

Dermayonan: Musical Intrepretation and Intercultural Collaboration

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Abstract

Dermayonan is a musical composition created through a collaborative concept based on the identity, authenticity, and instrumentation of *Tarling* music. This music resulted from the study process in specific areas in West Java, namely Indramayu and Cirebon. The process of creativity in this musical work refers to Rahayu Supanggah's theory about *garap* with musical approaches, history, culture, performance arts, and social sciences. In general, the existence of Dermayonan is intended to create a new aesthetic space in Karawitan.

Keywords: *Tarling*, identity and authenticity, creativity.

A. Introduction

The development of musical creativity based on folklore in West Java has showed a rapid increasing. Among musical performances are still widely displayed in simple way. *Tarling* is one of musical performances based on folklore and still much be appreciated especially in *Pantura* (the Java north coast) region, precisely in Indramayu, Jatibarang, and Cirebon districts. In these regions, *Tarling* grows evolutionarily similar to the development orientation of their social complexity. The musical expression of, *tarling* performance presents cultural values where their locus is known as '*Dermayon* or '*Dermayonan*'.

Tarling has similar acronym with some other terms in performing arts, such as *Tardug* (*gitar* and *bedug*), *Bangklung* (*terbang* and *angklung*). *Tarling* is taken from the acronym of *gitar* and *suling* (flute).

Popularity of *Tarling* in fact lacks of attention from academic orientation. This is an important reason why it is necessary to work on the initial hypothesis through the following numbers of questions such as: (1) Can *Tarling* be dialectically developed and oriented by their own community?; (2) Does *Tarling* have special formulation in the patterns?; (3) What elements of *Tarling* have an aesthetic limitation?

Waditra (music instruments) of *Tarling* set consist of three acoustic guitars and one *bangsing* (bamboo flute). Every *waditra* has a particular name and function, such as *gitar melodi* (melody), *gitar nenel* (rythem), *gitar demung* (frame), and *bangsing* (flute). These structures composition of *waditra* basically follow the gamelan pattern.

In 1970-1990s, *Tarling* performances were still played by using gamelan set. Two popular famous *sinden* (female singer) known as Hj. Daryah and Aan Darwati were still singing in the gamelan repertoire called classical *Tarling*.

Tarling has appeared and developed into the popular music when the song "*Warung Pojok*" (the shop corner) composed by Abdul Ajib has gained acceptance at national and international levels. This style of *Tarling* was classified in the form "*wanda anyar*" (new style), (interview with Carwina, 2019). During that time some popular songs such as *Kembang Kilaras*, *Kembang Bung*, *Waru Doyong*, *Pemuda Idaman* also became more popular for younger people. Some musicians said that these type of songs are classified as *Kiser Gancang*.

The people living outside Indramayu and Cirebon, are more familiar the names of song rather than they know *Tarling's* as representation of the identity of music. Those types of songs are identified as development form of classical *Tarling*. Since *Jaipongan* style gave a big influenced in Cirebon traditional music then *Tarling* has developed very rapidly. *Tarling* performances also started to be displayed by using some electrical devices in order to get high intensity sound when it played at open stage (interview with Mama Jana, 2019).

Currently, there is shifting form and function of *Tarling* known as *dangdut pantura*. Most likely this type of music is the development of the types of *teng dung*. One of the different thing from *dangdut pantura* is that they almost never bring the types of songs which are adopted from popular national songs. They are more comfortable to sing their own songs.

During the 1980s, another identity called “*Teng Dung*” has been coming as a new style of *Tarling*, but the people in Indramayu said this new name is about some combination between *Tarling* and *Dangdut*. It seem that this repertoire mostly adopted from *Dangdut* style.

Some amplification can be heard from what they created from many musical arrangement and combination on how they use many sound effects. This musical characteristics might be developed from inspiration how Rhoma Irama as “a king of *dangdut*” plays *dangdut* style. It was not surprising if there is a massive development of adding western music instruments such as drum sets, keyboard, percussions etc.

