

**Carnival De Minanga Danza:
Interpretation of Tan Malaka Philosophy Content into Sound
Complexity in Contemporary Music**

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Abstract

Tan Malaka is a figure who is identical with the liberation of the knowledge perspective of the Indonesian people from colonialism. According to him, as long as the Indonesian people are still trapped by superstition, the parasite of ignorance will always undermine their independence to be able to stand on an equal footing with foreign nations. Tan Malaka always campaigns for these radical ideas through provocative writings in the form of books and articles in the mass media. In fact, he was directly involved in the establishment of educational spaces for the proletariat and led a demonstration movement against the injustices of the bourgeoisie in Indonesia. For researchers, the phenomenon of Tan Malaka has an appeal to be elaborated into the creation of music art with a multidisciplinary approach. Because, from an extra-musical perspective, the conceptual and methodological creations can be explored in such a way through research-based practice, art research practice, and research-led practice. The musical sources used are the sounds of Minangkabau culture, such as handclap and *goreh randai*, *saluang* appeal, and the *talempong pacik* dialectic. The election was aligned with Tan Malaka's habitus which helped shape his philosophical thought patterns. Later it was developed into sublime expression in contemporary musical aesthetics.

Keywords: *Tan Malaka, culture sound, Minangkabau folklore, contemporary music, practice base research*

INTRODUCTION

Conceptually, Carnival De Minanga Danza's musical works are chapters of 'new' musicality inspired by the essential attributes of ethnic chants/mantras, tribal dialects, ancient literature, as well as prototypes of collegial collective culture throughout the Indonesian archipelago. That is, the spirit of 'primitive communal' is a necessity for the Indonesian people since time immemorial. It can be said that

the strength of this culture in the past was the foundation of Indonesian people before the entry of influences from foreign nations—Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and European colonialism—.

If we pay close attention, these essential attributes metamorphosed in the early 20th century into a modern revolutionary group and force in Indonesia. As Tan Malaka wrote in *Madilog*, among others, encouraging the spirit of liberation of the Indonesian people from superstitious habits or mystical logic caused by colonialism. According to Tan Malaka, the Indonesian nation can stand on the same level as foreign nations if the intake of knowledge is transformed through people's education rooted in the motherland culture. De facto, the concept of modern Indonesia in Tan Malaka's perspective is the spirit and expression of the mind and body of the people from all corners of the archipelago. On that basis, the spirit of 100 percent independence must grow like the division of human cells in Indonesia itself.

For the writer, the spirit of Tan Malaka has its own magnet to be reinterpreted into sound art thinking. Because, the unique culture of the Indonesian nation, known as *gemah ripah loh jinawi*, is no doubt more 'shining' and has a future. Especially, when the writer's desire is driven to conduct research on the dialectical sound of Indonesian culture, which has great potential to be transmitted into contemporary musical tastes. Because the sound of the culture can basically be referred to as the *Candradimuka* crater. This is what the author observes from the uniqueness and strength of differences in the way of singing voices and ethnic sounds which have the necessity to be a limitation on the growth and development of the vibrations of the cultural atom into an attitude of the nation's singing.

In today's contemporary sound attitude, we can feel the sensation of 'chaos' over the intertwined warmth of collective melodic genes that are expressed by anyone, and at any locus in Indonesia. Especially when the mix and match of the Nusantara waves are expressed through instrumentation, such as *saluang*, *sarunai*, *talempong*, shouts, and body parts that are synergistic in tempo and dynamics. Of course, the power of the art of music is even more 'beautiful' when the future potential of anhemitonic-petatonic rhythms is combined with the message and meaning of Tan Malaka's thoughts. This is predicted to have a jolting power into the recesses of the raging voice of the country's soul. This is because the alternative of combining the two aspects of art is one of the strategies for creating art that aims to stimulate reflection and collective awareness of the Indonesian people on the great thoughts of the nation's founders.

