

# Bali 1928 – Volume II

## *Tembang Kuna: Songs from an Earlier Time*

*Tembang, Kidung & Kakawin* from Geria Pidada, Klungkung, Geria Budha  
Kaliungu, Banjar Abian Timbul, Geria Tampakgangsul and Penarukan,  
Singaraja



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## Introduction

These historic recordings were made in 1928 (and possibly 1929) as part of a collection of the first and only commercially-released recordings of music in Bali prior to World War II. This diverse sampling of new and older Balinese styles appeared on 78 rpm discs in 1929 with subsequent releases for international distribution. The records were sold worldwide (or not sold, as it happened) and quickly went out of print. It was a crucial time in the island's musical history as Bali was in the midst of an artistic revolution with *kebyar* as the new dominant style of music. *Gamelan* groups were having their older ceremonial orchestras melted down and reforged in the new style. Intense competition between villages and regions stimulated young composers to develop impressive innovations and techniques. Andrew Toth has written of these landmark recordings:

Representatives from these companies [Odeon & Beka] were sent in August of 1928 to extend their coverage to Bali. Five of the ninety-eight existing matrices (sides) made at that time were included by the well-known scholar Erich M. von Hornbostel in an early anthology of non-Western traditions, *Music of the Orient*; this collection was the first exposure to Indonesian music for many people, the public as well as potential ethnomusicologists.

A third of the Odeon/Beka recordings eventually appeared in Europe and America, but the majority had been intended originally for local sale in Bali. For this reason the information on the labels was printed in Malay, the *lingua franca* of the archipelago, and in some cases even in Balinese script. The ambitious plan to develop an indigenous market was a complete failure, however, since few Balinese were interested in this new and expensive technology—especially when there was a world of live performances happening daily in the thousands of temples and households throughout the island. McPhee was the only customer to purchase these 78 rpm discs in an entire year from one frustrated dealer; his collection contains most of the copies that are still preserved to this day, for the agent later smashed the remaining stock in a fit of rage (McPhee 1946: 72).

Fortunately the recordings were made under the guidance of Walter Spies, the painter, musician and long-time resident whose intimate knowledge of Balinese culture was so freely given and so often benefited the work of others (Rhodius 1964: 265; Kunst 1974: 24). Although limited by the medium to being three-minute excerpts, they consequently are remarkable examples of a broad range of musical genres—vocal as well as instrumental—and many outstanding composers, performers and ensembles of the period who are now famous teachers of legendary clubs—I Wayan Lotring, I Nyoman Kalér, and the gamelan gong of Pangkung, Belaluan, and Busungbiu. These invaluable sound documents of the musical and family heritage of the Balinese include styles of vocal chant rarely heard today; *Kebyar Ding*, a historically important composition that has been relearned from the recordings by the present generation of musicians, whose fathers and grandfathers made the original discs; and records of renowned singers that are considered even sacred by their descendants, who keep tape copies in the family shrine.

No new material was released in the West during the ensuing depression and war, while only reprints of the old 78's were issued on different labels and in several anthologies.<sup>1</sup>

Much has come to light in the way of discs and information since Toth's account. In fact, a Chinese shopkeeper by the name of Ang Ban Siong continued to keep the Beka records in stock at his general store, Toko Surabaya, selling household merchandise in Denpasar up until the Japanese occupation in 1942, when he moved his family to Sayan, Ubud.<sup>2</sup> A young lady named Nancy Dean from Rochester, New York, sent by her parents on the proverbial "South Sea Island cruise" in 1936 to separate her from a sweetheart, bought a number of the records from "two nice German gentlemen" in Bali,<sup>3</sup> which luckily for us, were still in mint condition in 2003 as they had hardly ever been played. During the 1980s and 1990s Philip Yampolsky was able to locate 101 matrices (sides of the 78 rpm

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<sup>1</sup> Toth 1980: 16–17

<sup>2</sup> Conversation with Ang Bang Siong's daughter (2009)

<sup>3</sup> According to her friend, ethnomusicologist Ellen Koskoff (personal email 2003)

discs) at various archives in Indonesia, the U.S. and the Netherlands. Yampolsky shared this information with Arbiter's director Allan Evans and myself, facilitating our worldwide effort to access and reissue each and every 78 disc. The process of gaining permission from each archive and visiting most of the collections has taken us eight years. While seeking out private collections we found another Odeon disc from the original set, unlisted by both Toth and Yampolsky, on an auction list from a rural Texas town. And a search through the shelves of the UCLA collection yielded an unpublished disc listed by Toth. More recently we discovered four more sides in Bali. These and other finds bring our collection to 111 sides of three minutes each to be released on five CDs and an anthology. Although it seems clear, judging from a Beka catalogue, that they recorded a considerable amount of music in addition to these, a decision may have been made not to publish many more once they realized the lack of a market. The recording masters were aluminum plates, most likely stored at the Carl Lindstrom factory in Berlin (the parent company), which was bombed during World War II. However, another perspective precedes the war. In 1937 Béla Bartók wrote:

"It is well known that these companies are also busy recording the folk music of exotic countries; these records are bought by the natives, hence the expected profit is there. However, as soon as sales diminish for any reasons, the companies withdraw the records from circulation and the matrices are most likely melted down. This happened with one of the highly valuable Javanese record series of Odeon, as quoted in the bibliography of *Musique et chansons populaires* of the League of Nations. If matrices of this kind actually are destroyed, it represents vandalism of such nature that the different countries ought to enact laws to prevent it, just as there are laws in certain countries prohibiting destruction or marring of historic monuments."<sup>4</sup>

Eighty years after the recording sessions, as we acquired the records and transferred them to CD, our research team visited the oldest knowledgeable artists—many in their 80s or 90s and three at the age of 100—in villages whose musicians and singers were recorded in 1928—and often the children of those artists, now in their 70s and 80s. We would bring a boombox and play a CD of music that no one had heard for eighty years. While some of the repertoire has endured, much of the style and aesthetic has changed and many compositions have been forgotten. Some families would give us photographs of the artists of 1928. Another photo, acquired at the New York Public Library, led to our discovery of one of the two living artists known to have participated in the 1928 sessions. Our team visited this ninety-one year-old woman, Mémén Redia (formerly Ni Wayan Pempen), who was a solo singer at the age of ten or eleven for Kedaton's *jangér* group (CD #5). Mémén Redia described the recording session in detail and still remembered all the lyrics, correcting our earlier transcriptions. She recalled the recording taking place in the open air, on the ground and under a *tataring* 'temporary structure of bamboo' and *kelangsah* 'woven coconut leaves' near the village center. She suggested that some of the other recording sessions might have been at a *balé banjar* 'central hamlet building' open

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<sup>4</sup> Bartók 1992: 294. Bartók's interest extended into his concert repertoire: he and his wife performed McPhee's transcriptions for two pianos, "Balinese Ceremonial Music," at Amherst College in 1942 (Oja 1990: 153, 179). One of those pieces is *Buaya Mangap* (*Tabuh Telu*) on *Bali 1928: CD #1*.

on three sides with brick or mud wall and floor, and a roof of woven coconut leaves or thatch with bamboo and coconut wood beams. Many older-generation Balinese we visited refer to the old records and record players collectively as *orgel* rather than the Indonesian *piringan hitam* ‘black plates’, perhaps because the record players might have been thought of as related to Dutch *orgel* pipe organs, being a machine that produces music.

According to Philip Yampolsky, a Beka Music Company catalogue apparently printed in 1932 indicates that all of their recordings were made in Denpasar, Bali, except for four songs recorded in Lombok.<sup>5</sup> The catalogue also mentions that thirty-four discs were recorded in 1929, all of which, except for four sides, were vocal music. Twenty-five percent of our collection are listed in this group. However, little information regarding a second Beka recording tour has come to light as of yet, although according to Spies biographer John Stowell, in a letter to Jaap Kunst dated November 16, 1929, Spies refers to “the new Bekas.” In a letter to his mother, Martha Spies, dated July 1, 1928, he mentioned having entered a contract with Odeon for fifty records to be made over three years.”<sup>6</sup> David Sandberg, Spies’s grand-nephew and head of the Leo-und-Walter-Spies Archiv in Berlin, confirms that Spies’s letters home only mention Odeon and remuneration that would finally allow him to build his first house in Ubud. Spies wrote, “It is better than many little percents. Now I have a new contract for Balinese records, also Fl. 1,000 (one thousand guilders) per annum...In August the records will be produced. The players (njogos) get 1,000 guilders, too, I prevailed, for fifty records.” And in April 1929, Spies wrote again to his mother with regard to the records, promising, “I will send the best of it to you, if I have the money.”<sup>7</sup> Although Odeon and Beka were subsidiary labels under the Lindstrom conglomerate, Spies’s letters indicate competition and distinctly different operations between the two labels,<sup>8</sup> and we are still exploring the possibility that Spies might not have been involved with the Beka recordings. This topic will be discussed further in a forthcoming publication of our *Bali 1928* series.

Another question—regarding the location of Denpasar for all of the Beka recording sessions—recently arose when I Wayan Rata, *angklung* musician in Sidan, Gianyar (CD #4), asserted that he witnessed the recording session at the *balé banjar* in his village when he was approximately ten years old.

A missing link in previous discussions of the recordings is Ida Boda (a.k.a. Ida Bagus Boda<sup>9</sup>), surely an invaluable advisor to Beka—and possibly Odeon and Walter Spies—in choosing the artists and *gamelan* ensembles. From our research we can make this

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<sup>5</sup> Personal communication with Philip Yampolsky (2002)

<sup>6</sup> Personal email correspondence with John Stowell (2014)

<sup>7</sup> Personal email correspondence with David Sandberg (2009 and 2014)

<sup>8</sup> As just one example, David Sandberg writes, “In Badung, Bali (Den Pasar) was a shop, Behn & Meyer, that only sold Bekas.” Personal email correspondence (2014). However, McPhee implies that the enraged dealer who destroyed his own inventory had been selling both Odeons and Bekas (1946: 71).

<sup>9</sup> The inclusion of ‘Bagus’ was an early 20<sup>th</sup>-century development, and many Brahmana in East Bali still choose to go without it. After hearing so many of his peers referring to him as Ida Boda, we asked his descendants how he liked to be called, and they confirmed we could do without the ‘Bagus’.

assumption based on the fact that so many of the *gamelan* groups and singers had close relations with Ida Boda, either being his students or fellow performers. Ida Boda was a renowned *légong* teacher and *topéng panasar* ‘mask dance vocalist, comic and narrator’, performing with Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak of Geria Pidada, Klungkung (featured on this CD) and more frequently with Ida Bagus Rai Purya and Nyarikan Seriada (CD #5). Innovator and networker, Ida Boda was the *légong* master for the *gamelan kebyar* of Belaluan (CD #1 and #4), taught *légong* to the *gong Kebyar* and dancers of Busungbiu (Bali 1928: CD #1), sang *mabebasan* with Ni Dayu Madé Rai (who is heard on this CD),<sup>10</sup> performed *jangér* with the ensemble of Kedaton (CD #5) after which he became teacher for their rival group from the neighboring village of Bengkel in the 1930s. While these two *jangér* groups battled each other as artistic competitors<sup>11</sup> Ida Boda clearly transcended the rivalries,<sup>12</sup> as evidenced by Arthur Fleischmann’s photographs from the period between 1937–39, in which he is seen performing as *panasar* with the *jangér* group of Kedaton.<sup>13</sup> He danced *topéng* with the *gamelan angklung* of Banjar Bun (CD #4) and performed *Cupak* with the *gendér wayang batél* ensemble of Kaliungu (CD #3) as well as with Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak. His student Nyoman Kalér (1892–1969), composer-choreographer-theorist-educator, taught the *gamelan jogéd* of Pagan (CD #3) and the *angklung* of Pemogan (CD #4), and led the *gamelan palégongan* of Kelandis (CD #3). Ida Boda surely knew the *Sasak cepung* group recorded in Lombok (CD #5) from his many musical excursions there and even played a *suling* ‘bamboo flute’ solo for one tune recorded in 1928 (CD #4).

Among the discs on this CD series are several that the young Canadian composer and pianist Colin McPhee (1900–1964) heard in New York soon after their release.<sup>14</sup> Upon listening to the 1928 Odeon recordings, McPhee and his wife, anthropologist Jane Belo, were inspired to embark on a visit to Bali in 1931 which grew into a research expedition to consume them over the course of eight years and lead to his major work of scholarship, *Music in Bali* and her work with Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson as well as her own books including *Trance in Bali*.

After four years in Bali, McPhee wrote an article, “The Absolute Music of Bali,” for the journal *Modern Music*, positing: “what inspires the musician with wonder and envy, is the satisfactory *raison d’être* of music in the community. The musicians are an integral part of the social group, fitting in among ironsmiths and goldsmiths, architects and scribes, dancers and actors, as constituents of each village complex. Modest and unassuming, they nevertheless take great pride in their art, an art which, however, is so

<sup>10</sup> According to both Ida Wayan Padang (1913–2012) and I Wayan Rugeh (1929–2014)

<sup>11</sup> According to I Madé Monog, member of *jangér* Kedaton since the 1930s

<sup>12</sup> According to Ida Bagus Pujiarsa (1947–)

<sup>13</sup> Fleischmann 2007

<sup>14</sup> “Then in 1929, I think it was, we were given in New York City the opportunity to hear the first recordings of Balinese music, which had been made by Odeon under the direction of Walter Spies. The records we heard were brought to us by Claire Holt and Gela Archipenko (wife of the sculptor) who had just returned from a visit to Java and Bali...We decided to go the following winter...That was in 1930–1...” Belo: *Traditional Balinese Culture*: 1970:xviii. But according to the New York Public Library’s Guide to the Holt, Claire, 1901–1970. Papers, ca 1928–1970, (<http://www.nypl.org/research/manuscripts/dance/danholt.xml>), Holt’s first trip to Indonesia was in 1930.

impersonal that the composer himself has lost his identity.”<sup>15</sup>

While McPhee’s ideal of Balinese music was “impersonal,” with compositions unattributed to specific composers, this became less the case in the course of the 20th century.<sup>16</sup> Even in the early 1930s, McPhee quotes the composer I Wayan Lotring: “Ké-wěh!”<sup>17</sup> It is hard to compose! Sometimes I cannot sleep for nights, thinking of a new piece. It turns round and round in my thoughts. I hear it in my dreams. My hair has grown thin thinking of music.”<sup>18</sup>

### A Sketch of the Time Period of these Recordings

In 1928 Bali was part of the Netherlands East Indies (now the Republic of Indonesia) but Bali’s rajas had not been entirely conquered until 1908. *Kebyar* emerged around the turn of the 20th century in North Bali’s Buléléng region, which came under Dutch control beginning in 1849 after forces loyal to the Balinese king of Lombok and allied with the Dutch killed the celebrated military leader and chief minister of Buléléng, Gusti Ktut Jlantik, along with the king of Buléléng and the king of Karangasem, East Bali. At the time Bali had eight kings and their own internecine struggles for power allowed the Dutch to play one kingdom against another. Economic control was the goal but Dutch efforts to morally justify their conquest centered on the Balinese slave trade (which Holland had long benefited from) and widow sacrifice associated with royal cremations. One by one the kingdoms collapsed under Dutch attack: Lombok in 1894, Badung (Denpasar) in 1906 and Klungkung in 1908.

Each fell in “a traditional way to signal the ‘ending’ of a kingdom, and indeed the word *puputan* means ‘ending’. The *puputan* was both a sign to other kings of an end, and a way to achieve liberation of the soul by death in battle.”<sup>19</sup> Adrian Vickers continues, “...the Dutch moved on the capital of Denpasar. On the morning of 20 September the king, his family and thousands of armed followers all dressed in white and ready to meet death in battle, marched out to meet the Dutch. Each of the leading warriors ran amuk in turn, marching on as if bullets would bounce off their bodies. The Dutch opened fire on ‘women with weapons in their hands, lance or kris, and children in their arms’ who ‘advanced fearlessly upon the troops and sought death’...surrender was impossible:

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<sup>15</sup> McPhee 1935: 163

<sup>16</sup> Hildred Geertz (2004) challenges the idea of anonymity by showing how individual sculptors in Batuan were known and appreciated during their lifetimes for the art they created for the *Pura Désa* ‘community temple’, but that because written records were not kept, their identities could be forgotten over time.

<sup>17</sup> The spellings in this article follow modernized Balinese orthography of dictionaries such as *Kamus Bali-Indonesia* by I Nengah Medera et.al. (1990) and *Kamus Bali-Indonesia* by Yayasan Pustaka Nusantara, I Nengah Sukayana, editor (2008). Although this system was proposed as early as 1972 it has been applied irregularly in writings on the arts, but we have mostly chosen to adhere to it so as to reflect a closer relationship to actual Balinese *aksara* ‘letters, syllables’. For instance, many words with prefixes frequently spelled *pe* or *peng* are spelled here with the prefixes *pa* and *pang*. It should still be noted that Latinized spellings of Balinese words vary in publications, reflecting different ways of adapting from Balinese script.

<sup>18</sup> McPhee 1946: 162

<sup>19</sup> Vickers 1989: 34



‘where an attempt was made to disarm them this only led to an increase in our losses. The survivors were repeatedly called on to surrender, but in vain’. The king, his family and followers advanced relentlessly, killing themselves and any Dutch troops who came within range as they went. The Dutch later tried to cover up the death toll, but while it was fairly light on the Dutch side, well over 1000 Balinese were killed.”<sup>20</sup>

We can speculate about all of the factors that fed an artistic explosion in the period following the collapse of the kingdoms. I Nyoman Catra has suggested that the profusion of creative experimentation was akin to medicine helping heal the trauma of social upheaval and colonial occupation.<sup>21</sup> The dismantling of the power and wealth of the many regional kingdoms led to a kind of decentralization/democratization of the arts as they spread out to the *banjar* ‘hamlets’. *Puput* ‘the end’ also implies the beginning of something new. And along with the fashions and technology associated with modernity brought in by the Dutch came the small but steady stream of European and American travelers on cruise ships to this island paradise beginning in the 1920s. The Bali Hotel was built in 1927 by the Dutch colonial government as a stopover accommodation for the crew of KPM (Royal Packet Navigation Company) while their ships were anchored off the coast, and officially began operations as a hotel in 1928 after the Dutch government handed ownership over to KPM.<sup>22</sup> Within hearing distance of Gong Belaluan’s rehearsals at their *balé banjar*, the hotel soon became a hub of artistic accommodations to the tastes of international audiences. At the same time Balinese innovations continued to be driven by indigenous tastes and passions—both of artists and their local audiences.

Various manifestations of Balinese modernism are exemplified by the emergence—most likely in the teens—of *jangér*.<sup>23</sup> One clear influence on *jangér* was *Komedie Stamboel*, the Malay–language European–influenced theater which first appeared in Surabaya, Java in 1891.<sup>24</sup> Seemingly innocuous and lightweight to foreigners<sup>25</sup> but well-loved by most Balinese to this day, *jangér* humorously blended traditional dramatic themes with catchy songs performed by girls in traditional costumes along with a *kécak* chorus of boys in western costume including short trousers, epaulettes and silly moustaches. *Jangér* (on CD #5) fused musical elements from *Sang Hyang* trance ritual, Malay *pantun* sung poetry, and *cakepung* palm–liquor drinking songs with *gamelan geguntangan*, most commonly used to accompany *arja* dance opera, as well as *gamelan tambour* which included a *rebana* drum of Arabic origin;<sup>26</sup> their adaptation of the *saman* and *saudati* style of hand and arm movements and postures performed in Muslim Sufi rituals and other dances in Aceh, North Sumatra, became a signature element of *jangér*’s male *kécak* dancers. All this came together in *jangér* with elements of classical *légong* dance and

<sup>20</sup> Vickers 1989: 35, and within single quotes, a participant’s report from the chief of staff of the expedition, from Nordholt 1986: 5

<sup>21</sup> Conversation (2006)

<sup>22</sup> Mardika 2011: 28

<sup>23</sup> According to I Madé Kredek of Singapadu, *jangér* first emerged at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Menyali, North Bali (Bandem 2004: 148–52), a view also confirmed by I Gdé Budasi from Menyali (conversation 2013).

<sup>24</sup> See Achmad, 2006: 31 and Cohen 2006: 21

<sup>25</sup> Covarrubias 1937: 251–255

<sup>26</sup> Conversation with I Madé Monog (2007)



*wayang wong* dance drama based on the *Ramayana* epic, as well as circus acrobatics inspired by visiting troupes. And following Charlie Chaplin's visit to Bali in 1932 the painted moustaches worn by the *kécak* boys' chorus took the name *caplin*. Curiously, revivals of *jangér* over the course of the 20th century have recurred in times of political and social turmoil.

In the 1920s *gamelan gong kebyar* and related dances were starting to be seen and heard across both North and South; the compositions recorded in 1928 from Belaluan, Pangkung, Busungbiu and Kuta represent a revolutionary shift in musical and choreographic aesthetics. *Cak* (*kécak*) would only appear as a distinct dance drama—evolving into the *Ramayana* “monkey chant,” as it is known to international audiences—four years later, although its chorus traditionally accompanied *Sang Hyang* trance rituals, and *jangér*, its sister genre with *kécak* chorus (also having evolved out of *Sang Hyang*), was already popular.

*Kebyar* came into being around the turn of the century and innovations were brewing between 1910 and 1915 in North Bali's Buléleng region, the Dutch colonial administration center. The late 19th century, throughout the island, witnessed a creative era of Balinese—language (or a mix of *Kawi* ‘Old Javanese’ and Balinese) *geguritan* poetic literature and its song genre (*pupuh*) taking on historical, mystical and romantic themes as well as sociopolitical topics. At the turn of the century, a revival of interest in classical *kakawin* texts led to a plethora of *sekaa papaosan* ‘literary clubs’ emphasizing the skills of recitation in *Kawi* and translation into the Balinese language. Another popular form, *palawakia*, refers to non-metric prose *Parwa* texts from the *Mahabharata* recited in broad melodic contours. Literary clubs from different villages would compete against one another before ever-increasing audiences at ceremonial religious events and at night markets. Sometimes the *juru baca* (*pangwacen*) ‘singer’/‘reader’ and *juru basa* (*paneges*) translator would sit amidst a *gamelan* ensemble intoning *kakawin* verses from the *Bharatayuddha* section of the *Mahabharata*, or individual musicians in the *gamelan* might sing a verse of impromptu *kakawin*. (It was expected of musicians to be familiar with *kakawin* in order to respond musically to the sung texts). The surrounding *gamelan gong* would play short instrumental interludes from the classical repertoire and increasingly in the flashier musical phrasing that became *kebyar*. Most significantly, a solo singer would alternate his vocalizing by playfully rendering melodies on the solo *trompong*, a row of tuned, knobbed gongs, performed with some *gaya* ‘style’ or ‘flourish’. It is uncertain at which point this *trompong* playing began to resemble baton-twirling in a marching band or *main sulap* ‘sleight of hand’. The *Palawakia* dance performed today derives from this practice, generally credited to I Marya's *Igel Trompong* although alternative origins have come to light.<sup>27</sup>

In twenty-first century Bali we find an inquisitiveness toward reclaiming the past, wondering what is important in Balinese culture. The unprecedented interest in these old recordings amongst musicians, dancers and singers young and old has encouraged our persistence in implementing, over many years and continents, a repatriation project,

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<sup>27</sup> Simpen 1979 and Herbst 2009

searching far-flung archives to assist contemporary Balinese in reclaiming their aural history.

### A Poet and His World in Nineteenth-Century Klungkung

Researching the 1928 recordings of *pupuh*, sung poetry from the Brahmana Geria Pidada community in Klungkung, led us to explore the social and creative milieu of Anak Agung Gdé Pameregan (1810–1892),<sup>28</sup> author of the many of the *geguritan* verses sung by Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak and Ida Boda. Anak Agung Gdé Pameregan (a.k.a. Meregan), who in order to remain anonymous (a common practice of *pujangga* ‘poets’ to “humble themselves,” but also, in another sense, to protect themselves from any disapproval of *rajas*), used a *supik dohar* ‘pen name’ with obscure meanings, *Wirya Ghora Pratode*. *Wirya* is derived from *sira*, meaning great (in stature); *ghora* is also *gedé* ‘great’, ‘big’; *pratode* is a whip; *meragah*, or *mregan* is ‘animal’, his name at birth. The intended meaning, according to Ida I Déwa Gdé Catra from Sidemen, Karangasem,<sup>29</sup> was to “animate the animals” within his poems using the stimulus of a whip. In the publication of his *Duh Ratnayu: Tembang Kawi Mendamba Cinta*,<sup>30</sup> the *nama samaran* ‘pen name’ is *Ghora Tanu* (*tanu* meaning ‘body’). These two pen names are in agreement with Ida Bagus Pidada Kaut’s information<sup>31</sup> and I Madé Suastika confirms the former name, referring to Pameregan’s *Calon Arang*.<sup>32</sup> As illustrated in the selections on this CD, he wrote his poems in *Bali Kapara* ‘common Balinese’, mixed *Kawi* ‘Old Javanese’ with *alus* ‘high, refined’ Balinese and also composed just in *Kawi* (ibid: 327).

Déwa Agung Istri Kania, the queen who reigned over the kingdom of Klungkung during its glory days of the nineteenth century, presided over literary and artistic activities that included Pameregan. In *Visible and Invisible Realms: Power, Magic and Colonial Conquest in Bali*, Margaret Wiener writes, “In Klungkung oral tradition Déwa Agung Istri Kania, “the Virgin Queen,” is renowned for both beauty and brilliance.<sup>33</sup> A skilled poet in her own right (Kanta 1983), she was also a patron to other artists; the *Babad Ksatria* likens her to the Goddess Saraswati, and she is said to have been the force behind Klungkung’s literary efflorescence...”<sup>34</sup> Saraswati, goddess of learning and literature, is the wife of Brahma.

Adrian Vickers, in *Bali: A Paradise Created*, describes the devastation that occurred from the enormous eruption of Mount Tambora<sup>35</sup> the same year (1815) her brother, Déwa

<sup>28</sup> These dates are in Suastika 1997: 324

<sup>29</sup> Conversation (Amlapura, 2009)

<sup>30</sup> Adapted by Nyoman Tusthi Eddy (PT. Upada Sastra with Yayasan Adi Karya Ikapi and The Ford Foundation: 2001)

<sup>31</sup> Conversation at Geria Pidada, Klungkung (2006)

<sup>32</sup> “Kirtya 1047; cf. Uug Gianyar, LOr 3743” (Suastika 1997: 325)

<sup>33</sup> I use the current Balinese spelling of *istri* while Vickers and Wiener use *isteri*. ‘Kania’ is often also spelled ‘Kanya’.

<sup>34</sup> Wiener 1995: 140

<sup>35</sup> “On 10 April 1815, Tambora produced the largest eruption known on the planet during the past 10,000 years.” <http://www.volcanodiscovery.com/tambora.html>

Agung Putra II was ascending to power following her father Déwa Agung I's death in 1809. The volcanic debris resulted in as many as 96,000 deaths with widespread famine and disease continuing into the late 1920s throughout Bali and Lombok. Vickers continues, "After this devastation came a period of reconstruction and the emergence of a new Bali. In Klungkung the Virgin Queen and her brother...sponsored the restoration of the old palace of Klungkung, to which they returned. They were also strong supporters of the many state temples, and the Virgin Queen spent much of her reign meditating in the Flower Garden Temple to the north of the capital...During their joint reign the school of traditional painting in the village of Kamasan, two kilometers south of Klungkung, was rejuvenated" (Vickers 1989: 68). Vickers also dedicates an article to a discussion of references to Déwa Agung Istri Kania:

"In the *kakawin Astikayana* (Astika's adventures—a collection of Adiparwa stories) there is mention of a "princess (sic) (*naranatha-kanya*), whose beauty, nobility and proficiency in the sciences and arts is praised in the *manggala*. 'The name by which she is called by the great monks is *sang sri Wiryasakanta*'" (Zoetmulder 1971: 396). The text further mentions this royal patron as the center of great literary activity and the author of poems herself. In the *Babad Dalem*, the ancestral geneology of the rulers of Klungkung (East Bali), there is a record of that kingdom having a queen, called in that geneology the Déwa Agung Istri Kanya (*Babad Dalem*, f. 92b). The first two words are the titles of all the rulers of Klungkung, "Istri" merely denotes her sex, while "Kanya" means she was not married. From an interview with one of the present-day members of that royal family, Cokorda Gede Mayun, it becomes clear that her rule is now regarded as somewhat of a golden age in the recent history of Klungkung. Cokorda Mayun, himself an enthusiastic student of literature, even tells the apocryphal story that *kakawin* and *kidung* were sung every day of her reign, which he estimates to have been thirty five years. The Déwa Agung Istri is recorded as ruling with her brother, Déwa Agung Putra, a son of a low-status wife of the former king, Bhatara Kusamba. It seems that there were two rulers, because not all power interests would have found a queen acceptable, while others would not have accepted a ruler born from a low-status mother.