B. Methodology

The creation of "Dermayonan" is done through the orientation of *garap* theory. This orientation based on focus of studies on a phenomenon of traditional music in West Java. Another important factor that characterizes *Dermayonan* is how the construct of music frames the

independence of the relationship between textual and contextual in creativity.

In *Karawitan* phenomenon, there are not only standard conventions of tradition that apply as patterns in the Pelog Saléndro gamelan style. In its development, *Karawitan* encompasses an image and meaning which includes the genre of "new" music that refers to the characteristics or values of eastern "culture" (Rahayu Supanggah, 2002).

Garap Tarling is part of cultural expressions of Indramayu and Cirebon communities. Jakob Sumardjo (2001) explains that the mapping of communal works in the cultural sphere is an important fact as an internal factor where artists work based on the ideology of the communities in which they live and integrate themselves.

Tarling is a Dermayon product, but their imaginative form always starts from the real condition of their own community. This fact is often shown by a number of activities of musicians when holding performance that refers to the strength of elements of folklore Cirebon society.

Garap has meaning in a number of the aesthetic roles in Tarling music. *Garap* work on the role of elements such as *gending* (the essence of music), *sora* (sound), *gerak* (moving), *warna* (color), *sastra* (literature), and *panggung* (stage).

This multidimensional existence can only be described through analysis using *Garap* theory. This theory has several elements which include: (1) *Materi Garap* (material); (2) *Penggarap* (musicians); (3) *Sarana Garap* (facilities); (4) *Prabot Garap* (software); (5) *Penentu Garap* (determinants); (6) *Pertimbangan Garap* (Considerations) (Rahayu Supanggah: 2009).

The identity of *Dermayonan* as a form of *garap* and intercultural collaborative practices are based on the boundaries of creativity styles of "Dermayon". These two musical sources with each dialect of power provide a very unique creative space. First, the material is very unique and gives the possibility of searching on a variety of characters. Second, musician who make it possible to be "crossed competently" with alternative orientations of diverse musical backgrounds. Third, *garap* tools that also provide possible approaches to the identification of conventions. Fourth, the determinants of *garap* articulating social meanings and stimulating original ideas. Fifth, considerations in the search for possible socialization in various community situations.

We are aware of the fact that the concepts of "authenticity" and "Tradition" are more or less subjective and do not have definite "boundaries". From the point of view of philology, the prominence of the concept of authenticity from the standpoint of tradition, carries the risk of suppressing the creative process or renewal. In fact, no traditional art form has ever been conserved "without changing" throughout the ages. A traditional art is always undergoing modification sometimes substantially, due to political, economic, social, cultural reasons or because of its encounter with other cultures - which has left its mark on the traditional culture of a nation. (Leonardo d'Amico, 30, 2001)

Garap is a very typical work system for analyzing music and non-music characteristics. Specifically, this theory is applied to analyze the aesthetic needs (music) obtained from how artists (*pengrawit*) care about 'communal ethics' in creating musical innovation in the context of continuity and change.

Dermayon Creativity is not only characterized as a transformation process of *garap Tarling* but also the other idea. As a communal product,

Dermayon has a musical aesthetic principle that has multiple roles (multilayer). Performing arts (Traditional) Indonesia, including karawitan, have long been a multimedia art, long before the term multimedia art, multicultural, and also collaboration became "trend" in Indonesia (Rahayu Supanggah, 2009,12).

Desiring to realize a work by carrying out traditional idioms has a double benefit. First, a composer or arranger will have traditional knowledge while at the same time they have a sensitivity to the improvement of cultural ecosystems (although sometimes the form of works has a big difference from the original).

