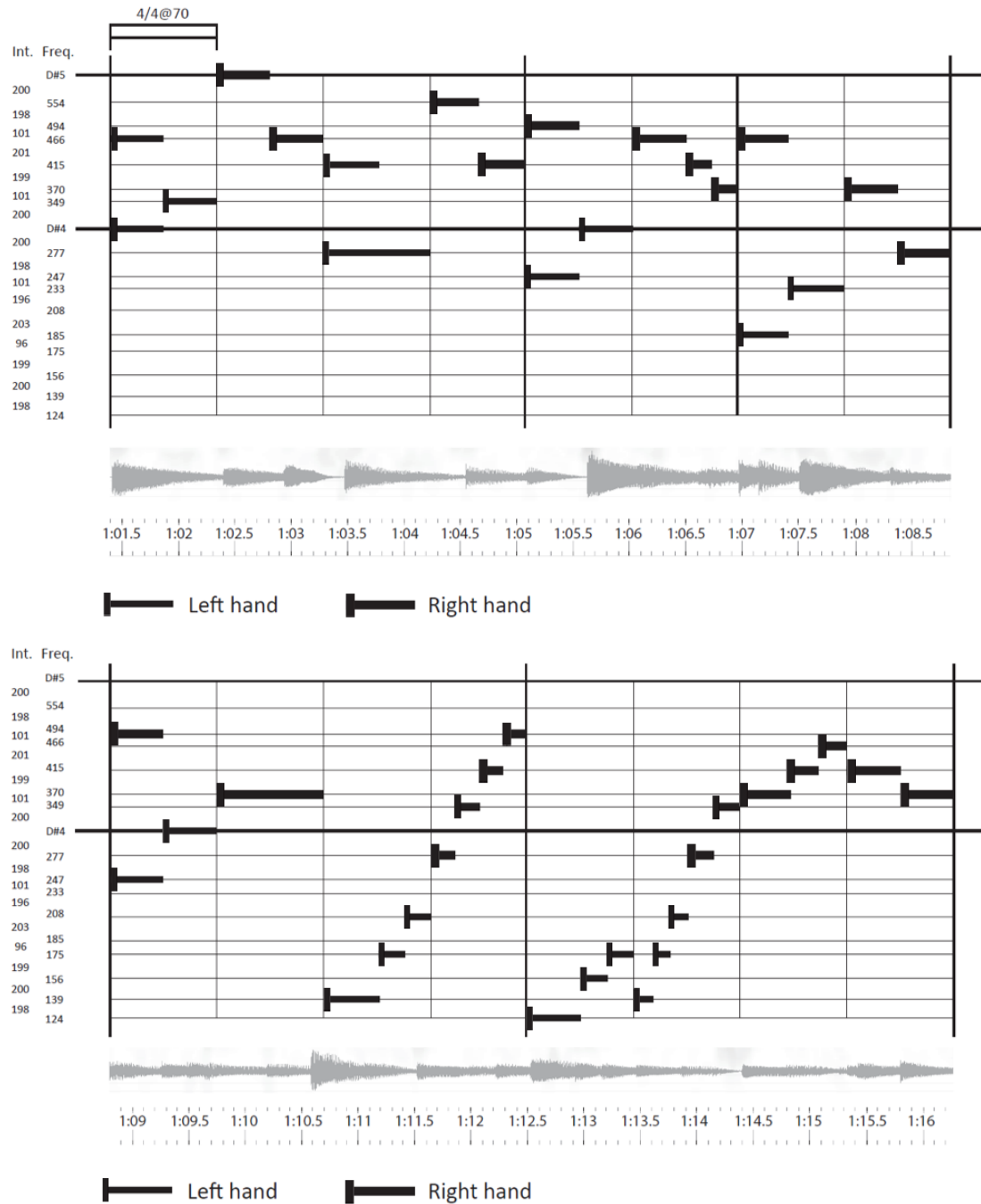


Figure 5-13: The intervals of the piano’s melody appear as roughly 200, 100, 200, 200, 100, 200 and 200 cents.<sup>61</sup>

### The comparison of the musical process of three different kinds of instruments

To show how the three different types of instruments play together and to represent their sounds in the same space, I have chosen two bars that contain a similar melody on

<sup>61</sup> Notation transcribed from the recording of *jasen potehi* music provided by Aneng Kiswantoro (See Audio Example 5-7).

all three kinds of instruments, and have drawn a pitch graph using four different lines to represent them. In the song, the *suling* and *erhu* play the main melody, while the *gambang*, *slenthem* and piano are accompaniments. In order to present each type of instrument more clearly, I have chosen one instrument from each group for the comparison graph. From the gamelan, I chose the *slenthem* and *suling*, because the *suling* has the main melody. In the graph (Figure 5-14), the *suling* is the blue line, the red line is the *erhu*, the piano is the shaded line, and the *slenthem* is the T-shaped black line. From this graph, we can see the *suling* and *erhu* performing the same melody, but the *suling* plays an octave higher than the *erhu* in order to highlight the *suling*'s sound. The *slenthem* and piano play different pitches in harmony. In addition, the results on the left show from the two sets of numbers that the intervals were roughly 200, 100, 200 and 200 cents, which is the equal temperament tuning system. Thus they actually played the melody in the same tuning, using equal temperament.

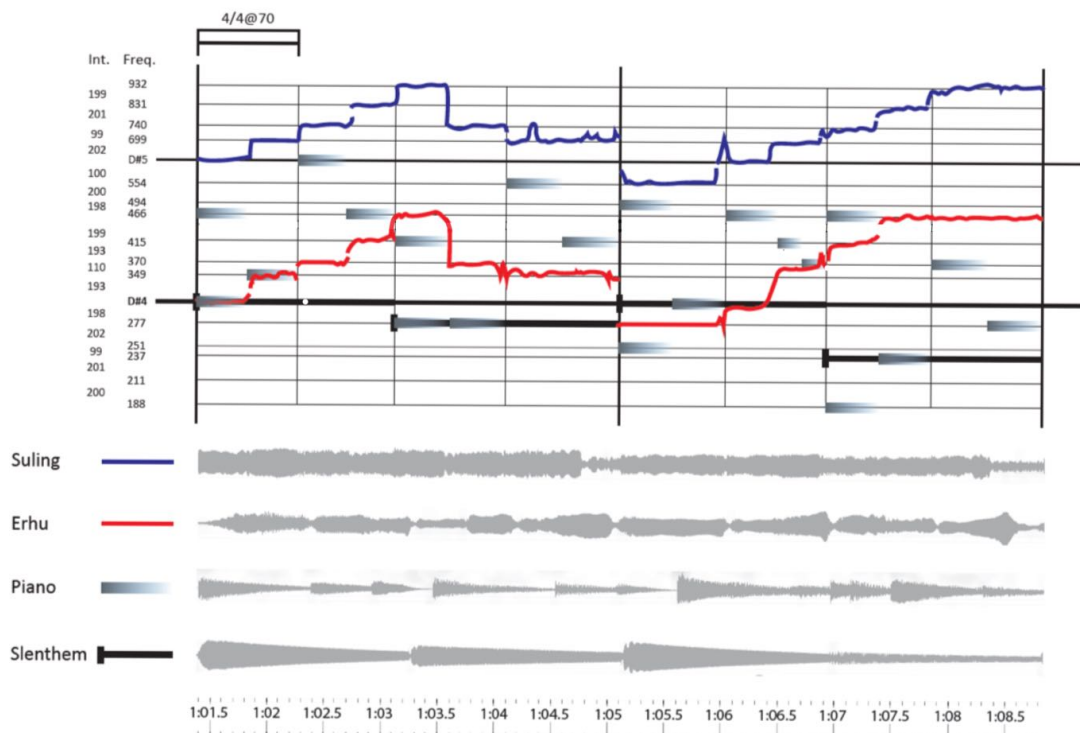


Figure 5-14: The comparison pitch graph of three different kinds of instruments.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Notation transcribed from the recording of *jasen potehi* music provided by Aneng Kiswanto (See Audio Example 5-8).



### 5.2.5 Results of the Musical Analysis

From this analysis, it can be seen that in order to play the Chinese pop song, the other instruments needed to match the piano accompaniment, so the traditional gamelan instruments (the *suling*, *gambang* and *slenthem*), and the traditional Chinese *erhu* had to have their original tuning systems (*slendro* and Chinese pentatonic) adapted to match Western equal temperament. In the opinion of the composer, the changing of *wayang potehi* and the birth of *jasen potehi* was needed in order to ensure the survival and development of *potehi* in Indonesia. However, he didn't want to change the essential Chinese characteristics of *potehi* because he thought that it belonged to the Chinese culture, and so should also be part of the Indonesian culture. That's why he chose Chinese music: to add a stronger Chinese element into the *jasen* performance. On the other hand, he has chosen to include pop music rather than Chinese traditional music in places to encourage a contemporary, younger audience to accept and participate in this new form of Chinese Indonesian culture (interview with Kiswantoro in ISI Yogyakarta, 10 December 2018).

As for the form of musical performance in *jasen potehi*, from my interview with the composer it is clear that he believes that adding the Western musical instruments and using Western tuning in a performance creates a form of multicultural fusion, which is the modern form of music in contemporary Indonesia. However, from a Western point of view, equal temperament is not necessarily more modern than traditional gamelan tuning. It was invented in the sixteenth century and has been the standard for keyboard instruments since the mid-nineteenth century. Nettl's sense of "modernisation" means adapting something traditional to help it survive in modern times, rather than "Westernisation" which might mean abandoning the gamelan altogether and using only Western instruments. Thus, if the musician regards it as modern then his changes to the tuning of gamelan instruments could be seen as "modernisation". Also, its purpose is to attract greater audiences, in order for its popularity to grow faster and wider.

### 5.3 The Localisation in Contemporary Chinese Indonesian Musical Culture

In addition to the “modernisation” of *jasen potehi* being shown in its performance and music, we also can see a localisation phenomenon in aspects such as the puppets, the stage layout, the performing form and the music itself.

#### 5.3.1 Perspectives on “Localisation”

Babiracki defined “localisation” as a process in which a group of people adopt a cultural element (for instance, a musical style) from a different culture and modify it, bringing it closer to their own culture and giving it new meanings in the process (Babiracki, 1985: 63). Hellberg, however, proposed a slightly wider definition: by “localisation” he means a process in which participants in one cultural sector, which is more or less dominated by imported cultural elements, bring this sector closer to the surrounding culture (Hellberg, 2010: 19). Following this definition, I see the localisation in the music of *jasen potehi* as a process in which the original forms of *potehi* become closer to the traditional shadow puppetry of *wayang kulit* and its music. So *jasen potehi* was modified specifically to appeal to local *pribumi* audiences.