The exact date of the joint reigns of these two is not known. Van Eck says that their father died in 1809, when Déwa Agung Putra was nine years old, and that Déwa Agung Putra ruled until 1849 (van Eck 1878-80 III: 346). According to Cokorda Gedé Mayun the "queen-mother", Gusti Ayu Karang, was the actual ruler after her husband's death, until the 1820's, and the Déwa Agung Istri died in 1868."<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> In Vickers: 'The Writing of Kekawin and Kidung on Bali', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 138: 492-3

But Wiener's timing is such that, " ...about 1815...a compromise was reached: the son was established as Déwa Agung II, but he was to rule jointly with his sister. He was the ruler van den Broek described as "an insignificant youth" is 1817 and Huskus Koopman identified as Bali's Keizer...Ironically, the only reference to Huskus Koopman in Balinese historiography comes in a text generally attributed to her [Déwa Agung Isteri Kania's] authorship: she notes that, although his manners were good and his clothing fine, his teeth were stained and his breath rank (Narayana et al. 1987: 44)."<sup>37</sup> I Madé Suastika writes:

"During the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the Puri Klungkung were three poets, I Dewa Agung Isteri Kania, Ida Pedanda Gde Rai, dan Anak Agung Gde Pameregan. At that time relations developed between a group in the puri with the region outside the puri, most importantly with the arrival of well-known bagawanta [palace pendeta 'priests'] to nurture the sons of the raja. The function of the bagawanta was as *guru*. These teachers in the Klungkung palace were pendeta [pedanda] from Geria Cucukan, Geria Dawan, dan Geria Pidada. Their guidance encompassed an education in social and cultural studies that included literature, technology and religion.

Anak Agung Gde Pameregan received his education through teachings inherited from his ancestors. The basics for a great author is that he has already lived a life of traditional education, and is able to utilize traditional texts he has read, discussed and imitated through the activity of mabebasan 'group reading/singing sessions'. During this era it is likely that the kingdom of Klungkung was at ease and peaceful, the Balinese rajas possessing their sovereign positions and freedom (Gede Agung, 1989: 134)—from after the Kusamba war (1849) until before the puputan Klungkung (1908)—when the development of the arts was well established."<sup>38</sup>

Ida Bagus Pidada Kaut has told us that Anak Agung Gdé Pameregan was married and had one daughter who died at an early age. Pameregan's most popularly known poem, *Duh Ratnayu (Smara Pralaya)*, was one of those written during the reign of I Déwa Agung Putra III (1850–1903).<sup>39</sup>

### Perspectives on Vocal Music

While literary and linguistic aspects of Balinese poetry have received a great deal of attention from Balinese and foreign scholars, there is a fairly limited amount of published studies of the actual discipline of singing. Within the practice of vocal music, and even in music-making generally, there is a plethora of local, regional and personal approaches and *istilah* 'terminologies', each of which reflect distinct sensibilities. To lend a *dalang*'s

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<sup>37</sup> Wiener 1995: 140

<sup>38</sup> Suastika 1997: 325 (my translation)

<sup>39</sup> Kanta 1984: 5

perspective to the divergencies between various styles, there are no rules on what is *baik* ‘good’ and *buruk* ‘bad’; if a sound is “incorrect’ but is pleasant to hear, it is not perceived as a mistake. The emphasis is rather on what is *pangus* and *lengut* ‘appropriate to the context’ (Ketut Kodi 2013).

Within the context of locating and hopefully illuminating the sonic world of 1928 I draw from only those sources and information that lend insight into these recordings, to evoke a glimpse of the social and natural environment of the period as well as specific insights and opinions heard directly from Balinese artists and scholars we have met in the course of our research. In the course of this article the reader will encounter multifarious references to music that reflect an ecology surrounded by seas, wet-rice fields traversing hills that descend from active volcanoes causing occasional tremors, and vegetation that can produce tastes ranging from the hottest of *tabia* ‘peppers’ to the sweetest of fruits like *manggis* (*garcinia mangostana*) and *wani* (*mangifera caesia*).

The word *ombak* ‘waves’ is used in all different vocal contexts ranging from Ida Boda’s *pupuh Adri* (track #10) to the fluctuations in Ni Lemon’s *Wargasari* (tracks #17 and 18) and the rippling effect in the *kakawin* of Klungkung (tracks #19-22). *Gregel* ‘fast, subtle, fluttering melodic waves’, or alternatively defined in Indonesian as *getaran halus dan cepat* ‘subtle, fast vibrations or tremors’, is another commonly-used term in Bali, possibly imported from Java in the 1950s. The verb form *ngregel* is commonly used today in discussion of all song forms including *tembang* (*pupuh*), *kidung* and *kakawin*. An unusual (at least, today) term for waves or fluctuations in a tone, offered by Ida Wayan Padang (1913–2012) of Budakeling, is *gegiwangan* or *gumi wang* ‘oscillation’ in Old Javanese. Pak Padang also gave the meaning as *bergoyang* ‘wiggling, changeable’. We must distinguish this from the Balinese word *giwang* ‘earring’. His *gegiwangan* can describe much of Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak’s singing, including his *Sinom* (track #2). Ida Wayan Padang also used the word *nglombang* ‘waves’ to refer to extended tones at the ends of melodic phrases such as Ida Bagus Ngurah’s *Kidung Lulungid* (track #15).

Life in earlier times, and up until not so long ago, was much more oriented toward the creeks and rivers as places where everyone would bathe each morning and afternoon (although rivers can also be sources of spiritual danger). Cokorda Raka Tisnu of Singapadu recalls how a stroll around the village at such times would be within ear shot of singing everywhere, whereas nowadays one hardly ever hears casual singing in public, if at all.

*Kakawin* singer Ida Bagus Madé Gandem (1933–) of Cakranegara, Lombok, suggests a way of developing the voice is in the morning on an empty stomach and in the late afternoon at a spring or below a waterfall of one or one and a half meters, with the water washing over you, and singing or screaming until hoarse with the throat swollen. When Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak would bathe at the public spring in Klungkung, he often attracted a bevy of young women who would come close to listen to him singing from under the water’s flow, and watch him as well, also offering to wash his clothing while he bathed. Oka, as is common amongst vocalists, also strengthened his voice by singing

loudly while up to his neck in the cold *Tukad Unda* river. When Ni Nyoman Candri<sup>40</sup> was first learning from her father she would sit in the river with water up to her neck and sing in her high register as loud as she could. After half an hour or so, she would lose her voice. A few days later the voice would return and she would be back at the river. After repeating this cycle over the course of time, the voice was strong and relaxed for singing *tembang arja*.

I Ketut Kodi<sup>41</sup> recalls hearing that the legendary *Cupak* and *Rangda* performer Gusti Ngurah Mokoh (a.k.a. Anak Agung Aji Mokoh) of Tegaltamu (father of *baris* dancer Gusti Ngurah Regug) would fill his mouth with *lombok* ‘hot peppers’ soaked in water and scream until hoarse, while up to his neck in a river or stream. This would cultivate a *keras* ‘strong’ voice that could be heard for great distances. Similarly, Ida Cokorda Oka Tublen of Singapadu, legendary *tukang tapel* ‘mask carver’, master teacher of *arja*, and *Rangda* performer, would supervise his *arja* students as they were submerged in a creek on how to swallow whole (without chewing) a ball of *lombok* peppers that had been soaked in coconut oil.<sup>42</sup> We have heard of such practices amongst singers and *dalang* ‘shadow puppeteers’ all over Bali in order to cultivate a *suara encak* ‘broken, shattered, fragmented’. *Suara encak* (or *encak*) is most common with stylized or normal speech of strong characters in *wayang* or dance drama rather than with singing. Yet *dalang* such as Wayan Nartha say that *suara encak* should not be forced, but worked on gradually. Supposedly, two of the great *dalang* of the earlier part of the twentieth century, Granyam and Rawa, had voices that were not very loud and strong, but conveyed *encak* qualities with less force and tension. A basic consideration is not to be pushing the sound out of the mouth, but keeping it resonating in the body.<sup>43</sup> And Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak’s preferred drink for nourishing his sweet, agile voice was boiled *biyu kayu*, literally ‘wood banana’ (but actually a normal variety) soaked in *santen* ‘coconut milk’. He would have this drink, sing again, and alternate drinking and singing until tired. More common amongst singers is to have banana soaked in coconut oil.<sup>44</sup>

Awareness and cultivation of expansive *nafas* ‘breathing’ is essential to Balinese singing. On a deeper level, *pranayama*, yogic breathing, is important for singers to cultivate their art just as the skilled use of breath as a singer is important for developing yogic breathing and meditation. The two activities complement each other. From the yoga perspective Ida Bagus Gandem asked rhetorically, “What is the purpose of *magending* ‘singing’? The purpose of singing is to extend one’s breath.”<sup>45</sup> In cultivating the voice, according to him, one does not breathe from the chest; the sound is in the throat and the source of energy is

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<sup>40</sup> Radio Republik Indonesia performer and teacher from Singapadu specializing in the role of *condong* for *arja* and *Calonarang*.

<sup>41</sup> *Dalang*, *topéng* and *arja* performer from Singapadu and teacher at ISI, the Indonesian Institute of Arts in Bali. Kodi was given this information by Aji Mokoh’s student, I Madé Kengguh from Singapadu, a musician, *topéng* and *Rangda* performer who also specialized in the role of Matah Gedé, the witch in the *Calonarang* magic dance drama.

<sup>42</sup> Also known as Déwa Agung Singapadu, his specialty was *barong* and *Rangda* masks.

<sup>43</sup> Herbst 1997: 25

<sup>44</sup> Ida Bagus Pidada Kaut (conversation 2006)

<sup>45</sup> Ida Bagus Madé Gandem, Cakranegara (conversation 2006)

in the stomach, diaphragm. This is the way of acquiring extended breath. (Of course, this is also a principle of vocalization outside of Bali as well). Ida Bagus Gandem explained that *makakawin* ‘singing of Old Javanese poems’ is a tool or vehicle for concentration on the extension of one’s breath. Ketut Kodi adds that with *pranayama* yogic breathing itself, one can grow bored from the repeated incoming and outgoing air, but singing creates a continuity so it becomes alive and interesting.

Nyoman Suarka writes of *ngunjal angkian* ‘controlling the breath’ (2007: 153), which in Singapadu is referred to as *ngunyar angkian*. *Nguaca angkian* ‘recycling the breath’ was taught to me by Madé Pasek Tempo of Tampaksiring, which he also described as “stealing breath as you sing so that no one will notice.” By *ngunda angkian*, Pak Tempo meant ‘moving the breath continuously’.<sup>46</sup> A melodic corollary and essential technique of his was *nyambung*, melodic movement so continuous the listener does not perceive it changing.

In a corporeal manifestation of the *Trimurti*, *Ang*, associated with Brahma, the breath enters through the nose with everything positive and negative. *Ung*, associated with Wisnu, is associated with cultivating the positive and “burning up the toxic.” *Mang*, associated with Siwa, involves exhaling, dissolution, casting out the negative, implementing that which is healthy and positive.<sup>47</sup>

*Suksma* has been a recurring theme in many of our conversations, a concept and aspired experience relating to poetry and its manifestation in song, be it *tembang*, *kidung* or *kakawin*.<sup>48</sup> Rubinstein (2000: 109) writes, “The beauty of the sites visited by Nirartha veiled a divine presence that was sensually perceptible to him because he possessed the supernatural faculties of a yogi. The term *suksma* recurs in the text to qualify this beauty. *Suksma* signifies the invisible, omnipresent, divine essence that lies beyond normal human cognizance. Zoetmulder’s definition (1982: sv) of *suksma* captures the complexity of its meaning: subtle, of subtle matter, ethereal, unsubstantial, i.e. not accessible to the usual organs of perception, but perceptible to those gifted with supernatural powers; invisible, immaterial (hence, comparable to *sunya*, *niskala*, q.v.: it is the state of the deity not manifesting itself in visible form). Thus it becomes divine (supernatural being), the supernatural manifestation from another world; the invisible essence of what is sensually perceptible...(Zoetmulder 1982: s.v.)”

While it is clear that *taksu* ‘inner spiritual energy made manifest that is perceptible by others’ is said to come after a great deal of study and preparation, cultivation of the abilities and techniques to perform a specific artistic or other kind of task, *taksu* ultimately comes from nature and from a momentum greater than ourselves as human beings.<sup>49</sup> Inspired performance is often said to come from *sungsungan*, the verb being *nyungsung*, literally ‘carrying on one’s head’ divinities that have descended to be

<sup>46</sup> This was in 1980-81.

<sup>47</sup> Conversation with Ketut Kodi (2013)

<sup>48</sup> In everyday Balinese conversation, *suksma* means ‘thank you’, but dictionaries also give the definition offered by Zoetmulder.

<sup>49</sup> I Wayan Dibia (2012) offers a broader, more inclusive, perspective on the nature of *taksu*.

honored and recognized.<sup>50</sup> Along with one's personal attention to skills within our control are other forces at work derived from *mawinten* 'ritual purification', *pasupati* 'empowerment of objects with divine energy',<sup>51</sup> as well as offerings and prayers to the deity *Betara Taksu* (*Déwa Taksu*). Essentially, both processes—learning and performing—involve *niskala* 'the invisible world' as well as *sekala* 'everyday reality'.

References to the tastes of food are considerable and diverse. *Lalah-manis* 'spicy-sweet' was rendered by Pak Tempo as 'fierce and sweet'. And the expression *mamanis suara* 'to sweeten the sound' (by shaping vowels and consonants) is ubiquitous. *Topéng* master, *dalang* and scholar I Ketut Rinda of Blahbatuh explained how spices for cooking also make tasty sounds, giving examples from the *wayang* characters such as *kunyit* 'turmeric' for Merdah's "eeee" coming from his teeth, or *cekuh* (*kencur*—the root of a palm-like plant in the ginger family), producing Sangut's "uuu", *jai* 'ginger' producing Delem's throaty sound and *gamongan* (*lempuyang*) 'wild ginger' giving Tualen his belly resonance.<sup>52</sup> And as the senses of smell and taste are intertwined, it should be mentioned here (and discussed further in this article) that a sequence of subtle vocal intervals can be described as *mabo* 'having the fragrance' of a specific *tekep* or *patutan* 'mode' as played by a *gamelan*.

When *lebeng* is used to describe singing, it is a compliment meaning 'well-cooked' or 'ripe', which is indeed *luung* 'good' or even 'beautiful'. *Warna* (*warnan*) 'color' implies tone in the sense of mood, *rasa* 'feeling', or "movement within stillness, the essence of *masolah* 'characterization within performance'."<sup>53</sup> Generally, good cultivation of the voice can produce a delightful quality that is *lembut* 'soft' by somehow combining *serak* 'dry' or 'hoarse' with *basah* 'moist' qualities.<sup>54</sup> This is the case for both the *dalang* and *panembang* 'singer'. I Nyoman Sadég, *panasar topéng* and *juru tandak* 'vocal soloist for *gambuh*' from the village Batuan, borrowed the Indonesian word *banyak* 'many' to create a Balinese term, *mamanyak* 'multiplying', to suggest the ability to access both high and low tones, also a necessary skill for the *dalang*.<sup>55</sup>

It is commonly said that *Wargasari*, following the sounds of *kidung*, uses a nasal sound *mencuri* 'stealing over' or 'moving' to the teeth and that *tembang* begin with the teeth and *curi* to the nose and the throat. *Tembang* singing particularly utilizes the tip of the tongue. *Kidung* is more concentrated on *suara madyaning lidah* 'the middle of the tongue', while the sound focused above the base of the tongue is favored for *mawirama* 'kakawin singing' and *palawakia* 'stylized prose speech'.

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<sup>50</sup> Conversation with Ketut Kodi (2014)

<sup>51</sup> "Pasupati: a form of Siwa, the name for the divine energy that is invited to "sit" in a power object or in ritual paraphernalia, especially keris, shrines, sacred texts; an offering given to invite such divine energy to enter an object or to recharge a magical object with power, which could also be thought of as "feeding" the object." (Wiener: 1995: 375)

<sup>52</sup> Conversation with Ketut Rinda in Blahbatu (1980)

<sup>53</sup> I Nyoman Astita (conversation 2013)

<sup>54</sup> Conversation with Ketut Kodi (2013)

<sup>55</sup> Conversation with Ketut Kodi (2014)



Mary Zurbuchen further explains: “*Anudanti* are written symbols sounded at the ends of the teeth; *anunasiki* are written symbols sounded through the nose; *alpaprana*: written symbols sounded with fluttering of the lips; *mahaprana*: written symbols sounded from within the mind” (1987: X).

### Musical Notation on Paper and Palm Leaf

Balinese musical notation is of circumscribed utility in general and of little use in dealing with the musical subtleties of 1928. There have been *lontar* ‘palm leaf’ manuscripts over the ages that used *gegrantangan* ‘notation’ to show *pokok* ‘instrumental core tones’ of many compositions for ritual *gamelan gambang* and *luang*. There are also *lontar* manuscripts containing the core tones of *kidung* sung poems as they relate to the instrumental parts. Colin McPhee observed in the 1930s that these notations were not used in teaching or rehearsing but rather as a means of preserving the compositions for posterity or as a reference when the music has been forgotten.<sup>56</sup> Even at the established arts academies in Bali, music is essentially an aural tradition learned by listening, *nuut* ‘imitation’ and *maguru panggul* ‘taught by the mallets’ wherein the student learns how to play kinetically and by means of an intuitive process in which the conscious mind understands after the hands have grasped the musical content. While texts containing *ding-dong* or modern *kepatihan* numbered notation can be a source of reference for beginners, a great many discussions with singers lead us to believe that singing proficiency in all genres including *tembang*, *kidung* and *kakawin* can only be acquired by means of oral transmission. One hears the music casually from early childhood, depending on one’s family and social environment. As he or she begins studying one-on-one with a teacher, the process is by imitation, internalizing and then manifesting the song as an aesthetic entity to be experienced more than an object to be analyzed and codified. As a result of this process that Ketut Kodi describes as fifty percent conscious and fifty percent unconscious, there still exist today great variety of tunings, many of which are not consciously systematized although they reflect the very essence of performance aesthetics.<sup>57</sup>

New systems of notation were developed by I Wayan Djirne and I Wayan Ruma in 1939<sup>58</sup> and in 1960 at the KOKAR conservatory by Nyoman Kalér, Nyoman Rembang and Gusti Putu Madé Griya<sup>59</sup>, but these have not replaced the aural learning process. The *ding-dong* solfege system is and likely has been used orally by *gamelan* teachers through the ages. Most often, the five *pokok* ‘core’ tones (*ding-dong-déng-dung-dang*) are actually vocalized as *nirrr-norrr-nérrr-nurrr-narrr* with a rolling ‘r’. While some singing teachers today, especially in schools, give their students the *ding-dong* solfege of the

<sup>56</sup> McPhee 1966: 56

<sup>57</sup> For more detail see Herbst 1997: 32–50

<sup>58</sup> Their *Taman Sari* introduced numbers to represent pitches.

<sup>59</sup> *Titilaras Dingdong*, as it is often referred to, introduced the Javanese term *laras* ‘scale’ to Bali, and involved such innovations as abstract symbols for various *gamelan* instruments, while further abstracting the pitch numbering system from its original context as *patutan* ‘modes’ or *saih* of specific *gamelan* ensembles. See Aryasa 1984: 28–36.

*pokok* tones, called *pacaperiring* in the case of *tembang*, all accomplished singers with whom we are familiar say that they learned by listening to a *tembang* or *kidung* as a melody with lyrics, and imitating. Many of the most subtle aspects of style, feeling and intonation are acquired even at the earliest stages of learning as a child. Ni Nyoman Candri suggests that the richness of tonal subtlety can only be taught one-on-one with a teacher, in order to internalize and then externalize (in one's own way) the flow of sound through the body, subtle movements of the mouth, head, neck, and shoulders as well as the emotional expression and spirit of the teacher. Some of the great singers of the recent past such as Ni Ketut Redep of Singapadu were illiterate. Redep was renowned for her fantastic memory and great expertise with *tembang* and *kidung*. Nyoman Candri recalls that one of her teachers, the renowned *arja* performer Jero Suli, originally from Keramas, was not cognizant of *ding-dong* 'the names of tones', which are in fact an abstraction of the song. Tones were nameless, intrinsic to an internal flow and instinctual presence within melody and lyrics. But this was no hindrance to these women's mastery of their chosen vocal genres and great range of repertoire. In many cases, I Nengah Medera has explained, some *kakawin* poems such as those recorded in 1928 were also memorized;<sup>60</sup> this was suggested by Zoetmulder with regard to *wirama kakawin* that are commonly used for ritual occasions. The four selections on this CD could indeed be considered appropriate for such ritual occasions.

Listeners may notice as many as seven to nine distinct tones in the *kakawin* selections (tracks #19–22). It is interesting to consider that those tones are all within the range of a (Western) chromatic fifth or sixth. Part of the tonal aesthetic of *mawirama kakawin* 'kakawin singing', especially the Klungkung style even to this day, is *padet*, *kerep*, 'dense', close intervals within a focused tonal range. This has led our research into the ambiguous terrain of implicit and explicit knowledge and practice. When I mentioned to a highly respected *kakawin* singer, Ni Désak Suarti Laksmi, that someone had asserted that only three or four pitches are used in *wirama kakawin*, she suggested that five was a more common conception. But when we listened to recordings of these *wirama* she began to differentiate six, seven, then nine and even more pitches to the octave. Then after she herself sang with several of those subtle intervals, I asked, if she had not conceived of this music as possessing so many pitches, what she had thought those musical phrases were. She answered, "*rasa*," feeling, an implicit element not articulated consciously. This explains some of the difficulty many singers experience traversing the years since 1928 and hearing an entirely "new" set of semitones or microtones that are not part of their intuitive aesthetic performed in much of the standard repertoire.

My own Balinese vocal teachers could be quite analytical about their style and consciously articulated the tonal and modal differences between each song form. So what I am suggesting is not that Balinese singers practice their art without conscious attention to pitches but that the most subtle, nuanced and complex aspects are implicit and within the realm of *rasa*. The intuitive approach works until you have a gap within which a generation misses the aural teaching process that to a large extent bypasses the intellect. That will be the challenge of reviving some of these singing styles. Some might prefer to

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<sup>60</sup> Conversation (2014)

absorb by listening to the recordings without self-conscious analysis and then see what new subtle tunings come while bathing in the shower, or even better, at a spring.

Although *sléndro* and *pélog*, the terms used to differentiate Bali and Java's two *laras* 'scales' are mentioned in the *Catur Muni-muni* section of the *Aji Gurnita* and *Prakempa*, believed to be 19th-century manuscripts,<sup>61</sup> they only came into common usage in Bali during the 1960s after being popularized by Nyoman Rembang, Gusti Putu Madé Griya and Nyoman Kalér, who had all taught at the KOKAR conservatory in Surakarta, Java. This theoretical rubric has in some ways had the affect of obscuring the sonic reality and tonal ecology of the great variety of tunings, modes and terminologies throughout Bali's villages. Some of the pleasures, questions and challenges of comprehending and reviving the lost vocal sensibilities of one hundred years ago reminded us of music scholar and educator Wayan Sinti's bold accusation in a letter to the Bali Post newspaper, "the Balinese public's ears have been colonized (occupied) by [modern five-tone] *gong kebyar* tuning."<sup>62</sup> Even more so, I might add, by diatonic music on radio and TV.

While *gambuh* tuning is referred to as '*saih pitu*', a seven-tone system, the *Catur Muni-muni* text describes a ten-tone *gamelan amladprana* or *simladprana*: "As to the sounds of the *simladprana* they are songs of the *gambuh* repertoire, the *patut* [tuning] includes ten sounds being *dang*, *ding*, *deng*, *ndung*, *dong*, called *pelog*, *ndang*, *nding*, *ndeng*, *ndung*, *ndong*, called *slendro*. Thus *pelog* sounded with *slendro* becomes a melody such as *ding*, *nding* as it is played, those are the sounds of the *simladprana* tuning of *pelog* combined with *slendro*."<sup>63</sup>

However historically accurate this text may or may not be, there is evidence that *suling gambuh* 'bamboo flute' players in Batuan village still use ten tones, according to Karl Richter's documentation with the aid of frequency analysis.<sup>64</sup> Many songs from 1928 embody an aesthetic that pre-dates *sléndro-pélog* differentiation. The singers recorded in 1928 grew up in an environment of ancient seven-tone *gamelan*. Their singing clearly reflects archaic *gamelan* such as *gambang*, *luang*, *gambuh* and *slonding* as well as *Semar Pagulingan saih pitu*, all rarely heard today, while exhibiting an even wider palette of pitches to the octave—in some instances ten distinct pitches and many more nuanced tones.

A striking characteristic of the male singers recorded in 1928 is the relatively high range of pitch, so much so that it is not uncommon for listeners to ask if we are sure that the

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<sup>61</sup> Bandem (1986: 80–96). Thomas M. Hunter postulates that the *Catur Muni-muni*, at least, is very likely a 19th-century text (2010: unpublished manuscript), evidenced by correspondences with musical instruments represented in paintings from Kamasan in Vickers (1985).

<sup>62</sup> "Telinga masyarakat Bali dijaja oleh laras gong kebyar." Conversation with Wayan Sinti (2009)

<sup>63</sup> Bandem, I Madé. (1986: 94–95). "Kunang gagambelan *simladprana* ika gendingnya *pagambuhan*, *patutanya* hana sapuluh swara lwirnya, *dang*, *ding*, *deng*, *dung*, *dong* ngaran *pelog*, *ndang*, *nding*, *ndeng*, *ndung*, *ndong* ngaran *salendro*. Dadinya *pelog* tinabeh *mwang* *salendro* marmanya *gending*, *ding*, *nding*, *keneskang* *tatabuhan*. Ika *gagambelan* *simladprana* ika *patut* *pelog* *kasalendroan*." Excerpt of the *Catur Muni-muni* section of the *Prakempa* (my translation from Indonesian).

<sup>64</sup> Richter 1992

voice is that of a man.<sup>65</sup> Given that the voices of Ida Boda, Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak, Ida Bagus Ngurah (as well as *arja*, *kidung*, and *kakawin* vocalists on upcoming Bali 1928 volumes #4 and #5) are in a range rarely heard in Bali today, we can assume a changing aesthetic. One factor to consider is that up until the 1920s and 30s most female dramatic roles were performed by males. Perhaps this shift toward lower-pitched singing was influenced in some way by the demarcation of genders in performance, although genres such as *gambuh*, in the village Batuan, did not introduce female performers into the ensemble until around 1960.<sup>66</sup>

### **Tembang: A Brief Introduction**

*Tembang* are sung poems, often called *pupuh* ‘melody’, and referred to as *sekar alit* ‘the small flower’ or by the Javanese term *sekar macapat* ‘flower read in groups of four syllables’.<sup>67</sup> *Puh* often refers to *kidung* poetic meters. More generally, *pupuh* can also refer to melody, both vocal and instrumental and there are links between *pupuh* poetic meters (*padalingsa* and *guru ding-dong*) and many instrumental compositions.<sup>68</sup> In the Balinese language there is a correspondence between the letters ‘p’, ‘b’ and ‘w’, and a common practice of replacing one with the other. So *puh* is etymologically related to *buh* and thus *tabuh* ‘to strike’ as in playing a *gamelan* instrument.<sup>69</sup>

*Padalingsa* is a basic principle of poetic structure in *tembang*. *Pada* can mean ‘foot’ (and imply taking steps) or ‘ground’ and most relevant to poetry, ‘ending’, also synonymous with *bait* (verses) in *pupuh*, *kidung* and *kakawin*. With *padalingsa*, ‘*pada*’ refers to the number of syllables per line and ‘*lingsa*’ to the vowel at the end of each *baris* ‘line, row’, also referred to as *carik* ‘comma’. Interestingly, the spelling of *lingsa*, while used in literary discussion, actually appears in Balinese dictionaries as *lingseh* ‘cluster’, but also ‘the expanse of a fallen tree’. Another term for the ‘syllable count’ is *guru wilang*. In actual musical practice, *pada* can be added to or subtracted from to some degree, as evidenced in some of these recordings. What is more important to its identity is the vowel sound at the end of each line, but this can also vary. Ida I Déwa Gdé Catra (1935–) tells us that *padalingsa* was even freer and less strictly adhered to in past times. *Guru ding-dong*, which governs the pitch at the end of each line, is also basic to each *tembang*’s identity, but this can also vary in order to provide continuity into the next line, especially in performances such as *arja*. In addition, *guru ding-dong* can vary by region or individual *gaya* ‘style’. It is interesting to consider that Balinese music terminologies are often prefaced with words such as *hukum* ‘law’ and *guru* ‘rule’ but singers and other artists take pleasure with *menyimpang* ‘deviating from the rule’ in the pursuit of beauty and pleasure, so long as it can be said to be *pangus* ‘appropriate to the context’.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>65</sup> By international standards the voices are within the range of a tenor.

<sup>66</sup> Conversation with I Nyoman Kakul (1972)

<sup>67</sup> *Pupuh* most often refers to *sekar alit* (for instance, Sugriwa 1978: 3) but others suggest common use of the words *pupuh* and *puh* interchangeably for *tembang* and *kidung*.

<sup>68</sup> I Madé Bandem (conversation 2006)

<sup>69</sup> I Nyoman Suarka (conversation 2014)

<sup>70</sup> Rather than invoking *hukum*, Sugriwa 1978: 3 suggests *pupuh* “are based [berdasarkan] on *pada-lingsa*.”