As for the soundness of the cultural body that the author offers, it is hoped that it will have a fresh idea for the many interpretations with new approaches in music creation at this time. In other words, the beauty of the ornamentation such as *cengkok* and *garenek*, the rhythm, motif, dynamics, tempo, and timbre that flow profusely in the expression of *ratok* and *mantra* in the conceptual Carnival De Minanga Danza, is essentially the spirit of growing a new and independent identity for body revolution. the main rhythms of the contemporary archipelago.

Based on the phenomenon of the strength and uniqueness of the cultural sound above, the determination of the musical structure is chosen in the form of a narrative or through composed form. This approach is a tactic to achieve value disruption, so that dramatic expressions feel more dynamic when the stages of repetition sound emit the strengths of novelty on the delivery of message reception and auditory meaning. On that basis, Carnival De Minanga Danza can be likened to a 'melting pot' of sound. In other words, the seepage of his musical image is expected to penetrate the trough of the soul of the audience.

MATERIAL AND METHODE

The material object in the concept of Carnival De Minanga Danza comes from the idea of Tan Malaka's nationality in Madilog. This philosophical thought is approached through a complete reading of all the political journeys of Tan Malaka's nationality in the early 20th century. That is, in this case the author makes an effort to reinterpret the energy of Tan Malaka's thought itself and then express it into musical energy.

The methodology of creating music that is sourced from extra-musical basically has its own challenges. For example, things that are not related to the art of music must be found alternative ways of expressing their musicality. On that basis, the author in this case uses a practice-led research approach. Because, in terms of a circular work process, such as the reflection of ideas from the results of practice into research, and furthermore from research generating new ideas for creation, practice-led research can be applied to the practice of art creation to assist writers in the preparation of the steps of the musical work itself. In addition, the practice-led research method is basically driven by art creation practices and has become an important part of art writing that is currently developing.

The above is in accordance with the opinion of Hazel Smith and Roger T. Dean, "The shift to creative practice is one of the most exciting and revolutionary developments that have occurred in universities in the last two decades and is

currently gaining momentum. This brings with it a dynamic new way of thinking about research and new methodologies for doing it, an increased awareness of the different types of knowledge that creative practice can convey and a collection of illuminating information about the creative process” (Smith and Dean, 2009: 1).

RESULT

Conceptual Carnival De Minanga Danza was initiated from Minangkabau cultural phenomena, such as Pasambahan, the harvest of the nagari children, the position of women/matrilines, the power of the penghulu and so on are the language of Tan Malaka's habitus when expressing his national concepts. Extra and intra musically, these cultural arts activities have the potential for 'sounds' to be researched, interpreted, and expressed in a new music creation system. Like the richness of percussion and melodic rhythms, the traditional sound art basically has the power of the future. Especially when the aesthetic approach of sonority is combined with issues of contemporary music creation, especially the repertoire of 20th century music for the category of 'serious' music such as serialism, concrete, minimalism, aleatory, chance, spectral and noise.

The creation of Carnival De Minanga Danza is an interpretation of music creation that aims to provide mental stimulants to Indonesian people. That is, an extra-musical art idea from Tan Malaka's philosophical thoughts can be used as the basis for musical exploration to then contribute his knowledge to the younger generation of Indonesia. According to Roger Smalley, "In recent works the signs of dynamics, articulations and phrases previously thought to be merely aiding performance became integrated into the actual structure of music and raised quite new problems for interpretation" (Smalley, 2014: 74). This is reinforced by Thomas Delio, "Composition, of course, is an act of exploration. What this exploration reveals (as countless composers have done) is how complex and seemingly contradictory our perceptions are. Each new discovery reveals previously hidden dimensions. Each new work reveals the world from a different perspective and represents one of many ways to give meaning" (Delio, 2001: 232).

