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**MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS AND GENRES
AMONG THE MINANGKABAU,
WEST SUMATRA**

THE BACHELOR DIPLOMA THESIS

**Hudební nástroje a druhy hudby etnika Minangkabau na
Západní Sumatře**

Bakalářská diplomová práce

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I state that this diploma work is the original work of mine and I worked it out in my own with using the sources and the literature mentioned in the Bibliography and with the help of PhDr. Greg Hurworth, the leader of my work.

Olomouc 22. 4. 2008

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Glossary of common terms in *Bahasa Minang and Bahasa Indonesia*

<i>alat</i>	-	instrument
<i>alat musik</i>	-	musical instrument
<i>anak</i>	-	means ‘child’, either one part of <i>sarunai</i> or <i>pupuik</i> ; or one of the singers of <i>selawat dulang</i>
<i>batino</i>	-	means ‘female’, one of the pair of drums
<i>bunyi-bunyian</i>	-	musical instruments
<i>dosen</i>	-	teacher
<i>gandang</i>	-	drum
<i>induak</i>	-	means ‘leader’, either one part of <i>sarunai</i> or <i>pupuik</i> ; or one of the singers of <i>selawat dulang</i>
<i>istana</i>	-	the king’s palace
<i>jantan</i>	-	means ‘male’, the other of the pair of drums
<i>kaba</i>	-	story
<i>kampung</i>	-	a local term for the birthplace of a Minangkabau; it means ‘a village’.
<i>karawitan</i>	-	Indonesian term for ‘traditional music’
<i>labuan</i>	-	means ‘dissolution’, ie each of the three parts of a <i>talempong pacik</i>
<i>mahasiswa</i>	-	a student
<i>pantun</i>	-	one strophe in the vocal genres
<i>randai</i>	-	traditional Minangkabau theatre
<i>saluang</i>	-	a bamboo flute
<i>silat</i>	-	a traditional martial art, originally from West Sumatra
<i>talempong</i>	-	a set of gong-chimes

Chapter 1:

INTRODUCTION

The story of this bachelor diploma thesis begins in August 2006. At that time, I arrived in Indonesia with the purpose of studying music. I took advantage of the program *Dharmasiswa*, provided by Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture through its Embassy in Prague [KBRI]. The place of my fieldwork studies was to be the small town of *Padang Panjang*, located in a valley between three volcanos right in the heart of the Minangkabau Highlands in West Sumatra. The school I attended was *STSI* [*Sekolah tinggi seni Indonesia* – The High School of Arts of Indonesia] Padang Panjang. I was the only Western student in the branch of this school called *karawitan* [Indonesian word for traditional music] so I came to enjoy the feeling of being somewhat of a ‘superstar’ for all my fellow class-mates and teachers.

The first obstacle which put me in the role of this strange and exotic kind of human-being was the language barrier. The local people usually speak only their Minangkabau dialect and Indonesian. So, to begin my fieldwork, I chose to use the method of observation and listening. I am glad I could use this method as it is the best way how to enjoy the music just as it is, without imposing any accumulated prejudices. Over time, my communication skills improved greatly and I was able to ask many questions my fellow school students and teachers, as well as other people in my surroundings. I also began to attend many performances of *karawitan*, *tari* [dance] and *randai* [theatre]. Sometimes, these were organised by *STSI* but in other cases they occurred naturally as part of town or village celebrations, such as: the initiation of new *suku* leaders; the anniversary of founding the village; the New Year’s Eve celebrations; traditional art festivals; performances taken for different occasions; family celebrations [wedding parties] as well as simple performances by people in the marketplace or in a *warung*. The latter is a place for eating, drinking [coffee or soft drinks] and talking.

But it has to be said that I also experienced other musical events. Because of the interest by my friends in playing rock music, I joined them a couple of times to visit

different places around the island of Sumatra to see how popular music in Indonesia sounded.

As my focus was studying the music from a practical point, I finally managed a little bit of playing different kinds of *gandang* [drums] together with *talempong* [set of gong-chimes] and to sing *saluang jo dendang* [the traditional singing form accompanied by a bamboo flute]. Finally, I was able to record CD of *saluang jo dendang* with Pak Anton playing the *saluang* [the CD is attached to this thesis as a supplement] and I joined my school friends to perform in the *Minangkabau Arts Festival [Seni Budaya]* in Padang for the Vice-President of Indonesia. [The low quality of recording means it was not practical to include it with this thesis].

Literature

Besides trying to learn about Minangkabau culture, tradition and everyday life from the practical point and therefore become a part of it, I also wanted to know about the phenomena from the theoretical point, too. Already, during my studies in Padang Panjang, and then after I arrived back, I began the search literature and various sources from which I could draw some theoretical information. I, therefore, soon discovered that there were not too many sources in existence. Generally, there are probably no authentic sources about this whole area. This is a problem typical of almost every culture with a primarily oral tradition.

As for scholarly literature, there is not too much in existence, either. Among the most important, non-Indonesian specialists in Minangkabau music is Professor Margaret Kartomi. Her writings¹, based on extensive field work in the late 1960s, have been most helpful for this project. She wrote about many specifics of Minangkabau culture; but, for my purposes, her book entitled *On Concepts and Classifications of Musical Instruments* [1990], has been the most important. Unfortunately, there are no other writings in English appropriate to this project.

¹ Publications I have drawn from are found in the Bibliography. For complete publication list see <http://arts.monash.edu.au/music/staff/mkartomi-pubs.pdf> [accessed 12.4. 2008].

As I had supposed, there are some books in the Netherlands about music of the Minangkabau. Nevertheless, for the size and scope of this project and due to the language barrier, I have not included this literature. Moreover, if there is any literature it probably will be quite dated and would come from the Dutch colonial era, which ended in 1945.

After Kartomi's writings, Indonesian books were the next most relevant source of information for me.² Most of them I found in *Perpustakaan* ['library'] *STSI Padang Panjang*. The authors of most of them are the pedagogues of that institution. These writings contain information about the origin and probable history of the instruments³, as well as the use of them. But there are some difficulties in many of the books [though, not in all of them], concerning the way of presenting the facts. Generally speaking, the level of scholarship is not the same as Professor Kartomi's, for example, so that it is sometimes difficult to find an important information within a mass of unimportant words and sentences.

As for Czech writings on the Minangkabau theme, there are two diploma works, dealing with this theme. The first of them is Tereza Malkrabová's "*Traditional Musical Instruments and Their Important role in the Life of Minangkabau Society*" [2003].⁴ This work deals with musical instruments, their technical parameters and their use. Unfortunately, it appears to contain many terminological, as well as historical, inaccuracies with some Indonesian and Minangkabau terms untranslated. It mainly seems to comprise a translation of Indonesian texts. The second is Tomáš Kerle's work "*Indonesian Martial Art Pencak Silat in West Sumatra*" [2007].⁵ Although the theme is not music, it deals with one of the biggest phenomenon of the Minangkabau society, which is also sometimes accompanied by music.

For understanding Indonesian history overall, there is voluminous Czech book, "*The History of Indonesia*" [2005]⁶, with detailed information about historical events of the whole archipelago. And the last Czech work I discovered on the Minangkabau is

² For complete extent of literature see the Bibliography.

³ We must not forget that, same as in the case of Minangkabau history, the historical facts are often mixed with myths.

⁴ "*Tradiční hudební nástroje a jejich důležitá úloha v životě minangkabauské společnosti*"

⁵ "*Indonéské bojové umění Pencak Silat na Západní Sumatře*"

⁶ Z. Dubovská, T. Petru, Z. Zbořil: *Dějiny Indonésie*, Lidové Noviny, Praha 2005

a paper entitled “*Matrilinearity, Migration and Social Change in Minangkabau in Historical Perspective*” by Mariana Pfliegerová.[2007]⁷ The work gives a detailed and penetrating look at the uniqueness of Minangkabau matrilineal structure.

In the final analysis, the most important sources of information have been my numerous interviews with both the *dosen* [‘teachers’] and the *mahasiswa* [‘students’] of *STSI Padang Panjang*. These interviews took place throughout the period of my scholarship from September 2006 to July 2007. Sometimes, it was a directed interview during which I made notes, and, at other times, we were talking freely. In such a case, I always tried to write my notes down as accurately and as soon as possible after these informal chats.

Other sources were my lessons themselves. The educational system of *STSI Padang Panjang* and of other art schools in Indonesia differs from the Western one⁸. It slightly resembles the system of conservatory-type school. Most of the lessons are practical with very little theoretical knowledge given by the *dosen* while playing. Some *dosen* are happier as players rather than as teachers. It means they know very well how to play the instrument but sometimes know very little technological and even musical details about the instrument itself, including notation. In fact, most of the *karawitan* teachers do not know Western notation.⁹ And there is one very peculiar thing for Western people: classes are never for individuals. Even if it is a drumming class, all the *mahasiswa* play and practise together [which does not provide an easy survey and is quite loud for the ears]. But because I was the only Western student, most of the teachers took care of me and gave me an in depth explanation of everything I asked and I could discuss with them at anytime I wished.¹⁰

⁷ “*Matrilinearita, migrace a sociální změna v Minangkabau z historické perspektivy*”

⁸ Though Western educational system has many subcategories, it is said to have some distinctive features. For main differences see http://www.utas.edu.au/tl/transnational/students/students_welcome.doc [accessed January 24. 2008]. For deeper view see Reagan, Timothy: *Non-Western Educational Traditions: Indigenous Approaches to Educational Thought and Practice*, Mahwah 2005

⁹ For notation see section 2. 2.

¹⁰ Of course, after few months when I managed the use of bahasa Indonesia [Indonesian language] or bahasa Minang [Minangkabau language].

Among my main informers belonged the teachers Pak Hanefi, Pak Erizal, Pak Dewa, Pak Admiral, Pak Anton and Ibu Efrinon, and the students Nisaul Aulia, Beta, Richi Hendrik, Arif, Dafie, Fauzi, Rico, Dedi Novaldi, Masvil Tomi, Ank Afdhal and Muyu Febra. There were many more who provided me with a great deal of knowledge concerning many aspects of Minangkabau culture as well as inspiration for this project.

Chapter 2

WEST SUMATRA AS A MINANGKABAU HOMELAND

In this chapter, a description of where the Minangkabau are to be found within Sumatra, Indonesia is presented. In addition, a brief introduction to the history and culture of the Minangkabau area is discussed so that the point of their uniqueness and social position within Indonesia can be made. These factors mean that the music of these people can be understood more clearly.

2.1 Geographical Facts about Minangkabau Area

Nowadays, the term ‘Minangkabau’ covers the area of West Sumatra Province [*Propinsi Sumatera Barat*] with the capital of Padang. It is bordered by Batak homeland around Lake Toba to the north [North Sumatra province], provinces of Riau and Jambi to the east, Bengkulu province to the south and Indian Ocean to the west [which can be seen in reference to the map]. Some scholars prefer to use the term West Sumatra instead of Minangkabau in their writings. Rusli Amran¹¹ is one of them. However, I wanted to avoid that local definition. Why? In former times, the Minangkabau Kingdom was spread across a far larger area and the area has been continuously changing during history. Moreover, I am going to talk about the musical arts, and it is better to view them as a part of culture than as a single phenomenon.

The present Minangkabau land consists of three main parts. First is called *Darek*, until now sometimes called *Tigo Luhak*¹² [‘three districts’] or *Bukik-bukik* [‘mountains’], situated in the Minangkabau Highlands, called "Heartland" by Kartomi.¹³ In this work, primarily this region is going to be discussed. This is the

¹¹ R. Amran, *Sumatra Barat Hingga Plakat Panjang*, Sinar Harapan, . Jakarta, 1981.

¹² For further details see the next section of this chapter..

¹³ M. Kartomi, ,The Music-culture of South-coast West Sumatra: Backwater of the Minangkabau "Heartland" or Home of the Sacred Mermaid and the Earth Goddess?‘ , *Asian Music*, 1998/1999: p. 133-181

area with the most indigenous genres of music, as it has been the longest centre of Minangkabau culture during history.

The second area is called *Pasisir* ['coast'] or *Rantau* ['abroad']¹⁴. The music from the *Pasisir* area will be mentioned as well. Both musical cultures influenced each other at various times. For example, *Pasisir* has overtaken many of the traditional *Darek* instruments. At the same time, *Pasisir* with its music influences from various foreign sources [Arab, Indian, Chinese, Portuguese, Acehnese] was then influential in the *Darek* area.

Finally, the third part, which still belongs to the West Sumatra Province, consists of the *Mentawai* Islands, which extended into the Indian Ocean off the Minangkabau coast. The *Mentawai* Islands have a unique culture entirely unrelated to that of Minangkabau mainland. The local people living in the jungle are still the most populous inhabitants of the islands and their music appears almost untouched by foreign influence.¹⁵

¹⁴ *Merantau* [the men's duty to go abroad] is the verb made from the word *rantau*.

¹⁵ The music of Mentawai Islands is explored by Pak Hanefi, Drs., the pedagogue of STSI Padang Panjang [see the bibliography].



Map: West Sumatra Province [source: web, see bibliography]

2.2 A short background history of Minangkabau Culture

The origin of the Minangkabau Kingdom is shrouded in myth and there are several theories on the derivation of the name ‘Minangkabau’. The most favoured one is that, facing an imminent attack by a Javanese king, the Minangkabau people proposed a fight between two bulls rather than a human battle. They put forward a tiny calf [but with sharp spears on its horns] to fight the enormous Javanese bull. Believing the bull to be its mother, the calf rushed forward to suckle at the bull’s belly. After the bull died, the people shouted: “Minang kabau“, which means “the buffalo wins”.¹⁶



Photo 1: *Rumah gadang* – traditional Minangkabau house

It is not easy to describe the Minangkabau history, especially the older history. The problem is that Indonesian writers about Minangkabau are often not historians. Minangkabau people themselves rarely read the history books. There is a phenomenon called ‘traditional historiography’. Everyone, who is considered to be of Minang origin, knows the kings and other heroes from the stories preserved orally throughout the generations. But it cannot be certain that everything is true. The book

¹⁶ This mythological story is until now believed by Minang people. It is reminded by typical Minangkabau architecture Minangkabau *rumah gadang* [big house] which features buffalo horn-like roofs [see photo 1].

*Adat Minangkabau*¹⁷ presents quite a detailed view of Minangkabau history. It contains the important events, stories and historical persons till the reign of Aditywarman, the considered founder of Minangkabau Kingdom.¹⁸ One of the serious writers about Minangkabau history is Rusli Amran.¹⁹

The first people in West Sumatra came between 2000-200 BCE from Central Asia. This ethnic group is called Proto-Melayu [‘Old Malay’]. There were further movements of local people around 250 BCE led by Hapunta Hang, who brought Buddhism to the formerly animistic area. It is inevitable to realise that animism continued in its being even after the arrival Buddhism, Hinduism and later Islam. The new religion was often accepted only by the king’s family and people around the court. Ordinary people and peasants in the villages stayed animists. Even nowadays, when animism is not accepted as a religion by the Indonesian government, there are still regions with remains of animistic beliefs; though covered with the label ‘Islam’.

In the first century, a kingdom was created. At this time, it had a close friendship with China [of the Tchang Dynasty] from where spices were imported. Chinese could even come to the King’s palace [‘*istana*’]. In addition to Chinese influences, there was that of India. The kingdom Srivijaya was created in Palembang at the beginning of the seventh century and was spread into most of Sumatra and Java²⁰. At the same time the part of West Sumatra shifted business allegiance with Arabic countries.²¹ The leader of kingdom was Sri Maharaja Indrawarman [718]. After the revolution in 730, during which King Maharaja Indrawarman was killed, the King’s son left *istana* and moved west to Sungayang. There, he established a fort; meanwhile, his enemies established the Buddhist kingdom of Darmasraya in Siguntur, close to the island of Punjung.

¹⁷ H.Suarman, B. Arifin, S. Chan.