The gentle downward melodic curves figuring so prominently in the singing of Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak, Ida Boda and Ni Lemon are so unknown today that there is no widespread *istilah* ‘term’ that finds any kind of consensus. Western terminology might just render the phenomenon as ‘slide’ or ‘*glissando*’. It bears repeating that *istilah* is extraordinarily varied in Bali, varying from region to region, village to village, and singer to singer. Certainly a prime contender for the vocal curve or slide is *luk*, a word that also describes the curves of a *keris* ‘dagger’. *Ngeluk* ‘to curve’ is common amongst singers of *tembang* as well as *kakawin* singers such as Ida Bagus Madé Gandem in Lombok. Ida Wayan Padang likened *luk* to *ombak*, *nglombang*, ‘moving like waves’.<sup>71</sup> However, *ngeluk* can rise and fall whereas our singers of 1928 especially feature the downward slide, showing a *Sasak* influence from neighboring Lombok. Upon hearing the recordings of Ida Boda and Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak, Pak Padang used the word *mengeluh*, from *keluh*, to describe that *Sasak* (Muslim *magrib*) ‘wail’ or ‘sigh’. Ketut Kodi likes the word *sriut* (verb: *nyeriut*) which means ‘to dip, dive or swoop down’, but one dictionary<sup>72</sup> defines *sriyut*, *nyriyut* as ‘almost falling, stagger’ which to other singers suggests an instability uncharacteristic of the gentle curves. The *suling* player I Gusti Ketut Sudhana from Negara describes it as *ngalad* ‘lengthening, extending’ which can imply ‘swooping gently like a kite’, and others use the words *ngeliuk* (also gliding like a kite), *nyerit* (*menjerit* ‘falling from up high’), *ngeleg* ‘bending, curving’, and *ngelengkung* (which can also rise or fall). Ketut Kodi thinks of *ngalad* more in the context of ritual *Wargasari* group singing. A term common in *makakawin* (described by Ida Bagus Gandem) and used by Ida Wayan Padang vis a vis *tembang* is *macepol*, but this suggests a greater falling distance of pitches. Ida Bagus Rai of Geria Pidada, Klungkung and Universitas Udayana uses the word *pélag*, from *pélagin*, which means ‘to lower’. Others suggest *sirang* (*nirang*) ‘slanted’.

The term *saih* is often used nowadays to mean *tangga nada*, a scale or literally, ‘ladder of tones’, which of course has the suggestion of fixed and exact positions. However, the literal definition of *saih* is *mirip* or *sebanding* in Indonesian, ‘similar to or comparable with’. So the terms *saih gendér* (*wayang*), *saih gong*, *saih gambang* or *saih angklung* actually mean ‘like or comparable to’ these four specific instrumental ensembles—far from any absolute or codified tonal arrangement, especially as great variety often exists between one *gamelan* set and another of the same genre. McPhee (1966: 38) mentions *ambah*, *jalan* and *marga*, which all mean ‘path’ or ‘way’, similar to the idea of *patutan* and *tekep* ‘tunings’, but applied especially to *gambang* (in the 1930s); for instance, *ambah Tembung*.

The tones in between the five *pokok* pitches of pentatonic *saih gong* or *saih gendér* (commonly known as *pélog* and *sléndro* since the early 1960s), are often called *paméro* (or alternatively, *panyorog*, from *sorog* ‘to push’ or *panyelah* ‘insertion’ for the *dé-ung* in between *déng* and *dung* and *pamanis* ‘sweetener’ for the *da-ing* in between *dang* and

<sup>71</sup> Schumacher refers to *mombakan* ‘swelling and ebbing’ in *kakawin* singing (1995: 493).

<sup>72</sup> Sutjaja 2006

upper *ding*).<sup>73</sup> Sometimes amongst singers *lebeng* can also describe the *da-ing* in between *dang* and the upper *ding*. *Béro-béro* in everyday musical discussion most often connotes ‘out of tune’ or ‘false’ to singers and musicians, and might insinuate an intruder into the dominant pentatonic systems or just an out-of-tune instrument. *Béro*’s meaning is also given as *sumbang* which, in Indonesian, means ‘not in accord’. But Thomas M. Hunter interprets *béro* or *maméro* and *sumbang* as having two meanings, ‘not in accord’ but also ‘reverberating’, ‘humming, buzzing’.<sup>74</sup> Indeed, the term *béro* suggests *énak* ‘delightful’ to many listeners including *pasantian* host Ida Pedanda Ngurah Bindu, of Kesiman (1932–), who described Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak’s singing thus. Essentially, if the *béro* is intentional, it is regarded as a subtle addition to the tonal palette, and Nyoman Suarka defines it in Indonesian as *peralihan* ‘transition’.<sup>75</sup> The tones *dé-ung* and *da-ing* are often described as *miring* ‘slanted’ or ‘in-between’, but others, most stridently Wayan Sinti, ask, “in between what? They are all in between if you are thinking of the *gamelan gambang*.”<sup>76</sup> Indeed, vocal music intonation is not bound by any pentatonic *gamelan*’s fixed pitch relationships, and might conceivably have preceded seven-tone *gamelan* tunings. *Kidung* evolved along with the heptatonic bamboo *gambang* ensemble, *gamelan gambuh*, *luang* and *caruk*; and *tembang* (*pupuh*, *sekar alit*) evolved with the accompaniment of the very flexibly intoned *suling* ‘bamboo flute’ in *mabebasan* sessions as well as *arja* dance-opera’s *gamelan geguntangan*.

When we listened with Ida Bagus Tegog, *suling gambuh* player of Batuan, to recordings of Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak, he did not hear specific *tekep* ‘modes’ but suggested his intonations *mabo* ‘have the fragrance of’ *lebeng* or *baro*. After this conversation, many singers such as Ida Wayan Padang of Budakeling, who also had experience with *gambuh*, agreed that *mabo* was the most appropriate way of making a comparison, as did *suling* player Gusti Ketut Sudhana (Pak Melodi). We have found this expression to be widely accepted, indicating a subtlety, *rasa* ‘feeling’ rather than measurement, and allowing for a personal style that avoids categorization. Ida Wayan Padang explained that although Ida Bagus Oka and Ida Boda were not singing in *tetekep gambuh*, they were without doubt experienced *gambuh* and *arja* performers and fascinated by *Sasak* singing.

What is the *Sasak* influence? Nyoman Candri hears it in the ambiguity between *saih gong*, *gendér*, and *angklung*, and certainly in the downward (small to big tones) slides (relatively faster than her *ngeluk* which often express sadness). She also hears it in the *kembangan* ‘florid’ *wiletan* ‘melodic contours’. Désak Suarti Laksmi from Manggis, East Bali, hears the *Sasak* influence in the *engkal-engkalan* or *ngéngkél*, ‘the vibrations with *luk* and *cengkok*, curves and melodic figurations’. Both use the example of *Sinom Cecantungan* as demonstrating a *Sasak* quality in their playful ambiguity with tunings, but also recognize the Balinese *Sinom Uwug Payangan* as an indigenous corollary.

<sup>73</sup> Rai 1996: 38 and 133 reports these terms used by *Semar Pagulingan* musicians in Pagan.

<sup>74</sup> Unpublished manuscript (2013)

<sup>75</sup> Conversation (2014)

<sup>76</sup> Conversation (2013)

I have written elsewhere<sup>77</sup> regarding the movement of sound in the singer's body—including all the cavities such as mouth, nasal passages, throat and chest, but also affected by the teeth, tongue, lips—as described by two of my teachers in 1980-81, Madé Pasek Tempo and Nyoman Candri. Pak Tempo referred to *gedong céngkok*—*gedong* meaning house or building and *céngkok* meaning, to him, holes or spaces. He thought of *gedong céngkok* as the shape, jumps and spaces within the flow of the melody, *ilegan*, as well as within the singer's body. I had not heard the term *gedong céngkok* used in this way aside from Pak Tempo until meeting Ida Wayan Padang, who also used the expression to describe the movement of sound and shaping of the space within the mouth and vocal cavities. Pak Padang also used the term *mengéngkok-éngkok* to describe melodic twists and turns. Nyoman Suarka (2007: 153) defines *céngkok-wilet* as “making variations in pitch and rhythm.”

Nyoman Candri uses the term *nyutra suara* for the smooth, subtle shaping and transforming of vowel sounds, but also totally one with the contours of a melody, meaning and kinesthetic experience of ‘sound moving through the body’. When this relationship is highlighted she may refer to it as *ilegan nyutra* ‘curves of the *nyutra*’. *Nyutra nyerod* (from *serodan*) can suggest the *nyutra* sliding over rocks as swirling water within a stream. *Nyutra* derives from Sanskrit *sutra* ‘silk’ and refers on an aesthetic level to smoothness and delicacy of the sound, *suara*. Taking into account the considerable assimilation of Tantric Buddhist practices, concepts, and terminology in Bali, *nyutra* may conceivably refer on a mystical level to the silken thread of which *tantra* is woven.<sup>78</sup> Mary Zurbuchen (1987: 62) has written:

“...inherent in verbalization is a force associated with our vital organs. The Balinese concept of *dasaksara* [group of sounds and written symbols important in Balinese mysticism; from *dasa* ‘ten’ and *aksara* ‘letter’] links the physiological fact with a multitude of linguistic symbols, each of which reiterates the relationship between language and various levels of universal truth...These symbols stand for sounds that are successively “born” and “dying” in speech, while themselves remaining “imperishable” (*asksara* ‘not perishable’) testimony to the eternal quality of divinity, cosmic order, truth, and so forth...Possible logological patterns can be seen in the meanings of words like *nyutra*...and *sandhi* ‘merging, becoming one’. Both are used extensively as metaphors for mystical transformation and are based on linguistic terms for sound assimilation.”

Transformations of timbre are intrinsic to *sandhi suara*, which can refer to the blending, assimilation, of words such that *banu umili* ‘flowing water’ becomes *banumili*. *Nyandhisuara* might be a more common expression in practice. Zurbuchen later defines *sandhi* as “merging of sounds, joining or assimilation of self with the divine (1987: 273).

<sup>77</sup> Herbst (1997)

<sup>78</sup> An interesting link is provided by Chogyam Trungpa (Rinpoche), Tibetan Buddhist teacher (1973: 219): “Tantra is synonymous with dharma, the path...The word tantra means ‘continuity’. It is like the thread which strings beads together. The thread is the path.”

A similar concept is expressed in *nyutra suara* as taught to me by Nyoman Candri, and also *mayasuara* or *admaya*, according to Ketut Kodi. More *niskala* ‘unmanifest’ in orientation, a practitioner entering *mayasuara* is not conscious of the subtle energies taking place. *Admaya* implies the inverse, *wayasuara*, which is a conscious activity.

According to the *Dharma Pawayangan* mystical treatise on *wayang* performance, an audience can be “stimulated” by the voice of the *dalang* and so “enraptured that they are incapable of going home.”<sup>79</sup> The audience’s empathy, or in current neurologic science terms, by the affect of ‘mirror neurons’,<sup>80</sup> derives from the vocal qualities and energies focused in specific organs of the *dalang*’s body: love and emotion in the liver, longing and passion in the gall, excitement and craving in the lungs and heart. The vocalist is not thoroughly conscious of what he is producing and the audience might not listen with their ears, but rather with their inner minds, *jiwa* ‘souls’, *suksma* ‘divine essence’. But in today’s environment of microphones and loudspeakers, the ears do the listening<sup>81</sup> and it is questionable whether any *nyutra*, *sandhi* or *gedong céngkok* are conveyed by these technologies from *panggung* ‘performance stages’ to audiences listening from much greater distances and with such sonic interference.

Rather than *nyutra suara* or *gedong céngkok*, dance master and *rebab* player Pandé Madé Kenyir (circa 1905–1986) of Singapadu used the expression *manyindahin* and described the affect as *mamanisan* ‘sweetening’ although the word literally derives from *singah* ‘visiting different places’. A really playful style of shaping the vowels and other sounds in the mouth is called *ngilag-gilag*, as if one is chewing on *kenyal* ‘rubber’ or like eating a fish called *paih* in Balinese, *pari* in Indonesian, which requires a lot of chewing. The sound is extended with a good deal of “ah—ee—uh—ah—ee—uu—ah”. Nyoman Candri uses the expression *mampir* ‘visiting’ for moving the sound from nose to mouth to throat, while Ketut Kodi uses *mencuri*, saying ‘the sound in the nose is stolen from the nose to the teeth or the throat.’

In contrast, Ni Ketut Ribu<sup>82</sup> is said to have had a way of singing very different from *nyutra* in which her vowel transformations were very distinct and unsubtle, and she would hold open vowels for extended, boldly unchanging lengths. In turn, her vowel changes were rather abrupt, sometimes referred to as *bagal-bagalan* ‘rough’, or literally, ‘cut into big pieces’. But this was appreciated, according to Ketut Kodi, because it was completely synchronous and unified with her dance movement as well her characterization that came from the heart and embodied *taksu*.

Another vocal term is *ngilik*, when, according to Ida Wayan Padang, the melody rises in pitch and the timbre often indicates nasal resonance. Madé Pasek Tempo likened *ngilik* to water passing from a wide bamboo irrigation pipe into a narrower one. He would use the

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<sup>79</sup> Hooykaas 1973: 191

<sup>80</sup> Winerman 2005

<sup>81</sup> Conversation with Ketut Kodi (2013)

<sup>82</sup> Legendary *mantri arja* ‘refined prince character’ with Radio Republik Indonesia, originally from Negari, Singapadu.



image *ngilik* instead of naming a tone as *paméro*. Ketut Kodi considers *gilik* as ‘dense, focused’. Pak Padang also referred to *nyirit*, a small (high-pitched) and *keras* ‘strong’ sound similar to *ngilik*. Kodi also uses *nyerit* to mean more forceful and also short in duration. He uses *ngelik* to mean a rise in pitch but more *alus*, refined and smooth than *ngilik*. Jero Ranten discussed Ida Boda’s use of *ngelik* and how she uses the technique for the *papeson* ‘coming out’ song (either *Adri* or *Dangdang*) of the *galuh* ‘refined princess’ in *arja*. She explained it as *suara hidung* ‘using the nasal cavity’ specifically in order to make it easier to create a subtle, smooth continuity between the sound of the throat and nose. She found it interesting that there is a precedent recorded in Ida Boda’s singing from 1928.<sup>83</sup> In general, both *malengking* and *jangih* refer to the sound of high pitches that are ‘forceful, strident’ or even ‘shrill’ (*nyaring* in Indonesian).

Nyoman Candri sometimes uses the term *élak-éluk* to refer to a *wilet* ‘melodic movement’ going “here and there,” with *éluk* derived from *luk* ‘curves’ and *élak*, just possibly from *lakar*, indicating intent as in *lakar kija* ‘where are you going’. Another expression of winding melody is *ilag-ileg* based on *leg*, bending, curving, as in the *légong* dance. For Désak Suarti Laksmi, *ngeluk* is *lekuk* (Indonesian) ‘dented, grooved, crooked, sloping’ within the *ilegan* ‘contour’. *Lekak-lekuk* is a frequently heard rendering of melodic twists and turns. Another word synonymous with *ngeluk* is *malengkung* ‘curving, bending’, more often referring to physical, bodily movement. She also uses the term *ngeleg* in her discussion of *pupuh* (*tembang*).

In *cakepung*, heard in Karangasem, East Bali and *cepung*, its equivalent in Lombok, *lelakak* is a playful, syllabic style of singing, making use of a variety of *aksara* ‘syllables, vowel and consonant sounds’ with syncopated, interlocking rhythms. A musically-related genre in North Bali (also similar in that both are inspired by drinking *tuak* ‘rice liquor’, also affecting the *ngilag* ‘rubbery, elastic’ shaping of vowels) involving rhythmic, interlocking group singing, *ngongkék* (also known as *tembang Rengganis*) literally refers to the movement, shaking back and forth, *mondar-mandir*, of a *penjor* ‘bamboo pole’ that is already in the ground, to get it free.

One can view the indigenous *khas Bali* teaching methodologies — that include a variety of techniques ranging from *maguru panggul* to *nyutra suara* as it combines with the movement, energy and emotion of the teacher—as a transmission process based on ancient wisdom that precedes and anticipates contemporary scientific discoveries in the neurosciences involving mirror neurons. Add to that the collective kinesthetic/kinetic experience of *ombak*—the paired tunings of *pangumbang* ‘hummer’ and *pangisep* ‘sucker’ (both referring to the activities of bees), scientifically produced by gongsmiths—that fill an environment and its inhabitants (including musicians) in an “ocean” of acoustical beats and inner/outer pulsations.<sup>84</sup> Recognition and re-assimilation of these pedagogical models could regenerate Bali’s ancient science of learning that exploits multiple intelligences such as empathy and emotion.

<sup>83</sup> Conversation with the Radio Republik Indonesia performer from Sukawati and Abian Kapas (2004)

<sup>84</sup> The affect of acoustical beats is especially profound in outdoor settings.



Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak (Photo courtesy of Geria Pidada, Klungkung)



Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak with his niece, the daughter of Ida Ayu Wayan Sidemen  
(Photo courtesy of Geria Pidada, Klungkung)





Mask of Patih Gaja Mada carved by Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak  
(Photo courtesy of Geria Pidada, Klungkung)

### A Glimpse into the Life of Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak

Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak was born sometime between 1873 and 1878 and spent his life in the Geria Pidada (Brahmana residence) of Klungkung. According to his son, Ida Bagus Pidada Kaut,<sup>85</sup> the name Kerebuak (most often used within the Geria residence) was given to him because at a moment during his mother's pregnancy, she fell down, and the onomatopoetic rendering of the resulting sound (on a bamboo floor) was *kerebuak*. Even as a youth his singing prowess was such that the great poet Anak Agung Gdé Pameregan would summon the youngster to his home in the nearby Puri Klungkung 'palace' to sing *geguritan* poetry as soon as it was composed so the poet could hear it as music. Ida Bagus Oka grew up listening to the original seven-tone *gamelan Semar Pagulingan* (*gamelan* of the bed chamber) that was played just outside the private residence of the Déwa Agung, raja of the kingdom of Klungkung, during meals, times of leisure, and when the Déwa Agung was otherwise engaged in pleasure or sleep with one of his wives. The *gamelan* was played by musicians from both the *puri* as well as commoners from the village of Kamasan. This set of instruments was destroyed during the *puputan* of 1908 during which the Déwa Agung and much of his family and followers committed ritual mass suicide rather than surrender to the overwhelming Dutch army. A new incarnation of the *gamelan* was later reconstructed by gongsmith Pandé Aseman (a.k.a. Asem) of Tihingan who also forged and tuned the *gamelan Semar Pagulingan saih pitu* of Pagan as well as the *gamelan gong kebyar* in Belaluan, Peliatan, and many other villages.<sup>86</sup>

According to Ida Bagus Pidada Kaut, his father Ida Bagus Oka sang as *juru tandak* 'solo vocalist' for the *puri*'s *gambuh* dance drama (also referred to as *tetantrian* 'performing *Tantri* stories'), another genre that utilizes a seven-tone system. He also performed the Raja Lasem role in *gambuh* and the *mantri* 'refined prince' role (including the character Sampik) in the dance-opera genre *arja*. Another singing role he often performed was *juru tandak* for *légong*, accompanied by *gamelan gong kebyar*. Ida I Déwa Gdé Catra recalls Ida Bagus Oka's *kesaktian* 'spiritual prowess' such that when performing the role of *Dalem* in *topéng* dance drama, he had the unique practice of singing his own introductory *tandak Dalem* (sung and intoned praise for the *raja* he was about to perform) from behind the *langsé* 'curtain'. This behind-the-*langsé* singing would enable Oka to *menjiwai* 'endow spirit' into his own mask character in his expressive voice. Everywhere else in Bali, this *tandak Dalem* is only sung and chanted by the *panasar*, half-masked servant to the *raja* who narrates and jokes through the drama as well as giving voice to the fully-masked *Dalem*, also translating his words from *Kawi* to the common Balinese language. Ida Bagus Oka also danced other *topéng* roles such as *keras* 'strong' characters including prime ministers. And he played the role of younger brother Grantang alongside Ida Boda as the glutton Cupak in the often *tenget* 'spiritually-charged' story.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>85</sup> *Topéng* performer and teacher; learned *jauk* and *baris* from I Nyoman Kakul.

<sup>86</sup> Pandé Madé Sebeng (a.k.a. Pan Santra), son of Pandé Aseman (conversation 1972)

<sup>87</sup> Conversation at Geria Pidada (2013)

At the time of these recordings Ida Bagus Oka was in his mid-fifties and still had fathered no children. His first wife, whom he had married at a young age, had passed away early in their marriage and his next four wives bore him no heirs. He was deeply disturbed by this but vowed to accept this fate and marry no more. However, his friend, Anak Agung Anglurah Jelantik, raja of Karangasem, suggested that Oka try once more and marry a young woman he knew named Ida Ayu Madé Rai Rupet, from the *geria* ‘Brahmana community’ of Dawan in the hills above Klungkung. Oka agreed to the suggestion and thereupon had five children, the first of whom was Ida Bagus Pidada Kaut. One of Ida Bagus Oka’s brothers, Ida Madé Tianyar (heard on this CD), performed *topéng panasar* with him and went on to become a *pedanda* ‘Brahmana priest’. Another brother, Ida Bagus Ketut Sidemen Kerempuang, was a *tukang banten* ‘expert at religious offerings’. *Kerempuang*, according to Ida Bagus Kaut, refers to the sound of someone falling backwards, whereas *kerebuak* is falling forward. There are endless examples of humorous names and related onomatopoeic similarities amongst Balinese siblings (Gerindem and Gerinding, for example).

Oka Kerebuak made many visits to the neighboring island of Lombok to perform. Besides there being family links between the Pidada lineage of Klungkung and Lombok, Oka was *gandrung* ‘infatuated’ with *Sasak* singing. Ida Wayan Padang, who performed *topéng* with his uncle Ida Boda and Ida Bagus Oka, has pointed out to us how the 1928 recordings of *Sinom*, *Dangdang*, *Pangkur*, *Semarandana*, and *Kumambang* are all *disasak* ‘showing *Sasak* influence’. Several Balinese listeners have needed some convincing that Oka’s is indeed the voice of a male singer.

Ida Bagus Oka was an accomplished *tukang tapel* ‘mask carver’ and his *topéng*, *barong* and Rangda masks continue to be admired by younger generations. His own *topéng* masks (the ones he used himself) have inscribed on the inside—up against the dancer’s face—the written symbols *Ang* on the forehead, *Ung* over the nose, and *Mang* under the mouth. ‘*Ang—Ung—Mang*’ is the *triaksara*, a condensation of the syllables, or letters, that invoke the realization of the macrocosmic-microcosmic correspondence, the *mahapadma ring sarira* great lotus within the self (Goris 1926: 63). It is still common today for *tapel* to be inscribed thus, after they have received *pasupati* ‘spiritual empowerment’, *taksu*, by a *pedanda* ‘Brahmana priest’ who can convey the blessings from the deity Déwa Pasupati. *Gelungan* ‘headpieces’ and costumes can also receive *taksu* through this *pasupati* ritual. Déwa Pasupati cultivates our lives: *Ang—Ung—Mang* refers to the *Trimurti* ‘three-fold unity of Brahma–Wisnu–Siwa manifested as *utpeti* ‘birth’, *stiti* ‘preservation’ and *pralina* ‘death’ (Sanskrit).<sup>88</sup> Zurbuchen (1987: 53-4) writes, “...the place of both written and sounded language on the Balinese cosmological map associates linguistic form and verbal activity with other fundamental elements in the conceptual system aimed toward achieving...the goal of the mystic adept’s meditation. For example, when the *pedanda* performs his daily ritual (*surya séwana*) the making of holy water is achieved through an inner activation of the *dasaksara*, and a mental “revolving” of the directions, such that the ten letters are progressively condensed and transformed. First, they become five, the *pancaksara* (*Na-Ma-Si-Wa-Ya*), then three, or

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<sup>88</sup> Ketut Kodi (conversation 2013)

*triaksara* (*Ang-Ung-Mang*). This triad then becomes a duality, *rwa bhinnéda* ‘the two distinguished’ (*Ang-Ah*), a principle referring to the bipartite-yet-invisible nature of universal oppositions such as male-female, life-death, and macrocosmos-microcosmos. Finally, there is the all-encompassing *ONG*, or *ongkara*, the representation of essential sound and ultimate reality all in one.”

According to Ida Bagus Kaut, his father was a friend of Mangkunagara VII (1885–1944), ruler of the court of Surakarta (Solo) in Central Java. Mangkunagara VII had invited and hosted huge assemblages of Balinese musicians and dancers ever since 1920 and Oka joined in at least three of these expeditions to Central Java.<sup>89</sup> A letter sent in 1941 by Anak Agung Anglurah Jelantik to Mangkunagara VII specifically promised that the *topéng* troupe he was bringing to Surakarta would feature Ida Bagus Oka and his Klungkung colleagues (he was one of only two artists listed by name), to perform the story of *Ken Arok* (*Angrok*)<sup>90</sup> (see photo). Mangkunagara VII made a trip to Klungkung on at least one occasion and visited the home of Ida Bagus Oka. The Solonese ruler bought various sculpted pieces carved by Oka including an elaborate doorframe, and commissioned a sculpted portrait of his young wife, Raja Isteri Timur (Gusti Kanjeng Ratu Timur).

Ida Bagus Oka died at ten o’clock in the morning on January 18, 1959 and his *pelebon* ‘cremation’ was on July 20, 1962. These recordings offer an aural window into his unique style that derived considerable influence from *Sasak* singing and *gambuh* as well as the *puri* Klungkung’s and later Kamasan’s seven-tone *gamelan Semar Pagulingan saih pitu*.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Arthanegara et. al. (1980-81: 6) adds Yogyakarta, Surabaya and Jakarta to the itinerary.

<sup>90</sup> Anak Agung Aglurah Jelantik’s granddaughter, Anak Agung Ayu Bulan Trisna Djelantik, provided photocopies of his correspondence with Mangkunegara VII acquired at Pustoko Mangkunegaran in Surakarta.

<sup>91</sup> “After the battle of April 28, 1908 known as “Puputan Klungkung,” the sound of the Gamelan Semar Pagulingan Saih Pitu owned by Puri Semarapura (Klungkung) was not heard again. It is likely that the gamelan was burned along with all the Raja’s belongings when the puputan occurred. Luckily, there were several musicians spared from the tragedy. Those musicians, who used to play Gamelan Semar Pagulingan in the palace, were from Banjar Sangging in Kamasan village, south of the palace. In addition to playing at the palace, these musicians also participated in the gamelan Gambuh and five-tone Semar Pagulingan at Pura Balebatur Kamasan. All the musicians were members (pemaksan) of Pura (temple) Balebatur. Around 1920, these court musicians met to discuss the idea of building a new gamelan Semar Pagulingan Saih Pitu modeled after the old palace gamelan... The pemaksan did not have sufficient funds... so they were forced to melt down the bronze of their old five-tone Semar Pagulingan. They called on Pan Asem, a gongsmith from Banjar Aseman, Tihingan, to forge and tune the new gamelan. For the petuding or pitch reference, gambuh flutes were used... from Puri Semarapura, saved by the musicians from Banjar Sangging. The petuding were made by I Wayan Kerug and I Nyoman Bablag, members of the temple. The actual work for this new gamelan was done at Pura Balebatur. (In the past, it was believed that the gamelan for the temple should be made in the temple). After the gamelan was finished, it was housed at the Pura Balebatur. The rehearsals were led by the surviving palace musicians including one in particular, Kaki Gondol... Even today, these gending remain largely unchanged since the beginning in Kamasan and can be heard on a CD” (I Wayan Rai 1996: 10–11).

Track #1      *Pangkur*  
 Sung by Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak  
 From *geguritan Tejaning Semara (Kidung Ngiket Ipian)*  
 Language: *Bali Kapara (lumrah)* 'Common Balinese'

*Iseng mangiket ipian,*  
 Playfully weaving a dream,

*ditu mapinda nepukin dedari,*  
 it is like seeing heavenly nymphs,

*miik maciri miik malepug,*  
 evidenced by the pervasive fragrance,

*magulem sarin pudak,*  
 of clouds of pandan flowers (*Pandanus tectorius*),

*ujan bunga, tambulilingan ngariyung,*  
 a shower of flowers, buzzing bees,

*mirib guruh sasih kapat,*  
 like thunder in the fourth month (October),

*anginé aris sumilir.*  
 the breeze blowing gently.

*Makelapan ngalap bunga,*  
 Glimpsing (a heavenly nymph) picking a flower,

*langsing lanjar pamulu putih gading,*  
 tall and slender, skin white and smooth,

*tayungan lemet malengkung,*  
 her hands swinging gracefully,

*ngenah kukuné lantang,*  
 her long, tapered fingernails are visible,

*manguranang nyalang kadi manik banyu,*  
 shining like precious crystals,

(the recording cuts off the last two lines of the verse):

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*yaning nyaréré malihat,*  
when she looks with a sidelong glance,

*masledét kadi tatit.*  
her eyes flicker like bolts of lightning.