In other words, the conceptual concept of Carnival De Minanga Danza is basically associating it as a musical body of poetic rhyme with anhemitonic pentatonic rhythms of Minangkabau and Nusantara. On that basis, it is implied that things related to the reciprocal vibration between Tan Malaka's energy and the author's interpretation are a necessity of creation itself. That is, in this case, what is the foundation on which to stand is the attitude of the author in interpreting the polarization of the future life of Indonesian people on the messages of the founding

fathers of his nation. Ivo Supičić states “There is no doubt that the consciousness of function depends on the broader social considerations, habits and mentality of a given period. We have already referred to clearly defined ways in which listeners approach music, its expression and symbolism, in ancient China, Java and Greece. In these cultures, aesthetic contemplation is almost normative. The particular texts produced by these cultures define very clearly not only what is to be heard and found in music, but also how one should approach certain works or types of music” (Supičić, 1971: 197).

The sources of inspirational sound in this work, among others; handclap, *goreh randai*, *saluang* appeal, and the dialectic of playing the *talempong pacik* rhythms. For composers, the sound source is processed in such a way with a minimalist musical approach with elements related to rhythm improvisation, call response, space-time processing, sonority, timbre, and Fibonacci sequences. John Holzaepfel states, “The emphasis on co-creation of the actor in the work also goes hand in hand with a strange ambivalence” (Hozaepfel, 2004: 59). That is, broadly speaking, the principle of Minimalist music is to build awareness of the intensity of sound that is repeated or repetitive. Intensity becomes important to give birth to rituality so that the sensation of sound can be perceived by the audience through vibrations and waves of determination. This is emphasized by William G Harbinson, "Composers incorporate varying degrees of determination in their works." (Harbinson, 2014: 16). Musically, this work uses the A-B-C-D structure. Like the *randai* prototype, the selection of the structure is used as the starting composers foundation; (A) percussive handclap (clapping music); (B) then moves on to melodic interactions of wind instruments *sampelong*, clarinet, and *saluang* in free tempo; (C) repetitive melodic playing in tempo by *saluang*, *sarunai*, oboe); (D) and finally the rhythmic interaction of *talempong pacik* in multimetric. In this case Terence J. O'Grady said, "Composition can provide listeners with many opportunities to penetrate the complexity of a work" (O'Grady, 1981: 371).

DISCUSSION

The development of music creation is basically inseparable from the rhythm and variants of the patterns that underlie it. The rhythm, however, continues to evolve over time. We can see this at least from the form of opera singing in the baroque and classical music era, as well as art song in the early Romantic era. So did the aesthetics of music in the twentieth century. Interestingly, in the twentieth century most composers did not just develop melodies in a simple sense. They began to create various rhythm patterns that were sourced from outside of incidental music, for example developing patterns from Africa, India, China, and Indonesia.

On that basis, in the case of the creation of music that the author designed basically cannot be separated from the spirit of exploring the unique rhythms of traditional music in Minangkabau. Because, based on the author's observations, there is a rhythm phenomenon that is commonly used by the Minangkabau community in art expression, such as *randai*, *basaluang*, and so on. The rhythms that are present in the community are musical aspirations that live in the culture of an agrarian society. Of course, this is more interesting when used as a source of music creation with a contemporary approach. As Christopher F. Hasty puts, it “Each domain is characterized by the different values we hear in the sound quality of a particular music. The definition of each domain is largely a matter of style. Also, the relative importance of certain domains is not universally fixed. It is for these reasons that the works of a single composer or individual works or even sections within a work can define a particular work in various domains” (Hasty, 1981: 58). For example, you can see the notation snippet below.

The image shows a musical score titled "Carnival De Minanga Danza" with the subtitle "Theme rhythm from Randai" and "Composer by Nurkholis". The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 1-13) features three staves for "Hand Clap 1", "Hand Clap 2", and "Hand Clap 3". The second system (measures 14-22) features three staves for "Perc." (Percussion), with each staff containing a box labeled "Improvisation Rhythm". The third system (measures 23-29) features three staves for "Perc." with rhythmic patterns labeled "ETSSS", "ETSSS", and "TUACH".