Hellberg’s view of localisation is that “Participants in a process of localisation do not look only to the past, but also appropriate new cultural influences, using the elements of the local cultural past that still are remembered in combination with them. Thus, in a process of ‘localisation’, both the newly arrived elements and those that have long been present can be reshaped in various ways; the former can be ‘localised’, while the latter can be ‘modernised’” (Hellberg, 2010: 20). According to Hellberg, we need to focus on two categories of elements in the process of localisation: the elements of “the local cultural past” and “the new cultural influences”. “The “local cultural past” could be “modernised”, while “the new cultural influences” could be “localised”. Aiming to attract *pribumi* and younger Indonesians, *jasen potehi* not only adds gamelan as a local musical element, but also retains Chinese traditional elements, and combines these with Western music (keyboard and banjo). It can be observed, therefore, that there are three

categories of elements participating in the process of the localisation of *jasen potehi* — gamelan music, Chinese elements, and Western music — not two categories as Hellberg stated. However, *jasen potehi* could fit into Hellberg’s view, as the Chinese elements and the gamelan both belong to “the cultural past”; the former is the original culture of *jasen potehi*, and the latter is a local influence on *jasen potehi*. Thus, in the “localising” process of *jasen potehi*, “the local cultural past” as described by Hellberg can be divided, since “local” means Indonesian but the “cultural past” is partly Chinese. To avoid confusion between these two “pasts”, in the phenomenon of *jasen potehi*, the “local cultural past” could be identified as the indigenous Indonesian elements, whereas the Chinese traditional elements should be considered as the “imported cultural past”, and the “new cultural influences” could be seen in the adding of Western music.

On the other hand, more weight is given to the “localising” of the original music in the “localisation” process, and both the Chinese culture and gamelan music are past elements, not modern. However, musicians regard this fusion form as modern, and as Hellerg said, in the “localisation” process, newly arrived elements and already existing elements can be presented in different ways. Depending on the aims of the participant, they can be either “localised” or “modernised”. Thus, “modernisation” can occur, not only from adding “new cultural influences”, but also from combining the local and imported cultural pasts in new ways. As for *jasen potehi*, we could say that the process of its transformation is more based on “localisation”, but the form in which it is presented is considered modern in the mind of the musicians. They have combined three different tuning systems of instruments in order for them to play together, which is different from traditional Indonesian shadow puppetry, and can be seen as “modernisation”. Therefore, with regard to *jasen potehi*, “localisation” can be seen as “modernisation” because of this multicultural innovation.

### **5.3.2 Localisation of the Puppets, Stage Layout, and Performing Form**

#### Puppets

*Jasen potehi* uses glove puppets in the manner of *wayang potehi*. The difference is that

the “local cultural past” —traditional *wayang kulit* puppets such as *kayon*—was added in the transitional part of the performance (Figure 5-15). *Kayon* has a transitional function, as the traditional *wayang kulit* puppets are used, but all the names on the puppets have been changed to Indonesian names instead of the original Chinese names. Sie Djin Koei was changed to Sudira, and Khaisobun was known as Gardayaksa, and so on (Figure 5-16).



Figure 5-15: A performance of *jasen potehi* with added *wayang kulit* puppets.<sup>63</sup>

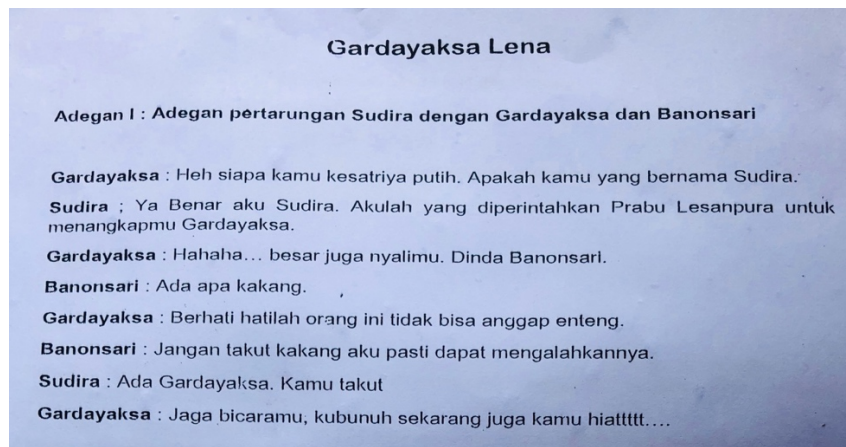


Figure 5-16: The script of a performance of *jasen potehi* in Malang, 15 December 2018.<sup>64</sup>

### Stage layout

Regarding the layout of the stage, *wayang* shadow puppetry was added behind the *jasen*

<sup>63</sup> Photograph by author.

<sup>64</sup> Script provided and approved by Aneng Kiswanto.

stage, as a background, while the player performing *potehi* also uses shadow puppetry (Figure 5-17). This is a way of combining traditional Chinese and Indonesian elements, both from the “cultural past” but resulting in a “new form” different from any traditional *potehi* or *wayang* in Indonesia, which aims to integrate with the Javanese culture, making a Javanised art. This is an example of how “modern” things do not necessarily come from the West, but could also be a new combination of original and local cultures. It also echoes Nettl’s and Hellberg’s points about “modernisation” and “localisation” above: the “localisation” can also be seen as “modernisation”.



Figure 5-17: The new staging of *jasen potehi* combining the staging of *wayang potehi* and *wayang kulit*.<sup>65</sup>

### Performing form

In addition to “localisation” being evident in the use of the puppets and stage of *jasen potehi*, it also can be seen in the performing form. Although *jasen potehi* is similar in performance to *wayang*, in the interval, the players use the famous clown puppets of traditional *wayang kulit* to perform for fun (Figure 5-18). This is the traditional half-time entertainment from the Javanese *wayang kulit* (Figure 5-19), and shows a localised process from the influence of the “local cultural past”. In addition, human actors play

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<sup>65</sup> Photograph by author.

the role of these clown puppets in the front of the stage, and talk about all aspects of the performance, such as the *dalangs*, the musicians, the sponsor, the performing story, the music, and even the weather. In addition, in order to increase interaction, the audience are asked about their experience of the performance. The use of human actors might be seen as characteristic of Western-style theatre and could be regarded as a “new cultural influence”. However, interaction with the audience is perhaps more an element of the “local cultural past”. For traditional puppet theatre in Indonesia, this was another new attempt to combine characteristics of the “local cultural past” (*wayang kulit*) and the “new cultural influence” (Western-style theatre), which also means that “localisation” could be seen as “modernisation” (Figure 5-20).



Figure 5-18: The famous clown puppets of *wayang kulit* appear in the interval of a *jasen potehi* performance (from left to right: Bagong, Semar and Petruk).



Figure 5-19: The original four famous clown puppets of Javanese traditional *wayang kulit*.<sup>66</sup>



Figure 5-20: Four actors play the four famous clown puppets of *wayang kulit* in the interval of a *jasen potehi* performance (from left to right: Semar, Gareng, Petruk, Bagong).<sup>67</sup>

### 5.3.3 Localisation of the Music Itself

Regarding musical “localisation” of *jasen potehi*, I decided to analyse the relevant musical elements of the opening song to show the “Javanisation” process in the music. The opening song uses a combination of Javanese gamelan, Chinese traditional

<sup>66</sup> Image obtained from the online resource: <http://djerugangsiji.blogspot.com/2013/06/kisah-asal-mula-petruk-gareng-bagong.html>, accessed on 28 December 2018.

<sup>67</sup> Photographs Figure 5-18, 5-20 by author.



instruments and Western instruments, with the main musical accompaniment being provided by the Javanese gamelan, instead of being played entirely by Chinese instruments as in the past. This is clear evidence that the “local cultural past” (traditional Javanese gamelan) was added in the music, and has become the main component, although Western instruments (keyboard and banjo) have also been added, which could be regarded as a “new cultural influence” in the music. Thus, *jasen potehi* is being both “localised” and “modernised” in a single, fused process. To reveal the twin processes of musical “localisation” and “modernisation” through musical analysis, I have again used Global Notation to examine how Javanese, Chinese, and Western instruments are able to play together despite using different tunings and modes, and to eventually find out the adaptations needed to achieve such musical combinations.

### **Musical Analysis using Global Notation**

In the recording of the opening song, the melody is played by Javanese gamelan (*saron*, *demung*, *gambang*, *slenthem*, *bonang*), Chinese traditional *erhu*, and Western instruments (two banjos and a keyboard). To help produce the pitch-time graphs, I recorded each instrumental part separately. I then imported the instruments into the Tony and Sonic Visualiser software to help transcribe the music into Global Notation and so obtained the musical data for analysis.

### **Gamelan**

Firstly, I divided the gamelan instruments into two groups for the musical analysis: *saron*, *demung* and *slenthem* are one part, and the other two instruments are another part, because they alternately play different parts in the opening song: the *saron* and *demung* play the melody for the introduction, while the *slenthem* plays the whole song from beginning to end, and the *gambang* and *bonang* play with the Chinese *erhu* and Western instruments as an accompaniment in the main part of the song.

### **Saron and demung**

In the opening song the *saron* and *demung* use the *slendro* pentatonic scale. The *slendro* scale divides the octave into five roughly equal intervals, giving scale degrees of



approximately 0, 240, 480, 720, 960 and 1200 cents above the tonic. I have notated the *saron* and *demung* parts of this song using Global Notation. From the graph of *saron* (Figure 5-21) and *demung* (Figure 5-22), we see that the pitch lines are equally spaced at an interval of approximately 240 cents. The *demung* has almost the same melody as the *saron* but in a lower octave.

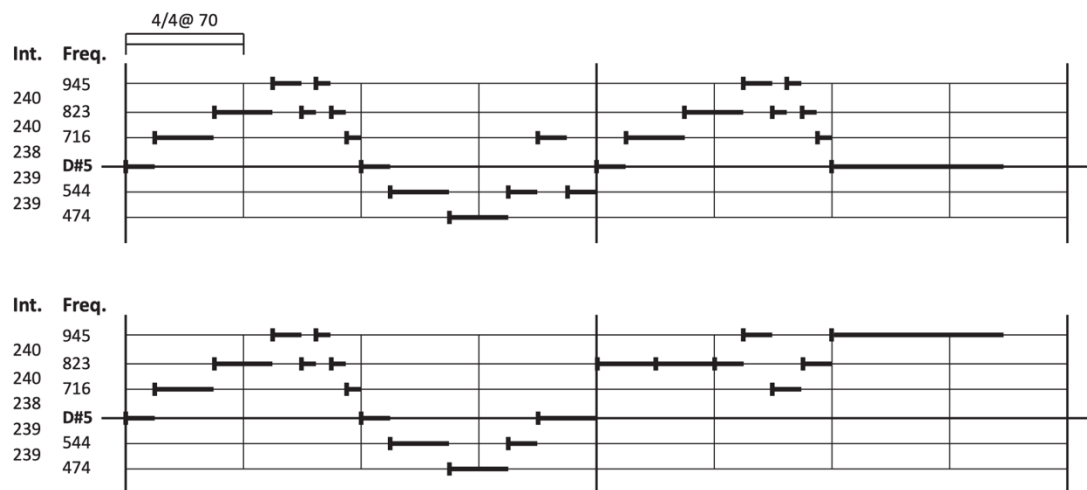


Figure 5-21: The pitch lines of the *saron* are equally spaced at an interval of approximately 240 cents.