¹⁸ The authors of the book use the name Minangkabau Kingdom far before the reign Aditywarman. Aditywarman himself used the name of Pagaruyung kingdom. Present sources are not terminologically unified either. That is why I use the name of each kingdom based on its original historical name through the whole text.

¹⁹ R. Amran, *Sumatera Barat Hingga Plakat Panjang*, Sinar Harapan, Jakarta, 1981.

²⁰ some sources mention the beginning 150 years earlier but most of them refers to the seventh century.

²¹ In the book *Adat Minangkabau* it is said the business with Arabic countries started after converting to Islam. It is impossible. Islam was brought to Sumatra for the first time in the end of 13th century and it was Arabic merchants who took it there.

In 1119, the king of Darmasraya attacked Fort Sungayang. The fort was completely burnt and, as a consequence, its residents moved further to the west all the way to the volcano, called Merapi. Here, in the same year, Sultan Sri Maharajo Dirajo²² established a kingdom, with its centre in Pariangan Padang Panjang. The kingdom was named Koto Batu, which means ‘stone town’. The Sultan married Puti Indo Jalito; but, after fifteen years of marriage, she could not bear a son; the Sultan therefore married a second time to Puti Cinto Dunie. The same situation was repeated so the Sultan got married a third time to Puti Sedayu. Finally, in 1147, two sons were born to each of the first two sultanas followed one year later by the third sultana also bearing a son.

To make some order among the inhabitants, a set of rules called Simumbang Jatuah were created. The meaning of this term is ‘the person, who has killed the rules, will also be killed in turn’. This set of rules was quite strict, but it suited the situation of how the people were living. They had to concentrate all their thinking and effort to establish the economy.²³ The magnitude of the Sultan Sri Maharajo Dirajo is shown by his quiet and peaceful reign as well as the prosperity of the society. The Sultan was famous for his courage, skill and strength. As a commander-in-chief, he had four assistants, who came from Iraq, Campo [kingdom in the place of today’s Vietnam], Persia and Siam [former Thailand]. These four men were probably the founders of the Indonesian traditional martial art ‘Silat’.²⁴

The Sultan died in 1149 and left behind him three sons; two of them were aged two while the youngest was just one. The control of the kingdom was overtaken by the Sultan’s first wife Puti Indo Jalito. She also took charge of the education of the three sons. They would later assume command as the so-called *Penghulu* [see photo 2] - leaders of a particular *kampung* [the Minangkabau word means ‘village’; but it has the secondary meaning of ‘district’]. The other two wives of the Sultan eventually gave into the idea that property would be inherited through the woman’s line. From that time until now, the whole of the Minangkabau area is consequently matrilineal.

²² Minangkabau version of the name. The Indonesian version is ‘Sri Maharaja Diraja’. According a myth he was the son of Alexander the Great.

²³ *Adat Minangkabau*, p. 13.

²⁴ *Silat* and genres based on it will be dealt later in this work. See section 4.3.



Penghulu – the leaders of the tribes

In 1150, Puti Indo Jalito married Cati Bilang Pandai, the former Sultan's close assistant. One of their sons, who assumed the hereditary title of Dt.²⁵ Suri Dirajo, became the first *Penghulu*. During his period of office, the set of rules called “*Nan 22*” was brought into power. These twenty-two rules are divided into five groups of four rules each [plus one group of two]. From this grouping into four rules for each main group, the traditional Minangkabau belief in number four originates.

The area of the kingdom was steadily increasing in population, and sometimes too quickly. It was necessary to make a new division of the Kingdom, which happened in 1186. As a consequence, the area which was called *Luhak Nan Tigo* was divided into three districts²⁶. The proclaimed leaders were three of Jalito's sons: Dt. Ketemangguangan; Dt. Parpatih Nan Sabatang; and Dt. Sri Marajo nan Banego-leno. *Luhak Nan Tigo* [whose other name is *Darek*] consisted of three parts: *Luhak Tanah Datar*; *Luhak Agam*; and *Luhak Limo Puluah Koto*. In those three districts, only two *suku* arose: *Koto Piliang* and *Bodi Caniago*, whose leaders were Dt. Ketemangguangan and Dt. Parpatih Nan Sabatang respectively. These two tribes were built on different fundamental principles, but they complemented each other while accumulating the wealth of the Minangkabau kingdom²⁷. Later, there was a

²⁵ Dt. means Datuk or Datuak. It is honourable title of Penghulu.

²⁶ This division lasts until these days.

²⁷ Until now, being a member of *suku* is very important for Minangkabau people.

quarrel between the founders of the tribes. Dt. Parpatih nan Sabatang [the leader of Bodi Caniago] did not agree with the law that 'he who has killed, will also be killed'. This quarrel was later exposed by the Dutch, who invaded Indonesia during the seventeenth century and made it their colony for 300 years.

At the end of the twelfth century, *Luhak Nan Tigo* united with *Rajo Duo Selo* [Kingdom of two mixtures]. The aim was to differ 'nature' [*Alam*] from 'customs' [*Adat*]. At the end of the thirteenth century, most of the inhabitants were devoted to Islam.²⁸ So, the kingdom changed its name again to *Rajo Tigo Selo* ['Kingdom of three mixtures'] in which religion [*Ibadat*] also differed. The centre was Istana Pagaruyung and the leader, Sultan VIII [1260].²⁹ During his reign, the Kingdom was endangered by the Javanese kingdom Singosari as well as by China. Facing the same danger was the Kingdom of Darmasraya. Its king, Mauliawarmadewa, arrived in Pagaruyung. The Sultan considered the offer, and though it was an honour to unite the kingdom with that of Darmasraya. This was how it was before (when they had been divided in the seventh century). The King of Darmasraya married the Sultan's sister and, from this marriage, a daughter, Dara Jingga, was born; she was later to be known as Bundo Kanduang.

Bundo Kanduang replaced Sultan VIII in Pagaruyung in 1295. She was the mother of the king Aditywarman (1347-1375) who is considered to be the founder of Minangkabau kingdom. Aditywarman was the king of Darmasraya. He moved to Istana Pagaruyung and joined Darmasraya with Bundo Kanduang's kingdom to become kingdom of Pagaruyung. From the beginning, it was a Buddhist kingdom simply because Aditywarman was Buddhist. He extended the kingdom beyond the borders of West Sumatra and established military service which had never been there before. His inscriptions [20 pieces written on stone, both in Sanskrit and Melayu Kuno - Ancient Malaysian] serve as a proof of his era. In one of them he set his son to be his successor. Unfortunately, after his death his son was killed by Minangkabau people so that they could return to a matrilineal system.

²⁸ First note about Muslims is found in Marco Polo's writings [he went to Sumatra in 1292].

²⁹ Istana Pagaruyung with the position close to the town of Batusangkar was conserved until last year. In January 2007, it accidentally caught fire.

During the rest of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Sumatra was under the control of the huge Javanese kingdom of *Majapahit*. Gold trading continued not only with India but also with Aceh [the very Northern province of Sumatra]. By the end of the sixteenth century, Pariaman had become the main port, until the Acehnese took over the trade. From the seventeenth century onwards, Western countries started to be interested in gold and black pepper; firstly, the Portuguese and, in the 1650's, the Dutch. The Dutch East India Company agreed to protect villagers from the Acehnese in return for trading monopoly and they stayed in West Sumatra [as well as in the rest of Indonesia] until this 1940's, which means almost 300 years. There were only two exceptions during that period. The British occupied Padang from 1781 to 1784 during the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War and again from 1795 to 1819 during the Napoleonic Wars.

Late in the eighteenth century, the gold resources started to be exhausted. But a new trading article - coffee - emerged. In 1803, a fundamentalist Islamic group from Padri village, led by Tuanku Imam Bonjol got into conflict with traditional syncretic groups and royals in Pagaruyung. Civil war broke out after a large part of the Minangkabau royal family was killed and it lasted until 1837 when Tuanku Imam Bonjol was finally captured and exiled.

During the whole of the nineteenth century, Minangkabau was still under Dutch control. The transportation system was improved and economic exploitation was intensified. New forms of education were introduced, allowing some Minangkabau to take advantage of a modern educational system, though it could only be applied to wealthy people as education fees were quite high. Anyway, the result was the rise of a new Minangkabau elite.

The beginning of the twentieth century brought the rise of cultural and political nationalism. The rebellions against the Dutch occupation occurred, such as the 1908 Anti-Tax Rebellion and the 1927 Communist Uprising. During World War II, Minangkabau territories were occupied by the Japanese. When they surrendered in 1945, Indonesia proclaimed independence. Sukarno became the first Indonesian President and Minangkabau Hatta [from Bukittinggi], the Vice-President.

The Minangkabau region became important one more time in modern Indonesia history. It was in 1958 when, after the dissatisfaction with the centralist and communist-leaning policies of Sukarno, the rebels proclaimed the Revolutionary Government of Indonesia [PRRI] in Bukittinggi. The Indonesian military invaded Sumatra and recaptured major places within the next month. A period of guerrilla warfare ensued but most rebels had surrendered by 1961. The policies of centralisation continued during the Suharto regime. Minangkabau villages were forced to change their *desa* [‘village’] system into the Javanese one. As a consequence, the traditional village and cultural institutions were destroyed. After the downfall of Suharto the new policies of decentralization were implemented and the Minangkabau *desa* system was finally re-established.

Culture and Language

Until now, the Minangkabau have been a strong ethnic group [Minangkabau people represent 90 per cent of 4.5 million inhabitants of West Sumatra³⁰] and it occupies a unique position. As in the old tradition, the men had to set off from their birth place [*kampung halaman*] to another part of the country to *merantau*³¹ [‘to find luck’], and that is why nowadays the members of this ethnic group are spread all over Indonesia. They are proud to be called Minangkabau.

Minangkabau are known for being good merchants. Their society is unique in one respect. Although strongly Islamic, it is a ‘matrilinear’ society. Property is therefore inherited through the female line, and a bridegroom moves to the bride’s house after wedding [in which the main authority is held by the eldest woman]. The women are entrusted with children growing up. [Photo 3 shows the lady with the biggest power in *rumah gadang*.]

Their language, *bahaso minang*, is quite similar to Indonesian as well as Malay. The main religion of the area remains Islam. The abundance of religious customs until now occupies the entire part of a Minangkabau’s everyday life. Nevertheless, the

³⁰ T. Kerle, *Indonéské bojové umění Pencak Silat na Západní Sumatře*, Praha, 2007

³¹ M. Phlegerova, *Matrilinearita, migrace a sociální změna v Minangkabau z historické perspektivy*, Praha, 2005

form of the religion is different from Islam found, for example, in Arabic countries. It is underpinned by animism, magic rituals and shamanism which have never really faded away.



Minangkabau woman, town of Payakumbuh

Chapter 3:

MINANGKABAU MUSIC

3.1 What is Minangkabau music?

The General Characteristics of the Music

In this chapter, the author describes the general characteristics of Minangkabau music. This includes genres, the tonal system and notation.

Minangkabau music culture is one of numerous music cultures in Indonesia. If the term ‘Indonesian music’ is used, most of the people primarily think of the Javanese gamelan. This has been known in Europe since the Paris Exhibition of 1889, when the Javanese performers displayed their musical art which affected Claude Debussy and many other European composers. In addition, the Balinese gamelan is also quite well-known. Bali as a popular tourist destination is much-frequented by many Europeans, Americans and Australians. Colin McPhee [1900 – 1964], for example, is one researcher-composer who helped Balinese music to be known in America.

But Indonesian music is not only Javanese and Balinese gamelan. It is a great mixture of different styles, genres, musical instruments and dances. Imagine an area of almost 10 million km²; (the USA covers approximately the same area). In such an area, it is obvious that many different cultures will co-exist. But who has ever heard much or anything, for example, about the music of Kalimantan, the music of Flores or the music of the Mentawai Islands?

Minangkabau musical culture is yet another of these to be found in Indonesia. At first sight, it might seem to be in the shadow of Javanese or Balinese culture. But it is definitely not. In actual fact, it is one of the biggest and strongest, as well as most peculiar culture of this fourth biggest island country in the world. Kartomi states that “a criticism is frequently levelled against Minangkabau music by people outside the area, according to which the music lacks emotional depth and breadth, is a little

decadent, and tends always to be extrovert in character. Moreover it is said to be a hybrid of foreign influences and to have lost most of the unique Minangkabau identity it might once have possessed”.³² It is because the music usually heard in markets and even music produced outside the area is a style of music called *lagu Minang Moderen*, or the newest version of it, called *Pop Minang*. These musical styles feature a spirited, dance-like character placed into the Western-harmonised settings using the diatonic scale, Melayu (Malay) rhythm and Western instruments such as keyboard, bass or drums.

But Minangkabau dance music has nearly always been happy. In strong contrast to this cheerful and somehow easy-going dance, vocal music has a completely different character. Minangkabau vocal art is extremely introspective and very sad indeed. Together with old traditional *saluang* [flute] or *rabab* [bowed instrument] it has inward power which has [after the Minangkabau beliefs] the ability to affect not only the human beings but also animals or ghosts³³. It has to be said that all these genres of vocal music are connected with either old Minangkabau animistic beliefs or the Muslim religion; or both of them. Though Islam was overtaken to the Minangkabau area, the animistic beliefs, nevertheless, were kept on being used and this fantastic mixture of different religions are very important in providing the outstanding art of deep singing. Except for *saluang dendang*, *langgam Melayu* and *gamad* which deal with secular themes, there are Tiger capturing rituals that provide a great mixture of both animistic and Muslim religion, *indang* or *dikie rabano* that represent a devoted Muslim singing³⁴.

As seen above, there is widely presented Minangkabau cheerful dance and pop music on the one hand, and less known, deep, devotional vocal art on the other hand. There are many differences between the two main types mentioned above. The most important are melody and harmony. While dance and pop music use entirely diatonic progressions as the implications of Western influence, religion-based vocal music is non-diatonic, usually pentatonic or heptatonic [but in the case of *saluang dendang* even the secular music is pentatonic]. The other difference is the number of

³² M. Kartomi, ‘Tigers into Kittens?’, *Hemisphere* 20/5, 1976: p. 9-16 and 20/6, 1976: p. 7-13.

³³ See the paragraph about *saluang sirompok* at the section 4.2. and the paragraph about Tiger capturing rituals in section 5.1.

³⁴ For details see section 5.1.

performers. In dance music many players usually gather to accompany the dancers, while vocal art is accompanied by one or two instruments [in case of *indang* or *dikie rabano* there are more instruments but they are all same frame drums].

These two main categories of musical genres are dealt with later in chapter four. Nevertheless, I did not intend to divide them according to the kind of music they represent. I prefer to make a distinction between vocal genres and instrumental ensembles and this will be explained more fully in chapter 5. Finally, all genres mentioned in section 4.2. [Ensembles] fit to the first category and all genres of 4.1.section [Vocal Music], except of genres of *langgam Melayu* and *gamad*³⁵, fit to the second one.

3.2 Tonal System and Notation in Minangkabau

The question about Minangkabau tonal system is one of the most important among all the questions connected with their music. Unfortunately, beyond the border of the Indonesian archipelago, this question has never been solved before. Let's have a look at Minangkabau opinion about their own tonal system. Whenever and wherever I asked Minangkabau people³⁶ about their tonal system, I heard only two answers. Minangkabau music is pentatonic or heptatonic. It is absolutely not diatonic. Prof. Martamin and Rizaldi in their book *Harmoni dalam karawitan Minangkabau*³⁷ came up with the theory, based on Western theory. They see the biggest difference between Western and Minangkabau music in the tonal system. While Western music is diatonic, Minangkabau music is pentatonic and heptatonic. They use the term 'pentatonic' together with the term 'five tone scale' and the term 'heptatonic' together with the term 'seven tone scale'. They further differentiate the two areas of Minangkabau and place the pentatonic scale to the area of *Darek [Luhak nan Tigo]* and heptatonic scale to the area of *Pesisir [Rantau]*, as they consider *Darek* [and therefore the pentatonic scale] stronger in keeping the traditions³⁸. In general, such a division basically fits to the rough characteristic of both areas. Unfortunately, it is

³⁵ Which I did not want to put in the section about ensembles because of the use of singing.