These two verses of *tembang Pangkur* are from a *geguritan* poem entitled *Tejaning Smara* ‘The Radiance of Love’s Passion’ (*cahayahan nafsu cinta*), written by Anak Agung Gdé Pameregan, according to Ida Bagus Pidada Kaut (the singer’s son) and Anak Agung Gdé Ngurah Oka Jaya, A.A. Pameregan’s great-grandnephew. After searching for the *geguritan Tejaning Smara* in manuscripts and books, and inquiring amongst scholars in Bali and abroad, the only written form in which we have found these verses is within a book of another *geguritan*, *Duh Ratnayu*, written by Anak Agung Gdé Pameregan and published by Ida Cokorda Gedé Mayun of the *Puri Klungkung*. We discovered a copy at the public archive Puskok (Pusat Dokumentasi); there is no indication of its year of publication. Puskok acquired it from the Bali Museum that had received it from the Hooykaas collection (HKS) at Gedung Kertya in Singaraja. After the *puput* ‘conclusion’ of *Duh Ratnayu* there follows a shift from *pupuh Dangdang* to *pupuh Pangkur* under the title *Mangiket Ipian*. While Ida Bagus Kaut tells us that Anak Agung Pameregan’s original title was *Tejaning Smara*, poems in Bali are often known by the first few words of the first verse, and this published *geguritan* begins with the Balinese words, “*Iseng mangiket ipian*” (playfully weaving a dream) with lyrics for these two verses matching those sung by Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak for this 1928 recording. Madé Suastika (1997: 325) and Nyoman Suarka (2007: 128) quoting from Hinzler (1993: 443), refer to A.A. Pameregan’s *Kiding Ngiket Ipian*. Ida I Déwa Gdé Catra suggests the reason this *geguritan* may be called a *kidung* is that there are no *carik* ‘commas’ at the end of each line of poetry (in the Cokorda Gedé Mayun edition) while *Duh Ratnayu* (in the same book) does contain *carik*. Interestingly, Déwa Gdé Catra prepared a typed version of *Duh Ratnayu* from a *lontar* ‘palmleaf manuscript’ in 1992 that included the same “*Pangiket Hipyen*” (beginning with the verse we have here) but using commas to end each line. Nyoman Suarka agrees that the poem as most people have seen it goes by the *bait* (*pada*) ‘verse’ for marking *carik* instead of the *baris* ‘line by line’ system. Others have suggested that a *geguritan* can be referred to as *kidung* is if its meaning is *wayah* ‘profound’, such as *Sinom Lawé*. Another reason that a *geguritan* can be called *wayah* is if its language is a mix of *Kawi* with Balinese.

The second *pada* that begins with the words, “*Makelapan ngalap bunga*” has long been—throughout Bali—the standard lyrics sung by the *condong* character in *arja* dance-opera for her opening *papeson* ‘coming out’ through the *langsé* ‘curtain’. It appears certain that these lyrics originated with this *geguritan* by Pameregan and likely that they were introduced to the Balinese public by Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak’s singing. Ida Bagus Kaut tells us family lore has it that Anak Agung Pameregan wept when he heard Ida Bagus Oka singing this *tembang*.

Suastika writes, “Kidung Pangiket Ipien depicts the poet himself dreaming he is meeting beautiful heavenly nymphs and relating their beauty to the realm of Semara Ratih ‘the God of Love and his wife, Dewa Ratih.’”<sup>92</sup> The poet’s reference to Semara Ratih does not appear until several verses after those excerpted in this recording. While a reading of the complete *geguritan* shows this to be true, a more personal account offered by Ida Bagus Pidada Kaut is that the poem was composed when in his later years Anak Agung Pameregan fell in love with a young woman of the *puri* by the name of Anak Agung Istri Rai, but knew he was beyond the age of pursuing this infatuation beyond his imagination. So following this interpretation there is an air of wistfulness along with the excitement that inspired the poem.

The fact that Anak Agung Pameregan died around 1892 means that *Tejaning Smara* (*Mangiket Ipien*) was composed before *arja* was the genre known today, having developed into its modern form beginning in the first decade of the twentieth century.<sup>93</sup> It is fascinating that any trace of Oka’s microtonal style of singing has continued to the present almost exclusively in the form of this *Pangkur condong arja* over the years, with its unusual modal characteristics, especially by those modern-day *pragina* ‘performers’ adept at intonation. However, singer Jero Ranten reflects a perception heard from many others, comparing the preponderance of Oka Kerebuak’s *paméro* (*béro*) tones with so few amongst singers today. The listener may hear examples of *paméro* tones still associated with the *condong arja* on the words *dedari* at 00:26, *malepug* at 00:43, and *pudak* at 01:00. To illustrate the *Sasak* influence on Oka Kerebuak’s style we include online a version of *tembang Pangkur* sung by the singer Mamik Ambar who we videotaped in 2006 at his home in Cakranegara, Lombok.

An equally stirring component of Ida Bagus Oka’s tonal palette derives from his experience with the seven-tone *Semar Pagulingan*. Many of his striking, stretched intervals are similar to those one can hear in the exquisite recordings from Kamasan<sup>94</sup> and may very well have been sung intuitively, without reference to specific *atut* ‘modes’, but rather reflecting the tonal ecology that surrounded him. (This seems to be the general consensus amongst singers we have consulted). Certainly not confining himself to any given mode, the singer weaves into and out of myriad tunings, just *mabo* ‘having the fragrance’ of those tonalities. Two examples of *nyutra suara* ‘subtle moving and shaping of vowel sounds’ are the words *malepug* at 00:43 (moving from ‘u’ to ‘ah’ to ‘o’ before landing on ‘ug’) and *mirib* ‘like [thunder]’ at 01:39 (moving from ‘i’ to ‘ah’ to ‘ee’ ‘ay’).

With regard to *padalingsa*, this rendition of *Pangkur* varies between the *pada* syllable count provided by Sugriwa (1978: 3) and that of Bandem (2009: 26). The seven *baris* (*carik*) ‘lines’ comprised of syllable counts and ending vowels are, according to Sugriwa: 8a, 10i, 8u, 8a, 12u, 8a, 8i. Bandem gives them as: 8a, 11i, 8u, 7a, 12u, 8a, 8i. However,

<sup>92</sup> “Kidung Pangiket Ipien menceritakan tokoh Si Aku yang bermimpi bertemu dengan bidadari yang dihubungkan dengan keindahan, terutama Semara Ratih.” (ibid.: 330)

<sup>93</sup> Dibia (1992: 21-21) places the earliest form as *arja doyong* ‘simple arja’ in 1904.

<sup>94</sup> *Gamelan Semar Pegulingan Saih Pitu: The Heavenly Orchestra of Bali*. 2013. I Wayan Sumendra: leader, *trompong*; Walter Quintus, producer. CMP (Creative Music Productions); [1995: Silva Screen Records].

Oka's *ding-dong* ending tones (*lingsa*) for each line, correspond to the "rule" in only two of the seven lines of the first verse: lines one and five, an example of *guru ding-dong* often varying according to context.

Track #2      *Sinom Salya*

Sung by Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak

From *geguritan Sinom Salya* by Anak Agung Gdé Pameregan

Language: *Bali Kapara (lumrah)* 'Common Balinese'

*Duh denda ratu mas mirah,*  
Oh, dear princess, jewel of my heart,

*juwinten Sang Satyawati,*  
have pity on me, Satyawati,

*swabawané kasebetan,*  
you look troubled,

*dadi mangelungang rarik,*  
why the frowning eyebrows?,

*cacingaké mangejohin,*  
your eyes staring away into the distance,

*apa krana ngubar gelung,*  
why have you completely messed up your hair (ornaments)?,

*sekaré maburarikan,*  
flowers scattered all over,

*masepuk bon nyané miik,*  
spreading that pervasive scent,

*kadi ukup,*  
covering like a blanket,

*pondoké bahan pagandan.*  
the entire encampment full of fragrance.

This verse is from *geguritan Salya*, also composed by Anak Agung Gdé Pameregan, according to I.B. Pidada Kaut and confirmed by Madé Suastika (1997: 326). The poem draws from a well-known *Bharatayuddha* section of the epic *Mahabharata* depicted in so many Balinese performance genres including *wayang* 'shadow puppet theater'. During

the battle between the Pandawa and Korawa clans, Satyawati follows her husband Salya into the encampment. King Salya is a Pandawa but had been tricked by Duryadana, leader of the Kuruwa, into allying with his family's adversaries during many battles. But he ultimately stayed loyal to his brothers and when Nakula (fourth of the five Pandawa brothers) arrived, Salya explained his secrets and how the Pandawa should fight so as to defeat him, and Satyawati overheard all this. She is devastated that Salya intends to go into battle and not come back, and angrily tells him that there is no need to wear her crown—for whom would she be dressing up?—while questioning his motives for surrendering his soul to the Pandawa. He in turn tries to persuade her, to woo her, but to no avail.

Listeners might lend their ears to how the first tone, *dong*, is one-half pitch higher when sung in the next octave at 00:23 on the word *mirah* 'my heart' (which begins at 00:19), followed by a *béro* tone in between the core tones of *dang* and (high) *ding* (often referred to as *da-ing*). The same sequence is heard again on the word *gelung* which begins at 02:17 on the word *gelung*, which we translate as hair. *Gelung*, or *gelungan* generally means 'crown' or 'headpiece' but for a royal figure like Satyawati, her formally arranged hair with ornaments and flowers (which she is tearing at in despair) is referred to as *gelung*. This particular way of playing with flexible pitches reflects *Sasak* influence, as suggested by singers Nyoman Candri, Jero Ranten, and Ida Wayan Padang. Candri actually calls this a *Sinom Sasak*, a description also applied to a well-known *tembang*, *Sinom Cacantungan*. While *Sinom Cecantungan* uses this "*Sasak*" shifting of tonalities to evoke a delightful, romantic mood of walking in a garden with one's sweetheart, Ida Bagus Oka uses it in this *Sinom* to heighten the tension and feeling of despair. I Wayan Pamit noted a similarity with *kidung* in the use of these *béro* tones.<sup>95</sup> I Nyoman Sudirga from Ababi, Karangasem, offers a comparison with *tembang* today, suggesting that the *kembangan* 'melodic elaboration' here is *polos* 'plain' but the singing "is richer in tones."<sup>96</sup> Nyoman Suarka has written that the style of presentation in the 1928 recordings of *pupuh* was "simpler," however they were "consistently nuanced with a magical, archaic quality."<sup>97</sup>

This rendition adheres to the standard *padalingsa* for *Sinom* of ten lines comprised of these syllable counts and ending vowels: 8a, 8i, 8a, 8i, 8i, 8u, 8a, 8i, 4u, 8a. Sugriwa (1978: 3) suggests lines five and seven could have 7 or 8 syllables. And this being a different variety of *Sinom*, his *ding-dong* ending tones for each line correspond to the "common version"<sup>98</sup> in only five of the ten lines of the verse: lines two, four, six, eight and ten.

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<sup>95</sup> Conversation (2006)

<sup>96</sup> Conversation (2013)

<sup>97</sup> "...tetap bernuansa magis dan arkais." Personal communication (2004)

<sup>98</sup> Bandem 2009: 58

Track #3        *Semarandana*  
 Sung by Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak  
 From *geguritan Asmaragama* (*Twan Sumeru*)  
 Language: *Kawi* ‘Old Javanese’ – *Bali*

*Malaku paksa mangawi,*  
 Forcing myself to write,

*kadia wong kakasih sastra,*  
 like someone in love with literature,

*Twan Sumeru ta reko,*  
 called Dang Hyang Nirartha,

*angiket ikang pralambang,*  
 interweaving poetry,

*kadi angganing kukunang,*  
 like fireflies,

*anarung kenyar sitangsu,*  
 desiring to equal the moon’s glow,

*duran pada ring Sang Kawia.*  
 impossible to attain the work of a true poet.

This verse is a *pangaksama*, an apologia by the poet often occurring at the beginning of a poem but sometimes, as in this case, in the middle. The excerpt is taken from the *Asmaragama* (merging *asmara* ‘love’ and *agama* ‘religion’) attributed to the priest and poet Dang Hyang Nirartha (also known as Dwijendra) from East Java, who fled from the collapsing Majapahit kingdom as Islam was solidifying its power in the latter part of the fifteenth century, arriving during the reign of the Balinese King Baturenggong in Gelgel (Rubinstein 2000: 73) and founding the Brahmana lineage in Bali. A version of the *geguritan* poem prepared by Ida I Déwa Gdé Catra, subtitled *Hikayat Nabi* ‘tales, or accounts, of a prophet’, has the first section of fifteen *pada* ‘verses’ in the poetic form of *Sinom*, followed by nine in *Pangkur*, nine in *Semarandana* and seventeen verses in *Dangdang*. According to Déwa Gdé Catra, Dang Hyang Nirartha would refer to himself as Twan Sumeru (the man of Mount Meru, East Java), a name given to him by people in Lombok, and this is just one of many *Twan Sumeru* poems.<sup>99</sup> However, Sugi Lanus<sup>100</sup>

<sup>99</sup> Vickers 1987: 49. Vickers discusses the variety of texts attributed to both Twan Sumeru and Pangeran Sangupati, with some accounts considering them to be the same person in different guises. He mentions one text by Twan Sumeru, *Kembang Langit*, having a *Sangupati* version alternatively called *Suluk Ali-Patimah* or *Smaragama*.

<sup>100</sup> Personal conversation (2014)

suggests that Nirartha would not have referred to himself as such in a poem and mentions a frequently held position that other poets used the name Dang Hyang Dwijendra as did Nirartha. He also reminds us that the historical Dang Hyang Nirartha was a great collector of poems and not necessarily the author of many texts ascribed to him. But Hedi Hinzler has clarified that Ida I Déwa Gdé Catra's attribution of particular texts to Dang Hyang Nirartha is not mere speculation, but rather a systematic mapping of literary images, key words, found to be specific to Nirartha's poetic work.<sup>101</sup>

Dang Hyang Nirartha is generally remembered as a visionary philosopher seeing the universality of religions, and is believed to have been instrumental in founding the *Wetu Telu* practice of Islam in Lombok that combined Balinese Hinduism with the Islam of the *Sasak* population. One motivating factor in his universalism was to moderate the Islam that was taking hold in Java and Lombok and potentially threatening Bali. Thus Sugi Lanus sees Nirartha as a strategist in consolidating the diverse regions of Bali and strengthening their Hindu identity. Dang Hyang Nirartha was arguably Bali's greatest mystic, wandering the island to experience, meditate, and write verses amidst many of its holiest spots. His Tantric Buddhist sensibility was exemplified by the merging of nature's beauty with that of feminine beauty in human form within his erotic imagery. Nirartha's journeys in Bali "...clung to the craggy coastline and the mountains which seem to form a religious geography. Until mass tourism took off in Bali in the 1980s, the coastline and mountains remained largely uninhabited by the Balinese who considered them unfit for habitation, believing them to be *tenget* 'sacred, supernaturally charged space' or *panes* (hot)—mystically charged space in which supernatural forces concentrate. The sea and mountains were considered the domain of gods with their benevolent and demonic aspects and also of myriad netherworldly forces" (Rubinstein 2000: 103).

The *Dwijendratattwa* serves as his biography and describes his walking through a great many coastal regions including *Tanah Lot*, *Ulu Watu* (where he constructed a hermitage named *Pura Bukit Gong* and the temple *Pura Ulu Watu*), Bualu, Nusa Dua, Serangan, Sakenan, and into the hills spending time in Sukawati, back to the coast at Gelgel and Kusamba, to *Gua Lawah* where he founded its temple, then up to Mount Agung (Rubinstein *ibid*: 111-20). He settled in Mas, a village in the central hills, where "he took several wives and fathered children who became the apical ancestors of the various Brahmana subgroups" (Rubinstein *ibid*: 80).

Nirartha's travels also led him to Sumbawa and some people in Bali believe that Nirartha also traveled to Mecca to pursue his interest in Islam.<sup>102</sup> Balinese Brahmana families see a direct line as suggested to us by Ida Wayan Padang, whose ancestor, Dang Hyang Betara Asta Paka, was a nephew of Dang Hyang Nirartha. Similarly, the Pidada genealogy, mostly in Klungkung, Karangasem and Lombok, see Nirartha as their ancestor. According to Ida Bagus Rai, nephew of Ida Bagus Wayan Buruan (*kakawin* singer on this CD), his cousins, especially in Lombok, still sing this *Twan Sumeru* (*Asmaragama*) poem, but especially a verse just after this one, when the *pupuh* changes

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<sup>101</sup> Personal conversation (2014)

<sup>102</sup> Conversation with Ida Wayan Padang (2006)

to *Dangdang*, to protect themselves from dark thoughts (night time as well as when black magic or illness is evident in one's environs). In fact, *Asmaragama* is actually sung all over Lombok amongst both Hindu Balinese and Muslim (or *Wetu Telu*) *Sasak*, the poem most often referred to as *Hana Kidung* 'singing *kidung*', from the first words of this particularly popular verse. In Lombok it is common for a *lontar* 'palm leaf manuscript' of *Asmaragama* (*Hikayat Nabi* 'saga of a prophet') to be placed on a rafter above the bed of a child, called *dikumaranya* 'the place of *betara* Kumara', a deity-protector of children and son of Siwa who always stayed small so his brother Kala would not eat him.<sup>103</sup> Siwa had once assuaged Kala's appetite for humans by promising that he could only eat fully-grown humans "who have not yet lost their milk teeth," and so Kumara remained the size of a child.<sup>104</sup> Inspired by Nirartha's *sakti* 'spiritual power', the song serves to protect and calm the singers. Sugi Lanus translated the verse for us from *Sasak*-Javanese to Indonesian and Ketut Kodi further interpreted in Indonesian, resulting in my English translation as:

*Hana kidung hangraksa syang wngi,*  
There is a song that protects us day and night,

*tguh rahayu,*  
resilient and safe,

*adohing alara,*  
keeping us at bay from all sorrows,

*luputing bilahi kabéh,*  
free from all kinds of calamity,

*jin sétan datan purun,*  
demons and the devil will be afraid,

*panluhan pan nora wani,*  
witchcraft practitioners will not be bold,

*adoh pangawé hala,*  
far from those who would harm us,

*geni wongha luput,*  
eluding the flames of people's malice,

*geni atemahan tirtha,*  
fire is turned to holy water,

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<sup>103</sup> Conversation with Ketut Kodi (2014)

<sup>104</sup> Hooykaas 1973: 171–173

*maling adoh,*  
far away from thieves,

*tan hana wani ring kami,*  
no one will be too bold with you,

*guna dudu pan sirna.*<sup>105</sup>  
sorcery will be ineffective and vanish.

These lyrics were adapted by I Wayan Geria of Singapadu for the opening *papeson panasar topéng*, using a melody suited to the *gamelan gong kebyar* accompaniment. Ida Bagus Buduk and currently I Gusti Putu Sudarta have continued this practice.<sup>106</sup>

Without a doubt, Ida Bagus Oka's rendition in this recording embodies *pranayama*, yogic breathing, with some vocalized exhalations ranging from twenty two to twenty five seconds. One can hear the vowels change from 'i' (pronounced 'eee') to a soft 'e' in the word *mangawi* 'to compose' beginning at 00:12, and *sandhi suara* as the word *angiket* 'interweaving' merges with *ikang* (sounding *tikang*) beginning at 01:14 with *nyutra suara* in the first syllable of *ikang* changing the 'i' (pronounced 'eee') to a soft 'e' to 'uh' to 'i' ('eee'). Another *sandhi* occurs as *kadi* 'like' merges with *angganing* 'like'...fireflies. The *nyutra* and *sandhi* effects are physiological and exemplify a tantric sensibility that merges aesthetic beauty and physical presence with transcendent spirit, unquestionably in the tradition of Nirartha. This confluence of aesthetic, spiritual and often erotic qualities is most common in the *kidung* style. The shifting into what is thought of as *Sasak* tonality occurs at 00:23 with the word *kadia* 'as'.

And the characteristic sigh that is considered *Sasak* can be heard at 01:47 in the word *pralambang* 'poetry' (which begins at 01:29). Islam was respected and welcomed by several Balinese rulers including Dalem Segening of the *Gelgel* kingdom of East Bali and Panji Sakti of Buléléng, North Bali. The interchange between Balinese and *Sasak* singing is illustrated by the styles of Ida Bagus Oka, Ida Boda and continuing over the next generation to Ida Wayan Padang of Budakeling, Wayan Geria and Madé Kredek of Singapadu, and Nyoman Sadég of Batuan, all of whom made repeated visits to Lombok. Creative interaction and cross-influence between *Sasak* and Balinese singers gave rise to the vocal chorus genre *cakepung* (in Bali—still performed in villages including Budakeling) and *cepung* (in Lombok). This will be discussed in the upcoming Bali 1928: CD #5. Ida Wayan Padang told us that while Ida Boda could do *cakepung*, Oka Kerebuak loved it but could not "get it." Again, many Balinese listeners also hear an influence of *Maghrib*, Muslim prayer emanating from the *masjid* 'mosque' just around sunset.

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<sup>105</sup> Excerpted from a lontar transcribed by Ida I Déwa Gdé Catra of Amlapura, Karangasem, December 3, 2004. The lontar was from the collection of Ida Bagus Wayan Jungutan, Griya Kecicang, Bunghaya, Bebandem, Karangasem.

<sup>106</sup> Ketut Kodi (conversation 2014)



This version of *Semarandana* adheres to the standard *pada* ‘syllable count’ for all seven lines, but the *lingsa* ‘ending vowel’ for line 3 is ‘o’ rather than the “standard” ‘é’ as in: 8i, 8a, 8e, 8a, 8a, 8a, 8i.<sup>107</sup> And Oka’s *ding-dong* ‘ending tones sung for each line’ do not correspond to the “rule” on two of the seven lines (lines 1 and 2).

Track #4      *Dangdang Gula*  
 Sung by Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak  
 Language: *Kawi* ‘Old Javanese’–*Bali*

*Mamugatera mangkin tingali wong kelaran,*  
 Oh my love, look at me now in such misery,

*kenan semara astra,*  
 when can I heal this heart’s yearning,

*duh kapan sida kaptiné,*  
 struck by an arrow of love,

*salaminé tan nemu,*  
 as long as we cannot meet,

*wulat sangsara kayeki,*  
 I will only know suffering,

*kaya tan kaneng tuna,*  
 even though it appears that I lack nothing,

*tila brata ayu,*  
 you are my heart’s obsession (the fruit of my heart),

*mayeki pala kinama duh betara,*  
 yes, alas, God, this is the effect of love,

*witarja ikanang urip,*  
 take this life at once,

*wusan anandang lara.*  
 so I can be free from suffering.

This *tembang* of wooing was composed by Anak Agung Gdé Pameregan, according to Ida Bagus Pidada Kaut. The actual vocal rendition is considered by Ida Bagus Gdé Diksa

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<sup>107</sup> Bandem 2007: 26 has line 7 as eight syllables and Aryasa 1984: 14 has it as seven.

(1948–) of Geria Aan, Klungkung, as exemplifying the iconic and unique style of Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak.<sup>108</sup> Upon listening to this recording, Ida Bagus Gdé Diksa (Ida Pedanda Gdé Madé Tembawu since his recent *madiksa* initiation) ventured to suggest that Oka's way with subtle microtones was iconoclastic even during the early twentieth century and that no one has ever sung like that since.<sup>109</sup> One can certainly compare this version of *Dangdang Gula* with the others on this CD, especially with that of Ida Boda, who uses the same *pupuh* to evoke the pangs of love but even more so as true despair.

Again, *suling* players and knowledgeable singers say that particular phrases in this rendition *mabo* ‘have the fragrance of’ *baro* or *lebeng* but that they could not be said to “be in” those modes. Another clear influence on Oka Kerebuak’s use of very small refined and *padet* ‘dense’ intervals is the characteristic Klungkung style of *makawin* ‘singing *kakawin* poetry’ as heard on tracks #19–22. It should be mentioned that throughout their lives, Ida Bagus Oka and his brothers would *mabebasan* ‘sing *kakawin* and translate’ as a regular pastime activity after midday or evening meals. This *Dangdang* is also another clear example of the *Sasak* influence in the soulful downward slides and flexibility with *tekep*. For comparison, with the publication of *Bali 1928: CD #5*, one will be able to reference (<http://arbiterrecords.org/catalog/category/world-arbiter/>) our video of *Sasak* singer Mamik Ambar singing *Dangdang*, recorded in Cakranegara, West Lombok, 2006. Mamik Ambar (1920–2014) was perhaps the best-known *Sasak* singer of recent years and one of six who comprised the *cepung* ensemble from Jagaraga and Cakranegara recorded in the 1970s and released on cassette by Bali-Record.

Just one of many *nyutra/sandhi suara* and accompanying timbral shifts is in the last syllable ‘u’ of the phrase beginning at 01:10 with the words *salaminé tan nemu* ‘as long as we cannot meet’. The ‘u’ changes back and forth with ‘ah’, to ‘o’ and finishing on ‘u’.

This *Dangdang* is perhaps the most striking example of how singers could offer a wider palette of tonal colors in earlier times, transcending the fixed tunings *saih gong*, *saih gendér* and *saih angklung* and even seven-tone *Semar Pagulingan* or the ancient *gambang*. Frequency analysis by means of the computer software SPEAR confirms at least ten distinct pitches employed in this *tembang* and so many more implied in the expressive sighs and other inflections. It should be noted that in any musical tradition a solo, unaccompanied singer will show a degree of variability in which a given tone (*dong*, for instance) changes its precise pitch over the course of a song. Such slight variations are not included in the chart as distinct pitches, and the specific hertz measurement assigned to each tone is based on the most often-occurring variant within the performance. Preferring the listening and vocalizing experience over technical analysis, at least for this article, we limit a detailed visual representation to this one *tembang* (as well as *Kidung Wangsari* and *kakawin Smaradahana*), only to suggest the complexity of tones and encourage listeners to notice and enjoy the subtleties. Ida Boda's

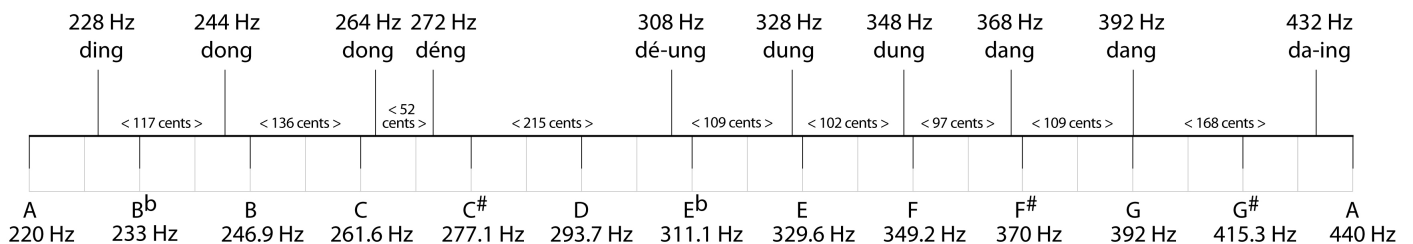
<sup>108</sup> An everpresent voice in Bali due in part to radio broadcasts of his mantra *Trisandya* three times each day as well as cassettes of his *kidung* played for diverse *vadnya* ‘ceremonies’.

<sup>109</sup> Conversation (2013)

singing could also serve as a basis for analysis and will be treated technically in an upcoming publication of the Bali 1928 project.

The ten distinct tones in this performance of *Dangdang Gula* are represented at the top of the chart by their frequencies as measured in hertz (vibrations per second) with the computer program SPEAR.<sup>110</sup> For example, 348 hertz (hz) equals 348 vibrations per second (the first pitch heard in this song). Just below each hz measurement is its Balinese solfege name. The horizontal line represents intervals between the sung pitches measured in cents, with 50 cents being a Western chromatic quarter tone, 100 cents a half tone, 200 cents a whole tone and 1200 cents a Western tempered octave.<sup>111</sup> Latinized spellings of the Balinese solfege represent *aksara* ‘letters, syllables’ for the *pitches ding dong déng dé-ung dung dang da-ing* (there is no high octave *ding* in this particular rendition of *Dangdang*). At the bottom, for comparison, are the nearest Western chromatic pitches and their frequencies. The lower vertical lines show the equidistant spacing of Western pitches as would be heard on a piano or keyboard.<sup>112</sup>

#### *Dangdang Gula* Track #4 Frequency Chart



This version of *Dangdang Gula* differs significantly from the “standard” *pada* ‘syllable count’ for all seven lines, but the *lingsa* ‘ending vowels’ are consistent with the standard. The normal *padalingsa* is: 14a, 8a, 8é, 8u, 8i, 8a, 8u, 12a, 8i, 8a.<sup>113</sup> This *Dangdang Gula* is: 14a, 7a, 8é, 7u, 8i, 7a, 6u, 12a, 8i, 7a. And Oka’s *ding-dong* ‘ending tones sung for each line’ do not correspond to the more common *guru ding-dong* “rule” on three of the ten lines: line 2 (*dong* rather than *ding*), line 7 (*ding* rather than *dong*) and line 8 (*ding* rather than *dang*) (Bandem: *ibid.*) But even today there is regional variety with regard to *guru ding-dong*, reflecting different *gaya* ‘styles’.

<sup>110</sup> SPEAR is an application for audio analysis, editing and synthesis developed by Michael Klingbeil at Columbia University. See: <http://www.klingbeil.com/spear/>

<sup>111</sup> “The cent is a logarithmic unit of measure used for musical intervals. Twelve-tone equal temperament divides the octave into 12 semitones of 100 cents each. Typically, cents are used to measure extremely small finite intervals, or to compare the sizes of comparable intervals in different tuning systems, and in fact the interval of one cent is much too small to be heard between successive notes... It has become the standard method of representing and comparing musical pitches and intervals with relative accuracy.” From: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cent\\_\(music\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cent_(music))

<sup>112</sup> The three charts in this article are based on Colin McPhee’s design concept 1966: 41-42 and created with help from José Evangelista and Marlowe Makaradhwaja.

<sup>113</sup> Bandem 2007: 26 has line 7 as eight syllables and Aryasa 1984: 14 has it as seven.