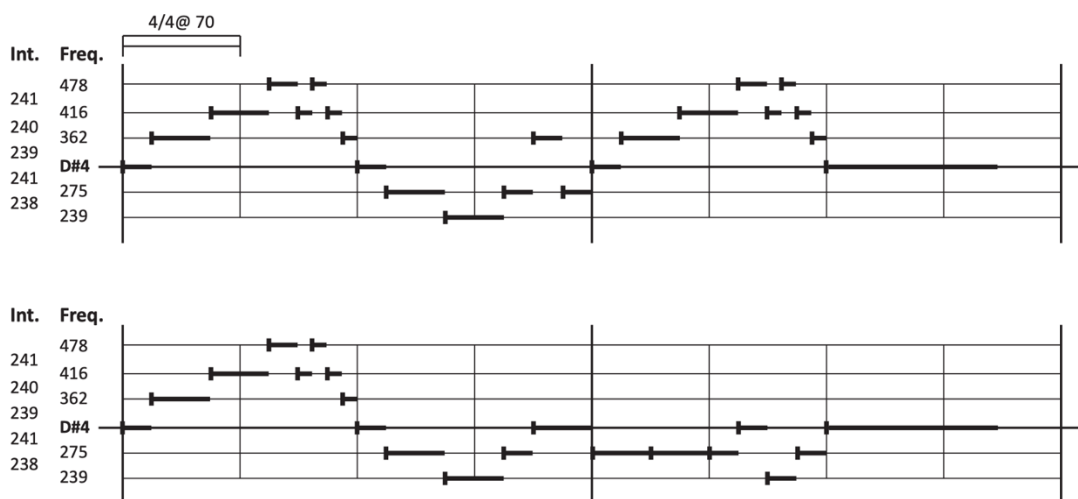


Figure 5-22: The pitch lines of the *demung* are equally spaced at an interval of approximately 240 cents.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Notations Figure 5-21, Figure 5-22 transcribed from the recording of *jasen potehi* music provided by Aneng Kiswanto (See Audio Example 5-9, 5-10).

### *Slenthem*

The *slenthem* also uses the *slendro* pentatonic scale. Referring to the opening song and the Chinese pop song I analyzed earlier, both appear in the performance of *jasen potehi*. As mentioned above, *slenthem* and *gambang* have changed their traditional *slendro* scale in order to play the Chinese popular music by using the equal temperament tuning system. Hence, I needed to observe whether the other three gamelan instruments maintain the traditional *slendro* scale or choose another tuning system in this song.

After I imported the recording of *slenthem* into the Sonic Visualiser software, I divided the notation of the *slenthem* part into two graphs to draw the pitch lines, because the *slenthem* is involved in two parts (the opening and main part). The first graph, *slenthem 1* (Figure 5-23), describes the performance of the *slenthem* in the opening section. The other *slenthem* graph, *slenthem 2*, shows the *slenthem* part throughout the main section (Figure 5-24). According to the graphs, the *slenthem 1* or *slenthem 2* pitch lines are not the same, because *slenthem 2* uses only some of the available pitches, but the intervals all appear as approximately multiples of 100 cents, which indicates Western equal temperament, although the scale is still (minor) pentatonic. But interestingly, *slenthem 1* has a different tuning to the *saron* and *demung*, although they play together in the opening of this song, yet it does not sound strange. This could be because all the *slenthem* notes fall on the beat (rather than between the beats) and are either the tonic or a fourth or fifth, so that the differences between *slendro* and equal temperament for these notes are small (480 vs 500 cents; 720 vs 700 cents).

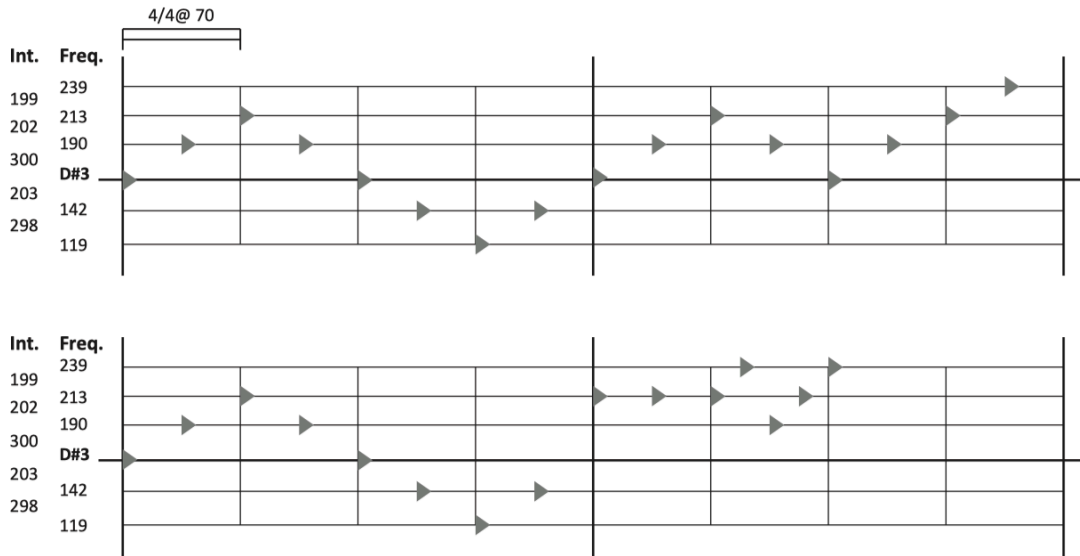


Figure 5-23: The intervals of *slenthem 1* show as approximately multiples of 100 cents.

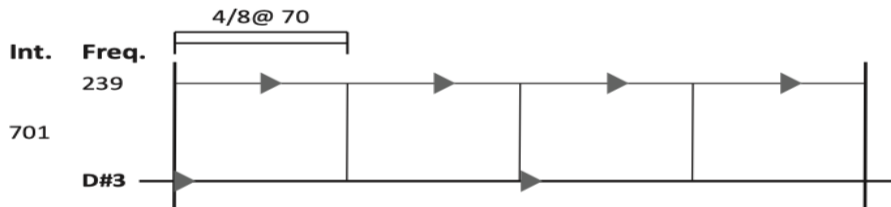


Figure 5-24: The intervals of *slenthem 2* appear as approximately multiples of 100 cents.<sup>69</sup>

### Gambang and bonang

I imported the recordings of *gambang* and *bonang* into Sonic Visualiser and made graphs of the *gambang* (Figure 5-25) and *boning* parts (Figure 5-26) using Global Notation. From these two graphs, the intervals appear as approximately multiples of 100 cents, which is Western equal temperament.

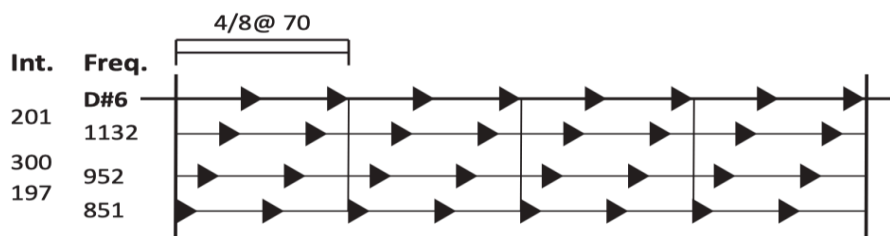


Figure 5-25: The intervals in the *gambang* appear as approximately multiples of 100 cents.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Notations Figure 5-23, Figure 5-24 transcribed from the recording of *jasen potehi* music provided by Aneng Kiswanto (See Audio Example 5-11).

<sup>70</sup> Notation transcribed from the recording of *jasen potehi* music provided by Aneng Kiswanto (See

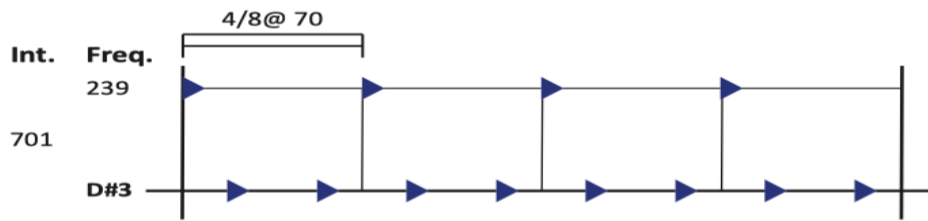


Figure 5-26: The intervals of the *bonang* appear as approximately multiples of 100 cents.<sup>71</sup>

We can see from the graphs of the five gamelan instruments in the opening song that they use the pentatonic scale, but although the *saron* and *demung* maintain the traditional *slendro* scale for the introduction, the *slenthem* accompanies the *saron* and *demung* using equal temperament tuning in the lower octave. The *gambang* and *bonang* have changed their traditional tuning to that of Western equal temperament in accompanying Chinese and Western instruments.

### Chinese *erhu*

I also made a graph of the *erhu* part using Global Notation based on Tony software. Compared with the analysis of the *erhu* in the Chinese pop song of the *jasen potehi* performance above, this graph reveals the same result. The intervals are roughly 200, 100, 200, 200, (100), 200 and 200 cents, which are also multiples of 100 cents, so they would be compatible with the equal temperament tuning (Figure 5-27). In fact, the *erhu* is a Chinese traditional instrument, and normally plays in the Chinese pentatonic scale, which should give intervals of roughly 200, 200 and 300 cents. But the *erhu* can also play any intervals or tunings. After I had shown the result to the composer, he told me that he had hoped the *erhu* would match the scale of the keyboard and one of banjos that played the same main melody. This was his reason for choosing the equal temperament tuning system (interview with Aneng Kiswanto via WhatsApp, 10 February 2020).

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Audio Example 5-12).

<sup>71</sup> Notation transcribed from the recording of *jasen potehi* music provided by Aneng Kiswanto (See Audio Example 5-13).