³⁶ Mostly the students, the teachers or the musical instrument players.

³⁷ M. Martamin, Rizaldi: *Harmoni dalam karawitan Minangkabau*, ASKI Padang Panjang, 1983/1984.

³⁸ See section 1.2. about the geography of Minangkabau.

not without problems. The instrument *saluang Pauah*, originally from *Darek* area uses heptatonic scale, while some pentatonic based genres [like *dikie rabano*] are found in *Pesisir* area as well.

What remains after all, is the fact, that Minangkabau music uses two tonal scales: pentatonic and heptatonic. Nevertheless, it seems that Minangkabau pentatonic and heptatonic scales are different from what normally is considered to be called 'pentatonic' or 'heptatonic'. In Harvard Dictionary of Music the pentatonic scale is described as "a scale that has five tones to the octave".³⁹ Two main types of pentatonic scales are presented; *the tonal [anhemitic]* pentatonic scale without semitones and *the semitonal [hemitic]* pentatonic scale which "results by omitting the second and the sixth or the second and the fifth degrees of the diatonic scale"⁴⁰. Nevertheless, Minangkabau pentatonic scale does not fit to either of these types. In fact, it resembles the first five tones of diatonic scale, though the tones have slightly different pitches, and therefore the frequencies, too.⁴¹

Heptatonic scale is, according to The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, "mode or scale based on seven pitches to the octave".⁴² According to this statement, Minangkabau music can be considered heptatonic. In most cases the scale approximates the following tones of solmization: 'la', 'do', 're', 'mi', 'fa', 'sol', 'la'. But, looking at the Minangkabau tonal system, there is a further fact that makes the situation even more difficult. It is the fact of different tuning almost in every village or area. For this reason, the only way how to handle the tonal system in Minangkabau, would be to research in different parts of Minangkabau land with measuring the frequencies of particular instruments, and afterwards comparison of results.

The other very important question is the notation. Although it seems it does not have to be important at all because almost all Minangkabau music is not notated[!] This

³⁹ W. Apel, ed. *Harvard Dictionary of Music*, Second Edition, H.E.B. Ltd., London, 1970

⁴⁰ *ibid.*

⁴¹ It would be interesting to measure the frequencies of particular tones and compare them with that of diatonic scale. Unfortunately, author had no proper technical equipment to do the measuring. Moreover, this phenomenon would lead us to deeper view and this project should be represent only an introduction to the problem.

⁴² S. Stanley, ed. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 11, second edition, Macmillan Publishers Limited London, 2001

fact is not surprising, though the situation is the same in many non-western music cultures. It is the result of underdeveloped musical theory and retrospective view. Theoretical reflections are focused on a different kind of problems [e.g. organology] and leave the problem of notation behind.

The truth is that Minangkabau musicians themselves do not need the notation and so do the teachers and the students.⁴³ Playing and learning by memory via listening and trying is still the most common way to acquire and master the musical material. Nevertheless, occasionally the need of notation emerges. The function is mostly educational. In this case numerical notation is used. Below there is the example of this kind of notation. It is one part of a quite popular *bansi* melody, played often with *talempong kreasi* when accompanying *tari panen* [harvest dance]:

• $\overline{11}$ 3 5 4 • $\overline{6}$ 6 $\dot{1}$ 5 • $\overline{43}$ $\overline{45}$ $\overline{432}$ $\overline{32}$ $\overline{43}$ $\overline{21}$ 1
 $\overline{11}$ 3 5 4 • $\overline{43}$ $\overline{21}$ $\overline{2342}$ 3 $\overline{121}$ 1 $\overline{121}$ 1 • $\overline{3}$ $\overline{53}$ $\overline{42}$ 1

The particular tones of solmization are given the numbers; ‘do’ = 1, ‘re’ = 2, ‘mi’ = 3, ‘fa’ = 4, ‘sol’ = 5, ‘la’ = 6, ‘si’ = 7 and ‘do’ = one with a dot on the top of the number [similarly tones above lower ‘do’ are written with a dot under the number]. Crotchets are written as a number without anything; quavers are written with the line above them, resembling the block for quavers in western notation; similarly sixteens are written under the double line, as the block for sixteens in western notation. The pause is indicated by a dot; if it is crotchet pause, it is without anything, if quavers or semiquavers note, it has single or double line above itself. There are no signs for minim or semibreve, as the notation represents the relations between relative durations of the notes. So the tempo can be slower or faster depending on the practical use. Also no special signs are made for more complicated rhythms, or other ways of enriching the melody [intervals smaller than seconds, vibrato, glissando, etc.]. This has to be remembered and learnt by listening and memorising.

⁴³ For details about education see the part History of the theme and accessible literature, see page 4

Chapter 4:

INSTRUMENTS

4.1 Introduction to the Classification of Minangkabau instruments

There are two main ways to classify Minangkabau musical instruments. The first, 'classical' way, is represented by the method organised by the musicologists Sachs and Hornbostel, which was published in *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* in 1914 and now bears their name. The Sachs-Hornbostel method provides us with a precise system which fits many ethnomusicological tasks. The method classifies an instrument based on the criterion of the material from which an instrument is made, which causes the sound. It divides musical instruments into four main groups: chordophones, aerophones, idiophones and membranophones. All four groups are represented in Minangkabau music. The fifth group in the classification - electrophones - is not relevant in the case of traditional Minangkabau instruments as there are no instruments which fit this category.

The second way of classification was worked out by Margaret Kartomi⁴⁴. Kartomi based her conception on 'socio-historical strata'⁴⁵. Her taxonomy respects the inherent Minangkabau way of viewing the instruments, although Minangkabau people themselves do not classify them. They do not feel the need of doing so as the instruments are never played all together. But Minangkabau people do differentiate instruments by their origin as well as by the way of making the sound ['mode of sound excitation'⁴⁶].

Kartomi worked out a classification based on the following division. There are three main categories of musical instruments [*bunyi-bunyian*].

⁴⁴ M. Kartomi, 'Taxonomical Models of the Instrumentarium and Regional Ensembles in Minangkabau (chap.14)', *On concept classification of Musical Instruments*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1990, p. 225-234.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

Category (i) : is represented by ‘authentic Minangkabau’ instruments [*Minangkabau asli*].

Category (ii) : involves instruments “of Arabic origin“ [*asal Arab*]; and

Category (iii) : is formed by instruments “of Western origin“ [*asal Barat*].

Each of the three categories are further sub-divided into subcategories based on the ‘mode of sound excitation’;

bunyi-bunyian nan dipukua – which means “beaten“,
bunyi-bunyian nan dipupuik – meaning “blown“,
bunyi-bunyian nan dipatiek – meaning “plucked“,
bunyi-bunyian nan ditariék – meaning “pulled“,
bunyi-bunyian nan digesek – meaning “bowed“ and
bunyi-bunyian nan dipusiang – meaning “swung“⁴⁷.

The other division of musical instruments [*alat musik*] used by the Minangkabau people themselves [which I encountered during my time in the country] is common in other parts of Indonesia, too. In this case, instruments are divided into:

alat musik gesek [literally : ‘rubbing’, and this refers to stringed instruments];

alat musik tiup [literally : ‘blowing’, meaning wind instruments]; and

alat musik pukul [literally: ‘beating’] or *perkusi* (percussion instruments, where the term clearly derives from European languages).

⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 226.

Within this thesis, I will follow Kartomi's classification since it respects the traditional way of how the Minangkabau people understand musical instruments. Although the Sachs-Hornbostel method would fit Minangkabau musical instruments' classification, Kartomi's method is clearly derived from Minangkabau culture itself. I will now discuss each of three categories in turn.

4.2 *Minangkabau asli* Instruments

In this section, only instruments which originate in Minangkabau are discussed, with just one exception - the *talempong*. As the most significant and unique instrument among the Minangkabau, it would be worth devoting a separate section to this instrument. In addition to the *talempong*, all the instruments used in STSI Padangpanjang are mentioned. A complete list of all *Minangkabau asli* instruments has been presented by Kartomi⁴⁸; this is provided in Appendix.

All *Minangkabau asli* instruments are all made by craftsmen. The ability to make musical instruments is passed from father to son and no school exists to teach how instruments are made. The result is that none of the instruments made have precise measurements. Sizes of instruments can be similar but usually each area seems to have a different measurement for an instrument. The parameters for most of the instruments mentioned in this chapter come from my own measurements of instruments as found in STSI Padangpanjang or from craftsmen in the town of Bukittinggi, West Sumatra, during fieldwork in 2007.

There now follow details for each of the main instruments of *Minangkabau asli*. They are presented using a classification of : *nan dipukua* ['beaten' instruments]; *nan dipupuik* ['blown' instruments]; *nan dipatiek* ['plucked' instruments]; and *nan digesek* ['bowed' instruments].

4.2.1 *Nan dipukua* ['beaten']

⁴⁸ M. Kartomi, *On Concepts and Classifications of Musical Instruments*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1990

Adok

Adok [see photo 4] is a wooden frame drum. The diameter of it is about 38 centimeters. A goat skin is used for the membrane. Only the right hand is used for playing the *adok*, while the left hand holds the frame. There are three kinds of hand stroke used. This instrument is used to accompany secular group singing.



Photo 4: *Adok*

Aguang

Aguang or *ogueng* comprises a pair of black-coloured vertically-suspended gongs. The meaning of the word *aguang* is 'noble' or 'glorious'; the instrument is used with the *gandang aguang* (drum) and *talempong*. It is beaten by wooden stick whose end is covered with cloth.



Photo 5: *Aguang*

Gandang

The Minangkabau word *gandang* means ‘drum’ and there are many types of *gandang* in the area. Below, I provide descriptions of three main drums I encountered; *gandang sarunai*; *gandang tambua*; and *gandang aguang*.

(i) *Gandang Sarunai*

The complete name is *gandang Sarunai Sungai Pagu* named for its place of origin. It is a double-headed and cone-shaped drum. The wood is taken from a kind of jackfruit tree, gouged out of the walls which are 1.5 centimeters thick. Other materials used for making the drum are goat skin and rattan.

There are two versions of *gandang Sarunai*: *jantan* (‘male’) and *batino* (‘female’). They differ in their parameters, as shown by the measurements taken by me of the two drums. While both are 50 cm long, the diameter of the *jantan* heads are 33 cm and 27 cm and those of the *batino* heads are 37 cm and 25 cm.



Photo 6: *Gandang sarunai*

Gandang sarunai are used in festivals such as weddings and *batagak penghulu* [which is the inauguration of *penghulu*⁴⁹]. At such times, it usually performs together with the *talempong*. In most cases, the instrument is used in pairs, with two

⁴⁹ See section 1.1. concerning the introductory history of Minangkabau.

players sitting opposite each other, playing neither the same rhythm with time difference of one stroke, or a little bit differently. In the latter case, one player keeps the fundamental rhythm and the second plays a more difficult rhythm.



Photo 7: *Gandang sarunai – jantan and batino*

(ii) ***Gandang tambua***

Along with the *gandang Sarunai*, the *gandang tambua* or, as it is also known, the *gandang tambur* belongs to the group of double-headed drums, made from light wood (a kind of cork or kapok). Its diameter is 60 cm, its length around 80 cm and its walls are 1.5 to 2 cms. thick. The two heads of *gandang tambua* are made from buffalo or goat skin and are laced by eight ropes. It is usually played in group of five (groups of seven or nine are possible as well) together with *tasa* (a drum which belongs among the *Asal Arab* classification of instruments).



Photo 8: *Gandang tambua* with *Tasa*

(iii) ***Gandang Agung***

This two-headed drum comes in two types: either in a cylindrical shape (*jantan*) or a barrel shape (*batino*). As with the *gandang Sarunai*, the parameters differ according to the version.

Gandang aguang is made from wood with heads made from the goat skin. Rattan serves to fringe the frame of head and nylon rope is used to fasten the skin. The *Jantan gandang* version is 65 cm long, 18 cm wide, while the *batino* has a length of 60 cm and width of 22 cm. The instrument plays in ensembles together with the *talempong*, *gong* and *pupuik batang padi*. It is used very occasionally in special events such as *batagak penghulu* [mentioned above] or at past coronations of kings. People have to ask permission if they want to play this drum.



Photo 9: *Gandang aguang*

4.2.2 *Nan dipupuik* [‘blown’]

There are three main types of blown instruments in Minangkabau; in Indonesian, these are called *alat musik tiup*. All such blown instruments in Minangkabau use circular-breathing technique. The continuous sound is achieved by simultaneous nose inhalation and mouth exhalation.

The first instrument is a flute called *saluang* (and *suling* or *seruling* in Jawa and Bali, respectively). It comprises a bamboo tube with either both ends opened (*Saluang Darek*, *Saluang Sirompak*) or a recorder-type flute (*Saluang Pauah*, *Saluang Panjang*, *Bansi*).

The second type is a reed instrument. According to Eric Taylor, if compared with Western instruments, this one is closer to an oboe than to a clarinet. Nevertheless, it differs both in construction and in the sound of an oboe⁵⁰. It has no similarities with any European instruments with the possible exception of old ‘cracked’ bagpipes⁵¹, as one traveller noted. Double-reed, oboe-type instruments spread from the Middle East, either directly or via India, and came to the Minangkabau with the arrival of Muslim culture. Minangkabau (together with Malaysians) adopted the original Arabic name *surna* and changed it to *sarunai*.

⁵⁰ E. Taylor. *Musical Instruments of South-East Asia*, Oxford University Press, 1989

⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 51.

The third type is called *pupuik* (,blown‘) in Minangkabau. It is made from buffalo or leaf horn.

Saluang

The *saluang* is a recorder-type flute. It is a generic term for this type of flute and the individual name of a *saluang* is usually assigned from its place of its origin. I shall now describe four *saluang* below.

4.2.2.1 *Saluang Darek*

Saluang Darek is one of the typical and best-known musical instruments among the Minangkabau [see photo 10]. It comprises a bamboo tube with both ends open. The kind of thin bamboo with long parts called *bambu talang* is used for making it. The most common type measures approximately 60 cms. There are three main types in which the pitch (and so the length) is important. It is because both men and women use to sing together with this instrument. Also, the diameter is not the same among the instruments but the most common diameter is around 1.5 cm.

Saluang darek comes from *Darek* area which is better known as *Luhak Nan Tigo*. The instrument has four holes. The way of playing is quite specific. The player sits crossed legs with *saluang* played not vertically but little bit aside with the top end of the *saluang* covering only part of the player’s mouth.

The tuning system differs from village to village but *saluang darek* uses virtually the pentatonic scale, though we should not confuse it with the Balinese pentatonic scale, for example. Using solmization, the notes are equivalent to ‘do’, ‘re’, ‘mi’, ‘fa’, ‘sol’ (in C major, this means the notes from c to g, from which the last tone - g - is one octave higher than the other four notes). Nevertheless, there is a vast number of tones possible by playing *saluang*. It is because the player can use different combinations of fingering as well as he can cover only half of the hole. This makes the pitch different.

The function of *saluang darek* is to accompany vocal performance *Saluang jo dendang*, which can take part on a wedding or other family celebration, and also as a money-making performance in the market place. The start of a performance is usually late in the evening and it can last until early morning.



Photo 10: *Saluang Darek* [copy of photo from STSI]

4.2.2.2 *Saluang Sirompak*

As with the *saluang darek*, the *sirompak* is a tube with both ends open. It is made from bamboo and the size is quite similar to *Saluang Darek*. It is 70-75 cms long. *Sirompak* has five holes, four in the upper side and one at the backside. This one has the function of making the tone one octave lower. So it has 10 tones afterwards. If transferred to solmization, the tones are ‘fa’, ‘la’, ‘do’, ‘re’, ‘mi’ across two octaves. The *sirompak* is found only in area of *Payakumbuh*.