*Topéng* performers from Klungkung at the Mangkunegaran Palace, Surakarta, Java in 1941. Left to right: Ida Madé Tianyar of Geria Pidada as *bondrés*; Ida Bagus Ngurah Tugur of Geria Pidada as the *keras* ‘strong’ role of Ken Arok (Angrok); Ida Bagus Kadé (Madé) Purwa, who later became Ida Pedanda Madé Keniten of the village Dawan, dancing *baris*, which he learned from I Nyoman Kakul of Batuan; Ni Wayan Gianyar from Tumbuh, Karangasem dancing *baris* as one of Kakul’s first female students of that genre, and who later became a primary school teacher in both Klungkung and Abian Kapas, Denpasar; Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak dancing the *topéng keras* role of Patih (prime minister) Gaja Mada; I Nyoman Mireg from Kamasan as a *bondrés*, which he performed in addition to the role of *panasar cenikan*, younger of the two comic narrators. Mireg also went by the name I Délém because of his skill at performing the comic character Délém.

(Photo courtesy of Geria Pidada, Klungkung)

Track #5      *Mas Kumambang*

Sung by Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak and interpreted by Ida Boda, whose spoken phrases are delineated within brackets.

Language of *tembang* & interpretation: *Basa Bali Kapara (lumrah)* ‘Common Balinese’

*Nutug saja,*  
Forever in pursuit,

[*Bih déwa ratu mileh titiang ngetut wuri*]  
Oh, God, I follow wherever you go

*tani bagiané numadi,*  
without happiness in this life,

[*Uduh mula saking dum titah saking panumitisan titiang wantah ngaba lacur,*  
*ha-ha-ha-ha-ha...*]  
Indeed, I am already fated to have a life of destitution

*pulesang pulesang,*  
forcing myself to sleep,

[*Kala peteng lemah titiang pules sing ja dadi pules*]  
Night and day I try to sleep but only in vain

*rasannya ida nakonin,*  
it feels as if you are actually present,

[*Ah yan rasayang mirib i déwa rauh pacang nundun tiang, ngraosin tiang,*  
*ha-ha-ha-ha-ha...*]  
If conceivably, maybe, you come to awaken me, to speak with me,

*Ibuk kenehe sing ja dadi engsap]*  
Oh, how despondent is my heart, I cannot stop thinking of you

*mara usud*  
when I touch you

[*Nah ri kala di pedeman mara gabag tiang i déwa]*  
So, in my dreams when I reach for you

*dadi gawang.*  
there's just emptiness.

[*Ah wireh sing ja ada i déwa ditu apa suwung usud tiang, ha-ha-ha-ha-ha, aduh bengong*  
*ati, ha-ha-ha-ha-ha, lacuré amun jani]*

Because you are actually not there, I only grab at emptiness, oh, this heart is truly broken,  
I cannot bear this suffering

*Sahi uyang manahé kalintang paling,*  
My confused mind is always restless,

*[Ah sarahina wengi ibuk uyang manah titiangé pacang ngenihin jani i déwa]*  
Day and night my troubled heart can only think of you

*sakit ko rasannya,*  
it's truly painful,

*[Yan upamiang titiang agengan sakit titiang amun jani, ha-ha-ha-ha-ha, apa kaden dum titahe ngicen sakit keneh]*

When I think of how great my suffering is at this moment I wonder why fate has given me such pain

*di tanggun gunungé ngepil,*  
hiding on the mountaintop,

*[Rika ring sisin-sisin bukité titiang mengkeb]*  
on the hillside I am hiding

*asing lihatin kadi sawat.*  
everything I see feels far away.

(The recording ends before the last line of interpretation.)

Here we are given a taste of the playful interpretation inherent in Ida Boda's *panasar* character. As mentioned elsewhere, Ida Bagus Oka and Ida Boda performed *topéng* together, and accounts of their performances have been given to us by Ida I Déwa Gdé Catra as well as Ida Wayan Padang, Ida Boda's nephew who performed *topéng* with the two of them. Upon hearing this recording, *arja* performer Nyoman Candri observed how Ida Boda's repeated laughter contrasts with the sad countenance of the character singing, who would likely have been a *mantri* 'refined prince' in *arja*. Candri sees the *tembang* unfolding as the sleepless *mantri* imagines his lover appearing as if in a dream, and just as he is touched, he is startled to discover that she is not there. One might assume that since he is so ill-fated, his attendant would not be laughing. But a *panasar*, while empathizing with his lord, also serves as a bridge to the audience and may sometimes add a layer of irony and humor (especially, from what we have been told, if the *panasar* was Ida Boda), in this case highlighting the pathetic countenance of the *mantri* and laughing just after speaking of the *mantri*'s '*ngaba lacur*' 'life of destitution'. Ketut Kodi suggests that Ida Boda's "distancing technique" was unique and strikingly different from today's *juru basa* 'interpreter' in *pasantian* poetry readings or *panasar* in *arja* performances, whose mood and countenance empathizes with the emotions of the *juru basa* 'reader' or main dramatic character. Even today, a skilled *panasar* or *juru basa* will go beyond

simple interpretation by introducing a deeper layer of meaning and making the theme more interesting and compelling to the audience.<sup>115</sup>

Another playful element (though one could also infer it is meant to heighten the emotional intensity) offers an example of how *tembang* incorporated both *saih gong* and a tuning of a different color, either *atut baro*, one of the modes of the seven-tone *gamelan Semar Pagulingan*<sup>116</sup> or either *saih angklung* or *saih gendér*. The first words, *nutug saja* are sung in the modal manner that could be heard as *mabo* ‘with the fragrance of’ *atut baro* or *gendér wayang*, after which all the lines are sung with a melody ‘resembling’ *saih gamelan gong* tuning, until returning to either *mabo baro* or *saih angklung* at 01:56. The singer might very well have been performing without specific reference to particular tunings (and instead following the *rasa*) but it is worth noting that beginning at 01:56 with the words *Sahi uyang manahé kalintang paling* ‘My troubled mind is often restless’, the *padalingsa* ‘syllable count, final vowel’ and final tone of each line are close to the “typical *sléndro*” *Mas Kumambang* as described by Bandem (2009: 73). The first *pada* ‘verse’ more resembles *saih gong* or “*pélog*” in melodic form. Sugriwa’s *padalingsa* (1978: 3) as well as Aryasa’s (1984:14), with the first two of five lines as 4u and 8i, agrees more with Ida Bagus Oka’s rendition than does Bandem’s combining the two as 12i, rendering it a four-line verse form. But the opening line of the second verse follows Bandem’s *padalingsa* of 12i. Again, there are countless ways that *tembang* performance can vary, and the *hukum* ‘rules’ of *padalingsa* are not set in stone.

#### Track #6      *Pangkur*

Sung by Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak & interpreted by Ida Boda, whose spoken phrases in *Bali Alus* ‘Refined, High Balinese’ are delineated within brackets.

Language of sung *tembang*: *Basa Bali Kapara (lumrah)* ‘Common Balinese’

*Wawu peteng sandhi kala,*  
Just as dusk falls,

[*Inggih niki sampun wengi aratu*]  
The day approaches night, my beloved

*masunaran bulané endag uli kangin,*  
the moon glows as it appears in the east,

[*Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha, nanging masasuluh antuk kenyanan Ida Sang Hyang Ratih mijil saking kangin*]  
Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha, yet it’s clear the Moon Goddess’s brightness strikes from the east

<sup>115</sup> Conversation with Ketut Kodi (2014)

<sup>116</sup> As described earlier, the *puri*’s *Semar Pagulingan* was destroyed in 1908 and rebuilt in the village of Kamasan in the early 1920s. A CD of this *gamelan* of Pura Balé Batur Kamasan is still available commercially and would serve as an illuminating complement to the *tembang* of Ida Bagus Oka, with each informing the other.

*mairib warnan i ratu,*  
like the face of my beloved,

*[Nanging nenten tios minab swabawan cokor i déwa, ha-ha-ha-ha...]*  
Yet there's no difference with the radiance of your face, beloved

*hayu tuara da [ada] kaasah,*  
your beauty is incomparable,

*[Inggih, sakayun i déwa ratu mangda ngeluwihin, asah nenten wenten, ha-ha-ha-ha-ha, aduh, ha-ha-ha-ha-ha]*  
Yes, my beloved idol so beyond compare, there is no one your equal

*éman ratu*  
tenderness my beloved

*[Uduh sayang i déwa]*  
Oh, tenderness, my beloved

*luir Supraba manurun,*  
like the Goddess Supraba descended to Earth,

*[Inggih yen upamayang titiang minab Ida Déwi Supraba nuraga di jagaté, ha-ha-ha-ha-ha...]*  
Yes, if I compare you with the goddess Supraba reincarnated on Earth

*mirib Ratih nyalantara,*  
like an incarnation of the Moon Goddess,

*[Malih yan upamiyang titiang Ida Sanghyang Ratih rumasat makumenyar nyunarin jagaté riki ring Baliaga]*  
And then to compare you to the shining Moon Goddess Ratih illuminating this island of Bali

*dija aksi ruruh alih.*  
where must one search?

*[Beh ratun titiang, dija titiang ngalih pacang sakadi i déwa, aduuh, ha-ha-ha-ha-ha...]*  
Oh, my beloved, where could I find another maiden like you?

Ida I Déwa Gdé Catra suggests that this *Pangkur* verse is a *cacantungan* 'composite of phrases from more than one source'. *Cacantungan* (from *cantung* 'branch') may sometimes involve 'branching out' in extemporaneous, improvised song within a performance to allude to a specific moment in the dramatic narrative. The translations are



very much in the style of a *panasar*, not just providing a literal meaning but also rendering the meaning of the words more *wayah* ‘profound’. Déwa Ratih is indeed seen as the “Moon Goddess,” as referenced by Ida Boda in his translation.

Nyoman Candri tells us that this verse is still used today for *arja* and could be sung by the *condong* ‘maidservant’ for her *papeson* ‘coming out’ (appearing through the *langsé* ‘curtain’, the words intended to praise the *galuh* ‘princess’. A character could also use these lyrics to praise herself. Just as Ida Bagus Oka’s earlier rendition of *Pangkur* on track #1, this singing clearly shows the *Sasak* influence through its shifting modal expression. These very similar but quite different melodic phrasings by the same singer’s *Pangkur* can offer a glimpse into his creative process that clearly valued variety and improvisation. One subtle example out of many is the rise in pitch that some singers would call *ngilik*, “like water flowing from a wide bamboo irrigation pipe into a narrower one,” occurs in the word *manurunin* within the phrase beginning at 01:38, *luir Supraba manurun* ‘like Goddess Supraba descended to Earth’.



Ida Boda teaching *légong* with *gamelan palégongan* of Kelandis circa 1931-38 (Photo still from a film by Colin McPhee, courtesy of the UCLA Ethnomusicology Archive & Colin McPhee Estate)



Ida Boda performing *panasar* role with *Jangér* Kedaton circa 1937-39  
(Photo by Arthur Fleischmann, reproduced by kind permission of the Arthur Fleischmann family)

## A Glimpse into the Life of Ida Boda

Ida Boda's family originated in Budakeling, Karangasem, East Bali, and he was born in 1870 into the Geria Budha community in Batuan (a village still steeped in the classical *gambuh* dance-drama tradition), then within the domain of the *kerajaan* 'kingdom' of Negara, Sukawati. Budakeling, where he often returned, also had an active *gambuh* tradition, and he participated in both ensembles.<sup>117</sup> According to Ida Bagus Pujiarsa, Boda's family (including his wife, daughter and parents)<sup>118</sup> moved to Kaliungu, Badung (now Denpasar) as founders of the Geria Budha in Kaliungu upon the invitation of the raja of Badung, who wanted to complement the *pedanda Siwa* with *pedanda Budha* to have a complete representation of *Brahmana* traditions. Also invited to Kaliungu were *Brahmana* priests from Ubud. The move occurred in 1897 after the fall of the Negara kingdom to the raja of Ubud.<sup>119</sup> The raja of Denpasar asked the raja of Ubud if he would allow priests, scholars and artists from Negara to move to Kaliungu. Ida Boda was particularly needed by the raja of Badung in order to perform *topéng Sidha Karya*, a ritual in which the performer completes the *upakara* 'ceremonies'.<sup>120</sup>

As a member of a legendary trio, Boda performed *panasar topéng* and *arja* along with *kartala* Ida Bagus Rai Purya from Serongga, Gianyar (upcoming Bali 1928: CD #5) and Nyarikan Seriada (1877–1947) from *banjar* Gemeh as *topéng Dalem* 'raja' or *mantri arja*. Their *topéng panca* added I Ketut Kenéng from Belaluan (father of Madé Regog and grandfather of Wayan Beratha) and Guru Grebeg from Angabaya. According to dancer Madé Monog (1920–2013) Ida Boda was known for creating a *bondrés* comic *topéng* character marked by a *cungih* 'harelip' (*sumbing*), singing in a *Sasak*-influenced style. According to Pak Monog, Ida Boda created a syllabic way of vocally phrasing the *pangécét* 'fast section' of the composition *tabuh Jaran Sirig* sung in *tandak Dalem* 'the raja's arrival'; Boda's innovation has remained characteristic of the form to this day. Ida Boda adapted a *Sasak* technique called *macingklak* 'juggling', a syncopated, interlocking style of group singing in the genre *cepung*. He would sing in rhythms anticipating or just after the tones of the *gamelan*, then returning to the *gamelan*'s

<sup>117</sup> According to Ida Wayan Padang.

<sup>118</sup> Ida Boda had one daughter, Ida Ayu Sunya with his first wife whose family was affiliated with the Puri Negara. Ida Bagus Pujiarsa is the grandson of this daughter and Ida Bagus Madé Neka of Peliatan. Ida Boda had no children with his second wife, Ida Ayu Putu Santi.

<sup>119</sup> One other significant artistic result of the defeat of Negara to Ubud was the acquisition of a *gamelan Semar Pagulingan* that made its way from Ubud to the Puri Kaléran in adjacent Peliatan and then to the neighboring rice-farming village of Teges Kanginan. Colin McPhee was lent the *gamelan* by Anak Agung Gedé Mandera and invited I Lunyuh from Payangan to teach many young musicians a diverse classical repertoire including *légong*, and then brought I Wayan Lotring from Kuta to teach his new compositions. Finally, Gungka Mandera returned the *gamelan* to Teges, which to this day continues the tradition of Lotring's music and *palégongan*, playing this exquisite *gamelan* with great artistry and dedication.

<sup>120</sup> *Topéng Sidha Karya* performer Ketut Kodi explains the ritual's essentials as being the *Sidha Karya* mask itself concluding the performance, the *tebasan* (special *sajén* offerings) and the tossing of rice by the (masked) performer as an act of generosity and good luck on behalf of the overall *yadnya* 'ceremony', the performer functioning as a bridge between nature, *Widi* 'the divine Creator', humanity and all living beings.

rhythmic phrasing. He also applied this technique to his *tandak* solo singing for *légong*. More discussion of these techniques will be included in Bali 1928: CD #5.

As did many of the groups recorded in 1928, this *topéng* trio would perform with the *gong* Belaluan (Bali 1928: CD #1) at the Bali Hotel as well as for the Balinese public. According to musician I Wayan Begeg (1919–2012), I Gusti Ngurah Mayun from the royal residence Puri Kaba-Kaba partnered with *panasar* Ida Bagus Ngurah from Buduk, taking the role of *kartala*, also performing with the *gamelan gong* Pangkung (Bali 1928: CD #1) at the Bali Hotel.

According to Ida Boda's friend and partner on the staff of Radio Republic Indonesia, musician Wayan Konolan (1923–2008), Ida Boda's voice lowered in pitch as he grew older, and that is the sound most associated by the Balinese public. Pak Konolan described how Boda enjoyed singing in the high range that we hear in these recordings, and made a point of performing *topéng* (generally accompanied by *gamelan gong*), with the high-pitched *gamelan angklung* of the village *banjar* Bun (upcoming Bali 1928: CD #4). But Boda arranged for the *gamelan* to be borrowed and played by the more virtuosic musicians from Belaluan on ceremonial occasions such as *Tumpek Landep*, *Tumpek Wayang* or *odalan* 'temple anniversaries'. Pak Konolan and others have described how Ida Boda was a strict, *keras* 'rough' teacher, but to be sure, many teachers of old have been described as *keras*, slapping, poking and forcing their young students into positions and choreographic sequences.

I Wayan Rai quotes Ida Boda's student Wayan Beratha saying that in his later years Boda's voice was too low for the pitch range of the village Sadmertha's '*saih selisir*' and would therefore, when singing *tandak Dalem* for the raja Arsa Wijaya's arrival in a *topéng* performance, have the musical composition *Jaran Sirig*, "with the gong originally on the pitch high ndang had to be transferred to the pitch ndéng which is two tones below ndang. This [transposition] is called 'gending mapelit' or 'gending makipekan'" (Rai 1996: 33). *Mapelit* can be translated as 'folding' or 'inverting the melody'.

Both Ida Boda and his student, Nyoman Kalér, taught the *légong* of Kelandis that included the boy I Wayan Rindi as *condong*, Ni Luh Cawan and Ni Wayan Sadri, all from Lebah (although Sadri's immediate family was in Pemogan) and before that Ni Nyoman Polok and Ni Ketut Ciblung, both of Kelandis. Kalér also taught *gandrung* to I Madé Sarin of Ketapian Kelod (captured on film for CD #3) and Wayan Rindi. Ida Boda's other students included composer Wayan Beratha (1926–2014), *arja* and *topéng panasar* Wayan Geria of Singapadu, *arja* and *topéng kartala* Madé Kredek of Singapadu, *légong* dancer and teacher Ni Ketut Reneng of Kedaton, *kebyar* dancer I Nyoman Ridet, and *topéng* performer Ida Bagus Ngurah Buduk.

Ida Boda continued "*nyuling*" (playing the bamboo *suling*) into his later years, according to great-grandson Ida Bagus Pujiarsa and his wife, Ida Ayu Kartika. They recall that even into his nineties, walking precariously with a cane and only with the help of an attendant, Ida Boda continued to go to work at Radio Republik Indonesia. But once at the studios he would regain his younger *semangat* 'spirit' and fully engage as a singer, translator and

*gamelan* player. According to family, he died in 1964 just after the great eruption of Gunung Agung and before the fall of President Sukarno.

Track #7      *Dangdang Gula I*

Sung by Ida Boda

From *geguritan Duh Ratnayu (Smara Pralaya)* by Anak Agung Gdé Pameregan

Language: *Kawi* 'Old Javanese'—*Bali*

*Wiakti tan kena ritadah guling ruksa mawang,*

It's so hard to eat and sleep with such a troubled mind,

*pamrat ning sarimang,*

burdened by longings,

*angebekin hredayané,*

full of anguish,

*tan kena yan inukur,*

impossible to fathom,

*agung saakasa pratiwi,*

beyond heaven and earth,

*lara tan tinambanan,*

this sickness cannot be healed,

*yan tan sih sang harum,*

without your mercy,

*rarasé sajroning pamreman,*

making love in bed,

*luhung pejah,*

I'm better off dead,

*sapadi kari ahurip,*

than alive,

The final line of the verse omitted during the recording session in 1928 is:

*saitya anandang wiring.*

I will bear this loneliness as long as I live.

Many Balinese listeners may be quick to identify these lyrics and those of the next track as verses from Anak Agung Gdé Pameregan's *Duh Ratnayu*,<sup>121</sup> one of Bali's most popular romantic poems—so named because of the first words of the first verse—thought of as generic love lyrics adapted by *arja* dance-opera's ever-popular *Sampik Ingtai* story.<sup>122</sup> For example, Nyoman Suastika writes, “The geguritan *Duh Ratnayu* elaborates the spark of love expressed by Si Aku ‘in the first person’ (perhaps the poet?) suffering in amour because his passion has not been fulfilled. Si Aku relates the matter of his yearning through this work [of poetry]. He says the lyric, ‘Oh, My Soul [my love]’.”<sup>123</sup>

But the genesis of this *geguritan* poem was actually a contemporary account of a tragic, prohibited love affair between first cousins in the royal court of Klungkung during the 1890s. Our conversations with Ida Bagus Pidada Kaut and Anak Agung Gdé Pameregan's great-grandnephew, Anak Agung Gdé Ngurah Oka Jaya (1934–)<sup>124</sup>, led us to a new understanding that transforms the song from what has for a century been thought of by the public and considered by Balinese historians to be from the imagination of the poet—into what must have been at the time the equivalent of a scandalous news story, a topical song. Ida Bagus Pidada Kaut tells us that the poet Pameregan's original title was *Smara Pralaya* ‘Shattered Love’.<sup>125</sup> This is quite a contrast with the upbeat popular title based on the opening words: *Duh* meaning *Wahai* (a ‘hello’ to get someone's attention) and *Ratnayu* ‘beautiful woman’.

According to Ida Bagus Kaut, the singer Ida Boda would very likely have been a personal acquaintance of these ill-fated lovers, Déwa Agung Istri Muter (daughter of the *raja* Déwa Agung Putra III) and I Déwa Agung Ketut Agung (son of Déwa Agung Putra III's younger brother, Déwa Agung Rai). Although Déwa Agung Putra III did not object to their wish to marry, his daughter's younger brother, Déwa Agung Jambé, did not agree, citing the fact that Ketut Agung was lower in rank, not being the son of a *raja*. So these first cousins were forbidden to marry. According to our conversations with Ida Bagus Pidada Kaut, the poet Anak Agung Gdé Pameregan was a confidante of the lovers, beseeched by Déwa Ketut to set their *smara pralaya*, *hati pecah* ‘broken hearts’ and *kiamat* ‘doomed fate’ to verse. So he composed *Smara Pralaya*, which became known only as *Duh Ratnayu*. Anak Agung Pameregan is believed to have passed away sometime around 1892.

One can read an account of this real-life drama in anthropologist Margaret Wiener's evocative, insightful and well-researched book, *Visible and Invisible Realms: Power,*

<sup>121</sup> Eddy 2001. Also, Ida Cokorda Gedé Mayun (publishing date unknown).

<sup>122</sup> The two *pada* ‘verses’ on this CD appear as the fourth and fifth verses of the *Dangdang* section of the *geguritan Sampik Ingtai* text.

<sup>123</sup> “Geguritan *Duh Ratnayu* menguraikan cetusan hati Si Aku (mungkin pengarang?) menderita asmara karena cintanya tidak sampai. Si Aku menceritakan isi kerinduan lewat karya ini. Dia katakan lirik ‘Aduh Juwitaku’.” (Suastika 1997: 330)

<sup>124</sup> Conversation at the Puri Kalér Kangin, Klungkung (2009)

<sup>125</sup> The *Jawa Kuna* ‘Old Javanese’ word *smara* is often interchanged with *semara* or *asmara*, all meaning ‘love’ and also another name for the god Kama (both God of Love and God of Beauty).

*Magic and Colonial Conquest in Colonial Bali.* Wiener writes (1995: 294), “Déwa Agung Isteri, elder full sister to Déwa Agung Jambé, was reputed to be not only exceedingly lovely but brilliant, especially at literature—rather like Déwa Agung Isteri Kania. It was said that she knew all the stars in the sky, one elderly woman even insisted that she was Klungkung’s ruler. The princess fell in love with Déwa Agung Ketut Agung, Déwa Agung Rai’s son, who as her father’s brother’s son was the only man of sufficiently high status to potentially be her spouse. But the marriage was forbidden, according to one source by her brother, who swore he would *amok* if his cousin tried to wed her. One can only speculate about why Déwa Agung Jambé might have so vehemently opposed the marriage. Déwa Agung Jambé was himself married to this man’s sister, and high-ranking Balinese claim such direct reciprocity is inauspicious; perhaps he opposed a union that might produce a son nearly equal in rank to his own...”

Ida Bagus Kaut has told us<sup>126</sup> that it was forbidden to sing *Duh Ratnayu* in the *Puri* Klungkung during this period because its lyrics *menyinggung* ‘offended’ Déwa Agung Jambé and others. If someone was heard singing the poem he would be exiled for a sentence of one to three months to the island of Nusa Penida that served as a penal colony. But Déwa Agung Istri Muter would often ask Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak to sing the *geguritan*. Whenever Agung Jambé heard *Duh Ratnayu* he would scream, “Who’s singing that?” If told it was Oka, he would be quiet since he knew the song had been requested by his older sister. Thus was the power and specificity of these lyrics. One reason Ida Bagus Kaut has had access to such detailed inner-*puri* intrigue is that his grandfather, Ida Pedanda Gdé Ketut Pidada (see photo), was *bagawanta* ‘palace priest’ and was often in the *puri*, as, of course, was Oka.

According to Wiener’s narrative, after it became clear that the cousins would never be allowed to join in marriage, Déwa Agung Ketut Agung (also known as Cokorda Gedé Agung), fell sick and died of a broken heart. Déwa Agung Istri, also heart-broken, would not leave his corpse until he was cremated, and prayed for an opportunity to join him in death. Then Déwa Agung Istri strategized how to create a situation by which she could die without committing the unacceptable act of suicide. She decided to make it appear that she was having a romantic liason with a lower-ranking man, and as a result, the royal family would put her to death. “She indicated to the low-ranking kinsman who had served as her go-between with her beloved that he could claim a “reward” for his services” (Wiener 1995: 295). Déwa Agung Istri was indeed thrown into the sea and the man was killed by *keris* ‘dagger’. Wiener does not give the complete name of Déwa Agung Istri Serengkug Muter or the name of the liason, only that her murdered confidante was lower in rank. According to Wiener, there was a letter sent by Resident Eschbach to the Governor General reporting the execution of Déwa Agung Istri in December 1901 (Wiener 1995: 410).<sup>127</sup>

<sup>126</sup> Conversation at Geria Pidada (2014)

<sup>127</sup> Wiener’s footnote offers a full reference to the Ministry of Colonies source, “While according to colonial sources the executions occurred during Déwa Agung Putra III’s reign, this is by no means clear from Balinese narratives (Letter from Resident Eschbach to the Governor General, 28 December 1901, Mail Report #711 in V. 28 April 1903 No 2., MvK Kol. Res. na 1900, ARA.”



But the narrative given by Ida Bagus Pidada Kaut offers a very different chain of events just after Anak Agung Pameregan composed the poem, *Smara Pralaya*. According to him, it is likely that a number of years passed during which the two cousins were despondent and the princess lived in a constant state of confusion. Finally, while watching a *tajén* ‘cockfight’ in Klungkung one day, she is said to have “made eyes” with an “outsider” from *Puri Batan Waru* ‘royal residence under the hibiscus tree’ named Anak Agung Oka Dugul (a.k.a. Cokorda Batan Waru), who was even lower in rank than her cousin. This led to a secret affair between the two that was eventually discovered by her family. When the raja learned of the illicit affair he was urged to have her thrown into the sea, which he did. Oka Dugul was killed by *keris*. Sometime after this her beloved cousin, Déwa Agung Ketut Agung, married someone else and had a son named Cokorda Gdé Oka Yek, who himself had no direct descendants, but our “local family historian” Ida Bagus Pidada Kaut knew him. Déwa Agung Ketut Agung died at a rather early age, according to Ida Bagus Kaut.

By both accounts, Déwa Agung Istri Muter was drowned in the sea by orders of her family and expunged from royal chronicles. Her brother, Ida Déwa Agung Gdé Jambé (according to Ida Bagus Kaut), influenced the outcome of the situation so that he could ascend to the ultimate position of *Betara Dalem*, which he in fact did until 1908. So as one listens to Ida Boda’s heart-wrenching rendition, one can feel that he was singing on behalf of the doomed lovers he really knew. Or at the very least, Boda likely learned the song from his friend Ida Bagus Oka, who had to have known the lovers, and who had also been the first to sing the *geguritan*.

Wiener details the demise of the kingdom of Klungkung leading up to the *puputan* ‘the end’ (mass suicide) of the royal family and subsequent Dutch conquest in 1908 just seven years after Déwa Agung Istri Muter was thrown into the sea. Wiener depicts Klungkung as the center of pre-colonial spiritual power in Bali and relates the demise of these lovelorn cousins in historical context. So exalted in rank and admiration was Déwa Agung Istri Serengkug Muter that her death was seen at the time as an important harbinger of the collapse of the moral and spiritual authority of the kingdom. As mentioned earlier, in her lifetime she had been compared to the Ida Déwa Agung Istri Kania, the queen who reigned over the kingdom of Klungkung during its glory days, presiding over literary and artistic activity that featured most prominently Anak Agung Gdé Pameregan, Ida Pedanda Gdé Rai and the queen herself. Wiener’s timing of 1901 for the death of Déwa Agung Istri Muter leads us to conjecture that Pameregan wrote *Smara Pralaya* at the onset of the forbidden liason between cousins and that their heartache and misery dragged on several years after Pameregan’s own death, sometime in the 1890s. Then, perhaps, a few more years transpired during which Déwa Agung Istri pursued her new liason and was finally put to death. The fact that our sources and Wiener’s end the tragedy very differently is not problematic as much as it is compelling to have two alternative narratives. In any case, this historical account is not to be found in the *Babad Dalem* ‘royal chronicles’.<sup>128</sup> But the voice of Ida Boda recorded in 1928 might serve to

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<sup>128</sup> According to Anak Agung Wirawan, professor of history at Universitas Udayana and descendant of the Puri Klungkung (personal conversation 2009)



*mencetuskan* ‘re-ignite’ cultural memory.