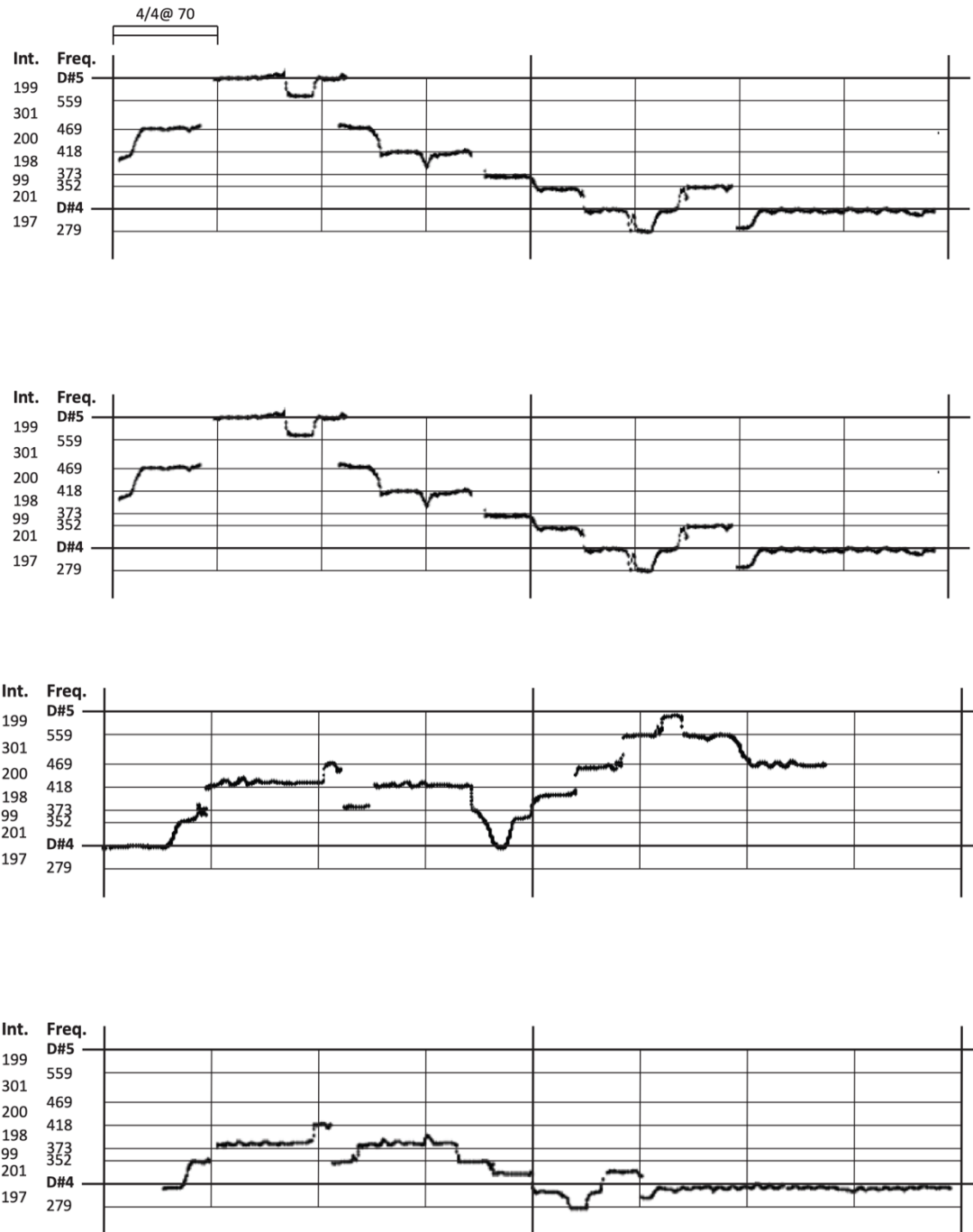


Figure 5-27: The intervals of the *erhu*'s melody appear as approximately 200, 100, 200, 200, (100), 200 and 200 cents.<sup>72</sup>

### Western instruments

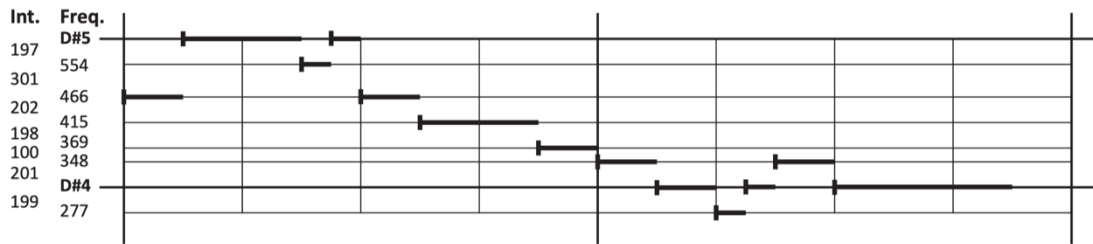
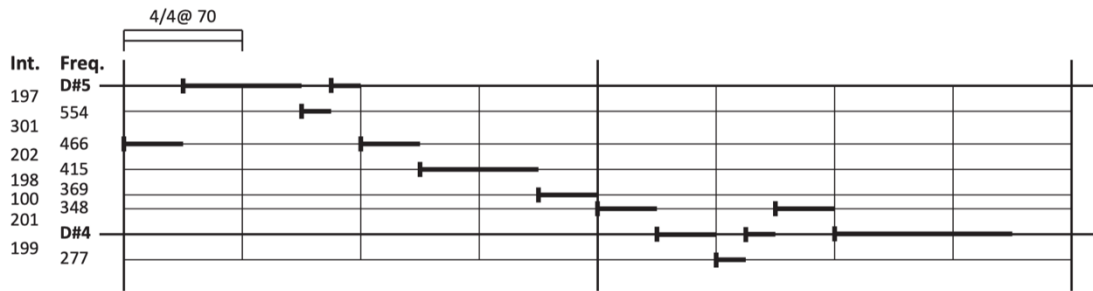
There were three Western instruments playing in the opening song of this *jasen potehi* performance. One was the keyboard, and the other two were both banjos. One of the

<sup>72</sup> Notation transcribed from the recording of *jasen potehi* music provided by Aneng Kiswantoro (See Audio Example 5-14).

banjos played the main melody with the keyboard and the Chinese *erhu*, while the other played the harmonic chords as an accompaniment.

Keyboard

The *keyboard* played the main melody in this song. The pitch-time graph shows that the intervals of the keyboard appear as roughly 200, 100, 200, 200, 100, 200 and 200 cents, which demonstrate equal temperament (Figure 5-28).



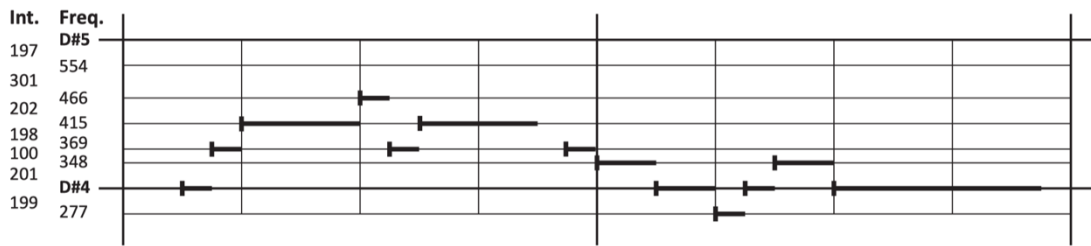
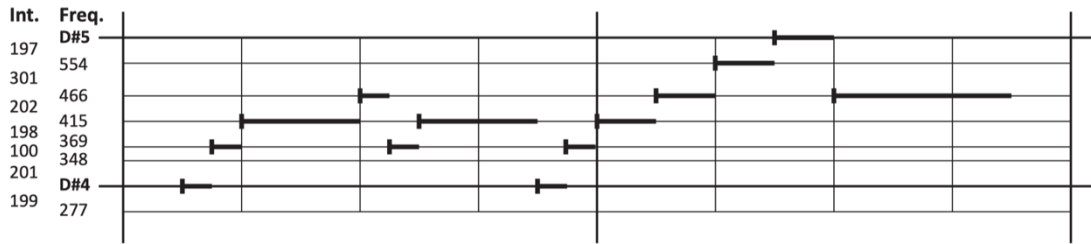


Figure 5-28: The intervals of the *keyboard* melody appear as roughly 200, 100, 200, 200, 100, 200 and 200 cents.<sup>73</sup>

### Banjo 1 (main melody)

The banjo is a traditional American instrument which uses the equal temperament tuning system. I imported the part of the banjo playing the main melody into Tony software. As expected, its intervals appear as roughly 200, 100, 200, 200, 100, 200 and 200 cents, showing the equal temperament tuning (Figure 5-29).

<sup>73</sup> Notation transcribed from the recording of *jasen potehi* music provided by Aneng Kiswantoro (See Audio Example 5-15).

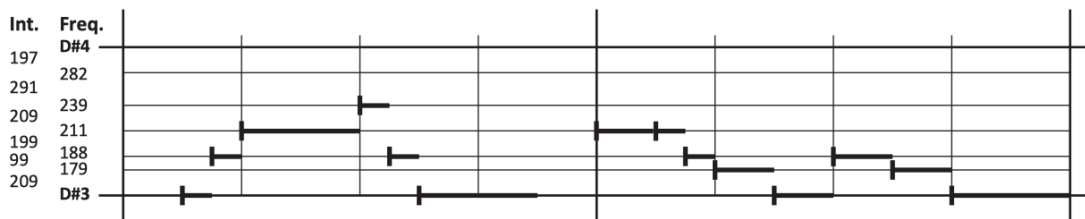
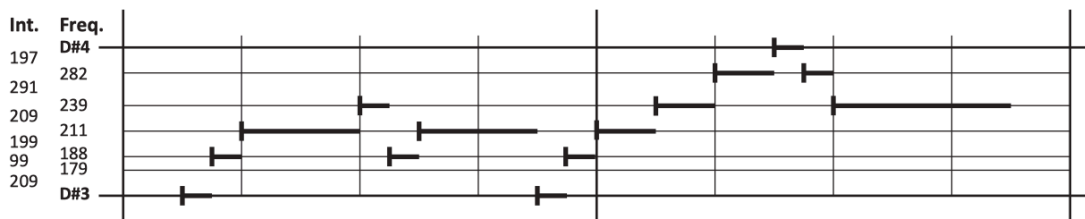
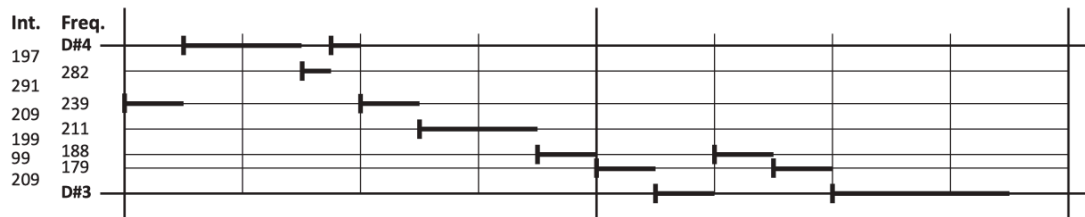
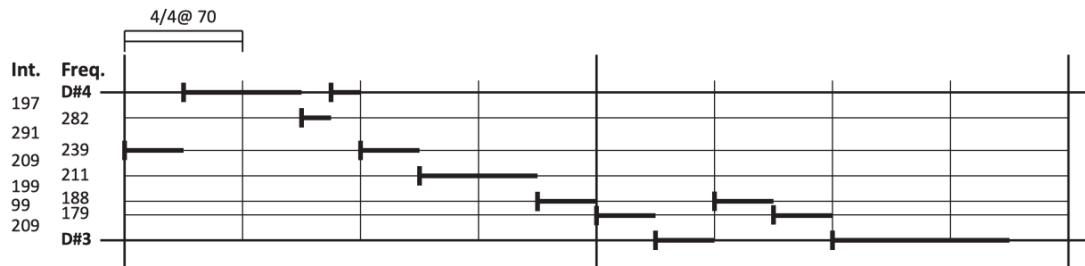


Figure 5-29: The intervals of banjo 1’s melody appear as roughly 200, 100, 200, 200, 100, 200 and 200 cents.<sup>74</sup>