As for the use of *sirompak*, it is the most interesting of the Minangkabau flutes. In the past, people believed (and some of them still believe it is so) that the *sirompak* possesses magic power. The instrument was used when the man had been refused by a beloved woman. Then he went to the *tukang sirompak* (the *sirompak* player) to ask for help. He only needed something connected with that particular woman, for

example, some hair, a nail, a scarf or other clothing. The *tukang sirompak* would start to play and cause the beloved woman (even if she was in different island) to fall in love with the man that she had previously declined. Nowadays, the *sirompak* is not often used anymore. It can be because some people still believe its magic power. It is said that if some woman had been once under enchantment of the *sirompak* she cannot hear it again. In other case she will suffer again (even if she had previously recovered).



4.2.2.3 *Saluang Pauah*

The next Minangkabau flute for discussion is the *Saluang Pauah*⁵². This is a recorder-type instrument with one end covered and equipped with reed (these parts are made from wood). The length of the instrument is about 42-43 centimetres while the diameter is 9.5 cms. The instrument has six holes. It is hard to discover the origins of the *Saluang Pauah*. According R. Sh. Mariati⁵³, there are two possibilities: The first, that *Saluang Pauah* was formed directly in the area of *Pauh, Kecamatan Lubuk Bagalung*, and its ancestors could therefore be the *Saluang Panjang* and *Sadam*; or the second, taht the instrument was drawn from the area of *Solok*. There is also an additional supporting aspect to its history, which originates from the idea that eighty per cent of the inhabitants of the *Pauh* area originally come from *Solok*.

There is an instrument called *bansi* (see below) which has absolutely the same shape. Moreover, both instruments are used as accompaniment to *dendang*.

The tonal system of the *Saluang Pauah* is hepta-tonic. In this case,

⁵² There is also another name version – *Saluang Pauh*. This version fits better to the place of its origin (area *Pauh*). Both terms are used with almost same frequency but according to the pronunciation of most of the people I have spoken to, I rather incline to the term *Pauh*.

⁵³ R. Sh.Mariati,. *Saluang Pauh di Kecamatan Pauh Kotamadya Padang*, ASKI Padang Panjang, 1983/1984.

heptatonic means in solmization ‘la’, ‘do’, ‘re’, ‘mi’, ‘fa’, ‘sol’, ‘la’. The pitch depends on the particular area, but most instruments are tuned between $e - e^1$. In order to play higher notes, more breath is required. Nowadays, it appears that not too many people are interested in *Saluang Pauah* performances.

This instrument also serves as accompaniment to *dendang*, but it stands in the shadow of *Saluang Darek dendang*. In contrast to the *dendang darek*, *dendang Pauah* tells a story (*kaba*) instead of lyric verses. Rare performances surprisingly show that there are now only five traditional melodies in existence. There are plenty of sung stories using these five melodies. There is another exception. Not like most of Minangkabau music, *Saluang Pauah* does not play heterophonically; rather the texture is more like polyphony, since the melody it plays differs from sung vocal line.

4.2.2.4 *Saluang Panjang*

Another name for this instrument is *saluang Sungai pagu*. The instrument originates in *Sungai pagu Kabupaten Solok*. It belongs to the recorder type and has only three holes; two at the upper side and one at the back. *Panjang* means ‘long’ and so the instrument measures rather longer than the others: anywhere between 72 and 80 centimetres. There are eight notes which can be produced by using two different types of blowing. If blown gently, notes do – re – mi - fa are achieved. If blown more forcibly, the notes so - la - si - do are achieved.

The instrument is used for accompanying *dendang Sungai pagu* and the music is played during events linked with Minangkabau customs. Different uses are quite rare.

4.2.2.5 *Bansi*



As noted above, the *bansi* is quite a similar instrument to *Saluang Pauah*. The shape is almost same and it also has a reed. Distinction between instruments is made: by measurements (*bansi* can be of many sizes, but it is definitely much smaller than the *saluang Pauah*); by the number of holes – *bansi* have seven holes, six on the upper side and one at the back.

The type of bamboo used for making the instrument is called *sariah*. After the body has been shaped, it is painted with a *hilalang* leaf. Concerning the shape of the mouthpiece, there are three types of *bansi*: the *datar* ('flat') type was the original one. From that type two more arose: the *miring* ('slant') and *miring lagi lengkung* ('slant then arch'). The main difference between *bansi* and *Saluang Pauah* is the tuning system used for each. The *bansi* is the only one of all the Minangkabau flutes that uses the diatonic scale. It originally comes from *Pasisir Selatan*. It is interesting that all instruments similar to Western ones come from this area (for example, *rabab Pasisir*). This is due to Portugese influence.

But there is another version that says *bansi* come from Persia or perhaps India from where it was taken by Islamic merchants. Playing the *bansi* is not taught by a guru but by autodidactic means. *Bansi* is used alone or with *dendang*, but without any other instrument and the music played on it is quite simple. It serves for a private entertainment, for consolation in illness or pain and it used to be played in rice fields. Often, it is used for: playing in *talempong kreasi* ensemble⁵⁴ because the *talempong kreasi* uses diatonic tuning; for *komposisi musik*; for music accompanying contemporary Minangkabau dances; or for traditional Minangkabau theatre called *Randai*. For its soft sound, the *bansi* is popular as a background instrument for theatrical performances. In some areas, *bansi* players use to say a prayer before playing to make the notes dulcet and not to be disturbed by magic creatures (as they give *bansi* a similar power to that of the *sirompak*, as mentioned above).

⁵⁴ See section 4.5.



4.2.2.6 *Sampelong*

The last of the flute-type instruments is the *Sampelong*. Kartomi⁵⁵ uses the term *Simpelong* for this instrument. I have never heard this name during my one year in the Minangkabau Highlands but possibly it can be some different area's version of the name *Sampelong* as it is quite often phenomenon there are many phonological differences between villages or groups of villages.

The *sampelong* comprises a bamboo tube approximately 54 cms long and with a diameter of 3.5 cms. It has four holes that are all located on the upper side. *Lima Puluh Kota* is the place from which the *sampelong* spread to other areas. It is tuned in the pentatonic scale: 'do', 're', 'fa', 'sol', 'la'. The one measured by me had tones approximately similar to e^b, f, a^b, h^b and c¹. In the past, playing the *sampelong* was attached to mystery. People believed *sampelong* had a similar potency to that of the *sirompak*. The purpose of playing changed over time and nowadays it is used as an art musical instrument.

⁵⁵ M. Kartomi, *On Concepts and Classifications of Musical Instruments*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1990.

4.2.2.7 *Sarunai*



Reed or oboe instruments are represented by the *sarunai*. Kartomi uses the name *sarune*; but, in all the writings I possess or have seen only the name *sarunai* is used. The most common instrument is *sarunai Darek*. It consists of two parts, first part *induk* ('leader') where the holes are, and the second part is *anak* ('child'), which is the one for blowing and is where the reed is located. In many cases, there is the third part mounted to *induk*. It is buffalo horn, usually beautifully elaborated. The instrument originates in the area of *Darek (Luhak Nan Tigo)*. And it is tuned 'do', 're', 'mi', 'fa', 'sol' [1-2-3-4-5]. The function is absolutely the same with that of the *bansi* (see above).

4.2.2.8 *Pupuik*

Pupuik are leaf and buffalo horns. The diameters differ greatly but the approximate length is about 25 to 30 cms. The *pupuik* has a very penetrating tone. It plays together with the *talempong* mainly at traditional feasts such as *batagak penghulu*, building a new house, a wedding and so on.

There are two types I have seen being used: *pupuik sarunai* (meaning 'buffalo horn') and *pupuik batang padi* ('leaf horn'). In picture below, *pupuik batang padi* is shown. It is made from two materials; rice leaf and young coconut leaf. Nevertheless, sometimes the names are mingled together⁵⁶. *Pupuik*, similarly to *sarunai*, consists of two parts: *anak* and *induk*. *Anak* is the part with reed made from rice leaf, while

⁵⁶ For example Drs Hajizar in the book *Talempong tradisional di nagari Pitalah dan Bungo Tanjueng* [ASKI Padang Panjang, 1993] use the name *pupuik sarunai* for the leaf-made instrument.

induak is made from coconut leaf twisted to the shape of funnel [Hajizar 1999]. This instrument does not have long persistence. It can be used only a few days.

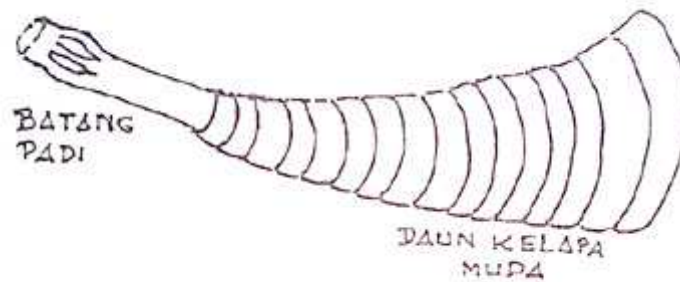


Diagram (i): *Pupuik batang padi*



Photo 11: *Pupuik sarunai*

4.2.3 Nan dipatiek [‘plucked’ instruments]

Kucapi

The Minangkabau *kucapi* is different from the *kecapi*, a popular instrument in West Java, although the Minangkabau sometimes use the name *kecapi*, too. It is a board zither with three, four or five strings tuned at the same height and kind of fingerboard which extends approximately one octave. The left hand of the player presses particular buttons [rather than keys] in order to produce a melodic line, while the

right hand plucks the strings all the time. This makes the very special sound of an uninterrupted melody. The player sits while playing and usually he is also the *dendang* singer.

The instrument probably originates in China or Japan. In Minangkabau areas, the first mention is from 1926 and mainly it was spread during the 1940s. Its hometown in Minangkabau is *Payakumbuh, kabupaten Lima puluh Kota*. This instrument was used to accompany the traditional play [or sung story] *Sijobang* and sometimes the name *Sijobang* is used for it. It is possible that it came to Sumatra together with Islam. The play *Sijobang* was performed to gather people to listen to and learn about the new religion. Before the *kucapi* was imported, a box of matches was used to accompany *Sijobang*. Now the *kucapi* is used for many family, *suku* and religious occasions, such as festival before a pilgrimage to Mecca.

4.2.4.1 Nan digesek

4.2.4.1.1 *Rabab Pariaman*

The *rabab* is a long-necked stringed instrument. The body of *rabab Pariaman* is made from a coconut shell and buffalo skin, while the head, neck and bow are all made from jackfruit wood. The surface of the neck is from bamboo. The diameter of the body depends on the size of the coconut [around 16.5 cms], and the length of the neck is double [33 cms]. It has three strings made from three, four or five threads (usually thread used for kites is employed in their construction); they are tuned in thirds: ‘do’, ‘mi’, ‘sol’. Nevertheless, the diatonic scale is not applied, as intervals smaller than semitones are often used, according to the traditional Minangkabau scale [with additional variations between different villages]. The pitch is adapted to the singer.

Rabab Pariaman is used for accompanying *dendang kaba* [‘sung stories’]. The player sits crossed-legged while playing the *rabab*. He holds the neck in the left hand to play the melody, and the right hand holds the bow. The function is playing

for pleasure during family or tribal occasions. *Rabab* performance usually takes part late in the evening.



Photo 12: *Rabab Pariaman* [copy of photo from STSI]

4.2.4.1.2 *Rabab Darek*

The instrument obtained its name from its place of origin. It arises from *rabab Pariaman* and spread to the northern part of Minangkabau lands to *Pasaman* and at a later date from there it finally came to *Darek*. Besides *Darek* it also appears in *Tanah Datar* and *Lima puluh Kota*.

The shape, size and material is quite similar to that of *rabab Pariaman* though *rabab Darek* has only two strings. *Rabab Darek* is used interchangeably with *rabab Pariaman*. It is often used together with *saluang Darek* as an accompaniment to singing (where all instruments including the singer, play heterophonically).



Photo 13: *Rabab Darek*

4. 3. Asal Arab Instruments

The instruments of Muslim or Arab origin came to Minangkabau together with merchants from Arabic or other Muslim countries and therefore together with Islam.

There are couple of hypotheses when and how Islam came to West Sumatra. Most of Minangkabau scholars think, the first contacts with Islam was throught Arabic merchants during the seventh century. This thesis is proclaimed by the authors of the book *Adat Minangkabau*⁵⁷. Drs. Erizal⁵⁸ thinks Islam arrived in West Sumatra in three waves. First it was *Sunnah* ideology brought in the seventh century by merchants from Persia. The second time it was *Shia Islam* in eleventh or twelfth century arrived with merchants from Egypt. Both two times it touched only the sea shore area. The third wave in the sixteenth century was the way which spread Islam all over the area of West Sumatra. Compared with the sources from outside West Sumatra, they differ approximately by one hundred years. As the most reliable dating, the beginning of the seventeenth century can be considered, when the Acehnes took control over the west coast of West Sumatra⁵⁹ [which means *Pasisir* area]. It took some time for religion to spread to the inner land of Minangkabau. That

⁵⁷ H.Suarman, B. Arifin, S. Chan

⁵⁸ In the book *Instrumen musik chordophone Minangkabau*, see the Bibliography

⁵⁹ Kartomi gives the same information in *The Music-culture of South-coast West Sumatra* [1998/1999].

is why for *Darek* area usually the end of the seventeenth century is connected with Islam conversion.

There are [with only one exception, *gambus*] only ‘beaten’ instruments in the category of *bunyi-bunyian asal Arab*. As in Muslim countries elsewhere, drums, especially frame drums are the most highly regarded.⁶⁰ I now describe the ‘beaten’ instruments and the *gambus* which belongs to the sub-category of ‘plucked’ instruments.

4.3.1 Nan dipukua

4.3.1.1 *Tabuah*

Tabuah is the mosque drum⁶¹ which sometimes can extend to huge parameters. Its function in the past was to call the believers to the mosque. Nowadays, *tabuah* can sometimes be seen on the stage during social or other events, when a traditional music and dance are performed. In some cases hitting the *tabuah* begins the whole ceremony. It can serve as an example how the use and function of some instrument or form [as we will see later] can be transformed and used in different contexts.

4.3.1.2 *Rabano*

Frame drum used for Muslim singing, called *dikie rabano*.⁶² Wooden frame of the drum is equipped with small cymbals. Goat skin serves to become head of the drum. The measurements of *rabano* can differ but the common instrument has a diameter of approximately 33 cms, while the height of the frame is 13 cms. [See photo 14]. The cymbals have the diameter of about 4 cms. Usually women perform the *rabano*. Women sit in two rows on opposite sides, each has her *rabano* in front of her. They play interlocking rhythm. Only Arab religious texts are sung during the performance.

⁶⁰ M. Kartomi, *On Concepts and Classifications of Musical Instruments*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1990, p. 228.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² See section 4.1.



Photo 14: *Rabano*

4.3.1.3 *Rapai*

Rapai [or other name is *indang*, similarly to the vocal genre accompanied by it⁶³] is a small frame drum also used for Muslim singing that can be performed only by men. The diameter of *rapai* is 19 cms and the height of the frame is 6 cms. Similar to other instruments, the measurements are not unified. In case of *rapai*, moreover, some small differences are requested because the final sound in a group will be different, too. It is played in a group of players with one leader. The drum itself is played usually with the right hand [while the left hand holds the drum] and there are two main types of hitting it. First one with which a lower sound is achieved, is played only with one finger. The second one resembles a slap and the final sound is quite penetrating. The players play interlocking rhythms with three different patterns, the first of them is the basis, the second same but played later and the last one being the most complicated of all three.

4.3.1.4 *Selawat Dulang*

This instrument is also called *salawek dulang* or *selawat talam* [according to the area and its tradition]. *Dulang* means tray and really the brass tray is the actual instrument. The diameter of *dulang* is approximately 37 cms. Performances of *selawat dulang* are always in a group of two men.⁶⁴

⁶³ See section 4.1.