Track #8      *Dangdang Gula II*

Sung by Ida Boda

*From geguritan Duh Ratnayu (Smara Pralaya)* by Anak Agung Gdé Pameregan

Language: *Kawi* ‘Old Javanese’ –Bali

*Yan tan hana sih sang diah ari atma jiwa,*  
Without your mercy, oh my lover, oh my soul,

*maneh ta mamwit pisan,*  
better off this slave to love vanishes altogether (to die),

*satiba para lakuné,*  
without direction,

*anut lwah pasir gunung,*  
along rivers, beaches and mountains,

*suket jurang pringga trebis,*  
forests, valleys, steep ravines,

*akaron awirang,*  
sorrow will be my only companion,

*sopana dilampus,*  
better off dead,

*manilar swanagara,*  
abandoning this land,

*kadang mitra,*  
kinsmen, siblings and friends,

*tan kimuténg yayah bibi,*  
not caring for my father and mother,

*tan ketung amurang lampah.*  
not caring where the road takes me.



Ida Déwa Agung Gdé Rai (Adi Patih; surrogate after the death of Déwa Agung Putra III and before ascension of Déwa Agung Gdé Jambé), with Ida Pedanda Gdé Ketut Pidada (father of Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak); Cokorda Raka Jodog (son of Déwa Gdé Rai and brother of Déwa Agung Ketut Agung) on right; Déwa Gdé Sasak (*parekan* ‘servant’, ‘courtier’) on left  
(Photo courtesy of Geria Pidada, Klungkung)



Ida Déwa Agung Gdé Jambé with his son, Ida Déwa Agung Gdé Agung; his half-brother (standing), Cokorda Raka Pugog, secretary/scribe of the kingdom; Anak Agung Raka Pelonot, *parekan* 'servant', 'courtier', holding *pacanangan* named I Kawotan, containing *basé* 'betel leaves', *buah* 'betel nut' (fruit of the areca palm), *pamor* 'lime powder' and *mako* 'tobacco leaves', all for chewing (Photo courtesy of Geria Pidada, Klungkung)<sup>129</sup>

<sup>130</sup> In this same photo Wiener 1995: 319 identifies Pogog as Cokorda Raka Jodog and Pelonot as Cokorda Putu Plodot. Our source, Ida Bagus Pidada Kaut (1932–), identifies Cokorda Raka Jodog in the photo on the previous page, insisting that his father (son of Ida Pedanda in that photo) told him the names of all in both photographs (personal conversations in Geria Pidada, Klungkung, 2009 and 2014). But Pelonot and

The entirety of the *geguritan* poem from which these two verses are excerpted is in the *tembang* form *pupuh Dangdang Gula*. As was often the case in Ida Boda's *mabebasan* performance (according to fellow musicians I Wayan Rugeh and Ida Wayan Padang), he is accompanied by a *suling* on both tracks of *Dangdang Gula*. But he may have also chosen to include the *suling* to highlight the melancholy in this version of *Dangdang* that lends itself so famously to the emotion-charged *arja* dance-opera. (The next two selections of Ida Boda singing *Adri*—not associated with *arja*—were sung without *suling*.) I Madé Monog and many others have identified the *Sasak* influence on Boda's singing for this and the previous track. One hears that *Sasak* sigh on Track #7 with the second word of the phrase *angebekin hredayané* 'filling my heart' beginning at 00:50.

Many older-generation Balinese *pragina* 'performers' have talked about how a particularly skilled artist, *mataksu* 'endowed with spiritually-energy', would make the audience feel *jering bulun awaké* 'goosebumps, hair standing on end' (*merinding* in Indonesian) with intense emotional empathy to the point that listeners/viewers would be in tears. Both Madé Monog and Wayan Rugeh used the examples of Ida Boda and Ni Wayan Pempen (a.k.a. Mémén Redia), heard with the *jangér* Kedaton ensemble on the upcoming Bali 1928 CD #5).<sup>131</sup> Madé Monog has also told us how Ida Boda would use this *Dangdang* as a literary source for his *tandak* 'solo vocalizing' for the *légong* dance, in order to evoke a feeling of *ngalangenin (kalangén)* 'enchanted, spellbinding, but so compelling that it touches the soul' (*sukma*, in Indonesian, is the word he used). According to Pak Monog, Boda's borrowing from *Dangdang* did not involve the melodic form—just the lyrics—since *tandak* follow and play off of the *gamelan* melody.

Subtle details that are often identified with *Sasak* influence include frequent back and forth between two versions of the tone *dong*. On track #8 at 01:31 beginning with the word *pringga* one can hear a sequence of high *dong* to "common" *dong* with the word *trebis* (the 's' silent at the end). The two versions of *dong* are even more salient are the two lines from track #7 beginning at 01:07 (*tan kena yan inukur, agung saakasa pratiwi*). The first word, *tan*, also includes a very strident *dé-ung* right at 01:10, just one of many in this rendition. With all the reference to *Sasak* style, it should be mentioned that Wayan Pamit (1935–2007) associated Boda's *miring-miring* 'slanted tones' as *hasan gending lama* 'the old style of [Balinese] singing'<sup>132</sup> and one can certainly hear similarities with the *kidung* of Ida Bagus Ngurah on this CD.

The 'rule' of *guru wilang* (syllable count aspect of *padalingsa*) is not adhered to on line two, which includes seven syllables rather than eight. Tusthi Eddy's edition of *Duh Ratnayu* has this line as *maneh tamwit pisan*, only six syllables. On the previous track of

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Plodot could be interchangeable in Balinese speech. Weiner 1995: *ibid.* identifies the *pacanangan* 'container' by name, in the way that a powerful *keris* could have its own name.

<sup>131</sup> Both on the staff at Radio Republik Indonesia with Ida Boda, Madé Monog joined *jangér* Kedaton in the early 1930s. Monog was an *arja* and *topéng* performer, also well-known for his Matah Gedé character, the witch in *Calonarang*. His wife, Ni Wayan Sadri, studied *légong* with Ida Boda and Nyoman Kalér and was one of the much-celebrated *légong* Kelandis. Wayan Rugeh was a musician and *dalang* from Kesiman.

<sup>132</sup> Wayan Pamit (from Kayumas Kelod, Denpasar) was an educator and author of a great many *kakawin*, *kidung* and *geguritan*.

*Dandang* from the same *geguritan*, line two includes six syllables as well and line four has seven rather than eight. This variance shows just one aspect of flexibility within the rules of the genre.

Track #9      *Adri I*

Sung by Ida Boda

Language: *Basa Bali Kapara (lumrah)* ‘Common Balinese’

(*Jangka* can refer to a variety of tools including the kind used for cutting and molding tobacco.)

*Jangkane timpahin matumpuk,*  
A tool pressed against the thigh,

*limané ngurapé,*  
hands groping,

*manyemak né lusuh gilik,*  
grabbing something cylindrical,

*giling-giling pangda enduk,*  
rolling, turning so as not to be limp,

*suba kekeh dadi masuk,*  
once stiff, it can be inserted,

*ané bolong asukina,*  
the hole is entered,

*pupusanga pada kukuh,*  
strongly wedged,

*magiseh-giseh nyogokang,*  
pressed and pushed with a vengeance,

*keblos-keblos pesu uwat.*  
a lot comes out, veins still bulging.

*Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha...Inggih, puniki indik cerita puniki anak ngaet temako keni sampun iwang tetampen. Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha... Sang sapa mirengang puniki ngartiang keni sampun titiang iwang saking karya memacul. Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha...*

Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha...Yes, this is a story about someone cutting tobacco not to be misinterpreted, Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha...Whoever hears and interprets this, so that there's no mistake, this is actually concerning agricultural work. Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha...

Described by some Balinese listeners as a *cecangkriman* ‘riddle’, this is more of a full-verse *raos ngempelin* ‘double entendre’ (‘polysemi’) metaphorical sexual joke. The lyrics highlight the range of Ida Boda’s reputation as an iconic comic artist who influenced so many *panasar* and *bondrés* in *topéng*, *arja*, *Calonarang* and other genres. The verse plays with the idea of pressing tobacco into a rolling device while more blatantly alluding to a comparable activity involving the genitals. But the singer’s concluding gleeful protestations (in his *panasar* voice) of the simple innocence of the song call even more attention to his true intent. It should be mentioned that humor such as this was surely not unique to Ida Boda, as evidenced by many sexually explicit paintings by Ubud artist I Gusti Nyoman Lempad (1862–1978). Although Ida Boda chose the poetic-melodic form of *tembang Adri* for this verse, *Pucung* is a different *tembang* meter more commonly used for such playful *cecangkriman* or *raos ngempilan* verses.

Track #10      *Adri II*

Sung by Ida Boda

Language: *Kawi* ‘Old Javanese’–*Bali*

*Kanggo anaké jani manulu,*

It’s up to people now to consider,

*sing ja jelé melah,*

it’s not good or bad,

*masasambat Déwa Widi,*

lamenting to the Supreme Divinity,

*amidéning ala ayu,*

who provides pleasure and sorrow,

*aglis surya jumah nyuluh,*

immediately reflected in ourselves, in the light of our souls,

*kento bakat nyalimurang,*

that’s the way to console oneself,

*tulisé nongos di suku,*

if one’s destiny is indeed in the soles of one’s feet (terrible, low),

*apang tagih juwa di gidat,*

why hope for what is at one’s forehead (good, high)?,

*ban lacuré tumbuh nyadma.*

that’s the suffering in being human.



In this very different use of poetic song form of *pupuh Adri*, Ida Boda's simple but effective use of breathing and dynamics of amplitude heighten the emotional impact of the philosophical verse. With the words *ala ayu* (good and the bad) at 01:04, one can hear his *nyutra suara* (*gedong cengkok*), changing the second vowel sound of *ayu* while moving the vibrations from the front of the mouth with 'a' to the back by transforming 'u' into 'oh'.



Ni Dayu Madé Rai (Photo courtesy of I Déwa Nyoman Widja & Ni Désak Madé Warni of Penarukan, Singaraja)



Déwa Ketut Mantra a.k.a. Bagus Mantra (husband of Ni Dayu Madé Rai) with Dutch soldier (Photo courtesy of I Déwa Nyoman Widja and Ni Désak Madé Warni of Penarukan, Singaraja)



## A Glimpse into the Life of Ni Dayu Madé Rai

Ni Dayu Made Rai (1895-1973) would nowadays be called Ida Ayu Madé Rai, being of *Brahmana* lineage. She was born and grew up in the Geria Cao, Belayu village, in the district of Sembung, Mengwi.<sup>133</sup> Ida Wayan Padang remembers Ni Dayu Madé Rai touring with Ida Boda through many regions of Bali including Badung (Denpasar) and in and around Budakeling, Karangasem. They would perform *mabebasan*, now more often called *pasantian*, associated with one event or another such as a *pura* ‘temple’ or a family ceremony. The two singers would generally be accompanied only by a *suling*, as you can hear on this track and the next. Wayan Rugeh, who also attended their duo events, said they would often present their songs outdoors at a temporary performance site on the road, with a bamboo fence to demarcate the audience area.

Pak Padang described and demonstrated their style of performing as a duo. She would sing a *tembang* and he would improvise in a style he adapted from *cepung Sasak* music he learned in Lombok: *lelakakan* or *ngkél-ngkélán*, the technique of singing all words in a syllabic, rhythmic manner. This interlocking, syncopated, playful use of *lelakakan*, called *macingklak* ‘juggling’ or *ngetingklad*, involved Ida Boda filling in with words and/or vocables before and/or after Ni Dayu Madé Rai’s sung syllables. Our 2009 video of ninety-six year old Pak Padang and his son Ida Madé Basma demonstrating this technique will be included with Bali 1928: CD #5.

Ni Dayu Made Rai was not a *pragina* ‘dancer-singer-actor’, but was well known for her *cekér-cekér*, a term that can refer to *tembang* in general or something more specific. *Cekér-cekér* are mostly associated with the *arja* character Désak when she is flirtatiously teasing a male character, often with humorous, spicy, sexual nuance sometimes described as *porno*. This style of *cekér-cekér* always uses the *tembang* form *Ginada*. When we visited Ni Dayu Madé Rai’s grandchildren in *banjar* Penarukan and mentioned that we had old recordings, they immediately asked excitedly if the songs were *cekér-cekér* since this was one of her trademarks. In everyday Balinese life of past times, young men might court their potential sweethearts by standing outside the young lady’s family compound in the evening and either playing *suling* or singing *cekér-cekér* (also with suggestive lyrics). It was forbidden to do so outside the walls of a *puri* but young men could sometimes get within hearing distance of a young lady of the court by making it seem more casual and unintentional and not so blatant.<sup>134</sup>

According to her grandchildren, Ni Dayu Madé Rai composed her own *cekér-cekér* but it is likely she also adapted some of these songs from *geguritan* texts or borrowed them directly from other sources. Recordings of her songs made her quite a sensation in North Bali and she was frequently invited to perform for *papaosan* and derived income from these activities. This is interesting in that more generally in Bali, *papaosan* did not involve monetary transactions during that era. Somewhat related to this aspect of

<sup>133</sup> According to her grandchildren, Déwa Nyoman Widja and Désak Madé Warni (conversation, 2013)

<sup>134</sup> Conversation with Ketut Kodi (2014)

modernism, her grandchildren use the more internationally applied term *gramofon* for 78 rpm records and record players, in contrast with ‘*orgel*’, the term we mostly hear in our research.

Ni Dayu Madé Rai married I Déwa Ketut Mantra (known as Bagus Mantra, ‘Bagus’ being a common substitute appellation for Déwa in Buléléng) around 1919 and moved to his village of Penarukan, Singaraja. We infer from her introduction of each song with the words, “dari Singaraja,” that she learned those *tembang* in Penarukan. It is likely that she began performing with Ida Boda around the age of twenty four, after she was married to Bagus Mantra, who was originally from Budakeling (as was Ida Boda’s family). Ni Dayu Madé Rai and Ida Boda likely toured quite a bit throughout the 1920s and her husband must have been very open-minded. Her grandchildren, born starting in 1944, remember that she taught *arja* to local children although she was not an *arja* performer herself.

Bagus Mantra was an expert at *disain* ‘design’ and was a pioneer at making *stempel* or *cap* ‘stamps’ that at the time functioned as *hak cipta* ‘copyright protection’ for businesses, factories, and the occupying Dutch government. He was close with the Dutch colonial administration and a good friend of Gusti Bagus Oka, Resident of the Buléléng region, under whom he served as well. Originally from Karangasem, the Resident had been brought to Buléléng by the Dutch administration from Lombok, where he had served under the *kerajaan* ‘kingdom’ of Karangasem, which controlled Lombok at the time (under the auspices of the Dutch). Gusti Bagus Oka was the husband of Bu Gedong Oka, a nationally well-known environmentalist and professor of English literature at Universitas Udayana. Bu Gedong and Ni Dayu Madé Rai were close friends as well and Bu Gedong attended Madé Rai’s cremation, also inheriting some of her favorite antique household objects. There is a *kawitan* ‘ancestral connection’ with Budakeling that continues to this day: *pedanda* from Budakeling are sought to officiate over *ngabén* ‘cremation ceremonies’ in Penarukan.

Track #11      *Dangdang*

Sung by Ni Dayu Madé Rai

Language: *Basa Bali Kapara (lumrah)* ‘Common Balinese’

*Sangkan titiang buduh paling ring i déwa,*  
Why am I so crazy over you whom I love so,

*rasa kena guna rasa inguh idepé,*  
as if touched by magic, my heart and mind distracted,

*yen andiang iratu len gunané ngrangsukin,*  
when it’s as if there’s a force that pervades you,

*yan mungguing warna tlenging tunjungé maungguh,*  
you appear like the quintessence of lotus flowers,

*yan ring raga jaring sutera né ring tangan,*  
in your physical form you're smooth as a web of silk to the ends of your fingers,

*guna lilité tan mari pangasihné guna-guna.*  
the power of your charms beats all other kinds of magic.

Track #12      *Semarandana Tuan Déwi*  
Sung by Ni Dayu Madé Rai  
Language: *Basa Bali Kapara (lumrah)* 'Common Balinese'

*Tuan Déwi raris manangis,*  
The princess is crying,

*sesambaté melad prana,*  
her sighs so touching,

*rakané keamé-amé,*  
lamenting to her lover,

*sampuniki kawastonnya,*  
this is how it is,

*tinwuh titiang wantah,*  
my life's destiny,

*sakadi telenging kayun,*  
as if I am always hoping,

*beli memanjakang titiang.*  
I might become my older brother's (sweetheart's) servant (devoted one).

*Énak beli mukti krasmen,*  
bringing joy to my heart with the pleasure of love,

*titiang mapamit sapisan,*  
I am going away forever (to die),

*tembé bilih nyadma manéh,*  
and then if I'm reincarnated again,

*titiang nutugang mamanjak,*  
I will continue to serve you,

*diastu ping sapta nyadma,*  
even if I'm reincarnated seven times,

*apang masih jua katepuk,*  
so that we will be sure to meet,

*beli memanjang titiang.*  
I will become my beloved's servant.

We have searched for any *geguritan* called *Tuan Déwi* but were informed by Ida Wayan Padang that *Tuan Déwi* would have been a *tokoh galuh* 'refined female character', not a story in itself.

Track #13      *Pucung Istri Ayu*  
Sung by Ni Dayu Madé Rai  
Language: *Basa Bali Kapara (lumrah)* 'Common Balinese'

*Istri ayu,*  
Beautiful maiden,

*okané bandesa kaut,*  
daughter of an esteemed village leader,

*warna tuara pada,*  
her comeliness is incomparable,

*katah tarunané buduh,*  
and many lads are madly in love with her,

*yen kapadik,*  
with suitors,

*istri ayu tuara suka.*  
this maiden is not willing.

*Tui ayu,*  
Truly gorgeous,

*abesik luputing wong,*  
there isn't anyone,

*kadi warnané,*  
quite as lovely,

*tan ada kadi I Ayu,*  
there's no one as alluring,

*yening kenjung,*  
when she smiles,

*kamamelahang tangkah.*  
it melts one's heart.

*Istri ayu,*  
Beautiful maiden,

*mepayas manerus ayu,*  
once she puts on make-up her appeal is even more riveting,

*odak dané gadang,*  
with green powder,

*masekar cempaka nerus,*  
and adorns herself with white cempaka flowers,

*tui ayu,*  
surely this beauty,

*sengkang lontar babintangan.*  
could not have been predicted in any horoscope.

Track #14      *Pucung Istri Ayu II*  
Sung by Ni Dayu Madé Rai  
Language: *Basa Bali Kapara (lumrah)* 'Common Balinese'

*Matangkalung,*  
Jeweled luminous necklace,

*angiras masinjang cepung,*  
clothing refined and neat,

*sabuk sutra gadang,*  
with a green silk belt,

*matepi kuningé alus,*  
bordered with a delicate yellow,

*nerus ayu,*  
truly beautiful,

*kadi dedari Supraba.*  
like the heavenly nymph Supraba.

*Istri ayu,*  
This lovely maiden,

*kepasar menyangkil wakul,*  
goes to the market carrying a bamboo basket,

*raris mabelanja,*  
while shopping,

*pamarginé tolah tolih,*  
and walking she squints left and right,

*ada hiju,*  
as if,

*dayaning twas kaplagandang.*  
there's someone leering who would want to rape her.

*Ampun rauh,*  
Once she arrives,

*dipeken menyangkil wakul,*  
at the marketplace carrying her basket,

*peken sedeng beka,*  
in that crowded marketplace,

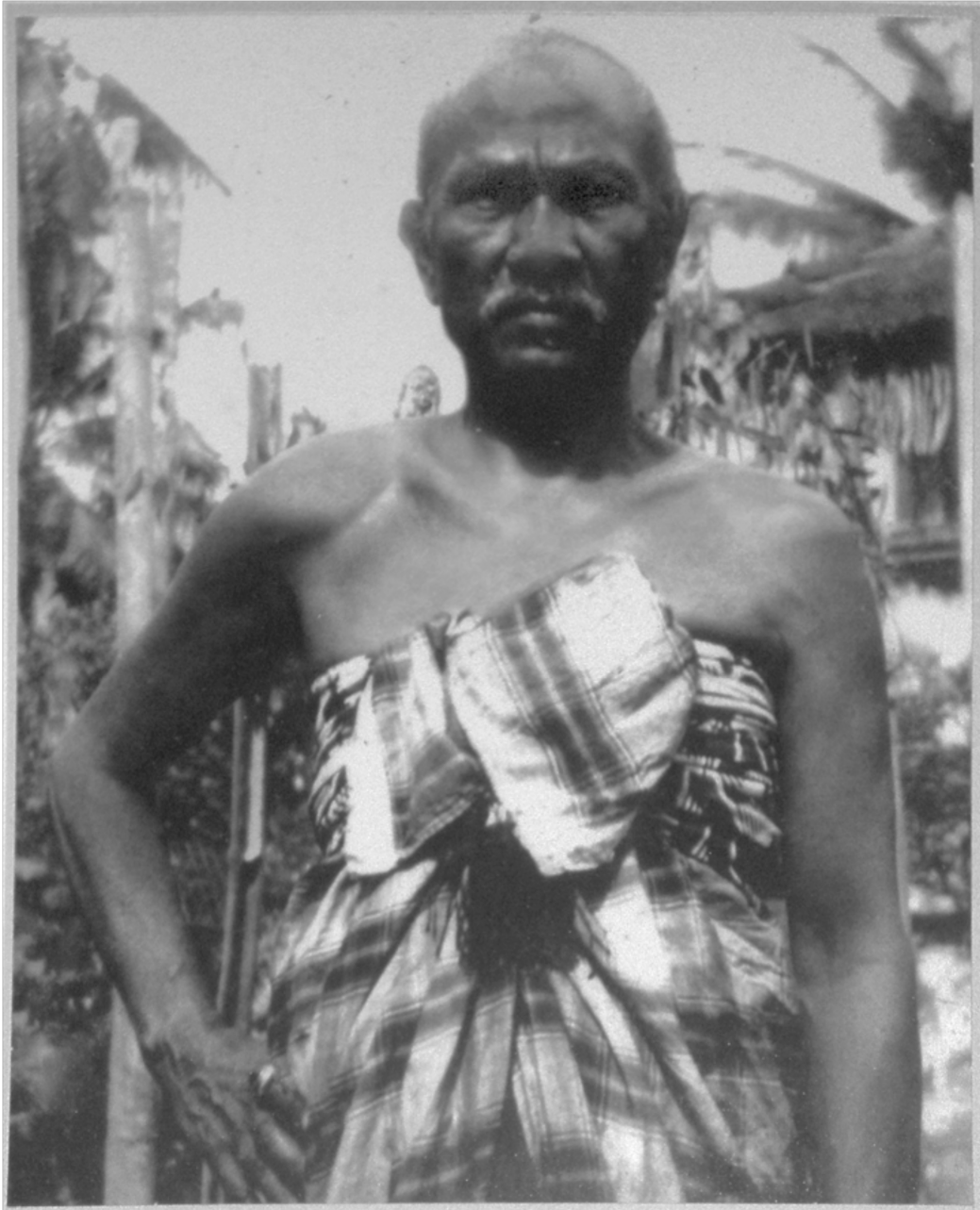
*rupa wenten jatma singid,*  
someone is hiding,

*anak liu,*  
amidst all the commotion,

*istri ayu paling tinglasa.*  
this lovely maiden stands out.

In these six verses (tracks #13 and #14) the singer mostly adheres to the *padalingsa* for *Pucung* as described by I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa 1978: 3. The standard syllable count and

ending vowel for each line is as follows: 4-u, 8-u, 6-a, 8-i, 4-u, 8-a (six lines). The four-syllable opening line is particularly suited to *Pucung*'s often didactic content.



Ida Bagus Ngurah a.k.a. Ida Pedanda Gdé Ngurah (Photo courtesy of Geria Tampakangsul)

## A Glimpse into the Life of Ida Bagus Ngurah

Ida Bagus Ngurah (1867-1963) from Geria Karang Tampakgangsul is best remembered by the name Ida Pedanda Gdé Ngurah, which he took upon his initiation as a *Brahmana* priest. Before becoming a *pedanda* he would sing *kidung* with a *sekaa mabebasan* ‘song and literary club’ at his home every Saturday afternoon from three to six o’clock.

A grandchild, Ida Bagus Kirana, recalled how Ida Pedanda would meditate from eleven at night until six in the morning. His son, Ida Pedanda Gdé Rai (1931–) recalls his father’s time of meditation more often as midnight to four in the morning. The grandchildren describe him placing three *cempaka* flowers into half a coconut filled with coconut milk, then having this put up in a tree late at night so the flowers and coconut milk could absorb the *tenget* ‘spiritual charge’ and *embun* ‘luxuriance’ of the moon mixed with early morning *damuh* ‘dew’. A grandchild would climb up to retrieve the coconut and Ida Pedanda would drink the coconut milk around six in the morning, giving each of two of his grandchildren a flower to eat as well. It is said that dew can help one’s voice. Another reason for putting the coconut mixture high in a tree is so it is not eaten by animals.

Ida Bagus Ngurah was just a few years of age when his father, a *pedanda*, died, so his mother became a *pedanda istri* and Ngurah did not become a *pedanda* until well into his seventies. Ida Pedanda Gdé Ngurah died around the time the volcanic Gunung Agung erupted in 1963. Upon listening to the 1928 recordings, one daughter-in-law commented in appreciation how these *kidung* have more *béro* tones and more *pranayama* than *kidung* nowadays. Others in the family especially appreciated what they called a “yoga” quality in the singing.

Ida Pedanda Gdé Rai described visiting the sacred cave of Ulu Watu with a group of fellow travelers. The accompanying retinue did not see anything so unusual, but the *pedanda* heard an explosion and then saw Dang Hyang Nirartha himself. Ida Pedanda Gdé Rai also describes how in his village of Tampakgangsul, sometimes the souls of people who had died one or two years past would come to him asking for *tirta* ‘holy water’. Ida Pedanda would answer, “You are already dead,” and they would respond, “We need *tirta* since our souls have not yet been released.” As a young man Ida Pedanda Gdé Rai played saxophone and trumpet regularly in an *orkes keroncong* ‘keroncong band’.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Other family members who provided information during a visit in 2009 included Ida Bagus Atmaja, Ida Bagus Rai and Ida Bagus Madé Sukadana.



Track #15      *Kidung Lulungid*  
 Sung by Ida Bagus Ngurah  
 Language: *Kawi* ‘Old Javanese’—*Bali*

*Rakryan sang saksat srining kalangon*  
 My beloved, embodying the essence of beauty

*dyah sang murti ning puspa arja*  
 you appear as a personification of a lovely flower

*maséng ka catur raras rum*  
 in the beauteous fourth month of the year

*ta angrapuh*  
 the time to start composing

*gita bhasa rasminé*  
 delightful songs

*tan kaopapama ry ahyun*  
 that are beyond the imaginings of the heart

*ténahan ya sa katon*  
 thus is visible

*gatra anglih anrang srining asana*  
 displaying a glimpse of the beautiful yellow flowers of the Burmese rosewood tree

*nya kalahron.*  
 in the dry season when flowers are fading.

Wayan Pamit commented that the record label’s title *Kidung Wilet* references *wilet* as a ‘way of singing’ and the *reng wilet* ‘melody style and mood’ rather than the formal poetic meter. *Wilet* often refers to *ilegan gending* ‘the contours of a song’ and in Balinese the word literally means ‘twisting, winding, swirling’. In *Kawi*, *wilet* means ‘following, joining’. A tempting question is, “following or joining what? The melody of a *gamelan gambang*? Of course, they were performed together for ritual occasions until a century ago—or even longer.

*Lulungid* are a variety of love poetry often of an erotic nature, placing “less emphasis on narrative and more upon descriptions of feelings related to love and passion” (Vickers 2005: 179). Rubinstein adds another dimension: “...eroticism is an integral aspect of mysticism. Poetry of erotic content is, therefore, typically mystical in intention” (2000: 95). She further explains, “According to my informants among the Balinese literati,

although this literature is erotic on the surface, it operates on more than one level. Its hidden meaning, which is deliberately concealed from the uninitiated, is mystical in intention” (ibid.: 109). Although *basa kidung* ‘the language of *kidung*’ is generally *Jawa Tengahan* ‘Middle Javanese’, linguist I Nengah Medera also refers to this *Kawi-Bali* text as *basa kidung*.<sup>136</sup> Vickers describes the difficulties of clearly differentiating the two languages historically (2010: 110). The poetic meter is *puh Rangga Silyasih* (with *silyasih* again connoting ‘love’).

Ida Bagus Gdé Diksa has told us that of all the vocal genres he finds the most freedom in singing *kidung*, which allow for creative expression<sup>137</sup>. But ways of singing, conceptualizing and talking about *kidung*, and all vocal music for that matter, vary greatly throughout Bali, and variety is one of the tradition’s great strengths. I Wayan Gendra, a performer and teacher of *kidung*, *tembang* and *kakawin* in the village Batuan, explains that “*Kidung* cannot be very free because there is a *pakem* ‘arrangement’; there is *gegrantangan* notation to which a *kidung* refers even though we do not use notation to learn or perform; we can be a little creative but should keep to the characteristic *reng*” (which he defines as ‘*nembang*’, ‘*ngewilet*’, shaping of the melody).<sup>138</sup> Almost all vocal performers consulted during this and previous research and documentation have said that they do not use notation in teaching or learning *sekar alit* or *sekar madya* (or the melodic elements of *sekar ageng*) and that they themselves did not learn by means of notation, but that the musical process is an aural one, learning by listening, imitating, and generating one’s own *rasa*. A literary text, on the other hand, is generally used for learning a poem, and the greatest challenge of performing *kidung* is memorization of the long poems.