"Indeed, in the sense of culture it also includes tradition" can be translated as inheritance or transmission of norms, customs, rules, assets. Tradition is not something that cannot be changed; tradition is combined with variations of human action and promoted as a whole. Humans make things with that tradition: they accept it, reject it or change it. That is why culture is a story of change: human history always gives new forms to existing cultural patterns "(Van Peursen, 1988: 11)

Traditions do not always link the principle of freedom in all matters of expression, because traditions that are conventions sometimes become challenges for the growth of creativity, people as holders of traditions tend to always align with a perspective that is resistant to innovative efforts. Resistance efforts by some people are certainly not seen as a deviation from the rules, because what is said with the culture of society is a society that holds the system and all the complexities that have developed hundreds of years ago. (Deni Junaedi, 2016: 54).

C. Results And Discussion

As we know that in the northern part of West Java or commonly known as *Pantura* (the northern coast region), precisely around Indramayu, Jatibarang, and Cirebon regions. There is a form of musical tradition called *Tarling*. Although it is believed that this art was born and developed in the cultural area of the community, but the term *Tarling* as a distinctive genre of music is still less well known. Similarly, about the history of the development of the music genre. Moreover, the background of *Tarling* is largely informed as verbally, without any supporting of the validity of historical data, (Interview with Carwina, 2019).

The characteristics of the genre starts from two acronyms guitar and flute. Related to being called *Mama Oot*, the beginning of *Tarling* was known in the 1950s. This type of music called the 'Classical' *Tarling* (*Mama Oot* interview; 2019). *Tarling's* musical history was developed through the adoption of a gamelan playing which is developed by *Mama Sugra*, a gamelan and music expert from *Kepandean Indramayu* who was a household assistant for Dutch families in the 1930-1940s. The incident began with the desire of Dutch commissioner *Antonio* to refit the acoustic guitar to *Mama Sugra*. Because this guitar was never returned by the owner, *Mama Sugra* conducted the guitar experiment with gamelan instruments (interview with *Asep Ruhayat*: 2019).



Fig.1. Mama Oot (artist and musicians *Tarling*)
(Doc: Ismet Ruchimat, May 2019)

One of the heritages of Mama Sugra's creativity which was then transformed into a classical *Tarling* performance was a type of musical presentation with a gamelan repertoire background with the virtue of the *pelog dam prawa* (salendro) scale.

Tarling figures who followed Mama Sugra's creative footsteps were Jayana, Uci Sanusi, Sunarto Martaatmadja, Abdul Ajib, Dadang Darniyah, etc. The phrase of classical *Tarling* lyrics generally revolve around the social sketches of society, spirituality, domestic life, to the love story.



Fig. 2. Asep Ruhiyat
(staff works of culture and tourist department In Indramayu)
(Doc: Ismet Ruchimat, May 2019)

In the 1936-1940s Classical *Tarling* began widely known to the public as "street music". The lyrics are delivered spontaneously in a ballad music style (Interview of Mama Oot, 2019). Among other *Tarling* successors, Sudjana or often called Mama Jana is the most prolific *Tarling* artist figure creating song melodies on *kiser* style. The experience of Mama Jana, who often supports Jayana, is one proof that people really believe in his creativity.

Sudjana Partanain is one of the second generation Cirebon tarling classical musicians who has succeeded in creating melodies in the traditional Cirebon song. The melody was named Kiser in the 1940s. (Interview with Sudjana, 2019).

In the beginning, *Kiser* was played on by including gamelan instruments. The form of *Kiser* is usually united in traditional theater performances. In its development there are creative efforts taken by the *Tarling* artists through the efficiency of *waditra* through the inclusion of *Tarling* devices, so that the existence of the gamelan can be functioned based on consideration and determination of musicians.



Fig.3. Mama Jana
(Doc: Ismet Ruchimat, May 2019)

Theatrical performances convention are held in one story and usually last for quite a long time. If it is performed at night, it will be finished until morning. This situation requires the creative work of artists to minimize story plays in the form of song fragments. In turn this habit stimulates Abdul Adjib's creative work to create a song at a corner shop. The form of working on this corner stall song is considered a new face of the development of the type of *Kiser*. At its emergence around the 1960s, song styles such as those created by Abdul Adjib were categorized as *kiser gancang*. The most distinctive feature of the presumptuous *Kiser* style lies

in the simpler rhythms and the more populist poems. (interview with Sudjana, 2019).