⁶⁴ See section 4.1

4.3.1.5 *Tasa*

Tasa is a kettle drum, which was probably transplanted from Muslim India in the eighteenth century⁶⁵. It has a synthetic membrane and a metal frame [see photo 15]. The diameter is 35 cms. *Tasa* has very strong and penetrating sound. It plays together with *gandang tambua* and it has the function of a leader. For playing, the drum is fastened to the rope, which is put behind the neck of the player so that it is on player's belly. Two rattan sticks are used for playing. The final sound is whirling due to the way of playing and holding the sticks.



Photo 15: *Tasa*

4.3.2. Nan dipatiek

Gambus

Gambus is plucked lute of probable Middle Eastern origin[see the photo 16]. Apparently, it is identical with original Arabian Oud. The shape resembles a pear sliced in half. There are two main types of *gambus*; *gambus Hadramaut* and *gambus Hijaz*.⁶⁶ Only the first type is used in Minangkabau music context. It is made from

⁶⁵ M. Kartomi, *On Concepts and Classification of Musical Instruments*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1990

⁶⁶ <http://www.musicmall-asia.com/malaysia/instruments/gambus.html>, [accessed March 30, 2008]

several different kinds of light wood. The upper part has two flower-like shape cuts. *Gambus* has twelve nylon strings [guitar strings are used] set in pairs and plucked with a plastic plectrum to generate the sound. The strings are tuned in perfect fifths down from the highest string, starting from middle C.⁶⁷ It is used to accompany Arabic-style secular love songs.⁶⁸



Photo 16: *Gambus*

4.4. Asal Barat Instruments

Instruments of Western origin have been coming to Minangkabau land from the period when the first Europeans came to West Sumatra. First of all, coastal areas were influenced because of shipping trade. On the other hand, central part of Minangkabau Highlands [*Darek* area] was lastly influenced. Most Western instruments stayed unchanged but there is one exception. It is *rabab Pasisir*.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ M. Kartomi, *On Concepts and Classifications of Musical Instruments*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1990

4.4.1 *Rabab Pasisir*

It belongs to the category of '*Nan digesek*' instruments. It probably came to Pasisir during the Dutch colonial era. As *rabab Pasisir* the instrument is known mainly out of Pasisir area. In Pasisir itself people called the instrument *biola*, which is Indonesian word for violin. As a matter of fact it is violin played in a different way. The player sits cross-legged, *rabab* put on the ground. The right hand holds the bow, left hand is on the neck, playing the melody. The player is the singer at the same time. There is one little difference between *rabab* and violin seen at first sight: The *rabab*'s soul (*nyawo*) has two threads which stick out of the cuts. The function of *rabab Pasisir* is to entertain during such feasts as *batagak penghulu*, wedding, final building approval or evening collection for the town needs.

Except for *rabab Pasisir*, all the instruments were imported and are played the same way as in the Western world. Kartomi⁶⁹ indicates some of them, using Indonesian versions of the names (*saxofon, bongo, biola, gitar, ukelele*). At the present many more world instruments are found in Minangkabau, especially in STSI Padang Panjang where almost all the Western instruments are taught (even such instruments as trombone, kettle-drums or marimba). Moreover, due to the interest of some STSI students in instruments of other countries [especially India] and also due to the contribution of foreign students, instruments such as *tabla, didjeridu* or *Jaw's harp* can be found in campus.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ The author realises these instruments are not all of Western origin but this was the best place to put this note. *Tabla* is of Indian but not of Muslim Indian origin and that is why the author did not mention them earlier. *Didjeridu*, Australian Aboriginal instrument, was coincidentally given to STSI students by a Czech student, the similar destiny for the *Jaw's harp* brought by a student from Bulgaria.

4. 5. Talempong as a Phenomenon of the Minangkabau Culture

Talempong

In the Indonesian dictionary of music⁷¹, *talempong* is said to be a musical instrument from West Sumatra, which is made from metal, bronze or iron, of the round shape with the boss in the middle.⁷² It is a set of gong chimes of different pitches, in most cases five or six. The term *talempong* is also used for the whole set and even for the whole ensemble comprising other instruments. The shape of a *talempong* resembles that of a Javanese *bonang* [one of the instruments in Javanese gamelan orchestra]. Unlike in Java with its gamelan factories, there is no factory which produces *talempong* in Minangkabau. All instruments are home-made and only sometimes can a group of *talempong* craftsmen be found. One of this famous home industries is placed in the small village, Sungai Puar Kabupaten Agam, [close to the town of Bukittinggi – see the map on the page 8.

The origin of the word *talempong* is not known, but in many parts of South-East Asia, similar instruments with similar names are found, for example, the *Chaklempung* in Malaysia, *Kolintang* in the Philippines and the *Gulintangan* in Brunei.⁷³ In the Minangkabau Highlands, the term *talempong* is used in most places. Only in the Agam area, the instrument is called *Calempong*.

In the sections below, the measurements, methods of playing, the different kinds of *talempong* and its use in ensembles, is presented.

⁷¹ M. Suharto, *Kamus musik Indonesia*, Jakarta 1978, p. 152.

⁷² “Talempong adalah alat musik Sumatera Barat yang terbuat dari logam, perunggu atau besi berbentuk bundar dengan pencu di tengah”, *ibid*.

⁷³ B. A. Adam, *Talempong; musik tradisi Minangkabau*, Padang Panjang, 1986/1987

The Measurements of the *talempong*⁷⁴

In diagram (ii) below, the approximate measurements of an individual *talempong* are given and shown by reference to the numbers. The height [1] is between 8.5 and 9 centimetres, while the height of the side wall [2] is between 5 and 6 centimetres. The diameter at the base [3] is anywhere between 12.5 and 17 centimetres, while at the top [4], it is 16.5 to 17 centimetres. The boss [5] is two to two point five centimetres in diameter.

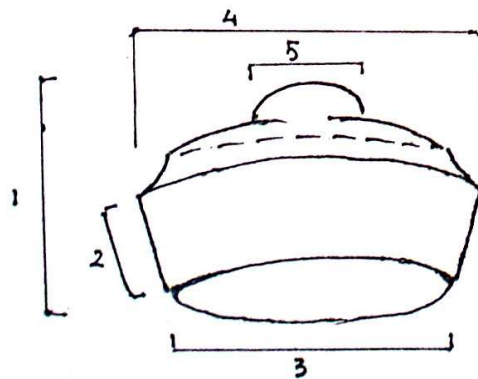


diagram (ii) : an individual *talempong*, showing its measurements

Different kinds of *talempong*

Except for the most wide-spread and popular metal *talempong*, there are also other kinds of instruments with the same name. The shape of those instruments is quite different and more resembles the xylophone. The material, from which it is made, is different, too. It can be made from wood (*talempong kayu*), bamboo (*talempong batueng*), iron (*talempong jao*) or stone (*talempong batu*). However, these other kinds of *talempong* are very rare nowadays. For example, *Talempong batu* is now only seen in the area of Talang Anau, *talempong batueng* and *talempong kayu* only in Kecamatan Harau, both in Kabupaten Limo puluh Koto and in the past *talempong jao* in Kecamatan Tujuh Koto, Kabupaten Padang Pariaman under the name

⁷⁴ *ibid*, author's measurements of own *talempong* correspond.

talempong Sitawa.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, as a part of private entertainment for evenings, wooden or bamboo *talempong* are used among some *suku* or within families.

The way of playing the *talempong*

This section describes how the *talempong* is played, and the musical ideas associated with this.



Photo 17: *Talempong pacik* played by women

There are two main ways to play the *talempong*. The first way is to play it while standing or walking. This kind of *talempong* is called *talempong pacik* [‘held’]. Usually three people play it, each of them holding two gongs in his left hand. The right hand holds a wooden stick with the end wrapped in cotton. Each of three pairs of *talempong* is called *labuan* [which means something like ‘dissolution’]. There are three kinds of *labuan*: *labuan anak* [‘child’], *labuan induek* [‘leader’] and *labuan*

⁷⁵ B. A. Adam. *Talempong; musik tradisi Minangkabau*, Padang Panjang, 1986/1987

paningkah [‘variation’].⁷⁶ All of *labuan* play the way called interlocking [the Indonesian or Minangkabau term is the same]. In most of the *talempong* compositions, *labuan anak* starts to play short melodic-rhythmic patterns. Afterwards, *labuan induk* follow the *anak* with different patterns and finally *labuan paningkah* join the first two *labuan* with another different pattern. The part of *labuan paningkah* is the most difficult of all and it can be varied depending upon particular player’s skills. Above all, when *labuan* are stable and interlocking melody is bright and clear, then the other instruments can join. First, *gandang sarunai* and after it *pupuik* or *sarunai*. In the illustration (i) below the very first section of popular song *Cak Din Din* is transcribed.⁷⁷

CAK DIN DIN

The illustration shows a musical score for three parts of a *talempong pacik* ensemble: Anak, Induek, and Paningkah. All parts are in 2/4 time. The Anak part plays a continuous eighth-note pattern. The Induek part starts with a whole rest for the first measure, then plays a pattern of eighth notes with accents. The Paningkah part also starts with a whole rest for the first measure, then plays a pattern of eighth notes with accents, mirroring the Induek part.

Illustration (i): the beginning of *Cak Din Din* composition played by *talempong pacik*

The pairs of gongs in one *labuan* are not the same for all the songs, if needed, the gongs have to be changed.⁷⁸ There is no key tone in the *talempong* composition. All gongs are equal. The tuning of *talempong pacik* differs a little bit in every village or group of villages. As seen in the section 3. 2., the tuning differs in almost every village. But here we are encountering special and somehow strange phenomenon. One of the former scholars of *STSI*, Prof. Mardjani Martamin⁷⁹ as well as others,

⁷⁶ English translations overtaken from M. Kartomi, ‘The Music-culture of South-coast West Sumatra’. *Asian Music* [1998-1999], pp 133-181

⁷⁷ Author prefers to display own transcription although there is already one by Drs. Amran in the book *Talempong tradisional di nagari Pitalah dan Bungo Tanjung* [1993]. But Amran’s transcription differs a little bit from the song author heard during the research in Padang Panjang.

⁷⁸ B. A. Adam, *Talempong; musik tradisi Minangkabau* [1986-1987]

⁷⁹ M. Martamin, *Harmoni dalam karawitan Minangkabau* [ASKI Padang Panjang 1983-1984]

were of the opinion that the measuring of the real frequencies is not relevant because it can destroy most of traditional versions of *talempong*.⁸⁰ He considered *talempong* to be non-diatonic, which, in fact, it really is. Nevertheless, the achieved scale resembles [though not really precisely] a diatonic scale. Expressed in solmisation, which is also used by Minangkabau musicians, the tones resemble ‘do’, ‘re’, ‘mi’, ‘fa’, ‘sol’, ‘la’ or ‘sol’, ‘la’, ‘do¹’, ‘re¹’, ‘mi¹’, ‘fa¹’.



Photo 18: *Talempong pacik*

The second way of playing the *talempong* is while sitting on the floor with the legs bent back along one side of the body. This type is called *talempong duduek* [‘sitting’] or *talempong rea* [see photo 19]. Particular gongs, five or six, are put upon the frames. *Rea* is the word used for the frame. Nevertheless, it is not the traditional way of playing the *talempong*. According to Kartomi, it arose around 1960s when the teacher in ASKI⁸¹ Padang Panjang, Boestanoel Arifin Adam, who had received a Western education, created a new type of *talempong* orchestra based on the diatonic scale. Kartomi states that it was Adam, who “put the gong chimes upon the carved

⁸⁰ It is not surprising if we read what the author of this paper have written about the education in STSI Padang Panjang in section The History of the Theme, Accessible Sources and Literature

⁸¹ ASKI = *Akademi seni karawitan* Indonesia; former name for STSI.

frames on legs, making the orchestra look like a rather high Javanese gamelan”⁸². In such case the player can neither sit [if the frames are without legs] or stand.

Nevertheless, in some areas of the Minangkabau Highlands, *talempong rea* is also found. Although it was really not until 1960s when it started to emerge that *talempong Sitawa* from Kabupaten Padang Pariaman or *talempong Sialang* both appear to represent kinds of *talempong rea*. The question is if this *talempong* could be influenced by B. A. Adam in putting it upon the frames. Except for the shape there are no other similarities between village *talempong rea* and the invention of B. A. Adam. The instruments are different and so is the music and the tuning. The village *talempong rea* consists of five or six gong chimes that play the melody and is accompanied by *gandang* [drum] and *ogueng* [big gong].

Adam’s invention, on the other hand, is represented by several [usually five] diatonically tuned sets of *talempong* on wooden frames, where the first one contains more than five gongs to create wide pitched melodies, while the other sets consist of four or six gongs and play the role of accompaniment. The music played on this type of *talempong rea* is called *musik kreasi baru* and is discussed in section 5.2.

So, was it only the shape that was utilised from Adam’s invention or was Adam the one who, being inspired *talempong rea*’s shape, used it in Western orchestra-like way? How could villagers living 100 km and even further from Padang Panjang, place of Adam’s activity, see and ‘copy’ his instrument? Is Adam really the inventor of *talempong rea* or did he discover the idea in villages and transformed it into his own way? Unfortunately, this work can not answer these questions due to a present lack of materials and only a little information provided by the people in Padang Panjang or taken from books. Let us hope that future studies can solve these pressing questions.

⁸² M. Kartomi, ‘Minangkabau Musical Culture: the Contemporary Scene and Recent Attempts at its Modernisation’, *What is Modern Indonesian Culture?*, ed. G. Davis, Madison, WI, 1979: p. 24.



Photo 19: *Talempong rea*

The *Talempong* Ensemble

As stated above, except for gong-chimes, *talempong* consist of *gandang sarunai* [‘drum’] and *agueng/ogueng* [‘big gong’]. In many villages, blown instruments, such as *pupuk* or *sarunai*, are used. While *gandang sarunai* and *agueng* have the accompanying function, *pupuk* or *sarunai*, if present, play the main melodic and therefore most important role in the ensemble. Its expressive melody is the lead melody and its penetrating sound pushes the *talempong* interlocking patterns to the background. Nevertheless, sometimes *talempong* melody emerges again from the background because *pupuk/sarunai* does not play throughout. This is the case of *talempong pacik*. In *talempong rea* compositions the main melody is played by the *talempong* itself, while the other instruments have accompanying function⁸³.

In conclusion, the *talempong* is also found in the area of Pesisir. But in many villages throughout the region, people prefer not to use name *talempong* for the instrument.

⁸³ For detailed view on *talempong rea* ensemble structure see section 5.2.

They rather use the name *gandang-sarunai*⁸⁴ which should not be interchanged with the drum of the same name.

The Use and the Function of *Talempong*

In the past, no family or village celebration could take part without participation of *talempong* playing. This stage has continued until these days, although nowadays there are some, but rare exceptions. *Talempong* is used in such occasion as *batagak penghulu*, wedding, finishing a new house, in modern era during the visit of the President, government member or other people of influence. *Talempong* does not fulfil religion purposes. Although sometimes it is used only as the music itself, in most cases its function is to accompany the dances, *Silat* or *Randai* performance.⁸⁵

Momongan and Canang

Although the *talempong* belongs among the most typical representatives of the whole Minangkabau area, other types of instruments similar to *talempong* are also known [though they were not spread so widely as the *talempong*]. These are the *Momongan* and *Canang*. *Momongan* is used for fun during family or village occasions, as, for example, when accompanying a bridegroom to the bride's house or for collecting money for repairing a house or road. But *momongan* can be also used as a talisman against evil.⁸⁶ It consists of four gongs and is played by four people, each of them holding one instrument. The tones which result, if solmization is used, can be quite similar to the following: 'mi', 'sol', 'do', 'la'. The instrument is never accompanied by any other instrument.