Notation 1. Rhythm of *randai*

The example of rhythm notation above is a rhythmic pattern of *randai* which is explored into a new musical structure by using the media of clapping, cheeks, body, thighs, feet, and shouts typical of Minangkabau silat. The author expresses this rhythm repeatedly by giving free space for alternate improvisations from the three musicians. For writers, such rhythmic patterns are common in *randai* art with all its sublime traditional backgrounds. Even the presence of the pattern of applause can be said to have existed before the development of the concept of minimalist music

itself. This is in accordance with the opinion of Jonathan W Bernard, “When this happens, the characteristic set of minimalistic repetition in a buzzing or buzzing texture, an explicitly projected pulse, a pantonal sonorous profile that is initially the product of a basic indifference to sheer sonority is pushed into the background, where they become objects of style” (Bernard, 2003: 114).

In addition to the rhythm above, the author also develops these repetitions into a melodic form. This is done as an alternative to bring up the image of contemporary Minangkabau melodies. Because, in Minangkabau culture in general, the art of sound is identical to the polarization of solo and duet games, such as oral tradition which is expressed through performances of rabab, saluang, and salawat dulang. That is, in terms of its essential attributes, traditional music in Minangkabau tends to be more melodic without accompaniment music as gamelan in Javanese culture. Bernard states, “One way to tell the story of what happened after this initial formation of minimalism can be done through four basic stages: (1) The cut becomes more complicated, which immediately triggers (2) greater attention to sonority itself; consequently, (3) the pieces begin to sound more explicitly "harmonic", that is, tone-oriented, although at this point they need not be pitched in any sense. Ultimately, however, (4) the harmony of the more tonal (or neotonal, or quasi-tonal) aspects takes over the main control” (Bernard, 2003: 114).

In the process of creating a melody, sometimes the writer makes a repetition of the melody. This is to emphasize the 'feel' that is built in the first melodic phrase. Schoenberg mentions, “The small ternary form (A-B-A), A remarkable proportion of the musical form is its three-part structure. The first part is sometimes a true repetition (recapitulation) of the first, but often more of a modified repetition. The second part is structured as a contrast. This form can undo the initial "Rondeau," where an interlude is inserted between repetitions of the refrain. The repetition is basically useful for satisfying the desire to hear again what is pleasing to the first hearing, and at the same time understanding. Contrast, however, is useful to avoid the possibility of monotony” (Schoenberg, 1967: 119). An example can be seen in the notation below.

Carnival De Minanga Danza

Composer by Nurkholis

The image shows a musical score for 'Carnival De Minanga Danza' by Nurkholis. The score is arranged in two systems. The first system includes Saluang (treble clef, 8/8 time), Sarunai (bass clef, 8/8 time), and Oboe (treble clef, 8/8 time). The second system includes Flute (treble clef, 8/8 time), Oboe (treble clef, 8/8 time), and another Oboe (bass clef, 8/8 time). The score features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and syncopation, and includes first and second endings. The notation is minimalist, focusing on rhythmic structure and melodic lines.

Notation 2: Melodic minimalism

The percussion and melodic rhythms in *Carnival De Minanga Danza* are more focused on the composer's aesthetic choices to express the flexibility of Minangkabau culture sounds. As is the case with the repertoire of rhythms in jazz music known as triple feel or compound time. The improvisational approach that the author uses is also inseparable from the existing concept. However, in its expression, the emphasis is more on combining multimetrics. That is, the multimetric itself moves like a dynamic Fibonacci sequence. This was done with the aim of getting the relation between the sounds of Minangkabau culture in the contemporary spirit. Because, if you look at the habit of singing in the form of *ratok*, then the melody line cannot be measured partially. Such traditional melodies must be seen as a whole because syllables and melismatics have been integrated into musical sentences. In this regard Hasty mentions "The initial difficulty with any investigation of musical rhythm lies in deciding what "rhythm" means. The term has acquired an extraordinary range of references that fall into three categories of interest: 1) specific observations of quantitative duration proportions, pulse and meter patterns, and accented and unaccented beat classifications; 2) the unfolding of musical forms; and 3) the general nature of temporal organization in music" (Hasty, 1981: 183). For example, please see the notation below.