The popularity of *dangdut* in the earlier 1980s had a major impact on the development of classical *Tarling* performances. The influence of *dangdut* music has led to a new orientation and progression known as the *Tarling Dangdut* term. Strong characteristics of the influence of the *dangdut* development can be seen from the use of guitar distortion with the use of sound effects that are commonly used in rock music performances. In addition there are additional items other instruments such as drums, drum kits, flutes, and keyboards.

Although *dangdut* also influenced the development of *Tarling* performance forms, this hybrid process was refined with elements of localized rhythm and musical image "Dermayon". Songs such as *kembang kilaras*, *kembang bung*, and *turun sintren*, are a series of examples of the emergence of the *Tarling Dangdut* repertoire. The poetical forms also bring out prosaic lyric characters with rhythms that are more familiar. Society of *Tarling* artists usually identify this type with the term *Kiser Gancang*. Even the orientation of *Tarling* artists in their development, which is around the 2000s has developed with the emergence of the term *pantura* song. The elements of the music progression of *pantura* song are more based on aspects of creativity mixing various styles of music in general, *dangdut*, rock, *garap* styles of Central Java. Even in the current developments, Indonesia's private television industry beginning to see this form of performance as a promising market potential. The program produced by Indosiar television has become popular in the land of the people as "pantura song".

D. Musical Conclusion

Mama Jana said that the basic musical construction contained in the Classical Tarling performances is the transformation of the gamelan play. In the hierarchy of instruments, percussion styles, and song repertoires are almost entirely adopted from gamelan repertoires.

"Playing Tarling is the same as playing gamelan, because all of it originally came from gamelan songs. All the techniques in gamelan are also used in guitars (interview with Sudjana, 2019).

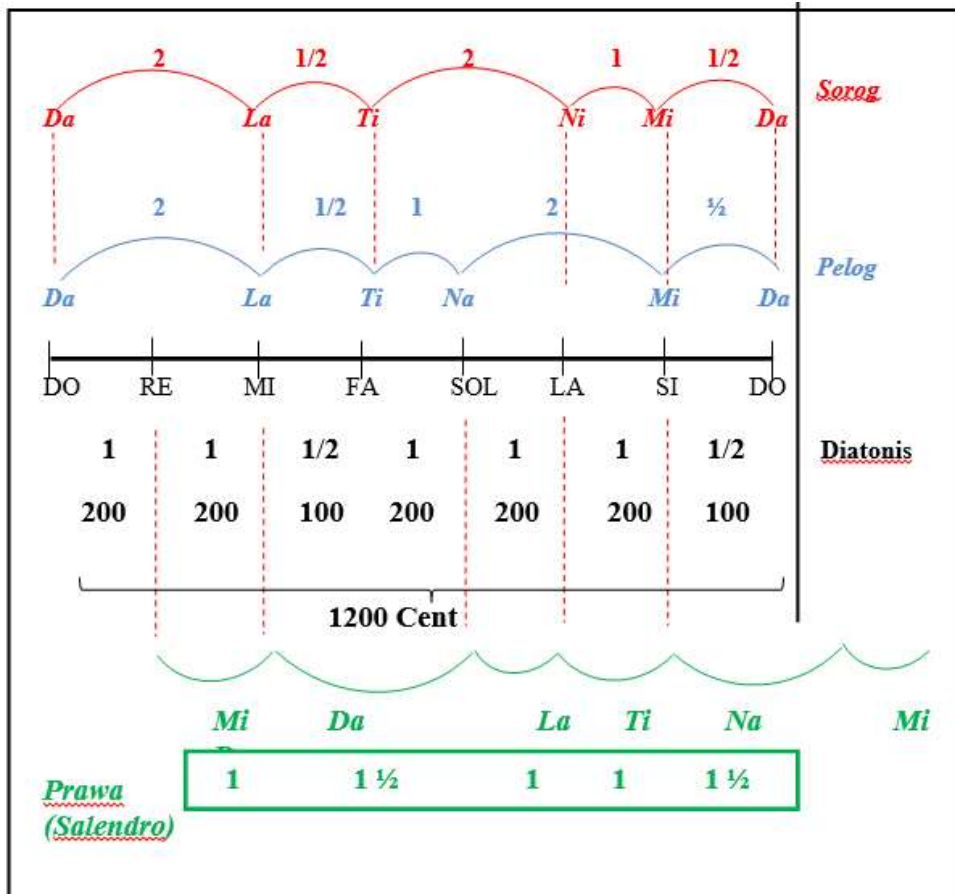
In a hierarchical instrumentation, the Classical *Tarling* organization is almost similar to the hierarchical position of the composition and role of the gamelan or even the Sundanese song *Cianjuran*. The melody guitar has functions to embellish or decorate the song. This form almost resembles the pattern of detailed *waditra* play in the Sundanese song *Cianjuran* repertoire or the gamelan *degung* pattern. The classic *Tarling* of the *Kiser* melody which created by Mama Djana is a mixture of songs that are on *gamelan* and *Keroncong*. The song is then combined with the gamelan scale like *pelog*, *slendro* and *Cirebon prawa*. (Liputan 6, March 10, 2019)