This recording is of one *pada* ‘verse’ from the poem *kidung Caruk*, consisting of sixty four syllables and in keeping with *kawitan bawak* ‘short form of verse length’, it ends with the vowel ‘o’ (the *kawitan panjang* ‘long form’ ends with ‘u’.) Indeed, the verb *ngewilet* often means, “to sing,” or “to sing melodically.” Wayan Pamit described this recorded rendition as *wayah* ‘old, profound’ and *karisma*, and suggests the voice is not unduly hoarse, but rather, that it is the original character of such *kidung* to possess this fragile, raw, *tidak dibikin* ‘natural’ quality. Ketut Kodi shares the perspective of many listeners, hearing *pranayama*, the singer’s focus on refined and calm yogic breathing (rather than emotion or literal meaning) in this rendition. Large interval jumps characteristic of some *kidung* can be heard on the first two syllables of *kalangon* on the first line; *dyah* on line 2; *tan kaopapama* on line 6; and *gatra anglih* on line 8. The subtle palette of tones in these two *kidung* certainly reflects the fact that *kidung* were often sung along with the ritual seven-tone *gamelan* ensembles *gambang* and *luang*, although Ida Bagus Ngurah’s pitches are more varied. As an example, on the first line, *satsat* (00:09) is sung with a tone that, in singers’ *ding-dong* solfege terminology, would often be called *dé-ung*, although it is a tone just like any other on the *gambang* instruments, and not necessarily “between” other more *pokok* ‘core’ tones. Then the next word beginning at 00:17, *srining*, includes a more subtle interval one-half tone lower than the previous *dé-*

<sup>136</sup> Conversation (2009)

<sup>137</sup> Conversation (2013)

<sup>138</sup> Conversation (2013)

*ung* (in chromatic terms, or 100 cents, with 1200 cents to the octave). He sings both tones again within the same breath at 00:25 with the word *kalangon* ‘beauty’.

Although *kidung* and *gambang* have very likely not been performed together for at least ninety years, Wallis has analyzed a relationship such that the last vowel of a *baris* or *carik* ‘line’ of the *kidung* poem would sometimes match the pitch by the same name (for instance *ding*, *dong*, *déng*, *dung*, *dang*) as well as the corresponding pitch of the *gambang*.<sup>139</sup> The titles of many *gambang* compositions also match the names of *kidung* poems such as *Manukabha*, “the tale of Abha’s search for his loves, who are all birds.”<sup>140</sup>

Track #16      *Puh Demung Gulaganti*  
Sung by Ida Bagus Ngurah  
Language: *Jawa Tengahan* ‘Middle Javanese’

*Rarisang rum srining puspa*  
Dear sister, sweet as a flower’s nectar

*déwayu wati katwanging madhu drawa*  
you are sweeter than flowing honey

*ri bhasanta aminda rum sang ratna ning puri*  
in the budding season as beautiful as a goddess in her palace

*dyah inang mapawekas ing*  
royal princess, your words

*nahen turida marknéng wisya astra sari*  
feeling my pains of longing, struck by an arrow of love

*wiakti atemahan laywan yan tan sih sang rum*  
I am truly going to die if I cannot win your favor

*ring gring kasmaran*  
in the pangs of love

*sadina inati-ati*  
every day yearning

*panon mataniréng karasmin*  
my eyes are drunk with love

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<sup>139</sup> Wallis 1980: 208-222, Vickers 2005: 114

<sup>140</sup> Creese 1999: 82

*tan liyan sira atma jiwa*  
there is nothing else but your affection, oh, my soul

*maka...*  
as if...

(Text cut off, deleting seven lines)

Despite the title on the record label, this is *puh Demung Gulaganti*. It is also sometimes referred to as *Demung Kediri* in the belief that its literary source is the *Malat*, dealing with Prince Panji amongst the ladies of Kediri as seducer par excellence. But Nyoman Suarka suggests this is not in fact *Demung Kediri*.<sup>141</sup> Wayan Pamit asserts that even if the singer loses control of the tones at several moments, it is still well within the *watak* ‘character’ as long as the *reng* ‘melodic form and resonance’ is consistent, including the characteristic *serak* ‘hoarse’ quality. Nyoman Candri agrees that although the singer seems to occasionally lose control, his vocal quality is in keeping with the style of the *kidung*, which reminds her of *Jayendriya* (to be released on Bali 1928: CD #5). Ketut Kodi suggests that this could very well be the way *Demung Gulaganti* was sung then, and points out how difficult it is to sing those wide jumps, like holes in the road, *celégang-celegong*, which differ from other singing styles characterized by more continuously flowing melodies. It is commonly suggested that *kidung* singing derives its essential qualities of vocal timbre from the nasal cavity, moving to the teeth and the throat, and that the full throat sound (into the chest) is more associated with *mawirama kakawin*.

At 01:43 we can hear one example of the sonic and mystical practice of *sandhi suara* ‘assimilation’ or ‘merging’ of syllables in the words *wiakti* ‘truly’ and *atemahan* ‘become’ into *wiakta*, then followed by *temahan*. In singing *kidung* Désak Suarti Laksmi combines *ngereng* (*metangguran* ‘echo’), by which she also means *bergema* ‘resonance’, with *gregel* ‘vibrations, tremors, quivers’<sup>142</sup>. Nyoman Suarka uses *cengkok wilet* to mean, ‘creating variation in tones and rhythms’ and *ngees nguncab* to refer to ‘decrease and increase in volume’. “The combining of *ngees nguncab*, *cengkok-wilet* and *nguanjal angkian* [breath control] creates a beautiful flow of sound. The process is called *ngengkal*” (Suarka 2007: 153).

What could be described by Ida Wayan Padang as *ombak* ‘waves’ are the extended vowel sounds at the end of a melodic line, especially in *kidung*. But these are more frequently called *ngengkuk* or *ngengkeg* (another variation used by Désak Suartha Laksmi) referencing the call of the *titiran* ‘turtledove’ with their characteristic ‘*kuar-ke-tengkung-kung-kung*.’ *Ngengkuk* is also often taken to mean *alun*, bringing us back to the image of continuous or extended waves, *alunan*. However, some singers insist that the rather staccato call of the *titiran* is more characteristic of the endings of *kidung* phrases than are waves.

<sup>141</sup> Conversation (2014)

<sup>142</sup> Laksmi 2007: 22-24

## A Glimpse into the Life of Ni Lemon

Ni Lemon (circa 1889-1974) was famous into the early 1940s as a *pragina arja* (singer-dancer-actor). According to Madé Monog, Ni Lemon performed with the *jangér* group of Abian Timbul as *mantri* ‘refined prince’ and *panggugal*, lead singer of the girls’ chorus (upcoming Bali 1928: CD #5). Her nieces suggest she would most likely have been about forty years of age when the recordings were made.

According to her family, while her younger brother Wayan Pantinon had three wives, Ni Nyoman Lemon never married because it would have hampered her freedom to perform as a dancer and singer, and she had *jiwa seni* ‘the soul of an artist’ (or ‘artistic spirit’). Dancer I Wayan Sura of Batuan commented that Ni Ketut Ribu, one of the great *arja* singers of the next generation, a Radio Republic Indonesia performer, also never married though she was pursued by many suitors. Pak Sura suggests that it was often said that a woman had artistic *taksu* ‘inner spiritual energy’ until she married and then it was dissipated or lost.<sup>143</sup>

Ni Lemon performed *arja* with various groups and toured to other villages. One practically unique aspect of Ni Lemon’s artistic career is that—according to her nieces—in the later years of her career she performed the role of Punta in *arja* ensembles in which all the other performers were men.<sup>144</sup> Punta is the half-masked *panasar* ‘comic narrator and translator’ and it is truly extraordinary that she would take on the strong, male role of Punta with the Wijil ‘younger brother’ (*kartala*) role played by a man. Wayan Rugeh has suggested that Ni Lemon playing the male role of *mantri* was likely similar to Ni Ketut Ribu (who played the role of *mantri buduk* ‘crazy prince’) and more recently, Ni Wayan Murdi, in that countless men and women alike would fall in love with her, following her everywhere. Pak Rugeh described the recorded voice of Ni Lemon as *kental* ‘thick, dense’ and *wayah* ‘profound’.

According to her nieces, Ni Lemon was not performing anymore as they were growing up, having stopped as she reached middle age. She enthusiastically took on the career of *dagang kopi dan nasi*, preparing food and selling coffee and other drinks at temporary *warung* ‘stalls’ set up on ceremonial occasions. She did not continue to sing *Wargasari* either as an older woman, but preferred to allow the younger generation to take on that musical and ritual role. One member of the family through marriage, Dadong Wirasta (Ibu Tin) does custom catering and hosts a *pasantian* program on Radio Diva FM. The *jangér* group of Abian Timbul has performed off and on over the years but is not currently active.

Ni Lemon’s sixty-seven-year-old niece, Ni Ketut Mitar, wept as she heard her aunt’s voice. Another niece, Ni Madé Dantini, explained how they now read *Wargasari* from

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<sup>143</sup> Personal conversation (2014)

<sup>144</sup> According to Ni Ketut Arini, her grandmother, Ni Klopok, also performed the role of Punta in an *arja* ensemble in *banjar* Lebah during the same period (personal conversation 2014).

the palm-sized published book printed in Latin script. They remembered the lyrics to the *Wargasari* on track #17 but the lyrics recorded in 1928 are not used anymore. The family females, led by seventy-four year-old Bu Kinon, sang *Wargasari* for us and they continue to perform as Sekaa Wirasanti for family rituals and local *odalan* ‘temple anniversaries’ as well as occasional ceremonies for families in the neighborhood.

Track #17      *Kidung Wargasari I*  
 Sung by Ni Lemon  
 Language: *Bali Alus* ‘Refined, High Balinese’

*I Wargasari kapitu,*  
*I Wargasari*, in this the seventh month (January),

*ana nonton linggihé,*  
 here, witnessing this place,

*kénak...*  
 with pleasure...

(text cut off at the end of the track)

Track #18      *Kidung Wargasari II*  
 Sung by Ni Lemon  
 Language: *Bali Alus* ‘Refined, High Balinese’

*Tuhu sawané,*  
 Truly, her corpse,

*nyuh mulung soring rupit sarahiné,*  
 her breasts, below, still beautiful like young coconuts,

*roma...*  
 hair...

(text cut off at the end of the track)

*Wargasari* (literally, ‘a bunch of flowers’<sup>145</sup> or ‘bunch of offerings’) is a ritual genre of musical offering most often for *déwa yadnya* ‘ceremonies honoring deities’ as well as *pitra yadnya* ‘ceremonies honoring ancestors’ such as *ngabén* and *nyekah* ‘rituals

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<sup>145</sup> This is the meaning given by I Nyoman Suarka 2007: 141.

associated with death and cremation', clearly the context for Track #18. Sugi Lanus points out that *sari* more broadly means 'essence' (also 'pollen') and can refer to all sorts of *persembahan* 'offerings'. I Nengah Medera suggests that *Wargasari* is sung for all varieties of *upakara* 'religious ceremonies'. Nyoman Suarka agrees that *Wargasari* can be performed for such *manusa yadnya* 'human life cycle rituals' such as *ngantén* or *pawiwahan* 'weddings' (though *kidung Tantri* is more common) and that even *buta yadnya* 'rituals dedicated to chthonic forces' can use *Wargasari* if the text is appropriate. Ketut Kodi has spoken of the fragrance of flower offerings enticing the deities to descend and visit during the course of a ceremony and/or performance as intrinsic to the relationship between humans, nature and divine forces. This has been hampered as of late with the introduction of plastic flowers for *gelungan* 'headpieces' worn by dancers.<sup>146</sup>

While *Wargasari* is still sung throughout Bali, the singing of Ni Lemon is truly remarkable as far as our ears have taken us. Her *prana* (both in its sense of 'breathing' and 'spirit') in a manner similar to that of Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak, creates its own temporal universe, allowing shifting modal patterns to shape a feeling of endless melody. Just seventeen and eighteen syllables are sung in each of the three-minute-long verses. Her style of glottal pulsations (for which there does not seem to be a name) can still be heard occasionally, mostly amongst older women. While the group singing of *Wargasari* is most often dominated by women, many of today's most popular cassettes and CDs played over loudspeakers for *odalan* 'temple anniversaries' and other ceremonies are recordings of solo men singers.

Ni Lemon's quivering melody shifting from one tone to another adjacent tone, can be called by many names, but most common are *ngengkuk* (*ngengkeg*) and *ombak* 'waves'. Terminology can vary from singer to singer, but as mentioned earlier, *ngengkuk* (or *ngengkeg*) generally refers to the sound of a *titiran* 'turtledove', a kind of stacatto but gentle bouncing, often demonstrated further as '*kuar-te-tengkung-kung-kung*'.

Nyoman Suarka explains that *Kidung Wargasari* was composed in Bali during the Gelgel dynasty of the 17<sup>th</sup> century in the style of the Panji romances and adventures within the *Malat*. Its protagonist is named I Wargasari and his sweetheart is Ni Wargasantun (*santun* also means 'flower').<sup>147</sup> The poetic image of *Wargasari*, according to Suarka, can also suggest the 'human body' as the 'bunch of flowers'. This *kidung* is in the *Tengahan* 'Middle Javanese' meter called *puh Wargasari*, but the *yadnya* 'sacral, ritual' version so essential to Balinese rituals only contains two *bait* (*pada*) 'verses' (the *kawitan* 'introduction') in the actual *puh Wargasari* meter. All the other sung verses, the *pangawak* 'body' of the song, according to Suarka, are in a "*yadnya* style" that resembles *geguritan* but does not actually adhere to any specific *pupuh* (*tembang*) meter, with content drawn from disparate sources in order to relate thematically to any given ritual occasion. For the general public's ease of reading the *Wargasari* lyrics out of the very small published books, *carik* 'commas' often break the lyrics of the *kawitan* down into

<sup>146</sup> Conversation (2013)

<sup>147</sup> *Santun* also connotes 'offering' including giving money to a *dalang*, as one might say, *niki wenten sesantunan* 'here is an offering' (conversation with Sugi Lanus 2014).

small phrases (the actual *puh kidung* meter verses that formally would only have a comma at the end of a full verse), and also continue with commas approximating but not consistently every eight syllables, as if it were *geguritan* in *pupuh* (*tembang*) meter.<sup>148</sup>

Suarka also writes in lucid detail about ‘flowers as a source of beauty’ (2007: 141), as the dwelling place of Kama, god of Beauty, flowers generating passion and lust associated with the character of Kama. Suarka points to the prevalence of the word and very image of *sekar*, *sari* ‘flower’ in Balinese vocal music, referring back to the three broad categories of song being *sekar agung* ‘the great flower’ (*kakawin*), *sekar madya* ‘middle flower’ (*kidung*) and *sekar alit* ‘little flower’ (*tembang macapat*). The verb ‘to sing’, *nembeng*, and *tembang* ‘song’, are derived from *kembang* ‘flower’. And while some *kakawin* singers do not apply the term *tembang* to *kakawin*, others have suggested, “it’s all *nembang*.”

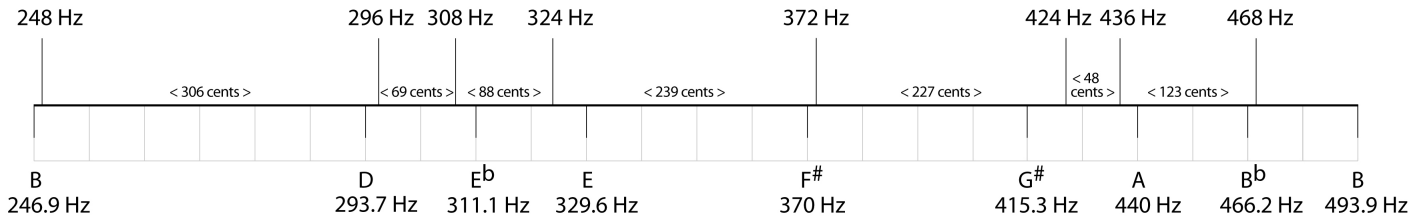
Ni Lemon’s singing predates *pélog* and *sléndro* as popular concepts and discrete systems. Intuitively, many singers today adhere to a *pélog* or *sléndro* model (let us, as they would have in 1928, say *saih gong*, *saih gendér* or *saih angklung*). But even the identity of specific tones in the *ding-dong* ‘solfege system’ is not consistent from one *Wargasari* singer to another, and is not even a conscious consideration by most singers. From today’s perspective, a common way of hearing the first pitch sung by Ni Lemon for this recording would suggest that this *Wargasari* is *saih angklung*, beginning on either *dang* or alternatively (if the variety of *sléndro* is *saih gendér wayang*, on *déng*). But this notion is quickly dispelled if not twelve seconds in, than certainly thirty seconds into the recording, as the tones reveal themselves to be free of the *sléndro-pélog* rubric. It seems to some listeners that the song is back in *saih angklung* at 01:22, allowing for another moment of familiarity with a fixed “*saih*” or “*laras*” but this intervallic phrase is lower in pitch (Balinese might say ‘bigger’) as if the *saih angklung* tones had been transposed. But in attempting to make our way into the mindset of 1928, this searching for names of tones in order to fit into today’s preconceptions, is to miss the broad, inclusive tonal phrasing that precedes the use of *pélog-sléndro*. Although today’s renditions of *Wargasari* do not show this wide a tonal palette, there is still considerable variety. As with the chart for Track #4, the upper vertical lines represent the pitches of the sung melody, while the lower vertical lines show the nearest Western chromatic pitches and equidistant interval spacing as would be heard on a piano or keyboard.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Conversation with Nyoman Suarka (2014)

<sup>149</sup> See description of frequency terminology on pages 42–43. As with the chart for Track #4, it should be noted that in any musical tradition a solo, unaccompanied singer, or in this case a group of singers without instrumental accompaniment, will show a degree of variability in which a given tone changes its precise pitch over the course of a song. Such slight variations are not included in the chart as distinct pitches, and the specific hertz measurement assigned to each tone is based on the most often-occurring variant within the *tembang*.



*Kidung Wargasari I* Track #17 Frequency Chart<sup>150</sup>**Perspectives on *Kakawin***

The performance of *kakawin*, *kidung* or *tembang* with translation is called *papaosan* or *mabebasan* and singing *kakawin* specifically is *mawirama* or *makakawin*. The reader/singer is *juru baca* (in Low Balinese) and *juru paos* or *sang ngawacen* (in High Balinese). The translator is *juru basa* (in Low Balinese) and *juru teges* or *sang negesin* (in High Balinese) and he translates the *Kawi* into modern Balinese.

Schumacher wrote: “The *juru basa* will only be able to provide a correct translation of the Old Javanese text if the chanted syllable groups can be perceived as words. This is also valid for an exact phrasing of longer verses. The musical phrasing as an organizational and structural device of performance is determined solely by the structure of meaning in a verse, and not by certain melodic formulae at certain syllable positions. This structure of meaning is realized by the exact position of the *angsel basa*, a break in the chanting process for the insertion of a spoken translation into vernacular Balinese. This break is subject to several restrictions in actual performance. According to Konta (1981: 11-2) fusions (*sandhi*) and assimilations (*sutra suara*) of sounds should generally not be separated by *angsel basa*. If subsequent words are related grammatically, *angsel basa* should only coincide with the end of a line. However, with regard to actual performance practice, I have witnessed many exceptions or violations of these rules, which causes me to question their validity.”<sup>151</sup>

Many *kakawin* scholars and aficionados occupy themselves with the literary, philosophical and religious content of texts and pay less attention to the aesthetics of sonic manifestation of the *wirama*. The terms *guru-laghu* and their notation system that was introduced at Universitas Udayana (UNUD) beginning in the late 1950s complemented printed Latin script texts of the *Kawi* ‘Old Javanese’. When the *kakawin* is written in *askara Bali* ‘Balinese script’, long and short *aksara* (*aksara* translates as ‘letters, syllables’ but the long and short refer to vowels) are embedded within the written

<sup>150</sup> See description of frequency terminology on pages 42–43. *Guru ding-dong* is not indicated here because *Wargasari* singers do not use it in teaching or discussion.

<sup>151</sup> Schumacher: 1995: 500

form as *busana aksara* ‘the clothing of the vowels’. There are eight such *busana aksara* that are read as *guru* ‘long syllables’<sup>152</sup>. The *guru* ‘long/heavy’ syllables are notated as ‘–’ and *laghu* ‘short/light’ as ‘u’.

Raechelle Rubinstein paraphrases Ida Pedanda Madé Sidemen’s reference to “the *kekawin* melodies employed, the total lack of observance of syllable length when vocalizing *kekawin*, and the style of interpretation popular during his youth,” having undergone no change from his childhood in the late nineteenth century until after the Japanese occupation (1945).<sup>153</sup> Evidence from the four *kakawin* recorded in 1928 suggests that a style of vocal phrasing based on the *busana aksara* inherent in the written Balinese script corresponds irregularly to today’s strict observance of long and short syllables. All informed listeners notice how the practice was inconsistent and conceivably even coincidental, more a characteristic of Balinese language than as a literary practice. But as Sugi Lanus points out, we cannot assume categorically that the four selections from Geria Pidada (and seven additional *kakawin* from Belaluan accompanied by *gong kebyar* that will be on *Bali 1928*: #4) were representative of Balinese *kakawin* circa 1928. Still, Geria Pidada, Klungung was the center of literary activity since at least the nineteenth century and we can be sure that as an advisor to Beka, Ida Boda was choosing respected performers whom he knew well.

Along with scholars such as I Gust Bagus Sugriwa, linguists at Udayana University led by Professor Raden Mas Ngabehi Poerbatjaraka developed a fixed system of phrasing based on the *Canda*, a fifteenth-century East Javanese manuscript,<sup>154</sup> replacing the freer Balinese oral tradition that prioritized *guru basa* (the meaning of the words) along with musical phrasing. Rubinstein writes: “The *Canda* appears to be a treatise written primarily for poets rather than performers of *kekawin*, although an early stanza that mentions its purpose is addressed to ‘*sakweh sang sujana*’ (all fine people)...Indeed, the theory of *kekawin* prosody explicated in the *Canda* barely raises the issue of *kekawin* performance. Rather this text appears inclined towards the needs of poets who compose *kekawin*, although it is possible that in former times performers of *kekawin* also had to master prosody. Certainly, Balinese poets must be consummate performers of *kekawin*. Moreover, the vocalization of *kekawin* is only possible when the metres have been constructed correctly, as *kekawin* are always sung from lontar texts. Inherent in the written text is crucial information that enables their vocal realization. It is the words of the text written in *Kawi* that determine pitch, melodic contour and the rhythm that is employed.”<sup>155</sup>

As an aspect of what Rubinstein calls “Guided Pepaosan,” the rules of *guru-laghu* were further inculcated by *Listibiya*, ‘The Council for Development and Promotion of Balinese Culture’, beginning in 1969 in contests and festivals<sup>156</sup> that continue to this day with *Utsawa Dharma Gita*, held during the annual *Pesta Kesenian Bali* ‘Balinese Arts

<sup>152</sup> Conversation with Sugi Lanus, UNUD scholar and writer from Seririt (2004)

<sup>153</sup> Rubinstein 1992: 89

<sup>154</sup> Rubinstein 2000: 133

<sup>155</sup> *ibid.*: 135

<sup>156</sup> Rubinstein 1992: 102

Festival'.<sup>157</sup> These events have served to popularize *kakawin* while at the same time instilling an aesthetic that prioritize the regulation of long and short vowels with a precision that has been developed further to measure fractions of each beat.

*Mawirama kakawin* has thrived in Bali for six hundred years as an oral tradition intertwined with poetic texts—kept alive and cultivated in a particularly Balinese style of improvisation and subtle acoustical phenomena interpenetrating with kinesthetic experience. Ida I Déwa Gdé Catra, Ida Bagus Madé Gandem and others have commented that these recordings exemplify how during this era the *juru mabasan* ‘interpreter’ would not be reading his interpretation from a written text in *Basa Bali* as is done today, but would rather be replying spontaneously, often from memory, to the words of the *kakawin* as it is sung line by line. Even *juru baca* ‘readers, singers’ would often be performing from memory, relying on the oral tradition and not always a written source. Nyoman Sukartha has pointed out that in today’s ritual performances of *kakawin*, most often amplified over loudspeakers, one may occasionally notice a *juru basa* lose his place in the book from which he is reading and then give interpretations that do not match the sung text. This reflects the loss of a certain immediacy of emotional resonance between the singer and interpreter and shows how an aspect of personal creativity is no longer as common as it once was.<sup>158</sup>

*Guru* can emphasize “weight” rather than length, and Déwa Gdé Catra asserts that although one cannot vary fixed *guru-laghu* in theory, one certainly may “in the field.” He added that the *nada pokok* ‘core tones’ of *wirama* also exist in theory but vary in practice. He offered the example of a well-respected singer of *wirama kakawin* whose prioritization of *reng* over *basa* ‘language’ or ‘meaning’ can render the words of his *wirama* difficult to hear clearly.<sup>159</sup> Wayan Pamit and many others have cautioned that listeners today will describe the four *kakawin* as *guru lamuk* (deviating from the rules of *guru-laghu*) while at the same time appreciating the sense of *prana* ‘breathing and life-force’ and *reng* ‘quality of sound and melody’. Déwa Gdé Catra describes the contemporary East Balinese process of *guru pungsaka* stretching in order to *mengurukan laghu* ‘make the *laghu* into *guru*’. Often still, as in these *kakawin* recordings, each *carik* is divided into many shorter phrases, to allow listeners a more direct understanding of content, rather than singing an entire line.

*Nyelekeh* within *mawirama* singing is a term used by Ida Bagus Gandem to mean flat or straight, and not interesting, with just slight lowering of intonation, repeatedly for each *baris* ‘line’.<sup>160</sup> Déwa Gdé Catra describes *ngelekeh* as “going nowhere like a dog chasing its tail.”

Since it appears from the account by Ida Pedanda Gdé Madé Sidemen and evidenced in these recordings that a systematic use of *guru-laghu* syllabic quantification was not

<sup>157</sup> While organized by Utsawa Dharma Gita and not the PKB festival itself, both take place simultaneously at the *Taman Budaya* ‘Bali Arts Center’ each summer.

<sup>158</sup> Conversation (2013)

<sup>159</sup> Conversation (2013)

<sup>160</sup> Conversation (2006)

conspicuous in 1928, we will not dwell on its procedures, as it is only tangentially relevant to the recordings and since many other studies have already done so. But just so the reader has a reference for some of the comments made by Balinese listeners (some of whom did not have the perspective that *guru-laghu* is a relatively newly instituted rule), a few of the concepts will be mentioned. If *guru-laghu* was not being practiced as it is today, then what were the aesthetic parameters and priorities? Certainly, *guru basa* and *pengertian* ‘understanding the content’, and according to I Nengah Medera, “the beauty of the *tembang* more than *guru-laghu*,” emphasizing its musical qualities.<sup>161</sup> Ida Bagus Gdé Diksa tells us that when Klungkung *kakawin* practitioners compete nowadays in island-wide events, they adhere to *guru-laghu*, but not so when they sing *wirama* in their own territory. At home they prioritize *reng* ‘buzzing, resonance’, *taksu* ‘spiritual energy’ and *keindahan* ‘beauty’.<sup>162</sup> Nengah Medera, a frequent judge at *kakawin* competitions, agrees that while strict adherence to *guru-laghu* is required in such *lomba* ‘competitions’, it is not so highly prioritized in *yadnya* ‘ritual’ contexts. Ida I Déwa Gdé Catra tells us that *kakawin* singers from Karangasem do not even bother to enter *lomba*, including those at the Balinese Arts Festival. He makes the point that it would be preferable if such events celebrated the *keragaman* ‘diversity’ of regional styles rather than *lomba* by which the result is another aspect of *seragaman* ‘uniformity’ because the criteria are slanted in the direction of hegemonic influence of the Denpasar and Gianyar districts which enjoy the stricter, formalized *guru-laghu*.<sup>163</sup>

Ida Bagus Gdé Diksa likens *reng* to *kumbang* ‘bumblebee’ in *Kawi*, *sadpada* or *tumulilingan* in Balinese. He suggests the *reng* of any given *wirama* (melodic form) is the particular quality of vibrations, resonance, “buzzing” or “humming.” In the same discussion, Nyoman Sukartha (of Sankan Buana, Klungkung and Universitas Udayana) concurred. Balinese dictionaries give the meaning of *reng* as *gema*, reverberation.<sup>164</sup> *Ngreng* is the sound of a tiger. *Ngreng* also means to reverberate or, as in singing of *kidung*, *matangguran*. And to Ida Pedanda Bindu, *reng* means *suara* ‘sound’<sup>165</sup>. *Reng* has varied meanings amongst singers and scholars partly because it involves an implicit combination of vibrations, *rasa* and melodic shape. Other singers (Wayan Gendra of Batuan, for instance) speak of a specific *reng* as melodic shape while the *rasa* and quality of vibrations is implicit.