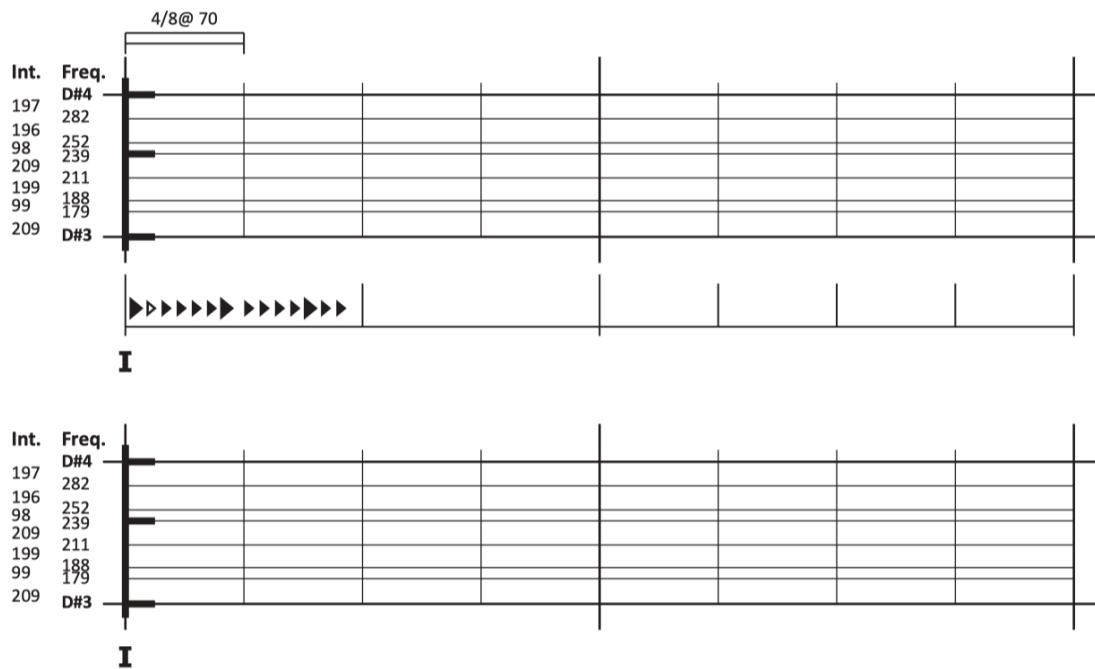
### Banjo 2 (chords)

The other banjo played the accompanying chords for banjo 1, keyboard and *erhu*. From the graph (Figure 5-30), we can see the same result as banjo1, giving the intervals of

<sup>74</sup> Notation transcribed from the recording of *jasen potehi* music provided by Aneng Kiswantoro (See Audio Example 5-16).



approximately 200, 100, 200, 200, 100, 200 and 200 cents, which is the equal temperament tuning. What I need to explain here is that this graph of chords looks different from other graphs. I have used the black symbol resembling a capital “E” to represent the chords in order to make them more clearly visible on the pitch lines. I have also used Roman numerals for the harmonic progression of chords which consists of I - IV64 – I - IV64 - V - I. In addition, I have added triangles to show the rhythm (a hollow triangle means an optional stroke, not used in every repetition of the pattern) under the pitch lines. I have only notated the first bar because the rhythm is repeated thereafter.



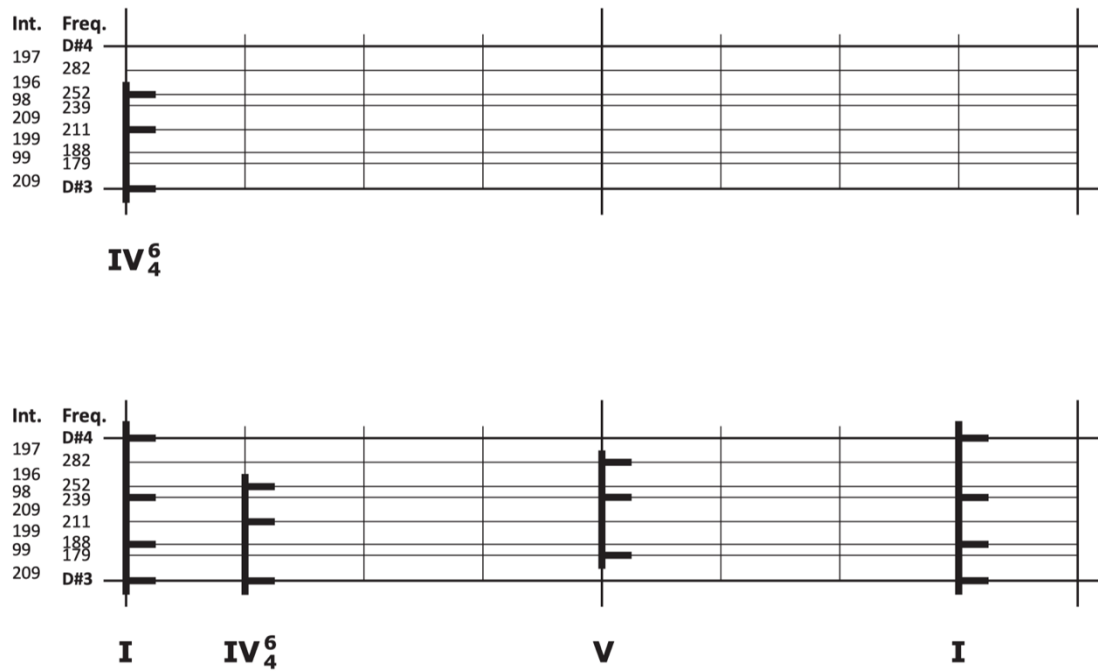


Figure 5-30: The intervals of banjo 2's chords appear as roughly 200, 100, 200, 200, 100, 200 and 200 cents.<sup>75</sup>

### Comparison

In order to show how Javanese, Chinese and Western instruments are able to play together despite using different tunings and modes, I decided to draw two comparison graphs showing the musical process of *jasen potehi*. According to the musical analysis I presented above, the gamelan instruments are divided into two parts to play in the different parts of the opening song. The *saron* and *demung* play the melody for the introduction, and the *gambang* and *bonang* perform with the Chinese and Western instruments to provide the accompaniment in alternating sections with the melody. The *slenthem* is represented in the whole song from the beginning to the end. I have made two comparison graphs which represent the musical processes of “localisation” and “modernisation”.

#### Comparison 1

In the introduction, three gamelan instruments play together: the *saron* and *demung*

<sup>75</sup> Notation transcribed from the recording of *jasen potehi* music provided by Aneng Kiswanto (See Audio Example 5-17).

play the main melody, while the *slenthem* has the accompaniment part. I have constructed a pitch graph using three different symbols to represent the instruments (Figure 5-31): the *saron* is the T-shaped black line, the *demung* is the T-shaped grey line and the grey triangle represents *slenthem* 1. We can see that although the *saron* and *demung* perform the same melody, the *saron* part is an octave higher because of the different pitch range of each traditional gamelan instrument. The *demung* also sometimes plays at a different pitch to create harmony with the *saron*. In the fourth bar the two instruments play in parallel at an interval of c. 720 cents (plus an octave), which indicates a kind of harmony not usual in gamelan music. In addition, the left two sets of numbers show that the pitch lines of the *saron* and *demung* are equally spaced at an interval of approximately 240 cents, which is the *slendro* scale from the traditional gamelan tuning system. Thus, the music has retained traditional tuning for the *saron* and *demung* in the main melody in the introduction of the opening song. It would seem that this is ample evidence of the musical “localisation” of *jasen potehi*, but it is not completely “localised” because the harmony seems different from the traditional harmony of Javanese gamelan, and also the intervals of *slenthem* 1 show a different tuning system from that of the *saron* and *demung*. Its intervals appear as approximately multiples of 100 cents, which is characteristic of equal temperament, not a traditional gamelan *slendro* scale.

I thought a possible reason would be that the same set of gamelan instruments were used in the Chinese pop song. But I started to wonder why the *slenthem* plays the main part in the accompaniment as well as *gambang* and *bonang*. I asked the composer about this and he said:

In the early stages of creation, I also planned to let *slenthem* only play the main part, so that it could avoid playing with the traditional Javanese *saron* and *demung*, as to those familiar with gamelan, it might have sounded a little bit strange. However, when I think of what I do now, it is the music of *jasen potehi*, not *wayang potehi*. This *potehi* is Javanese in style, and that’s why I added the Javanese gamelan into the music. Among all the melodic instruments of gamelan, the *slenthem* is the most important—we call it the

“soul” instrument. In fact, in traditional Javanese compositions, we never remove *slenthem*. So, I needed to let the sound of *slenthem* be heard throughout the whole song in order to enhance the Javanese color. But in order to avoid the disharmony with the *saron* and *demung*, I chose to use the *slenthem* in the accompaniment part, in a lower range. (Interview with Kiswantoro via WhatsApp, 1 May 2020)

From his words we can see a strong influence of musical “localisation” in the music of *jasen potehi*.

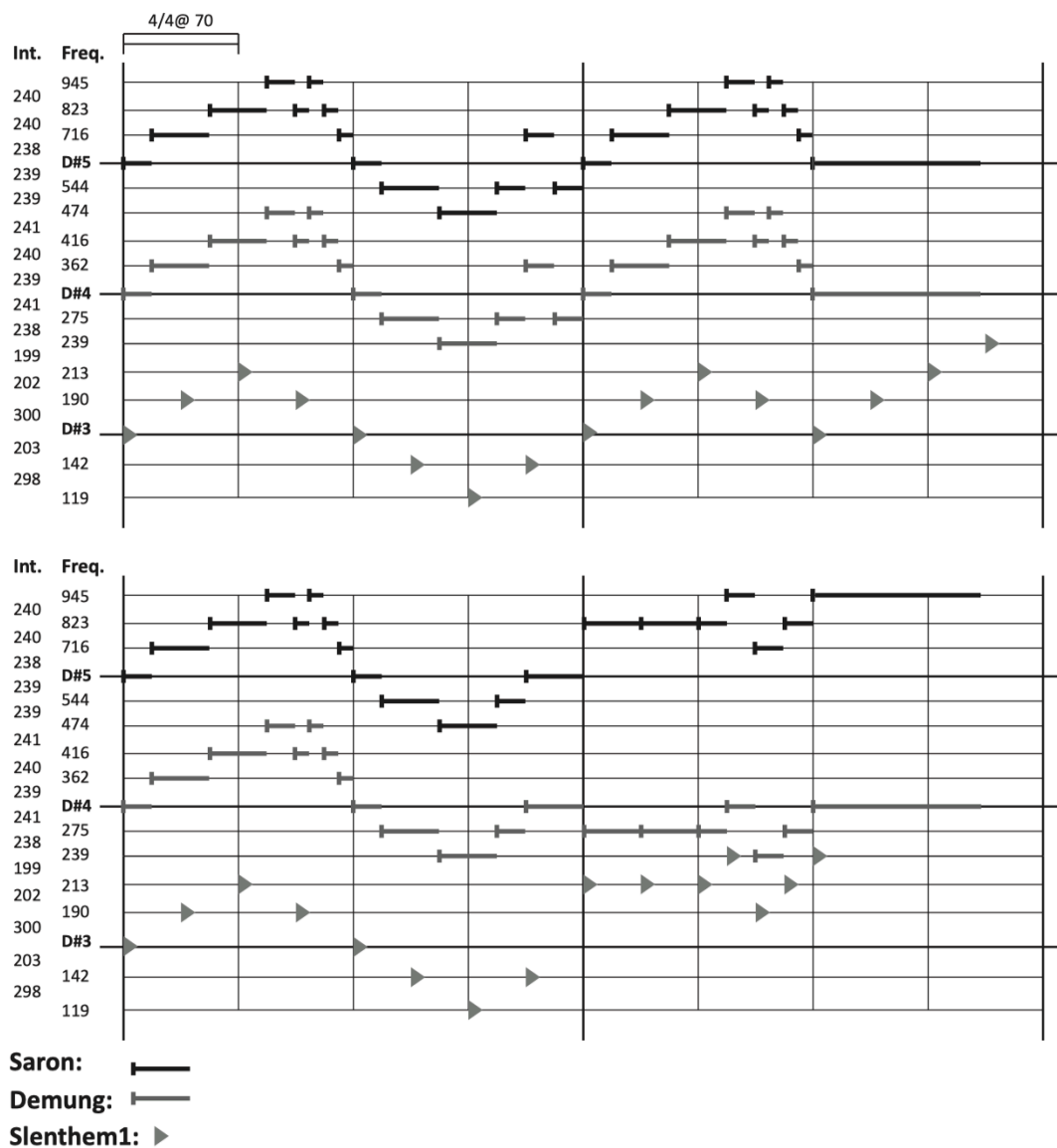


Figure 5-31: The comparison pitch graph of three gamelan instruments for the introduction of the opening song.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>76</sup> Notation transcribed from the recording of *jasen potehi* music provided by Aneng Kiswantoro (See Audio Example 5-18).