Carnival De Minanga Danza

Composer by Nurkholis

The image shows three staves of musical notation for 'Carnival De Minanga Danza'. The top two staves are labeled 'Talempong 1' and 'Talempong 2', both in 2/4 time and marked 'Andante'. Talempong 1 plays a steady eighth-note pattern. Talempong 2 plays a similar pattern but includes triplet markings over groups of three notes. The bottom staff is labeled 'Talempong 3', also in 2/4 time and marked 'Andante', featuring a pattern of eighth notes with rests.

Notation 3: *Talempong Pacik* in multi accent.

In this decade, music is basically more inclined to highlight the relationships of post-tonal motives that focus on tonal and postonal allusive conflicts and influence two opposing interpretations. That is, the relation of melody and harmony is no longer bound in the phrase tonality cadence. In some cases of melodic phrases in the 20th century, in general the emphasis of the song's rhythm flows more horizontally. Santa Matthew mentions "tonal allusions and the use of set theory to highlight post-tonal motive relationships have presented a dialectical view of the work, one musical analysis of tone and setting perspective in turn." (Santa, 2000: 168). Philip Stoecker puts it this way, "Understanding Post-Tonal Music contains fourteen chapters organized into modules or units. Chapters 1 and 2, which form the first unit, focus on pitch centres, modes, diatonic and pentatonic scales, interval cycles, equal division of octaves, and inversional symmetry. Likewise, Joseph N. Straus who mentions that "Various ways to create a sense of large-scale harmonic motion, often follow the path of interval cycles" (Straus, 2005: 130). The interval cycle referred to by Straus is a 'new' melodic form based on both diatonic and non-diatonic modes. The 'new' melodic character in the postonal composition is generally no longer determined by its movement by the dominant tonal hegemony using a harmony substitution (dominant seventh). While Schoenberg mentions "The structural function of the harmonic, independent triad is wholly unlimited in its harmonic sense; it may be tonic of one note or one degree of some other. The addition of one or more other triads can add meaning to a smaller number of notes. A certain order promotes chord succession such that it functions as a progression" (Schoenberg, 1954: 1).

The transition to postonal melodic style has started since the late 19th century through the works of Claude Debussy, Maurice Ravel, Alexander Scriabin, Rimsky Korsakov, and Moset Musorgsky. But the significance of the music was substantially more progressive in the early 20th century pioneered by Arnold Schoenberg. Wai Man Szeto and Man Han Wong mention “One of the most significant areas of music research, post-tonal music analysis - art music which began in Europe in the early 20th century, significant composers of whom were Bela Bartok, Alban Berg, Arnold Schoenberg, Igor Stravinsky, Anton Webern consistently study how this music works by finding the building blocks as a unifying cell in such musical works” (Szeto, 2006: 307). This development was basically influenced by Arnold Schoenberg through the theory of atonal serialism or dodecaphony. According to George Perle, “Schoenberg objected to the use of the term atonality to designate musical idioms that were not based on the traditional tone function recommended as pantonality. The implication, perhaps, is that the new musical language is a consequence of the amalgamation of all tonal. Since then, according to Schoenberg and his followers, the immediate effect of combining all these tonalities is the elimination of the general tonal characteristic features, atonality seems to be a more appropriate designation for this language” (Perle, 1991: 8).

Associated with counterpoint. Schoenberg explains as follows “Most of the counters are rigid imitations, some cases such as inversion, diminution, augmentation, and variation are slightly introduced. All these examples are presented as modulations into the major and minor regions (Schoenberg, 1963: 217). Meanwhile, David Cope mentions that motifs can produce a large amount of melodic material and therefore prove to be helpful when composing melodies. Many melody lines start with a motif and the blessing becomes a full melody based on variations of that motif. This process can be effective if the melody is not due to a simple exposition of various versions of the motif, such as transposition, inversion, retrogression, and retrograde inversion (Cope, 1997: 28). Likewise, Reginald Smith Brindle wrote, “Each composer designs a series that he uses to suit each individual composition. He did not choose the twelve-note succession in an arbitrary manner, but carefully considered the position of each note, weighing its implications and values, so that this series may well match in every detail with the music the composer had in mind” (Brindle, 1966: 4). For example, please see the notation below.