In diagram (iii) below, the approximate measurements of *momongan* are given and shown by reference to the numbers. The height [1] is 10 centimetres, while the

⁸⁴ M. Kartomi, 'The Music-Culture of South-Coast West Sumatra: Backwater of the Minangkabau "Heartland" or Home of the Sacred Mermaid and the Earth Goddess?', *Asian Music* XXX vol. 1, 1998/1999: p. 133-181

⁸⁵ See section 5.3.

⁸⁶ For example, in Kinari Kabupaten Solok if a young girl is abducted and the villagers think it was something other than human being, they gather to play *momongan* and sing mantras until the girl comes back. B. A. Adam, *Talempong; musik tradisi Minangkabau*, STSI Padang Panjang, 1986-1987.

height of the side wall [2] is between 8 centimetres. The diameter at the base [3] is 31 centimetres. The diameter of the boss [4] is 9 centimetres, while its height [5] is three centimetres.

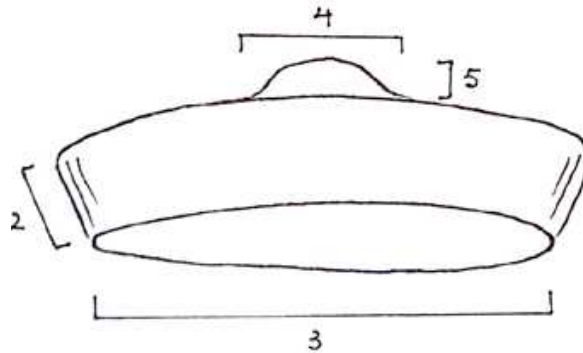


diagram (iii) : *momongan*, showing its measurements

The *Canang* is quite similar to the *momongan*, but differs due to the measurement being a little different – *canang* is smaller than *momongan*. During the Dutch colonial era, the *canang* was used not as an instrument but as a way of communication. Nevertheless, later it started to be used as an instrument consisting of three gongs and usually played by three women.

Chapter 5:

MUSICAL GENRES

5.1 Vocal Genres

If some feelings are to be expressed, the best way to do it is through the vocal art. I strongly believe is generally believed that the ability to sing is the most natural musicianship of everyone. Before using any musical instruments, it was singing that expressed human feelings. Together with words, nothing else can express the stage of a human mind better than singing.

When I came to West Sumatra and heard *dendang Minang* [Minangkabau solo vocal music] for the first time, I knew I wanted to study it. The first term of my studies in *STSI Padang Panjang* was quite difficult for me because of the language barrier [of course all *dendang* are performed in the Minangkabau language] as well as a lack of notation.⁸⁷ But, I finally achieved my goal, thanks to my teachers Bapak Admiral, Ibu Efrinon and my classmates. Even after a year, I still could not perform as a native, of course.

The biggest difference between Western and Minangkabau singing is the technique. Classical western singing [bel canto] is based on a strong breath support and making a good sound tone from breathing. In *dendang Minang*, the tone generator is the neck [though breathing is also important in this regard, too]. There are more techniques used in vocal art of Minangkabau which differs in the use of the vocal cords position while singing. The different place of the rise of the tone gives the tone itself a slightly different timbre. The ways of singing are practiced according to the kind of vocal music. A different way is used for *dendang*, as well as for *indang*, *selawat dulang*, *dikie rabano*, the voice of a *muezzin* in *masjid* [‘mosque’], *langgam*

⁸⁷ In the beginning of every lesson, the teacher or one of the students wrote down the text [without the melody, of course] of the learning song on the blackboard. Then the teacher started to sing it again and again and the students’ task was to try to remember and sing it afterwards with the help of teacher and finally without it. I have to say that it usually took me the same or only slightly longer time than to my *Minang* classmates to learn the song.

Melayu, gamat orchestra or so-called *pop Minang*. I will now discuss each genre in turn.

5.1.1 *Dendang*

Dendang is the most characteristic and significant vocal form among the Minangkabau. I have founded that even until nowadays, it is quite usual to hear *dendang* while walking in a market or along the streets, both played live or from a tape. There is no traditional wedding party or other traditional event without evening performance of *dendang*, too. Although many kinds of Minangkabau music are being overrun by modern music, it is *dendang* which is still popular among people [though almost entirely old generation]. In the town of Payakumbuh, every Thursday, a *dendang* performance takes place with the plenty of audience and requested songs, as witnessed by me.

The term *dendang* originates in the combination of two words; the first is *den* [meaning ‘I’] and the second *indang* [‘to sing’]. Therefore, it loosely translates as ‘I sing’. It is male or female solo singing accompanied by *saluang* [other blown instruments such as *sampelong* or *bansi* are rarely used as well] or *rabab*. *Saluang* or *rabab* [sometimes both of them can be used at once] play heterophonically and in most cases they play a secondary role. Sometimes, other instruments can be used, such as the *kecapi* or a box of matches as rhythmic accompaniment, but this is only in case of one kind of *dendang* from the town of Payakumbuh, which is called *Sijobang*.

The power of *dendang* is to be found in their texts. The art of speaking through a combination of music and poetry is highly appreciated among Minangkabau people. They are known within the whole Indonesian archipelago for their great ability to talk [and sometimes at the expense of doing]. One of the reasons is that the Minangkabau people, in general, do not like to express themselves directly so they often choose the way of saying it in a poetic and enigmatic way. A good singer is often not recognised after his/her voice but after the verses he/she uses. People appreciate the art of poetry more than musical art in the case of vocal music.

Due to the importance of the texts, the structure of verses is quite unique in *dendang Minang*. It consists of two *pantun* [or ‘strophe’, ‘stanza’]. The first *pantun* is called *sampiran* and it usually refers to the ordinary things such as: ‘the beauty of nature’; a village; harvesting; cooking; or eating rice and so on. The second *pantun* is called *isi* [‘content’] and it refers more directly to the fact or problem, usually unhappy love, missing the brother or son who went *merantau*⁸⁸ or problems connected with poverty.

According to the text, which nevertheless goes hand in hand with the melody and whole musical character, the three main types of *dendang* can be differentiated. They are: *dendang ratok*; *dendang gembira*; and *dendang kaba*. The first two of them are kinds of sung poetry, while the third one is storytelling. ***Dendang ratok*** [‘sad’] are the songs with mainly sad content and character. They are of the slow tempo [crotchet varies between 60 and 82] and they use free rhythm. The melody is in the small range of three, four or five pitches at maximum and the interval between two tones is almost never bigger than second. Tones contain much vibrato, using the micro-tones. The song, *Mudiak Suak*, can serve as an example:

The image shows a musical transcription of the song 'Mudiak Suak' in treble clef. The melody is written on a five-line staff with a common time signature (C). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first line of music starts with a whole note 'Ai' followed by a series of eighth and quarter notes for 'ga-ja di su - ak mak ma-kan pa - di'. The second line starts with a measure rest (marked '6') followed by 'di sa - riak tin gga bu - la - lai - nyo lah bu - la - lai - nyo'. The third line starts with a measure rest (marked '10') followed by 'ka u - wo ai'.

Musical example (i): *Mudiak Suak*, transcription by the author

There are two very special *ratok* forms in Minangkabau.⁸⁹ The first of them is a professional mourner’s *ratok*, performed in the past at funerals. The songs are called *ratok manangih kamatian* [‘crying death songs’] and belong to the most sad *ratok*

⁸⁸ ‘to find luck’

⁸⁹ M. Kartomi, ‘Tigers into Kittens?’ *Hemisphere* 20/5 and 20/6; 8.

songs. However, this custom is now banned by Islamic law. The second special form of *ratok* is sung by palm sugar collectors while at work. They believe that more tears they shed, the more sweet liquid they will get. This type is called *ratok manangih enau* [‘crying song for a palm tree’].⁹⁰

On the contrary the term *dendang gembira* [meaning ‘merry’ songs] is used for cheerful, happy songs sung in moderate tempo. Although the range of pitches of the melody is often no larger than fifth, the intervals used in it can be seconds, thirds, and even fourths [though seconds are the most frequent ones]. The rhythm is set in case of *dendang gembira*, mostly it is in quadruple, or common meter. The texts refer to common everyday life, to general truths and often give advice e.g. how to find and keep a good partner. For example, the song, *Andam oi*, refers to the town of Bukittinggi in the first *pantun* [*sampiran*], but in fact, in *isi* it shows boy’s courage in front of girl named Andam:

Bu-kit - tin - ggi ko - to rang A - gam yo An-dam oi man - da -

7
ki jan - jan am - pek pu - lu - ah ba - sim - pan ja - lan ka Ma - la - lak

Musical example (ii): *Andam oi*, transcription by the author

Dendang kaba [*kaba* means ‘story’] is a kind of storytelling. The tempo can change all the time according to the text. The rhythm is usually set but sometimes [for example at the end of particular *pantun* or when some new text is added] it can be free as well. The stories are taken from Minangkabau history or mythology⁹¹ and refer to the historical people or heroes from the past. It is accompanied mainly by *rabab*, but, sometimes, *saluang* can be used as well such in case of famous *dendang*

⁹⁰ Kartomi used term *manangisi*, which can be different area’s modification for *manangih* I have heard.

⁹¹ As seen in section about history 2.2 the myths and history are often the same for Minangkabau people.

Raimah from Padang Panjang.⁹² Once again, in all three kinds of *dendang* the text is the most important. The melody is almost always calm without much expression, in spite of the deep meaning of the lyrics. It goes together with Minangkabau people's nature. Even when they are sad and desperate, they never show this outwardly. In the Indonesian archipelago they are said to be 'tigers on the outside, but goats on the inside'.⁹³

The performance of a *dendang* with *saluang* is called *saluang jo dendang* [see photo 20] and the singer is called *padendang* while the act of performing is called *badendang*. The performance usually takes place late in the evening and it lasts until the early morning.



Photo 20: *Saluang jo dendang* [copy of photo from STSI]

Except for the *padendang* itself who is often female, only men can watch the performance. The texts used in performance are spontaneous so a really skilful singer has to be found to *badendang*. The texts are immediate reactions on present

⁹² *Dendang Raimah* is the tragedy about girl named Raimah who lived in Padang Panjang in the beginning of 20.th century and was killed by her jealous husband. It is sung by two people, one represents Raimah and the second one her husband and the two singers are changing consequently. Whole performance is accompanied by *saluang Darek*.

⁹³ Erizal, Efrinon, *Sekilas lintas dendang Minang [suatu pegatar]*, Padang Panjang, 1987.

situations, political or within the village, or they can comically comment on members of the audience⁹⁴.

Similar to *saluang jo dendang*, when a *dendang* is accompanied by a *bansi*, two types can be differentiated: *dendang bansi riang* (meaning ‘joyful’ or ‘merry’) and *dendang bansi manangih* (‘crying’ or ‘sad’). There is no *dendang kaba* accompanied by *bansi*. On the contrary, if a *sampelong* is used for accompanying a *dendang*, it is solely the *dendang kaba*.

5.1.1.1. The functions of *dendang*⁹⁵

There are at least four main functions of *dendang*. The first one is to entertain the people during the social events [such as wedding party, evening market, collecting money for village purposes, etc.]. The second function is connected with *dendang kaba*. Getting in touch with the text, people can learn about the history of the particular place or about the actions of heroes. The third function could be an appendix to the second one; the story can serve as a lesson, kind of wisdom and can become an instruction how to act, how to behave. The last of the most important functions is serving of *dendang* as an art [*seni*]. In the past, people did not count *dendang* or other *karawitan* [traditional music] as an art but more often as an entertainment or filling of free time.

5.1.1.2 The use of *dendang* in tiger-capturing rituals

Tiger-capturing rituals, called *dendang marindu [manangkok] harimau*, belong to the classical musical tradition of Minangkabau.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ I was once the subject of such a comic situation. During the *badendang* held on the wedding party, I was sitting with one of my teachers, Pak Yusril. The singer spotted us in the audience and made the comment, in song, that Pak Yusril should follow me back to the Czech Republic if he likes me so much. [Fieldnotes: February 12th, 2007].

⁹⁵ I. Syarief, *Dendang Raimah di kanagariah Jao, kecamatan X Koto, kab. Tanah Datar*, ASKI Padang Panjang, 1989-1990.

⁹⁶ The great contribution of knowledge about this musical genre has been contributed by Margaret Kartomi in her article ‘Tiger Capturing Music in Minangkabau, West Sumatra’, *Sumatra Research Bulletin*, ii/1: 1972: pp. 24-41

Tiger-capturing songs are performed by two shamans [*pawang, dukun*] while waiting for a tiger to come near in the forest. The songs are sung to the accompaniment of a *saluang*. The rituals use 'black' magic [*ilmu sihir*] despite the fact that this kind of magic, in comparison with 'white' magic [*ilmu batin*], is banned both by Islam and the State. There is a very strong animist element in the ritual, even though Muslim prayers are additionally chanted during the rituals. Kartomi suggests that the singing of Muslim prayers is probably an addition to the originally purely animist tradition, in order to make it more acceptable to the devout Muslims in the community⁹⁷.

Musically, tiger-capturing songs are notable for their lack of passion and their calmness. It can be partly because of their spiritual purpose, which is to create atmosphere conducive to contacting the supernatural.⁹⁸ The text of songs in Minangkabau is set in *pantun* and it is improvised by one of the shamans. It calls the tiger and says why shamans need to catch it [usually because it has eaten a human]. Melody is lightly ornamented with trills and vibratos. The melodic line of accompanying *saluang* is more ornamented than vocal melodic line. Kartomi states that the calm songs set to poetic texts are suitable for their function of settling nerves and giving moral and psychological strength to the skilled artist, the shamans who work for long nocturnal periods in the jungle.

5.1.2 *Indang*

In contrast to *dendang*, *indang* is male singing and dancing to the accompaniment of small frame drums called *indang* or *rapa'i*. Kartomi refers to *indang* in the following way: "The performers make dance formations, by moving alternately forwards and backwards sometimes in slanting positions, swaying from side-to-side like a human wave. At times, they place their instruments on the floor and weave patterns in the air with their hands. Some patterns are marked rhythmically by hand claps".⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ M. Kartomi, 'Minangkabau Musical Culture: the Contemporary Scene and Recent Attempts at its Modernisation', *What is Modern Indonesian Culture?*, ed. G. Davis, Madison, WI, 1979; 19-36

The art form *indang* is apparently pre-Muslim in spite of texts, dealing with Muslim themes about the Prophet and about morality. Nevertheless, some songs deal with ancestral and social Minangkabau history. *Pantun* form is mostly used. Generally, “choral *indang* melodies are sung in unison and are structurally symmetrical and sequential, with phrases of even length”¹⁰⁰.

5.1.3 *Selawat dulang*

Found also under the names like *salawek dulang* or *selawat talang*, *selawat dulang* is the musical form found mainly in *Darek* area. The two men sit crossed-legs next to each other on the floor and both of them hold *dulang* [metal tray] in front of them [see photo 21].



Photo 21: *Selawat dulang* performance [copy of photo from STSI]

They alternate in singing while rhythmically accompany themselves on *dulang* played with hands. The first singer is called *induk* [‘leader’], the second *anak* [‘child’]. Each performance consists of six songs. The first song serves as a greeting and the text can be improvised; the audience appreciates, if the singers are witty and create the text spontaneously according to the situation. The other songs have set

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

both melody and lyrics, though there are many different variants which can be moreover slightly modified. The last piece of the performance, on the contrary with the previous ones, can be sung to a new melody, often taken from popular *dangdut* or *pop Minang* songs. Similarly to *indang*, although songs of *selawat dulang* glorify the Prophet and deal only with Muslim themes, the art form is pre-Muslim.

5.1.4 *Dikie rabano*

Dikie rabano is group singing with drums. In the past only men could perform *dikie rabano* because, according to Islam, women were not allowed to play the music. Nowadays, both men and women can play, but usually it is women who play it. The singing is accompanied by several different drum patterns on *rabano*, using interlocking. The text is specially created for this form and it tells the story about the Prophet Mohammad or about Islam itself.