Furthermore, Mama Jana explained that for the types of playing with using normal rhythm actually there are no standard provisions on the melodic guitar percussion patterns, the musicians generally use the capacity of improvised creations. Melody guitar is also often used as introduction song. *Kiser* generally has a similarity in vocal song for *dalang* on *wayang golek* performances, where *dalang* (the puppeteer) refers to the equal pitch of the scale when its using.

Mostly the types of *Kiser* have the characteristics of a more 'free style' when the song sung by the singer. This pattern almost resembles the

pirigan in the Sundanese Cianjuran song *Rarancagan* offerings or *Antawacana* and *Kakawen* for *dalang*. This position also shows how the transformation system, techniques, and patterns found in the *gamelan* repertoire are also found in the *Classic Tarling* performances.

1. Interval Scale



The interval scheme in the previous sheet shows the comparison between the diatonic and the pentatonic concept of Rd. Machjar Angga Kusumadinata. In *Tarling* music, the pentatonic interval scheme consists

of *prawa / salendro*, *pelog*, and *sorog*. The Western notation approach to the barrel specifications contained in the tarling is described as follows.

Do = F

Diatonis
Pelog

Da La Ti Na Mi Da Da Mi Na Ti La Da

Sorog

Do = F

Diatonis
Sorog

Da La Ti Ni Mi Da Da Mi Ni Ti La Da

Prawa (salendro)

Do = G

Diatonis
Prawa

Da La Ti Na Mi Da Da Mi Na Ti La Da

2. Fingering Techniques

In its application, using tone scales can be developed according to the tastes of players (not only on guitar frets that have been written) based on fingering techniques on guitar playing. As one example, there is a guitar melody pattern in Tarling music. The scales system used is *Salendro (prawa)*, *Pelog*, and *Sorog* tunings. In addition, the user tonality or basic tone on this tone scale is not only fixed on one tonal, but can be anywhere in accordance with the needs of the song. The following is an example of a melody pattern on each scale.

Guitar

TAB 4/4

1 3 1 0 1 3 1 | 3 3 1 3 1 3 1 | 3 1 3 1 3 1 3 | 1 1 3 1 3 1 3

5

Gr. TAB

1 1 3 1 3 1 | 1 0 1 0 1 0 1 | 0 0 1 0 1 0 1 | 0 0 1 0 1 0 1

A. Gr.

9

Gr. TAB

0 0 1 0 1 0 1 | 0 0 1 0 1 0 1 | 0 1 3 1 0 1 3 1 | 1 3 1 0 1 3 1

A. Gr.

13

Gr. TAB

1 3 1 0 1 3 1 | 0 1 0 1 0 1 1 | 0 0 1 0 3 1 0 1 | 1

A. Gr.

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