Carnival De Minanga Danza

Composer by Nurkholis

The image shows a musical score for 'Carnival De Minanga Danza' by Nurkholis. It features six staves: Saluang, Sampelung, Clarinet in Bb, Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Cl.), and another Clarinet (Cl.). The score is in 4/8 time. Annotations include 'FREE PENTATONIC MELODY' for the Saluang and the second Clarinet, 'FREE IMBAUAN SALUANG' for the Flute, 'SALUANG MULTIPHONIC TRANSITION' for the Clarinet in Bb, and 'FREE PENTATONIC BLUES' for the second Clarinet. A red dashed line highlights a specific melodic line in the Sampelung part.

Notation 3: Melodic in multimodes

Paul Hindemith also discusses the importance of melody and its function in composition as follows: “Melody, although no definite theory of melody has been developed, has not been completely ignored in musical theory. The counterpoint study begins by constructing the simplest melody, i.e., starting from the first to complete the study of harmony” (Hindemith, 1937: 175). In addition, based on known references, the postonal melodic style began when Debussy was inspired by gamelan music performances that appeared in an art festival commemorating the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Eiffel Tower in Paris. The influence of the gamelan music, among others, has an impact on the structure of Debussy's music, namely impressions that no longer emphasize the tonality system. In the opinion of Stefan Kotska “It was not uncommon in the 20th century to find all parts using only one scale (except for the chromatic and microtonal scales). On the other hand, one usually finds that only a few steps will use a certain scale, or that the melody can connect to the scale while the accompaniment does not, or that the music may include only a few notes that seem to imply the scale” (Kotska, 1990: 22). In this work the author also uses the spirit of the anhemitonic singing of Ilau Minangkabau which is like the madenda scales in Sunda. The character is also similar to Hirojoshi in Japan. Basically, this anhemitonic song develops in hilly areas in the interior of the island of Sumatra. It could be that this connection is due to the Sunda Exposure factor in the past. However, in this case, of course, special

research is needed to find traces of ancient culture in Indonesia. For example, please see the notation below.



Notation 4. Ila scale anhemitonic

CONCLUSION

The figure of Tan Malaka among the general public in Indonesia is still considered a mystery and is only used as a myth in social memory. This is clearly a paradox, because Tan Malaka also wrote down the main ideas of his nationality into printed books, such as *Naar der Republik*, *From Prison to Prison*, *Deception*, *Mass Action*, *Madilog* and so on. Similarly, other printed books produced from in-depth research by Indonesian researchers and Indonesianists. For the author, the existence of these books is very important to bridge the knowledge of the Indonesian people today, even still relevant to be used as a basis for creative thinking, such as the creation of music in the future.

Regarding the conceptual content of music creation, which is rooted in Tan Malaka's philosophical content, it is basically a research work with complex extra-musical material objects. Because, in this case, researchers need a deep understanding to be able to relate Tan Malaka's message and philosophical meaning to the method of creating art with a research-based practice approach and so on. Related to that, the author collects metadata through literature studies, interviews with valid sources such as Tan Malaka researchers, mapping the main thoughts of Tan Malaka and so on. Of all the steps of the research work, the authors classify the data to be adjusted to the existing facts. This is useful for finding the common thread of art creation from practice to research in a reciprocal and sustainable manner. In other words, the process of finding concepts and methods of creating art can be synergized with extra-musical and intra-musical sources into multidisciplinary research.

The selection of sound sources for Minangkabau culture in the Carnival De Minanga Danza, among others, is based on the habitus of Tan Malaka and researchers who come from the same tribe. This is not meant as an attempt to glorify the researcher's sense of ethnocentrism. But more to the strategy of creating art that

is sourced from the sound energy of culture, such as *goreh randai*, appeals from *saluang*, *ratok*, applause, and shouts of *silat* can be explored musically into new music.

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