## Comparison 2

To show how the three different kinds of instruments play together and to represent their sounds in the same space, I have chosen two bars that contain a similar melody on all three kinds of instruments, and have drawn a pitch graph using different symbols to represent them. In this main part of the song, the keyboard, banjo 1 and *erhu* play the main melody, while the *gambang*, *slenthem 2*, *bonang* and banjo 2 make up the accompaniment part. In this graph (Figure 5-32), the keyboard is shown by the T-shaped grey line, the red T-shaped line is banjo 1, and the *erhu* is the black wavy line. Also, I used grey triangles on the pitch lines to show *slenthem 2*, blue triangles for the *bonang*, and the black triangles represent the *gambang*. Finally, I have used a hollow “E” for banjo 2’s chords. I also added the rhythm of banjo 2 with a series of triangles under the pitch lines.

From this graph, we can see the keyboard, banjo 1 and *erhu* performing the same melody, although banjo 1 plays an octave higher than the *erhu* and keyboard in order to highlight the *erhu*’s sound. The *slenthem*, *bonang* and banjo 2 play the notes and chords of the harmony in a lower octave. In addition, the *gambang* plays a harmonic sound an octave higher than all the other instruments in order to distinguish it from *slenthem 2* and the *bonang*. The two sets of numbers on the left show that the intervals were roughly 200, 100, 200, 200, 100, 200 and 200 cents, which is the equal temperament tuning system. Thus, they all played the melody using the same tuning of equal temperament.

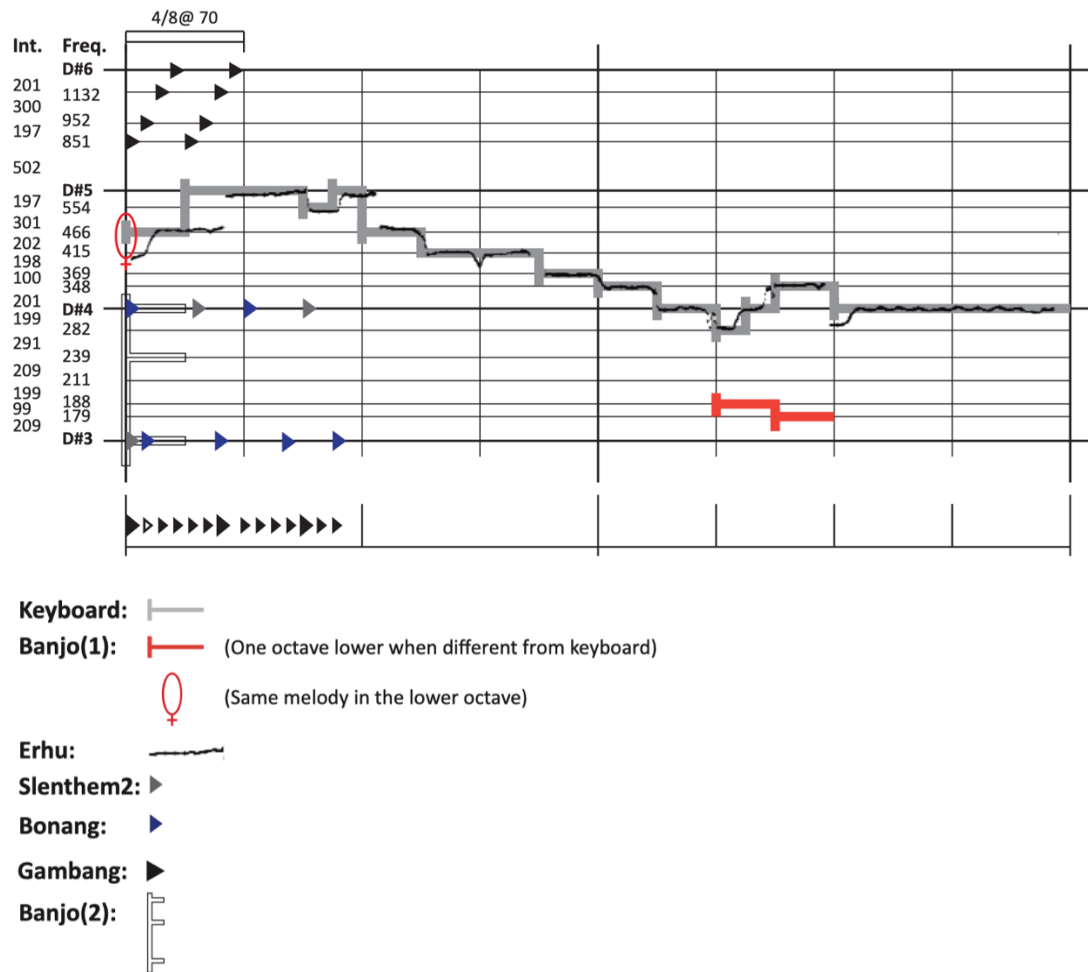


Figure 5-32: The comparison pitch graph of three different kinds of instruments for the main part of the opening song.<sup>77</sup>

#### 5.4 Diverse Ethnic and Cultural Identities in the Process of Revivals and Developments of Contemporary Chinese Indonesian Music

As mentioned in a previous section about the history of the revival of Chinese Indonesian musical culture, the entire musical culture has experienced a slow development after the “New Order” restrictions were lifted. Chinese Indonesian musical culture does not thrive as it did during its heyday, and it faces the problem of how to survive and develop. In order to deal with this, some have chosen traditional performance to keep Chinese culture alive (e.g. *wayang potehi*), while others have chosen to change the traditional way and created a cultural fusion, such as we see in

<sup>77</sup> Notation transcribed from the recording of *jasen potehi* music provided by Aneng Kiswanto (See Audio Example 5-18).

*jasen potehi*. Along with these different developments, ethnic and cultural identity also changes in different ethnic groups, based on the historical environment. By exploring the process of tracing “roots” and “routes” (Hall, 1996: 3), we can investigate how a hybrid ethnic identity combining Chinese Indonesian and *pribumi* culture is constructed and perceived as meanings and identities are created.

The following is a brief discussion of the ethnic identities by which musicians represent themselves in different contexts. To evaluate how this is manifested in the minds of musicians of the Chinese Indonesian culture, I interviewed many musicians currently performing *jasen potehi*, as well as the sponsor of the group, the provider of the performance venue, and the audiences at performances. The aim was to discover what national and cultural identity means to them and analyse their responses. The results from the data collection during my fieldwork on musicians in the group of *jasen potehi* between March 2018 and May 2020 can be summarised into two separate types of ethnic identities based on the historical origin and growth experience, which I have described as the “dual identity” (Chinese ethnicity and Indonesian nationality), and a “strong sense of single identity” (Indonesian ethnicity and nationality). These two terms have been introduced since they best described how the subjects thought of their ethnic identities and how they expressed them in contemporary Indonesia.

The first of these is what I call “dual identity”. A person’s ethnic identity is generally imposed on them by their historical origin and cultural heritage. Many Chinese Indonesians in Indonesia regarded themselves as both Chinese and Indonesian, which means they feel a dual identity, showing the Chinese ethnicity and Indonesian nationality. Historically, this group was mainly composed of *totok* Chinese Indonesians who culturally belonged to the “Chinese”, spoke a Chinese dialect, married Chinese spouses, and many of whom were born in China or were studying in Chinese schools within Indonesia. Whether young or old, people in this group all acknowledge that their roots are from China, and that with Chinese blood in their body, they are Chinese. On the other hand, they have grown up and live in Indonesia, and in some cases they feel

more Indonesian than Chinese. Two examples are Nyo Yensen, the sponsor and creator of the group of *jasen potehi*, and Toni Harsono, the sponsor and promoter of the traditional *wayang potehi* group Fu He An :

I think I have both Indonesian and Chinese identities because my ancestors came from China but I was born in Indonesia. I grew up in Indonesia but lived in the circle of Chinese and read some Chinese books and newspapers. I often watched the Chinese performance when I was young. (Interview with Nyo Yensen in Malang, 15 December 2018)

I consider myself as Chinese in the historical [aspect]. For nationality, I am Indonesian. Because I cannot speak Chinese, I have no difference from the locals, and even my skin has gradually become the same color as them. But I love Chinese culture, because it is my original root. (Interview with Toni Harsono in Yogyakarta, 20 February 2018)

The other group that I would like to consider is those who have a “strong sense of single identity”, showing Indonesian ethnicity and nationality. Most of this group are *pribumi* who know little of Chinese history and culture. My reason for investigating the identity of such a group of people is that the vast majority of people currently performing Chinese Indonesian music are actually *pribumi*, not Chinese Indonesians. Their cultural identity affects their relationship with Chinese culture, and this in turn influences the way that they present this culture. Hence, I think they need to be considered as a distinct group since they identify primarily with local culture and history. People in this group are more inclined towards indigenous traditional music and strive to promote their local culture. With regard to Chinese Indonesian musical culture, however, in an interview, a *pribumi* musician in the *jasen potehi* group said: “The Chinese Indonesian culture originally came from the Chinese culture, but during the long historical development process, it has slowly taken root in Indonesia. It is now our Indonesian culture” (interview with Fani Rickyansyah in ISI Yogyakarta, 20 November 2018). Obviously, his words show another way of perceiving and presenting *jasen potehi*. The people of this group may be attracted to Chinese Indonesian culture because they feel that it is now an indispensable part of traditional Indonesian culture.



However, people within a culture can have different views, so I have grouped these audiences for Chinese Indonesian culture in two ways, according to ethnic identity and age. I will use *jasen potehi* as a typical example to analyse their views. In the first grouping, I have focused on the views of *pribumi* and Chinese Indonesians on the “localisation” and “modernisation” of contemporary Chinese culture. As to the second grouping, I decided to explore how younger and older people think about this new fusion form, where Chinese Indonesian culture has been blended with other cultural elements.