5.1.5 *Langgam Melayu and Orkes Gamat*

Langgam Melayu and *orkes gamat* [or just *gamat*] are vocal forms with instrumental accompaniment. There are two questions why these two musical [not only vocal] forms are mentioned here. The first question concerns the place of origin of these two forms. As I mentioned in the preface of this work, my aim is to focus on the music of the *Darek* area, especially the surroundings of Padang Panjang. And although these two art forms which originate in the Pesisir [Rantau] area, it is worth to mention them both here.

The reason is that shortly after they became popular in coastal areas, they spread all over the Minangkabau region, including the area of *Darek*, and became part of its culture. Moreover, both forms are taught in *STSI Padang Panjang*, and not only in the *Karawitan* Department but also in the Department of Classical Music.

The second question is why, in fact, ensemble music is mentioned in this section named vocal music? The answer is that in both musical genres, the vocal part has the leading melody while the instruments play the role of accompaniment. It can

therefore be seen that *langgam Melayu* and *orkes gamat* are both vocal forms, but with instrument accompaniment.

Langgam Melayu and *gamat* are examples of Western-influenced musical genres. They “came into being in the past four or five centuries as a result of contact with Portuguese traders”¹⁰¹. This music is well-known beyond the borders of Minangkabau region and is one of the representative genres [the other one is dance music] for which Minangkabau music can be considered as merry, easy, with too many influences from abroad and without deeper emotions. Portuguese or South European folk character is felt from the melodies and Western harmonic progressions are used for accompaniment.

Langgam Melayu and *gamat* exhibit two kinds of rhythm [*irama*]. The slower one is called *irama langgam*, and the faster is called *joget*. Vocal part is sung “in a relaxed way, with gliding between some tones. The texts deal with love, homesickness or beauty of one’s home village”¹⁰²

Both *langgam Melayu* and *gamat* ensembles consist of *biola*, *akordeon* [nowadays unfortunately often replaced by keyboard], *gandang Melayu* [in case of *langgam Melayu*] or *gandang Sarunai* [in case of *gamat*]. However, the only difference between the two genres is the language. *Langgam Melayu* is sung in Malay language [*bahasa Melayu*] while *orkes gamat* uses Minangkabau [*bahaso Minang*]. The most famous pieces of *langgam Melayu* are ‘Hitam manis’, ‘Kuala Deli’ and ‘Siti Payung’, those of *gamat* are ‘Kaparinyo’, ‘Rosmani’, ‘Dayuang Pariaman’ and many more¹⁰³.

5.2 Ensembles

Differently, and in a contrast to the previous text in section 5.1, the next text can hardly be based on particular writings. *Saluang jo dendang*, religion-based or popular

¹⁰¹ M. Kartomi. ‘Minangkabau Musical Culture: the Contemporary Scene and Recent Attempts at its Modernisation’, *What is Modern Indonesian Culture?*, ed. G. Davis, Madison, WI, 1979: p. 19-20

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ In the lesson *Praktek karawitan IV* we learned the most popular and famous songs including the ones mentioned above.

music performances are widely [widely in context of Minangkabu music culture] reflected among people, while in the case of instrumental music the situation is much more complicated. The reason could be that most instrumental music does not fulfil the aesthetic function itself. The most usual are dance and accompanying function of instrumental music. The most popular genres are the ones that use vocal elements. Nevertheless, playing in a group is typical for the whole archipelago and so it is in Minangkabau, though not comparatively to Java or Bali. For this section most information I have noted from observing and listening to music during my fieldwork. As in main part of this project, the following text relates mainly to musical practise in STSI Padang Panjang and surrounding area.

Many ensembles contain vocal parts as seen in previous section about vocal genres. Nevertheless, there is a large number of instrumental pieces in Minangkabau region, though no particular name is used for them. Sometimes, they are called *instrumentalia* [name seen on many CD booklets with only instrumental versions of Minangkabau songs], sometimes the name *talempong* is used. According to that second name it is obvious that most of Minangkabau instrumental music cannot be performed without *talempong*. It is the basis of almost every instrumental composition. Also, according to its function, the form is chosen. It is, therefore, variable and dependent on the use and/or function.

The most instrumental music of the Minangkabau area is used together with other performing art. It can be dances, martial art *Silat*, or *Randai* theatre. In the case of dances, it much depends on the origin and character of a particular dance. Different music will be used for Malay dances, different for dances of Minangkabau origin. In general, for Malay dances usually cheerful music is used with diatonic *talempong* and/or Western instruments like violin, guitar, keyboard etc., while for traditional Minangkabau dances non-diatonical *talempong* ensemble is used [together with one of Minangkabu blown instruments]. The subject is dealt with at length in the next section.

There are numerous variations of instrumental ensembles in Minangkabu, which differ from village to village, from region to region. The difference is also between the musical styles they play. For this project's purpose couple of examples of

different ensembles should suffice. The first example is that of traditional ensemble. It usually comprises non-diatonic *talempong pacik*, *gandang sarunai*, *pupuk* or *sarunai*. This traditional ensemble is almost entirely the same all the time, the only difference being in repertoire. Newer ensemble quite similar to the traditional one is often seen as well, usually under the name *talempong kreasi*. This ensemble, appearing from 1960s or 1970s, consists of several [mostly five] pieces of diatonic *talempong rea*, where one performer plays the main melody on the instrument called *talempong melodi*, while the other four performers accompany him on *canang* or *talempong* called *paningkah* [same term with that of *talempong pacik*]. Sometimes accompaniment resembles an Alberti bass.¹⁰⁴ *Gandang* is used, similarly to traditional *talempong*, but in case of blown instrument there is a difference; *bansi* or *saluang* can be used, although originally they are not used together with *talempong*.

In case of later-constituted ensembles, there is a huge variety of possible combinations of instruments. It again depends on the purpose of performance. Apart from music as accompaniment to dances, *Silat* and *Randai*, the ensembles made in order to accompany theatre performance have emerged. In this case, the instruments' constitution is absolutely free.¹⁰⁵ The only case where purely instrumental music has the aesthetic role and is devoted only to listening, I have experienced in STSI Padang Panjang.¹⁰⁶ Such compositions are called simply 'compositions' [*komposisi*] and they are absolutely free; in choosing the combinations of instruments [some brand new instruments can be used as well]; the way the instruments are played [gong, originally beaten with stick, is now beaten with hand]; the length and the form.

Facing present world trend towards multiculturalism together with music fusions, combining different music from different places of the world, is very popular. And it does not matter whether it relates to Western and Minangkabau traditions or Minangkabau and other archipelago [e.g. Javanese] ones. At this point it is necessary

¹⁰⁴ M. Kartomi, Minangkabau Musical Culture: the Contemporary Scene and Recent Attempts at its Modernisation, *What is Modern Indonesian Culture?*, ed. G. Davis, Madison, WI, 1979; 24

¹⁰⁵ This refers mainly to nowadays use. Alternative theatre is very popular all over Indonesia and alternative music is used to accompany it.

¹⁰⁶ It was during the occasion of final exams of *karawitan* department. As a final work, students can choose between writing the thesis or making the composition in which they have to take part not only as the composers but also as the players and which is perform in front of the teachers as well as other students.

to realise, similarly to any kind of music, not every attempt achieves the real aesthetic quality. There are some compositions where cliché appears to be the main component. But some compositions are of very good quality and with the ambitions to succeed in the world market.



Photo 22: *Komposisi*

5.3 Pencak Silat, Randai and the Dances

As known from the previous section about ensembles, Minangkabau instrumental music is almost never performed alone. Its most important function is to accompany dances, as well as other performing arts in Minangkabau society. The first of these is *Pencak Silat*.

5.3.1 *Pencak Silat*

Pencak Silat [Minangkabau name is *silek*] is an Indonesian martial art, originally from West Sumatra, which had been spread during the last centuries from Sumatra and later from Java to the whole archipelago. Later, it became rooted in surrounding countries of South East Asia.¹⁰⁷ Within *Pencak Silat*, different sources, beliefs and attitudes are mingled together. Some of its movements resemble Chinese martial arts,

¹⁰⁷ T. Kerle, *Indonéské bojové umění Pencak Silat na Západní Sumatře*, Praha, 1997: p. 12.

but Indian, Arabic, Siam and other earlier influences can be found, too.¹⁰⁸ According to Minangkabau history, the first man to introduce *Silat* in West Sumatra, was the king Sri Maharajo Dirajo, whose assistants were four renowned fighters from different parts of the world.¹⁰⁹ Paradoxically, one of the most flourishing era of *Pencak Silat* [as well for other art], was during the Dutch Colonial Era. According to Patzöld¹¹⁰, during the that era, many new musical, as well as dance forms, indicated and considered as ‘traditional’, emerged. The situation was the same with *Pencak Silat*, in spite of an official ban of it.

Nowadays, though many different styles and categories of *Pencak Silat* exist, there are three main streams or attitudes that can be differentiated. The first of them, called *silek balago* [‘fighting *silat*’]¹¹¹ tries to use as many efficient fighting techniques as possible. In this kind of *silat*, no music is used.

The second one, *silek seni* [‘art *silat*’]¹¹², *Pencak Silat* in the form widely known today, is in fact the stylization of the fight. It is marked by aesthetic affect, slower movements and low number of real fighting positions. This type is often accompanied with music, which is quite varied. Among the instruments, connected with *Pencak Silat*, belong *saluang Darek*, *sarunai*, *gandang tambua* and, of course, *talempong*. The compositions and selection of songs depend mainly on the area where *Pencak Silat* is performed.

The third stream is called *silek batin*¹¹³ [‘mystical *silat*’] or *silek daerah* [‘*silat* of the particular area or village’]. This way is the traditional one, concentrated on developing supernatural skills that are used within rituals, combining animistic practices with Islamic movements. No music is used for this category of *silat*, except for one version [sub-category], in which there is no physical contact and it is based

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ See section 2.2.

¹¹⁰ U. U. Patzöld. *Blute, Frucht und Kern: Bewegungsformen und Musikstile im Bereich des Pencak Silat in West-Java und West-Sumatra*, Holos-Verlag, Bonn, 2000

¹¹¹ T. Kerle, *Indonéské bojové umění Pencak Silat na Západní Sumatře*, Praha 1997: p. 30.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid; p. 31.

only on exchanges of energies.¹¹⁴ In learning this version, the guru first taught the pupils the basic movements and than he sang some mantras called *Dampeang*¹¹⁵ [Patzöld 2000:364]. These mantras, probably of Indian origin, are sung for hours and should give the ‘fighters’ inner power to attack without touching each other.

5.3.2 *Randai*

Silat has served as the basis of many other forms of Minangkabau art. The influence of its movements is seen in traditional Minangkabau theatre, *Randai*. A paper exists about *Randai* by Kartomi.¹¹⁶ *Randai* use dance elements based on *silat*, spoken dialogues, performed scenes [or ‘pageants’] and the singing, both narrative and lyrical. It is performed within a select circle of people.



Photo 22: *Randai* [copy of photo from STSI]

¹¹⁴ I know about this type from many friends. Unfortunately, non of them could give me detailed information. I am not convinced about the reason, neither they did not know more or they did not want to talk about it.

¹¹⁵ U. U. Patzöld. *Blute, Frucht und Kern: Bewegungsformen und Musikstile im Bereich des Pencak Silat in West-Java und West-Sumatra*, Holos-Verlag, Bonn, 2000

¹¹⁶ Randai Theatre in West Sumatra, *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs*, XV/1, 1981: p. 1-44; Unfortunately, it was impossible to obtain a copy in time for this thesis.

Twenty to thirty performers put on the special trousers, called *galembong*, with the crotch reaching the ankles. They bang on *galembong* and clap their hands in different rhythmical, and sometimes very tricky, patterns during the dance sections [see photo 22].

These dances are interjected between particular pageants which carry the actual story. The subject matter is usually taken from traditional Minangkabau *kaba* [‘stories’]. The tragedy in a story is pitted against witty dialogues, often on actual political or cultural themes.

The musical accompaniment consists usually of *saluang*, *rabab*, *talempong pacik*, *gandang*, *bansi* and *sarunai*. It plays during the dialogues, while dance interjections are without accompaniment. *Randai* is mostly played outside during the village or state celebrations or at weddings of wealthy people.

5.3.3 Dances

There appear to be two main sources for origin in Minangkabau dances.¹¹⁷ The first type originated within Minangkabau land itself and the movements have their origin in *silat*. Such dances include: a welcome dance [*tari pasambahan*]; a candle dance [*tari lilin*]; a harvest dance [*tari panen*]; and the most extraordinary one, the plate dance [*tari piriang*].

In the latter dance, small plates are put on the floor to form a circle. In front of the circle, there are two piles of broken china. The performers [the number can vary, but is usually around ten] dance, step on the plates, hold a plate in each hand and make the rhythmical sound as the rings on their fingers touch the plates. Dance masters sometimes hold a bottle with a lit candle in the bottle neck on their head. The highlight of the dance is, when one or two of the dancers step on the pile of broken china and start to jump on it without being injured. The music that accompanies the dance is quite animated, non-diatonic, and employs *talempong pacik*, *gandang* and *sarunai*. It sometimes can cause a kind of trance not only for dancers but also for the

¹¹⁷ I have been told this by my friends in Padang Panjang. Each of these two types has its significant features of moving and musical accompaniment, too.

audience, as observed on occasions by the author in various places throughout the fieldwork.

As a contrast to the dramatic plate dance, there are dances based on Malay figures. Such dances include like the umbrella dance [*tari payung*], the scarf dance [*tari salendang*], a dance with drum [*tari indang*], *tari barabah* etc. These dances are more gentle, with moving based not on *silat* but on natural movements¹¹⁸ and with a cheerful character. This character is shown by joyful, light-hearted music with a violin alternating with an accordion playing the leading melody, while a diatonic *talempong rea* and *gandang* play melodic and rhythmic accompaniments. Nevertheless, similar to the forms of *langgam Melayu*, *gamad* and, in fact, almost every musical genre, the musical accompaniment of these dances has greatly changed since the 1970s. Nowadays, a bass guitar can be used to support the harmonic line, while a keyboard often alternates with an accordion; a drum-set can be seen instead of simple *gandang*. What did not change are the typically sweet melodies and rhythmic models of *langgam*, being followed by *joget*.¹¹⁹



Photo 23: *Tari piriang* performed by children

¹¹⁸ More leaping as well as twisting are used, in contrast to more static *silat*-based dances.

¹¹⁹ See section 5.1.5

This completes a survey of musical genres found in Minangkabau culture. It is now necessary to conclude this project by describing the present position of music among the Minangkabau.

Chapter 6:

PRESENT STATE OF MUSIC IN MINANGKABAU. MODERNISATION

Until this very last chapter, the whole text has dealt with everything traditional; traditional instruments; traditional musical genres; traditional theatre; and dances. But, like every world culture, Minangkabau continues to develop. Some of the practices used in the past are not in use nowadays or they are used very rarely. It is the case of *sirompak* magic ritual¹²⁰, or tiger capturing rituals¹²¹. Somehow more protected against outside influences are small villages where modernisation and globalization leak very slowly. In those villages, very old tradition is being preserved until nowadays.

The areas close to the sea or bigger towns and surroundings of them changed a great deal during the last fifty years. According to Kartomi, there are two types of modernisation in West Sumatran music; the first one is the automatic, relatively unwitting type; the second one is intentional and devised type.¹²² The first involves adaptations of foreign music, which results in small changes within the music. It can be Muslim religious chant sung in a way which combines Arabic influences together with older Minangkabau music. Another early example of modernisation can be *Gamad* music¹²³, which is connected with Portuguese influences.

The second type appeared during the twentieth century and it was much connected with “Western cultural and economic values and the ‘national cultural policy’ of the Jakarta government.”¹²⁴ This modernisation resulted in using the diatonic scale, melodic and rhythmic practices and some Western instruments. In fact, there were big presumptions for accepting Western music ideas. Already during the Dutch

¹²⁰ See section 4.2.2.2

¹²¹ See section 5.1.1.2

¹²² M. Kartomi, ‘Minangkabau Musical Culture: the Contemporary Scene and Recent Attempts at its Modernisation’, *What is Modern Indonesian Culture?*, ed. G. Davis, Madison, WI, 1979; 19-36.