In the first grouping, for local *pribumi*, *jasen potehi* was not as completely representative of traditional Chinese culture as *wayang potehi*, which has been developed via a different route. The composer has used a new fusion style combining different kinds of cultural elements in one performance, aiming to attract *pribumi* audiences. The traditional Chinese accompanying music (on Chinese instruments) has been replaced by traditional local music (Javanese gamelan). In addition, traditional *wayang kulit* puppets are used in the *jasen potehi* performance. These changes gave the *pribumi* some experience of their own culture in the performance, which made it easier for them to accept and enjoy it. A *pribumi* musician, Bayu Nugraha, mentioned that “in the performance of *jasen*, adding more local music elements will undoubtedly increase my understanding and create more interest in the performance. I prefer to think of this as a new version of *wayang kulit*.” A member of the *pribumi* audience, Agapetus, made a similar point: “In the past, I only watched fighting scenes of Chinese *potehi*, because I did not know much about the music and characters. Now I prefer *jasen potehi*. I was attracted by gamelan firstly. I really like gamelan music. Secondly, I felt that the form of the glove puppet show combined with the shadow puppet show was very innovative and interesting.” From their words, it can be seen that audiences are adapting to the new localised, more accessible and entertaining form of *wayang potehi* (interviews with Bayu Nugraha and Agapetus via WhatsApp, 8 & 15 March 2020).

Most Chinese Indonesians enjoy Chinese culture, and want it to still have a place in contemporary Indonesian culture. However, opinions are divided as to how this should happen. Regarding the development of *potehi*, there are two factions: one element is insistent on tracing the cultural roots and want to keep to traditional ways in order to arouse emotional memory and resonance with the past. Toni Harsono is the most typical representative of this faction: “My childhood was full of Chinese culture. However, it was very hard to see Chinese cultural performance after the prohibition of the Chinese performance and I was very sad during that time. When performances could re-open again, I tried to revive that culture because I wanted to see it again and it gave me a feeling of being connected with homeland China. So I prefer to maintain its original form of *potehi* so that we could find our roots through it” (interview with Toni Harsono in Yogyakarta, 20 February 2018). However, for the other faction, the route is indeed different. Yensen disapproves of such a traditional way of development in *potehi*. Although helping *potehi* to survive in Indonesia also became his priority, the first thing he did was to develop *jasen potehi* specifically for *pribumi* and the younger generation. He changed the traditional way, adding local and Western cultural elements, and merging them into a new performance form, in order to encourage more young people to accept it (interview with Nyo Yensen in Malang, 15 December 2018).

Regarding the grouping by age, whether they are *pribumi* or Chinese Indonesian, young people who are not so familiar with Chinese history and culture have accepted this new form of *potehi*. They enjoy this multicultural, cross-border form, which is influenced by globalisation. Although this new form is interesting to them, regrettably, they still are not able to learn it, because it does not produce much income for them (interviews with Venica, Frisca and Stella, Chinese Indonesian young generation, via WhatsApp, 4, 12, and 18 March 2020). Older people are very worried about this situation, because they know the importance of cultural continuity. They are afraid that the form of the performance has changed too much, and is in danger of letting too much tradition disappear permanently. On the other hand, they are also afraid that if there is no change in *potehi* and young people are unwilling to engage with it, this kind of art form will

also slowly disappear (interviews with Asih Santoso, Yopie Liem and Purwanto via WhatsApp and Facebook, 7 and 8 March 2020).

## 5.5 Conclusion

One of the largest influencing factors on the development of Chinese Indonesian music culture was the rise to power of Suharto in 1966 and the implementation of aggressive assimilation policies towards the Chinese. Of particular importance were the 1967 “New Order” policy which prohibited Chinese religion, culture, and education, and the promulgation of Executive Order No.14 which strictly controlled various ceremonies, cultural and art activities related to Chinese traditional culture and customs on any public occasion, making it impossible for Chinese musical performances to be held, and so increasingly fewer people learned it. This meant musicians had to look for other jobs and many Chinese musical and cultural forms almost disappeared. However, such measures led to unexpected consequences as, faced with such a harsh political environment, *wayang potehi* underwent some “localisation” in order to adapt to the systems of the Indonesian social environment, for instance, replacing Hokkien in the spoken parts of *wayang potehi* with Indonesian. This led to local participation in, and appreciation of, the performance of *wayang potehi* during that time. Despite this, however, Chinese Indonesian musical culture in general suffered great destructive damage during the “New Order” period and saw no revival until President Abdurrahman Wahid took office after thirty-three years and implemented more multicultural policies, abolishing previous policies of discrimination against the Chinese from the “New Order” period. In this post- “New Order” period, Chinese Indonesians were provided with channels through which to express themselves, and they took the opportunity to regain their sense of ethnicity, reviving and developing traditional Chinese culture. As a result, *wacinwa* saw a revival, and *wayang potehi* expanded its previously slow development, and was even transformed into a new form, *jasen potehi*, in order to help *wayang potehi* survive. However, some other Chinese Indonesian musical forms disappeared entirely, due to the impossibility of performing

and the lack of opportunity to pass them on to the next generation.

In order to understand the changes in Chinese Indonesian musical culture since 1998, this chapter shows that the musical revival process of Chinese Indonesian musical culture has been conducted by Chinese Indonesians and locals involved in the Chinese culture in contemporary Indonesia. By investigating the practice of *jasen potehi*, we can see, reflected in its development, a degree of cultural negotiation among the Chinese and local Indonesians. Whether in the performance form or the music itself, the creative process shows interaction between many different cultural ideas and forms, resulting in the development of a cultural fusion. These ideas have their roots in the selection and combination of the “local cultural past”, the “imported cultural past”, and the “new cultural influences”, as represented in the processes of “localisation” and “modernisation”. For instance, the music of *jasen potehi* shows a combination of Javanese gamelan (the “local cultural past”), Chinese traditional instruments (the “imported cultural past”) and Western instruments (the “new cultural influences”). The analysis of the specific details of this musical fusion process using Global Notation reveals the twin processes of musical “localisation” and “modernisation”. More specifically, the composer has used the Javanese gamelan as the main instruments for the musical accompaniment, instead of using only traditional Chinese music as in the past. It could be considered, therefore, that the “imported cultural past” was “localised”, because the “local cultural past” has become the main component. However, it has not been a complete localisation process; in order to meet the requirements of the sponsor from the Chinese Indonesian community, the composer retained one or two Chinese instruments to play the main melody together with Javanese gamelan, and even included a Chinese pop song in order to make the performance resonate with the emotions of Chinese Indonesian audiences, and this became a bond to connect them with their homeland. Moreover, this was also not a unidirectional transforming process, as *wayang potehi* was both “localised” and “modernised” in a single, fused process. Under the influence of the globalisation of music cultures, which aims to help culture to survive, and to attract a large audience, especially of young people, Western

instruments which were able to play the Chinese pop music were added to the performance of *jasen potehi*, which made the creation more modern and multicultural. As mentioned earlier, although Western instruments were used and the tuning system was adapted, they did not abandon the Chinese culture (the “imported cultural past”) and indigenous Indonesian culture (the “local cultural past”), by using only Western music. The Western instruments and tuning system were simply used to attract a wider audience and to connect global, original and local elements. This transforming process can be considered as a dual process with two elements, “localisation” and “modernisation”.

*Jasen potehi* is not the only instance of traditional culture undergoing these gradual transformations between localisation and modernisation, but it provides a useful case study as an example of broader trends in the music of a diaspora community. In the contemporary diaspora context, it may be sometimes difficult to distinguish between “localisation” and “modernisation”, but the twin processes together reveal a trend in musical development. The use of Western musical elements while preserving the character of imported culture, and blending both with the local music, enables the original traditional music to move towards a new fusion form, thus not only preserving cultural heritage from the homeland, but also increasing the popularity of this form of performance.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusion**

This study on the musical culture of the Chinese diaspora in Indonesia began with questions such as these: What were the original sources of the Chinese diaspora and its music in Indonesia? How did the historical political and cultural policies help to shape Chinese Indonesian musical forms in Indonesia in different periods? How was a Chinese Indonesian ethnic and cultural identity constructed and shaped through the practice of musical activities, and how has Chinese Indonesian musical culture negotiated between the past and the present? What have been the changes in the performance of Chinese Indonesian music? How has musical hybridity been embodied in the process of musical practice, and how do musicians connect ethnic and cultural identity in representing the music? In seeking to answer these questions, my research on the Chinese Indonesian musical culture has been based not only on the development of the music, but also on its current musical practice, ethnic identity transformation and the impact of cultural policy. This study has also discussed to what extent the dynamics of ethnic and cultural identity, hybridity, integration trends and political influences have affected Chinese Indonesian musical culture.

Chinese history in Indonesia goes back for hundreds of years. A cultural emphasis on practicality, organisation, thrift, patience, optimism, and contentment with what they have, have helped Chinese Indonesians to rise in the business world and become economically successful. The strong cohesion of the Chinese community has helped make them a very influential ethnic group in Indonesia today, affecting the economic lifeline of Indonesia (Xiang, 1992: 437-9). In the long history of Chinese development in Indonesia, the Chinese have constantly tried to integrate with the local social system. However, due to their different religious beliefs and ways of thinking, and their lifestyle and cultural system, they finally established a unique culture of their own that is different from the cultures of both indigenous Indonesians and their homeland.

As Chinese Indonesians work hard to contribute to traditional Indonesian arts and the

economy of the country, their music is still an important part of their Chinese cultural identity and helps shape their social and economic status, and even their international status in the world. However, in the early days after the lifting of the “New Order” policy, although political and cultural policies have been open to the representing of Chinese culture, the difficulties caused by history hindered the spread of the Chinese culture in Indonesia. At that time, most Indonesians still regarded Chinese culture as a foreign cultural system. This could be seen in a typology of *wayang* established by Pandam Guritno in 1988, which involved 28 different traditional *wayangs* in Java, Bali, Lombok and Sumtra. Various regional performing languages were also presented in this *wayang* system, such as Sundanese, Betawi and Palembang (Guritno, 1998: 14). However, the Chinese *wayang potehi* and *wacinwa* were not included. Even though the president at the time advocated and encouraged multiculturalism, they actually did not integrate the Chinese Indonesian culture into the entire Indonesian cultural system.

After that, the Indonesian government became more open to Chinese Indonesian society and cultural policy. These events have helped Chinese culture to have more space to develop. The performing form of *wayang potehi* and *wacinwa* have changed, constantly integrating and negotiating with the local culture. Its diverse characteristics and the value of cross-cultural exchange have been discovered by more and more locals, which led *wayang potehi* and *wacinwa* to be gradually incorporated into the traditional *wayang* system in Indonesia. For example, *wayang potehi* puppets were exhibited at the Wayang Museum in Jakarta in 2014, and in the same year, the antique puppets of *wacinwa* were exhibited at the Museum Negeri Sonobudoyo in Yogyakarta. The TV show *World of Wayang* also included *wacinwa* in the category of *wayang* in 2010 (interview with Yensen in 15th December 2018, Malang). Of course, these achievements are inseparable from the efforts of the patrons, especially the sponsor Yensen. He positioned *wayang potehi* as a “100% Indonesian” art form and promoted it as part of the *wayang* system. This approach has helped introduce the culture of the Chinese ethnic minority to the *pribumi*, and in being defined as a unique style of *wayang*, Chinese Indonesian puppet theatre has become a part of traditional Indonesian

art and culture.