¹²³ See section 5.1.5

¹²⁴ M. Kartomi, ‘Minangkabau Musical Culture: the Contemporary Scene and Recent Attempts at its Modernisation’, *What is Modern Indonesian Culture?*, ed. G. Davis, Madison, WI, 1979; 19-36.

Colonial Era, there were schools [usually for elite, like *Sekolah Raja* in Bukittinggi] where pupils got Western musical education. Some Minangkabau also went to study in Holland. To some of those Dutch-educated people, Western music seemed supreme.

From independence in 1945 until now, the national government has supported combining different regional music with Western style. The diatonic *talempong rea*¹²⁵ from Padang Panjang, invented by Boestanul Arifin Adam¹²⁶, is a good example of combining Minangkabau tradition with Western musical ideas.

From the 1960s and 1970s another influential Western musical type caused changes not only in Minangkabau music. This was pop music. The transition from traditional Minangkabau music to pop music has taken place until the present and modern implications are of course more prominent now. The first type of popular music which appeared in Indonesia was *dangdut*. *Dangdut* combines Indonesian language with Indian elements and Western instrumentarium. It is one of the most popular music all over the archipelago until nowadays.

Another types based on Western popular music started to appear in many areas in Indonesia. Similarly in Minangkabau, there is a type of music called *Pop Minang*. It is, in fact, the most popular type in many places of West Sumatra. It combines traditional way of *dendang* singing with all ornamentations and vibratos, the sweet Malay melodies and typical *langgam* and *joget* rhythms,¹²⁷ with Western harmonic practices. *Talempong* [already set diatonically, even with semitones, which did not appear in Adam's instruments] is the only instrument which has outlasted; the other instruments comprise keyboard, electric guitar, bass guitar and drum set. *Pop Minang* resembles old Minang songs by language and melody, but the arrangement is almost completely in a Western style.

As an addition to this chapter it has to be said that in the Minangkabau area and all over the Indonesia, it is not only traditional music that is now heard, but forms of

¹²⁵ See section 3.5.

¹²⁶ As Kartomi suppose.

¹²⁷ See section 4.1.

modern and popular music as well. Due to modern communication and media [internet] Indonesians listen to Western Rock, Pop and Jazz music with almost the same knowledge the Western people do.¹²⁸ The most popular is Rock and R'n'B though almost every kind of music is found over the archipelago.¹²⁹ But Western popular music is not the only popular music heard in Indonesia. There are thousands popular bands playing mainly Pop-Rock music who are adored sometimes more than Western ones. Examples while I was in West Sumatra include: 'Ada Band', 'Cokelat', 'Dewa', 'Funky Kopra', 'Jamrud', 'Kerispatih', 'Nidji', 'Radja', 'Shaggy Dog', 'Slank', 'Steven and Coconut Treez', 'Tipe X', 'Unggu', 'U9', and solo singers Ari Lasso, Iwan Fals, Agnes Monica, Ria Amelia and many more.

The scene is vivid and always changing. The great role plays naturally high musical skills of Indonesians [almost everybody can play the guitar and sing] and the support of the prosperous tobacco trade. Many tobacco companies figure as sponsors of numerous competitions for young musicians [*festival band*] as well as concerts of already groovy stars. The easy and cheap access of recordings is caused by flourishing piracy, which is a darker side of modern life. But, today's evolution from CDs towards internet downloads shows the path which can be probably quickly spread to this area, too.

Concluding statement

In this thesis, I have attempted to portray the music of the Minangkabau people as witnessed by me during my year living in West Sumatra, and later, researched by me in the Czech Republic. This has included a review of the literature, instruments, genres, dancing and music-drama, which seemed to me to be representative of present and past *Minang* culture. In essence, this can only be a survey, since there are elements of Minangkabau music, which are still in need of in-depth research by local and outside ethnomusicologists.

¹²⁸ Of course, some music is better known than the other due to the producers and marketing strategies.

¹²⁹ As an one "small" example could serve regular *International Java Jazz Festival* held every March in Jakarta.

Summary

The phenomenon of the musical culture of the Minangkabau, who comprise the main ethnic group of West Sumatra, Indonesia, is a subject of ethnomusicological study that has scarcely been worked out before within a Czech context. The topic of this research project is Musical Instruments and Genres among the Minangkabau, West Sumatra. Much of the information for this project results from basic ethnographical fieldwork undertaken by the author between September, 2006 and July, 2007.

The scope and main focus of this thesis is the music of the area of the central Minangkabau Highlands [*Darek*] and its inherent musical entities like the *talempong* [gong-chime ensemble] and other specific instruments; vocal and instrumental genres as well as dances, *Randai* traditional music-theatre and martial arts.

The author's classification of instruments present in this thesis is based on that used by Margaret Kartomi. The musical instruments [*bunyi-bunyian*] are classified according to their origin: *Minangkabau asli* ['authentic Minangkabau']; *asal Arab* ['of Arabic origin']; and *asal Barat* ['of Western origin']. Each of these three classifications is further sub-divided into categories based on the 'mode of sound excitation'; *nan dipukua* ['beaten'], *nan dipupuik* ['blown'], *nan dipatiek* ['plucked'], *nan digesek* ['bowed'] and *nan dipusiang* ['swung'].

Musical genres are divided into vocal and instrumental by the author. Among vocal genres belong : *saluang jo dendang* [singing with the accompaniment of a bamboo flute, with the secular or magic texts]; *dikie rabano*; and *indang* [Muslim collective singing accompanied by frame drums]; *selawat dulang* [men singing Muslim religious texts with the accompaniment of a metal tray]; *langgam Melayu*; and *orkes gamad* [secular songs with European influences, played by small ensemble]. Most instrumental genres use the *talempong* ensemble, which serve mainly as an accompaniment for the dances, theatre performances and *silat* martial art. The description of musical genres takes into account both the musical material and the function fulfilled by them within the life of Minangkabau society.

The result of the analysis of the present situation in Minangkabau music by the author reveals that it comprises a mixture of the old and the new. This mixture contains: old animist beliefs versus the newer and still active Islam; old traditional ceremonies versus new impulses and directions from popular music; traditional instruments versus new, electric ones; the old tonal systems versus a new implied diatonicism from the West and so on. All these phenomena exist side by side, living together in a strange and vital symbiosis. In this thesis, the author indicates how these mixtures co-exist and interact.

Resumé

Fenomén hudební kultury etnika Minangkabau, jež tvoří nejpočetnější skupinu populace Západní Sumatry, je téma, které v českém kontextu téměř nebylo zpracováno. Bakalářská práce pojednává o hudebních nástrojích a druzích hudby tohoto etnika. Práce je založena na autorčině terénním výzkumu během studijního pobytu na Západní Sumatře v období od září 2006 do července 2007.

Hlavní zaměření práce tvoří hudba oblasti *Darek*, ležící v Minangkabauské vrchovině, a její podstatné hudební entity jako je *talempong* (soubor gongů) a další specifické nástroje oblasti. Práce se dále zabývá vokálními a instrumentálními druhy, stejně jako tancem, tradičním divadlem *randai* a bojovým uměním *silat*.

Při klasifikaci hudebních nástrojů autorka vychází z třídění použitého Margaret Kartomi. Nástroje jsou podle původu členěny na *Minangkabau asli* (tradiční nástroje Minangkabau), *Asal Arab* (nástroje arabského původu) a *Asal Barat* (nástroje Západu). Každá z těchto kategorií je dále členěná do subkategorií podle způsobu tvoření tónu: *nan dipukua* (bicí), *nan dipupuik* (dechové), *nan dipatiek* (drnkací), *nan digesek* (smyčcové) a *nan dipusiang* (zvuk je dosažen rotací nástroje).

Druhy hudby autorka dělí na vokální a instrumentální. Mezi první typ patří *saluang jo dendang* (zpěv s doprovodem bambusové flétny se světskými nebo magickými texty), *dikie rabano* a *indang* (muslimské kolektivní zpěvy, doprovázené rámovými bubny), *selawat dulang* (mužský párový zpěv na muslimské náboženské texty za doprovodu plechových táčů), *langgam Melayu* a *orkes gamad* (světské písně s evropskými vlivy, hrané malým souborem nástrojů). Instrumentální druhy téměř vždy využívají *talempong* a slouží především k doprovodu tanců, divadla nebo bojového umění *silat*. Při deskripci je zohledněn jak hudební materiál, tak i funkce, kterou daný hudební druh plní v životě minangkabauské společnosti.

Výsledek autorčina výzkumu, týkajícího se současného stavu minangkabauské hudby, odhaluje, že hudba, stejně jako jiné druhy umění a kultura všeobecně, je směsí, v níž se pojí staré s novým: „starý“ animismus s novějším a stále aktivním

islámem, staré tradiční ceremoniály s novými impulsy a směry populární hudby, tradiční nástroje s novými, elektrickými, staré tonální systémy (pentatonika, heptatonika) s poměrně nově aplikovanou diatonikou ze Západu atd. Všechny tyto fenomény koexistují vedle sebe ve zvláštní symbióze a bakalářská práce ukazuje, jak se vzájemně ovlivňují.

Zusammenfassung

Das Phänomen der Musikkultur von Ethnikon Minangkabau, welches die Mehrheit der Bevölkerung in West –Sumatra bildet, ist ein Thema, das bis jetzt im Tschechischen Kontext fast nicht bearbeitet wurde. Diese Bakkalaureus – Arbeit behandelt Musikinstrumente und Musikarten von Ethnikon Minangkabau. Die Arbeit ist auf der Forschung im Terrain begründet, die Während des Studienaufenthaltes der Autorin in West Sumatra seit September 2006 bis Juli 2007 realisiert wurde.

Die Haupteinstellung der Arbeit bilden Musik aus dem Gebiet *Darek*, das im Minangkabauer Berland liegt, und ihre inhärenten Entitäten wie *Talempong* (Gonggarnitur) und andere spezifischen Instrumente aus dem Gebiet, auch der traditionelle Gesang *Dendang* und sonstige Vokal – und Instrumentalarten, sowie Tanzarten, traditionelles Theater *Randai* und Kampfkunst *Silat*.

Die Autorin bemüht sich die Grundfragen zu beantworten, die Musikinstrumente und Populationsarten Minangkabau betreffen. Diese wichtigen Forschungsergebnisse sind von geographischen, historischen, auch kulturellen Informationen eingerahmt. Das Ziel der Arbeit würde Präsentation der Kultur Minangkabau im Ganzen.

Das Resultat der Untersuchung des zeitgenössischen Zustands der Minangkabauer Musik enthüllt, das diese Musik, sowohl auch die sonstige Kunst und Kultur allgemein werden ein Potpourri, in dem das Alte und Neue verbunden sind: „alter“ Animismus mit neuem und immer mehr aktivem Islam, alte traditionelle Zeremonielle mit neuen Impulsen und Musikrichtungen, traditionelle Musikinstrumente mit neuen elektrischen, alte Tonsysteme (Pentatonik, Heptatonik) mit der aus Westen relativ neu applizierten Diatonik usw. Alle diese Phänomene existieren nebeneinander in einer besonderen, unglaublichen Symbiose. Diese Arbeit solle alle diese gegenzeitigen Einflüsse zeigen.

Appendix

Diagram of Minangkabau instruments

[M. Kartomi, *On concept Classification of Musical Instruments*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1990]

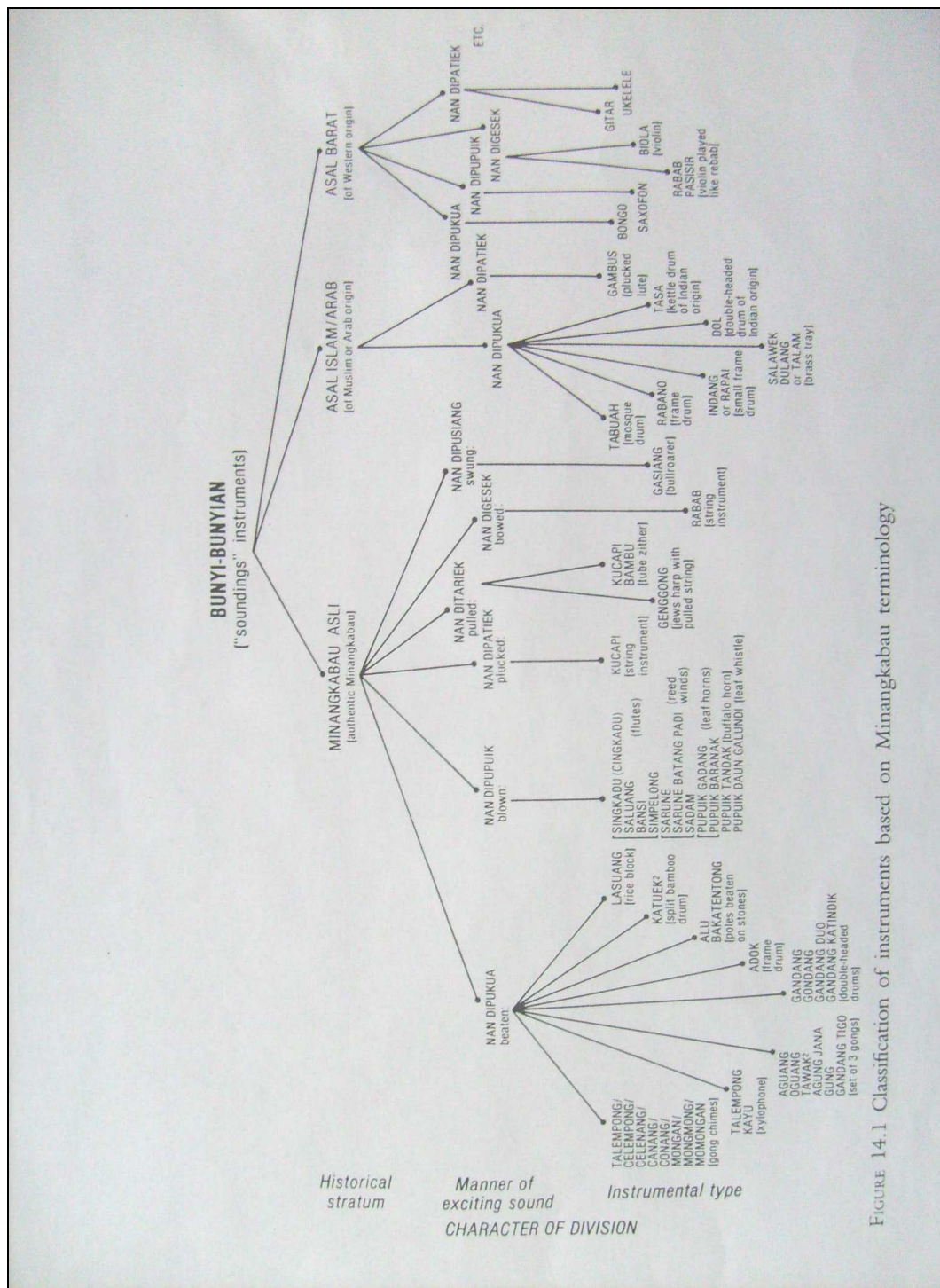


FIGURE 14.1 Classification of instruments based on Minangkabau terminology

Appendix 2

Contents of accompanying CD

1. MUDIAK SUAK - see transcription 1, see Chapter 5, page 63
2. BAYANG SALIDO
3. JOBANG BAJONTIAK
4. PADANG MAGEK
5. TANTI BATANTI
6. ANDAM OI - see transcription 2, see Chapter 5, page 64
7. BACARAI KASIAH

All tracks on the CD were recorded 7th June 2007 in the studio of STSI Padang Panjang.

The performers are Gabriela Szabová [singing] and Pak Anton [*saluang*].

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