In the more than 20 years since the “New Order” policies were ended in 1998, *wayang potehi*, *wacinwa*, *barongsai*, *nanyin* and other Chinese Indonesian musical genres won the heart of the indigenous audience in performances that earned enthusiastic applause. For Indonesian society, the arts have served not only to break down the barriers and conflicts among different races, but also to move people to shield or care about each other. Prof. Hanggar Budi Prasetya from Institut Seni Indonesia Yogyakarta commented:

To me, I won't discriminate the Indonesian culture of Java from China, especially under the name of art. Art is the media that brings the possibility for different races to understand each other, to live together and eventually to unite as one. Javanese people can learn to speak Chinese as well as dig into the performance art like *potehi*. Through the interactions, the Chinese Indonesians can get closer to the native Indonesians too. We are already a united community of shared life in our country. Because the racial discrimination was all about the political consideration, which is impossible for me to agree with it. We all have rights to live in this country. No matter what race we are or what religion we believe, we all have been living in Indonesia since a long time ago. We are supposed to fight for the right of our friends. We deserve a peaceful life together in this land. (Interview with Hanggar Budi Prasetya in ISI Yogyakarta, 24<sup>th</sup> January 2018)

In the perspective of Didik Nini Thwok, one of the grand masters of Chinese Indonesian dance:

To appreciate the culture of Indonesia should not be a political issue. It is not about the point of being a Chinese or not, either. For me, what you can do for the Javanese culture as a Javanese people is the key point that matters. I don't think there should be only Chinese sponsoring the Chinese Indonesian culture and performing it by local Indonesians. There could have been more motives to understand the traditional culture of Indonesia, and more original intentions of sincerity on building up friendships with native Indonesians. Those are what make the achievements meaningful. (Interview with Didik Nini Thwor in Yogyakarta, 19<sup>th</sup> January 2017)

In a spirit of harmony between different cultures and identities, the Chinese Indonesian performing arts now have the chance to blossom in a land where once they were



oppressed and uprooted. After the struggles and efforts over the past hundreds of years, what was once a foreign land to Chinese people may now become their real homeland.

### **6.1 Contribution of this Thesis**

As noted in the Literature Review, a few previous studies have discussed the development of the musical culture of the Chinese diaspora in Indonesia (Kartomi, 2000; Tsai, 2018). Other sources also describe the different musical genres of Chinese Indonesian culture, such as studies of *wayang potehi* and *wacinwa* (Purwoseputro, 2014; Mastuti, 2014; Kuardhani, 2012; Stenberg, 2015; Seltmann, 1967; Soelarto, 1980; Hariwijaya, 2015). However, these studies have only focused on certain musical genres of the Chinese Indonesian community, and there has been no comprehensive research on the development and current status of the Chinese Indonesian musical culture using ethnomusicological methodology.

I have tried to fill a gap in the study of Chinese diaspora music through this ethnographic study of the contemporary Chinese Indonesian musical culture. I have also constructed a framework to study and re-evaluate Chinese Indonesian music in modern day Indonesia, using multiple perspectives and ethnographic methods from ethnomusicology. In addition, I provided a close analysis of the performance content of Chinese Indonesian musical genres, especially analysis of the musical sound organisation itself. My detailed music analysis is intended to be a new contribution that shows how the broader historical and cultural contexts are manifested in actual sound. I used two different notation systems for transcription and analysis, illustrating the process of musical hybridity: Western staff notation and the “Global Notation” proposed by Andrew Killick. As this thesis is the first study to use Global Notation for in-depth analysis of a particular musical culture, it represents a methodological innovation in the analysis of world music which I hope is a significant research contribution in itself. It exemplifies how Global Notation might be used especially for analysing music that mixes instruments or other elements from different cultural sources.

Due to my female and Chinese identity, I have been able to provide a different perspective from those of local scholars and Western scholars who have no Chinese music background. My Chinese identity and musical knowledge helped gain me a warm welcome from my research subjects, who were keen for me to share my Chinese knowledge with them. At the same time, my Chinese identity also seemed to affect the results of my interviews and fieldwork, especially when they involved politically sensitive questions. Meanwhile, participating in practice and performance as a female *dalang*, which broke the tradition of traditional *wayang* shadow puppetry, enabled me to explore the limits of change that the sponsors and musicians were willing to accept. In these ways, my own identity allowed me to make a different contribution from previous research.

This research has explored the Chinese Indonesian musical culture and connected it to the cultural issues of national identity, hybridity and revival. Chinese Indonesian music has also been transforming from traditional performances to local and innovative approaches through processes such as localisation and modernisation. My research explored how the musicians expressed their ethnic and cultural identity, how musicians constructed the current musical forms of Chinese Indonesian musical theatre, and how they have chosen adaptive measures under the influence of politics and the survival crisis. Moreover, the concepts of ethnic and cultural identity used to investigate the hybridity Chinese Indonesian and *pribumi* identities ultimately provides an explanation for the negotiation and reconstruction of the musicians' own ethnic identities. This research is unique in that it is the only one to address the musical culture of the Chinese diaspora in history and contemporary Indonesia through an ethnographic point of view. I hope the research presented here has achieved an in-depth account that makes a significant contribution to the study of musical diasporas in the field of ethnomusicology.

As I mentioned in the Introduction, I have posed the question of what makes the musical culture of the Chinese diaspora in Indonesia different from other diaspora situations that are discussed in the literature. After the foregoing analysis of Chinese Indonesian musical culture, I can begin to answer this question. As is well known, in addition to the Chinese diaspora community in Indonesia, there are other Chinese diaspora communities scattered in various countries around the world. For example, in Southeast Asia, there are Chinese Singaporeans who have already occupied the dominant economic and cultural positions in Singapore, and Malaysian Chinese who still have relatively tense relations with the indigenous people. On the other side of the world, there are also many Chinese living in Europe, North America and Australia, having an influence in their host countries. However, according to Huaren.com,<sup>1</sup> based on a survey of the number of overseas Chinese in the world in 2017, the total number of Chinese overseas was roughly 45.43 million, 73% of which were concentrated in Southeast Asia. Indonesia was pointed out as the country with the largest number of Chinese, with more than 9.6 million. In terms of numbers, Chinese Indonesians account for a large proportion of all overseas Chinese in the world. In terms of history, the Chinese have immigrated to Indonesia for hundreds of years, which was a much longer history than that of most other Chinese diaspora communities or even other diasporic groups. Therefore, the study of Chinese Indonesian culture has great importance in representing a large and long-standing part of overseas Chinese diaspora communities in the world.

Mackerras mentioned that in the various Chinese diasporas, the Chinese identity does not seem to be in danger of disappearing. Especially in Western countries, Chinese can not only maintain their Chinese identity, but also integrate well into the new communities in which they live. These two processes occur simultaneously and are complex (Mackerras, 2005: 18, 27). However, this kind of danger has really existed in the historical development of Chinese Indonesians. During the “New Order” period,

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.haiwaihuarenwang.com/hrzx/3.html>

the Indonesian government implemented various oppression and assimilation policies toward the Chinese. The most obvious was that they were deprived of their dual nationality. Chinese could only choose Indonesian nationality if they wanted to become legal citizens of Indonesia. With a series of comprehensive bans related to the Chinese, their Chinese identity gradually was weakened from generation to generation. Therefore, the change in the Chinese identity of the Chinese Indonesians also reflected different characteristics from the Chinese diasporas in other countries. This is a point that distinguishes the study of Chinese Indonesians from other Chinese diasporic studies.

Furthermore, although there are many studies on the musical culture of diaspora communities in the ethnomusicology field, most of them are about how the diasporas inherit or innovate the traditional culture of their homeland in the host country. However, the Chinese Indonesian musical culture has undergone a process of change that is different from research accounts of the musical culture of other diaspora communities. Specifically, the contemporary Chinese Indonesian musical culture is no longer dominated by the Chinese diaspora itself, but is mostly practiced and promoted by local Indonesian artists.

Before the prohibition policy of the “New Order”, the Chinese culture was mainly inherited and developed by Chinese Indonesians. However, during 33 years of banning performances, most of them changed careers or simply grew old. After the ban was lifted, only a few of them went on to revive the Chinese culture, and most of these were businessmen. Since the Chinese Indonesian younger generation were unwilling to do the work of maintaining the Chinese arts, they could only invite local *pribumi* who needed to make a living to learn, play, and even now become the leaders of the Chinese Indonesian musical troupes. As a result, most practitioners of Chinese Indonesian music are local Indonesians, not Chinese. They have integrated a large number of musical ideas into the current Chinese Indonesian music based on their own identities, including perspectives on Chinese Indonesians and their culture, their own traditional culture, and

the understanding of Western music under the influence of globalisation. Therefore, the contemporary Chinese Indonesian musical culture is more like a unique multicultural music than a musical culture that only belongs to the Chinese diaspora. It is filled with the identities of the Chinese diaspora and the musical thinking of the local Indonesians. In documenting such a unique case, I hope my research on Chinese Indonesian musical culture has made a new contribution to the study of diasporic music and the field of ethnomusicology.

## **6.2 Limitations and Opportunities for Future Research**

This research on Chinese Indonesian musical culture is not without its limitations. In addition to the representative genres of Chinese Indonesian musical theatre that I pay attention to, there are other Chinese musical forms that exist and develop in contemporary Indonesia, such as the *barongsai* and *nanyin* mentioned in this research. Although they did not participate in the entire history of Chinese diaspora development in Indonesia, these also represent a characteristic of the Chinese Indonesian musical culture. On the other hand, in this research, I mainly focused on the traditional music of the Chinese Indonesians, and did not include research on their modern and popular music, such as the spread and development of karaoke in the contemporary Chinese diaspora communities in Indonesia. In fact, during my fieldwork in Indonesia, I have discovered that Chinese pop music and orchestras have become a new way for young Chinese Indonesians to exchange feelings and construct a Chinese ethnic and cultural identity in contemporary Indonesia. Therefore, these musical genres that I have not covered may become my future research direction as I strive to gradually expand the research map of the Chinese Indonesian musical culture.

In this research, I intended to make a comparative study of Chinese Indonesian *wayang potehi* and *wacinwa*, comparing *wayang potehi*, *wacinwa* and Chinese traditional *budaixi* and *piyingxi*, looking at the changes and differences between the Chinese Indonesian and the original Chinese genres. In my fourth fieldwork trip in China, I organised a cultural communication event and led an Indonesian shadow puppetry

troupe to conduct in-depth exchanges with a famous shadow puppet troupe in central China. However, in the course of the exchange, I found that the discussion did not convincingly explain the similarities and differences between these two kinds of arts, because the glove puppetry and shadow puppetry of Chinese Indonesians originated from Fuzhou in southern China, not from central China, and the performing forms in the southern and central regions are not exactly the same, although some of the performance stories are the same. Therefore, in this research I gave up doing comparative research because of a lack of accuracy. This provides me with an opportunity in the future to carry out a comparative study of the diaspora music that experienced development and innovation in Indonesia with the corresponding music of the homeland. In addition, I will be more able to conduct a multi-sited ethnographic study for cross-national and cultural research, such as researching on Chinese musical culture in Southeast Asia, or comparing the musical culture of the Chinese diaspora communities in Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia.

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