Stuart Robson writes that a *kakawin*’s “sequence of high and low notes (or ‘melody’, Bal. *siur*) is determined by the count of syllables per *carik*.” He continues, “In Singaraja the term *reng* was given for melody, but in Pliatan it was explained that in fact there is a difference: *siur* is the melody, which remains the same no matter who sings the *wirama*, while *reng* is the resonance or tone, which varies with each singer.”<sup>166</sup> *Reng* does indeed very often refer to the melody of a *wirama* ‘poem form’ in the *kakawin* along with its characteristic resonance or “buzzing.” Rudiger Schumacher offered a somewhat different

<sup>161</sup> Conversation (2009)

<sup>162</sup> Conversation (2013)

<sup>163</sup> Conversation (2014)

<sup>164</sup> Kamus Bali-Indonesia 2008

<sup>165</sup> Conversation (2013)

<sup>166</sup> Robson 1972: 313

perspective and recognizes limits of discourse on *kakawin* practices of the past (which will be re-evaluated with the availability of these recordings):

“The melodic aspects of the reciter's musical capabilities primarily concern the correct use of the required tones or pitches (*nada suara*). According to Witana (1981: 12-3) this aspect is of special importance in the judging and evaluating of participants at reading competitions. Even if this requirement is not of central significance during ‘conventional’ *mabasan*, it nevertheless should not be underrated or neglected. Unlike text and metre, the principles of melodic structure are to be found exclusively in oral tradition. Therefore, with regard to the past, we can only state that oral performance existed; understanding its musical and especially its melodic features can only be done with reference to contemporary practice.<sup>167</sup> Stability of oral tradition is guaranteed by the fact that a large number of different metres are performed by applying a comparatively small number of melodic contours or models which, therefore, can be learned and remembered easily.

*Reng*, the Balinese term for this concept of melodic model or contour, is apparently derived from Old Javanese *hrend* (‘deep persistent sound, rumbling, grumbling, growling, humming’, Zoetmulder/Robson 1982: 643). It is not easy to recognize or define *rend* as the most important musical concept in chanting *kakawin* since it has several layers of meaning and use, and it is articulated anew in countless concrete realizations. These versions of melodies as well as their inherent melodic ornamentation and figuration (*gregel*, *eluk*, *leglegan*) depend upon stylistic traits and habits of particular *juru paos*, their region of origin, and their training. Even if we are able to discover something like an underlying musical grammar of *kakawin* performance, there will always be an element of uncertainty since a capable *juru paos* is able (and willing) to improvise within the scope of a fixed text, metre, and a flexible melodic model.”<sup>168</sup>

From the perspective of Ida Bagus Rai, grandnephew of the 1928 *kakawin* singer Ida Bagus Wayan Buruan, what is valued is *sumerti* and *suksma*. He describes *sumerti* as the ability for a singer to understand the content of the literature (more than merely translating) and then implement it. *Suksma* is to internalize the content, which ultimately involves yoga, *bawa* ‘inner life force’ of *rasa*, *cahaya* ‘radiance’ of *rasa*. *Bawa* is an inner manifestation of the sun’s radiance.<sup>169</sup> *Wibawa*—a word derived from the inner life force and radiance, Ida Bagus Diksa suggests, is the quality of *kakawin* sound characterized by *taksu* ‘spiritual energy’ and *wayah* ‘profundity’.<sup>170</sup> *Bawa* also connotes ‘alive’ and is used to suggest when a group of musicians, for instance *gendér wayang*

<sup>167</sup> Fortunately, these recordings from 1928 now allow us to experience the musical features Schumacher discusses with a perspective beyond the parameters of contemporary practice.

<sup>168</sup> Schumacher 1995: 501

<sup>169</sup> Conversation with Ida Bagus Rai (2013)

<sup>170</sup> Conversation with Ida Bagus Gdé Diksa (2013)

players, are “breathing as one.”<sup>171</sup> Another profound yogic vocal concept is *sapta windu*, wherein the sound and breath, in its immaterial but essential form, go out through the top of one’s head as if through a hole.<sup>172</sup> Another way of viewing or hearing *wibawa* is described by Schumacher (1995: 497): “According to many informants, the chanting of kakawin requires a full, deep, strong, and resonating (*wibawa*) voice, a requirement which, according to the majority of my informants, is rarely met by women. The vocal qualities of women - medium or higher register, soft, flexible, and melodious - are understood as perfectly matching the requirements of singing kidung. In recent years, however, the chanting of kakawin has become more and more open to women, as can be seen in annual reading competitions (*utsaha*) being organized in two different groups (male and female).”

The very close intervals characteristic of the Klungkung style of *kakawin* singing are described as *padet* ‘condensed, strong’, a quality that seems to have influenced the microtonal *pupuh* style of Ida Bagus Oka Kerebuak. Another aspect of the Klungkung style of *kakawin* singing is an emphasized descent in pitch at the end of a breath, occurring at the end of a poetic line or phrase of meaning. The Klungkung style, also shared with Karangasem and Lombok, is described by Déwa Gdé Catra as more simple, profound and powerful, stressing *mabayu* ‘life-energy’ and *nafas* ‘breath’. Another subtle quality characteristic of Klungkung, Karangasem and Lombok is *ngemkem*, where the sound is inside the mouth in a vigorous, forceful manner but breath, air, is not expelled. The focus in this style is within, not directed out, *wayah* ‘profound’, with the vibrations still moving, “being stolen” from throat to nose, to the chest and so on.<sup>173</sup> Ida Bagus Gandem speaks of accessing the sound at the base of the throat so that the deeper reverberations are audible.<sup>174</sup>

Each of the four lines of a *pada* ‘stanza’ has a name, described thus by Schumacher:

- line a: *pangawit* (‘the initial one’) or *ngambilang* (‘to take up, to begin’)
- line b: *pananggap* (‘the receiving/hearing/answering one’) or *masalah/mingsalah* (‘to change/remove/shift’); the sound or melody presented in line a is to be ‘changed’ or ‘answered’ in line b.
- line c: *pangumbang* (‘the flowing/streaming one’). This label is related to an important Balinese concept of the perception and aesthetics of (musical) sound, expressed in a pair of opposing terms (*pa*)*ngumbang*-(*pa*)*ngisep*. It means that a deeper, ‘flowing’ sound (*pangumbang*) is balanced by a higher, ‘sucking, absorbing’ sound (*pangisep*). Coming together they merge into a lively vibration of musical sound. In accord with the *pangumbang* character of this third line of a stanza, there is a strong tendency to stress the range of lower pitches at the beginning of this line during performance.
- line d: *pamada* or *papada* (‘the one [completing] a stanza’).<sup>175</sup>

<sup>171</sup> As will be evident with I Wayan Lotring’s group playing on *Bali 1928: CD #3*

<sup>172</sup> Conversation with Ida Bagus Madé Gandem in Cakranegara, Lombok (2006)

<sup>173</sup> Conversation with Ketut Kodi (2013)

<sup>174</sup> Conversation (2006)

<sup>175</sup> Schumacher 1995: 495



Ida Madé Tianyar a.k.a. Ida Pedanda Gdé Madé Manuaba  
(Photo courtesy of Geria Pidada, Klungkung)

### A Few Details on the Lives of Ida Madé Tianyar and Ida Bagus Wayan Buruan

Ida Madé Tianyar (a.k.a. Ida Bagus Madé Tianyar), *juru teges* or *sang negesin* ‘*kakawin* translator’ on these recordings, was younger brother to Ida Bagus Oka and participated in diverse performance activities until being consecrated as Ida Pedanda Gdé Madé Manuaba. He danced and acted the role of Prabangsa (Prince Panji’s older brother in the *Malat* stories) for the *gambuh* dance-drama of the *puri* Klungkung. He also frequently performed as *panasar kelihan*, older of the two half-masked comic narrator-translator characters in *topéng*. The Klungkung *topéng* genre was comprised of five performers, referred to as *topéng panca*, four of whom, including Ida Madé Tianyar, are in the 1941 photograph taken the Mangkunegaran Palace in Surakarta, Java. Even after becoming the *pendéta* Ida Pedanda Gdé Madé Manuaba, he continued to join in *mabebasan* sessions and sing *kakawin*.

Ida Bagus Wayan Buruan, *juru paos* or *sang ngawacen* ‘*kakawin* reader-singer’, was also of the Geria Pidada, Klungkung community. His nephew, Ida Bagus Rai, Udayana University literature faculty member, remembers his uncle as a charismatic singer, affecting listeners in profound ways.

For the next four tracks, Ida Madé Tianyar’s translation and interpretation are delineated within brackets.

Track #19      *Kakawin Bharatayuddha*

Performed by Ida Bagus Wayan Buruan & Ida Madé Tianyar

Language: *Kawi* ‘Old Javanese’ with interpretation & translation to *Basa Bali Alus* ‘Refined, High Balinese’

*Tan iwön sadurgama nikang rana*

It is difficult to explain the horrors on a battlefield

[*Inggih tan uningayang prasida pangabuté irika ring tegal Kuru kesetra*]

It’s hard to describe the troubles that arise in the midst of war

*ri surup ikang Diwākara,*

when the sun goes down,

[*ri sampun prasida ical ida sanghyang sahasra kirana*]

when the sun is already setting

*Sira Korawéndra*

His Highness King Korawa



*[sakadi mangkin ida Maharaja Kururaja]*  
 His Highness, the Mararaja Duryadana of the Korawa

*wuwusĕn*  
 narrates

*[ida ucapang manira mangkin]*  
 he whom I speak of now

*sĕdĕng ira umulih*  
 when he returns (to the encampment)

*[ya ta kocap matulak ida sané mangkin]*  
 it seems he is coming back to the barracks now

*maréng kuta,*  
 towards the temporary royal encampment,

*[ida ngranjing irika ring wirayatana]*  
 he enters the royal barracks

*pangupāya*  
 to plan a strategy

*[tan mari nabdabang indik buat pangindrajala]*  
 there is no end to the creation of deceits

*tingkah*  
 attempts

*[sapunika prasida pidabdab idané ratu]*  
 quite so are his efforts

*alawan para ratu*  
 along with his subordinates

*[kairing antuk sahananing wiraroda]*  
 accompanied by all of his soldiers

*masamūha ring kulĕm,*  
 conferring at night,

*[pidaging punika sami ida kumpul mabebaosan duké wengi punika]*  
 they assemble to talk that evening

*sira sang gumantya*

about who is worthy to take the place (leading the battle for the next day)

*[daging yan sapasira wenang angantyani]*

depending on who is appropriate to take that responsibility

*gĕlarĕn*

devising a strategy

*[pacang kajenengang]*

in order to be crowned

*balapati*

as a commander in battle

*[jumeneng bupalaka]*

to be the commander in battle

*winiwĕka ring sabhā.*

it is this factor that is discussed in their deliberations.

*[sané kabaosang ring panangkilan.]*

that's discussed in the meeting place.

Although the creative and literary dynamics of *guru-laghu*, *guru basa* and *guru pungsaka* would be most accurately clarified by comparing the vocalized version with a manuscript written in *huruf Bali* 'Balinese script' containing the *busana aksara* 'clothing of the vowels', for this article Nyoman Suarka provides us with the original text in Latin script:

Ton-iwön sadurgama nikang rana ri surup-ikang diwākara,  
sira Korawendra wuwusĕn sĕdĕngiran-umulih mareng kuta,  
angupāya tingkah-alawan para ratu masamūha ring kulĕm,  
sira sang gumantya gĕlarĕn balapati winiweka ring sabhā.

The *Bharatayuddha* 'War of the Bharatas' is, in Bali, one of the most popular parts of the epic *Mahabharata* as a source for *wayang*, dance dramas and *papaosan* sessions. Written by a pair of authors, mpu Panuluh and mpu Sedah, "The royal patron of the two authors was Jayabhaya, king of Kadiri (Daha), known from three charters dated 1135 and 1136 and 1144" (Zoetmulder 1974: 271). Verses from the *Bharatayuddha* such as this may be used for *ngabĕn* and associated death rituals because it deals with the struggle in one's life (and death) to return to *Sang Pencipta* 'the Creator'.<sup>176</sup> Madé Bandem points out that the phrases sung in this recording occur during which time Duryadana is meeting with other rajas to decide whether Karna or Salya should lead the battle. Ultimately, Karna is

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<sup>176</sup> Separate conversations with Ketut Kodi and Nengah Medera (2014)

chosen.<sup>177</sup>

The *reng* of this *kakawin* is *Wahirat* (*Wirat*). The *wirama* is *Tebusol*, characterized by the pattern of long and short syllables per line and per verse. Many different *wirama kakawin* poems have the *reng* of *Wahirat*, a comparable resonance and melody, but with a different syllabic structure. However, we have been told that *wirama Tebusol* is always in *reng Wahirat*. *Wirama Tebusol* is structured with 20 syllables as: uu–/u–u/uu–/uuu/uuu/–u–/uu.

Track #20      *Kakawin Ramayana*

Performed by Ida Bagus Wayan Buruan & Ida Madé Tianyar

Language: *Kawi* ‘Old Javanese’ with interpretation & translation to *Basa Bali Alus* ‘Refined, High Balinese’

*Wibhāsana*

Wibisana

[*Daging asapunika ida ida sang Punta Wibhisana*]

Quite so, the royal Wibisana

*nahan ta sāmbatnira,*

thus is the royal Wibisana’s lamentation,

[*sapunika indik ida pandulamén idané*]

so this is what his lamentation is about

*Raghūtama*

His Highness Prince Rama

[*né mangkin Ida Sang Ramabhadra*]

His Highness Prince Rama is present

*wawang matanguh sira,*

at once Prince Rama gives his advice,

[*tan mari gelis ida ida pituhua reké ida*]

right away Prince Rama advises

*Wibhāsana*

Wibisana

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<sup>177</sup> Email correspondence (2014)

[*adi adi sang wipratmaka ja adi*]  
my dear young brother like a Brahmana priest

*huwusta*  
enough!

[*pidaging puputang peragatang ja adi*]  
stop, this is already enough, my brother

*haywālara,*  
do not be so disheartened,

[*pidaging eda bas kadurus i adi nduhkitayang di pakayun*]  
don't be too excessively sad at heart, brother

*apan saphala*  
because it appears as the fruit of your karma

[*dening jati luh mapikolih adi nyaman beliné sang wipratmaka*]  
because (Rawana) was truly extraordinary, my priestly brother

*Sang Dasasya*  
King Rawana

[*dané rakan i adi sang yaksaraja reké dané*]  
your brother, King Rawana, was a raksasa<sup>178</sup>

*ar pĕjah.*  
he has already fallen.

[*ida nĕwata ngamarganin buat dini di tegal Indrakarana, purusa kaucap diguminé, keto adi nyaman beliné ja adi.*]  
he is defeated in fulfilling his goal in battle with a path that has been truly praised, so it is, my dear brother.

This verse from the *Ramayana* takes place as Prince Rama is consoling Wibisana after his brother Rawana's death at the hands of Rama and his armies. The *kakawin* is in *wirama Sarisi* and the general consensus is that it is *reng Saronca*. The *guru-laghu* phrasing for *wirama Sarisi* as observed today is: u-u/uu-/u--/uu.

Upon hearing this rendition, Déwa Gdé Catra explained how in Karangasem, but also commonly throughout Bali, singers may stress *guru* or not, reflecting their sense of *pangus* 'what is appropriate to the context', following *tuntutan aksén* 'the requirements

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<sup>178</sup> *Raksasa* translates as 'dangerous giant or supernatural, monstrous humanoid'.

of the accent' and a sense of *manis* 'sweetness'.

Once again, Nyoman Suarka has provided us with the original text in Latin script:

Wibhīsana nahan ta sāmbatnira,  
Raghūtama wawang matangguh sira,  
Wibhīsana huwusta haywālara,  
apan saphala sang Daśasyār pējah.

Track #21      *Kakawin Boma (Bomantaka)*

Performed by Ida Bagus Wayan Buruan & Ida Madé Tianyar

Language: *Kawi* 'Old Javanese' with interpretation & translation to *Basa Bali Kapara (lumrah)* 'Common Balinese' mixed with *Kawi*

*Hana laki*

And now, my young brother

*[Isinnye ada adi nyaman beliné adi]*

alas, is there anything more, my young brother?

*tatwa nikang dadi*

concerning the nature of this incarnation

*[nah prasida katuturan anaké dadi manusa]*

as regards the story of our incarnation as human beings

*ginawé*

to be destined

*[kéto né kardininnya]*

that is what's destined

*anitya*

not to be immortal

*[satata tata di jagaté]*

perishable in this world

*dadinya kabéh,*

that is the nature of everything in life

*[kéto dadianya maéndah-éndahan makejang, adi]*

thus births into this world vary, all of them, brother

*anili-ilih*

forms of penance change

*[yéning ia maganti-ganti kocap to adi]*

if they change, it seems, brother

*wisaya*

as the pleasures of the senses

*[gegunan pajalané dini dadi manusa]*

that's life's journey, coming into existence as a human being

*aněmu suka*

enjoying one's pleasures

*[yadiastun upami nepukin né madan kasukan]*

even though, for example, experiencing pleasures

*bhinukti*

enjoying

*[aketo né prasida tepukina]*

so it is with enjoyments

*mawéh prihati,*

that carry with them sadness and worry,

*[pradé bisa masih nekayang ida duhkitan ida]*

it can bring with it grief

*prawala nikā*

a sign

*[déning kantenanya]*

as for qualities

*sang anginak-inak*

of a person wholly consumed by his desires

*[yan mungguing ida sang angénakangé tan énak]*

someone who disports himself for pleasure too much

*anilih suka*

gets lost in those obsessions as they change from one to another

[*yan ida prasida kaungguan suka*]  
as a person who is always obsessed with his desires

*mogha jěněk*,  
until he is complacent

[*mawastu ta sida*]  
until he succeeds

*sang aněmu bhoga*  
as a person who finds happiness

[*yan mungguing pitui sang nepukin kasidan*]  
as one who achieves success

*tayan wruha ta sira*  
if he is someone who knows himself

[*aji kemoksahané apang tawang*]  
the way of self-awareness (the soul's release) must be learned

*pinandhita yogya tirun*.  
becomes like a priest (beyond likes and dislikes), as someone who sets an example.

[*sang pandita patut tulad.*]  
a person of priestly disposition appropriately exemplifies wisdom.

The *Bomantaka* is an episode from the *Mahabharata* relating the greatness of the god Krisna. Here, he is giving advice to Arjuna. Because it deals with *moksa* 'the soul's release', the *Bomantaka* is appropriate to sing during death rituals and as a commonly performed *wirama*, very likely would have been sung from memory.

And again, Nyoman Suarka has provided us with the original text in Latin script:

Hana laki tatwa nikang dadi ginaway anitya dadinya kabeh,  
anili-nilih wisayeng maněmu suka bhinukti maweh prihati,  
prawala nikā sang-angenak-inaking-anilih suka mogha jěněk,  
sang-aněmu bhoga tayan wruha ta sira pinandita yogya tirun.

This *kakawin* is in *wirama Citrawilāpa*. Déwa Gdé Catra suggests that *Citrawilāpa* can vary between twenty and twenty-one syllables. The almost general consensus—based on the melodic form and resonance—is that that this is sung in *reng Saronca*, although today's *Saronca* would be appropriate for a pattern adding up to anywhere from six to thirteen syllables. Wayan Pamit appreciated this rendition, again commenting how it is

free of the strict rules of *guru-laghu*. He further added this is *ciri khas budaya Bali—bebas* ‘the special character of Balinese culture—free’.<sup>179</sup> Still, as a reference, the *guru-laghu* for today’s *wirama Citrawilāpa*<sup>180</sup> is: uuu/u–u/u–u/uuu/uu–/uu–/uuu.

Track #22      *Kakawin Smaradahana*

Performed by Ida Bagus Wayan Buruan & Ida Madé Tianyar

Language: *Kawi* ‘Old Javanese’ with interpretation & translation to *Basa Bali Alus* ‘Refined, High Balinese’

*Sahaja*

Truly

*[Inggih sawiakti]*

Really

*sumapangendah*

lovely as a flowering Sappanwood tree (that yields a reddish dye)

*[yan parnayang waluya waluya sang ahayu]*

comparable to the beauty of a girl

*sōng ning parwata*

a radiance on the mountain

*[sapunika reké tegéh-tegehnyané i gunung]*

it’s like that on the mountain

*umurang,*

like an ember,

*[aratu mategep masemu abang]*

truly appearing a bright red

*sahidu mirah*

like red saliva

*[upama waluya i pees barak]*

like red saliva (from someone chewing sirih leaves)

*asengit*

passionate

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<sup>179</sup> Conversation (2003)

<sup>180</sup> Zoetmoelder 1974: 464



*[irika tan mari ngesed]*  
when continually brushing up against each other

*kosap*  
caressed

*[keni i ratu kaesed]*  
you are being stroked

*dening angareki,*  
by a seductive lover,

*[antuk ida sang abagus sang angrasanin]*  
by a handsome one who wants to gently caress

*kadi latu-latuning mas*  
like sparks of gold

*[waluya kagebug kasmarannyané i mas]*  
like sparks of love as if gold were being forged

*Hyang Wi*  
the Sun God

*[Ida Sanghyang Pretangga Kirana]*  
the sun deity

*wawu cumarana,*  
just risen,

*[ritatkala wawu sutéja wawu dumilah reké ide]*  
when it just starts to shine

*Aruna*  
the red light of dawn

*[Ida Sanghyang Aruna sapunapi]*  
“How is it with the God of Dawn?” (translator asks the reader-singer)

*kadi rajabang*  
like the king of radiant red

*[waluya sang abagus aratu ida]*  
just so handsome, Your Highness

*bwat sanggrama*  
like a bed

*[saksat ring paturuan]*  
as if in bed

*piniturun.*  
who has descended (from heaven).

*[Ida nuroning sang ayu].*  
the Goddess of Beauty has entered this lovely one.

Once again, Nyoman Suarka has provided us with the original text in Latin script:

Sahaja sumepangendah song ning parwata umarang,  
sahidu mirah-asengit kosap dening-angareki,  
kadi latu-latu ning mas hyang we wahu cumarana,  
aruna kadi rajabang bwat sanggrama piniturun.

The *kakawin Smarandahana*, composed by a poet calling himself mpu Dharmaja, “can be dated approximately because the name of the royal patron is mentioned,” and appears, “to belong to the last half-century of the Kadiri period.”<sup>181</sup> Zoetmulder is referring to the Hindu Javanese kingdom in East Java, 1042—circa 1222. Smara is another name for the god Kama. Ida Bagus Madé Gandem summarizes the theme of the selection in this recording as imagining a beautiful woman at a moment of love, painting a picture of *smaran* ‘passion’ and *asmara* ‘sex’. It is not a character within the narrative who is “speaking” but rather the *pujangga* ‘poet’ himself.<sup>182</sup> The story of *Smaradahana* is one of many used in performances of *légong* as well as the dramatic narrative genre of *baris malampahan*. Beryl de Zoete and Walter Spies provide an opening synopsis:<sup>183</sup>

“The demon-king Nilarudraka, whose citadel was at the foot of the Himalayas, had long been waging war against heaven. The gods could not destroy him, for he had received Çiwa’s promise that he should die neither at the hands of gods nor men nor (sic) other demon like himself. Only Çiwa [Siwa] himself could devise a remedy; but Çiwa was practicing yoga on Mount Meru, and none of the gods dared to wake him. They decided at last that Çiwa’s favorite child, Smara, the God of Love, must be persuaded to undertake the dangerous task, and all went together in search of him. ...Indra said to Smara, “Our only hope is to bring Çiwa out of his meditation, so that he may lie with Parvati and bear a child of such a shape that he can kill Rudraka”...So Smara was persuaded. But first, he said, he must go home...and take leave of Devi Ratih, his wife... He finds her weeping bitterly, her hair drenched in tears. And the scent of flowers is

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<sup>181</sup> Zoetmulder 1974: 291-298

<sup>182</sup> Personal conversation (2006)

<sup>183</sup> De Zoete and Spies 1938: 323–324

heavy on the air...Smara breaks to her that he must go and wake Ćiwa, in order that he may remember Parvati and bear a child, which by some device must be of monstrous shape, neither god nor man nor demon. She warns him of the danger, and implores him not to leave her. But he stole away while she was still sleeping after a night of love, and came at last, with the divine beings who attended him, before Mount Meru. But two such terrible rakshasas kept guard over the mountain that Smara's heavenly companions fled before them, leaving him alone. He prays for Ćiwa to awake. He shoots arrow after arrow, but they all turn into garlands of flowers when they touch Ćiwa, and in no wise disturb his meditation. Then Smara begins to make spells, summoning all his thoughts in one spot. And with this clump of thought he shot again, and his mantra entered Ćiwa's thought and he awoke. There was a great earthquake when Ćiwa woke, and here were no bounds to his wrath. He was like a fire-spitting mountain. In his rage he burned Smara to ashes."

Zoetmulder picks up the story.<sup>184</sup> "Scorched by the all-destroying fire emanating from Śiwa he addresses a last farewell to Ratih, lamenting his miserable fate, after which his soul escapes his body. The months of spring, and with them all that is lovely and beautiful in the forest, perform the funeral rites...Wrhaspati explains why they have urged the god of love to this wretched deed. He reminds him that Nilarudraka, who has become a threat to the whole world, has received his extraordinary powers from the god himself, who once granted him the favour that nobody but his (Śiwa's) son should be able to defeat him...He should also realize what will happen to the world when there is no longer any love. At last Śiwa consents to letting Kama live again, though in a hidden and immaterial (sukṣma) form...Since the departure of her consort Ratih has been prey to despondency and the pains of love. She tries to divert her thoughts by taking a bath, but it is "as if she were plunging into a fire"...Accompanied by two servants, Nanda and Sunanda, she sets out on her long and arduous way through the mountains. At last a small column of smoke shows her the place where Kama had been burnt...She addresses him in a long lamentation, and it is as if he were replying, protesting his unshaken fidelity. Śiwa, seeing she is about to seek death together with her attendants, causes the fire to flare up; and now it is as if Kama were beckoning her to come. She begs him to wait for her on the perilous road to the realm of death, purifies her mind through yoga, and throws herself into the flames. They meet each other, but, as they are bodiless, they cannot unite. Therefore Kama enters the heart of Śiwa, and Ratih that of Uma...Soon their union bears fruit...When shortly after a son is born he appears to have the head of an elephant. Śiwa declare that his name shall be sang hyang Gana; he will by nature be a remover of obstacles and will destroy the enemies of the gods...Nilarudraka, informed by his spies of the birth of Śiwa's son, decides that his expedition against the gods cannot be postponed any longer. The demons march out and spread destruction wherever they pass. In panic the gods flee to Śiwa, who shows them a child that will be their saviour. Mantras and yoga are used to accelerate his growth and he is presented with divine weapons. Then the army of the gods sets out, with Gana, escorted by Brahma and Wisnu, in the rear... When at last the demons are threatened with defeat, the demon king appears in person and rages with such fury that all the gods take flight. Only Gana stands firm and a fierce combat

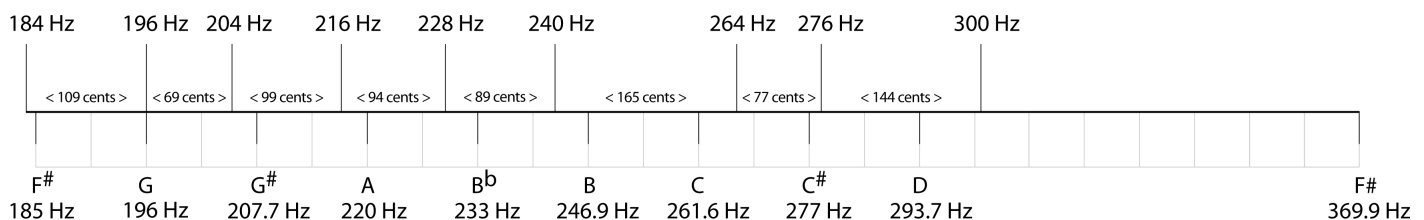
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<sup>184</sup> Zoetmulder 1974: 292–295

follows. When the demon hits him with his bajra (diamond weapon), a gift from Śiwa, and severs his left tusk, he seizes the axe (kutara) which is one of the magic weapons recently presented to him, and cuts off his adversary's hands and feet, and finally his head. He restores to life with amṛta those who have fallen on his side and they praise him with shouts of Gananjaya. The world is at peace again...Śiwa reigns in heaven with his consort Uma and his sons Gana and Kumara, for many yugas. As Ardhanaṛiswara (the lord who is half woman) he is fulfillment of all who aim at uniting with the supreme deity...The final cantos relate some of the incarnations of Kama and Ratih. It is Uma who on a pleasure trip sees the ashes of the god and goddess of love and, moved by compassion and gratitude, obtains from Śiwa a promise that they shall be reborn... Apology of the poet for his imperfections. He hopes he will not be reborn as a *kawi* in his next incarnation, as this is an occupation which involves much fatigue and pain."

This is *Wirama Girisa* with sixteen syllables per *carik* 'comma delineating a line'. Zoetmulder (1974: 459) gives the *guru-lagu* of *Girisa* as: uuu/uuu/- - -/ - - u/uuu/u with the last syllable either long or short. Following the word *piniturun*, one more *carik* would have completed a *bait* or *pada* 'verse'. Typically, nowadays, the *guru-laghu* pattern along with the distinctive character of resonance and melodic contour will identify the *reng*. Nyoman Suarka, Nengah Medera and Wayan Pamit agreed this is *Saronca* and Ida Bagus Gandem concurs, adding it is like a long *Saronca*, which he finds somewhat confusing. While Déwa Gdé Catra agrees that this is close to *Saronca*, he reminds us that *reng Saronca* has a maximum of thirteen syllables per *carik* (and minimum of six). He suggests that the *reng* is *Sikarini*, which is common to *wirama Girisa*. Clearly, opinions can differ due to the fact that the style of performing *wirama* was so different in 1928 from that of today. Frequency analysis confirms at least nine distinct pitches employed in this rendition, with even more subtly inflected tones.

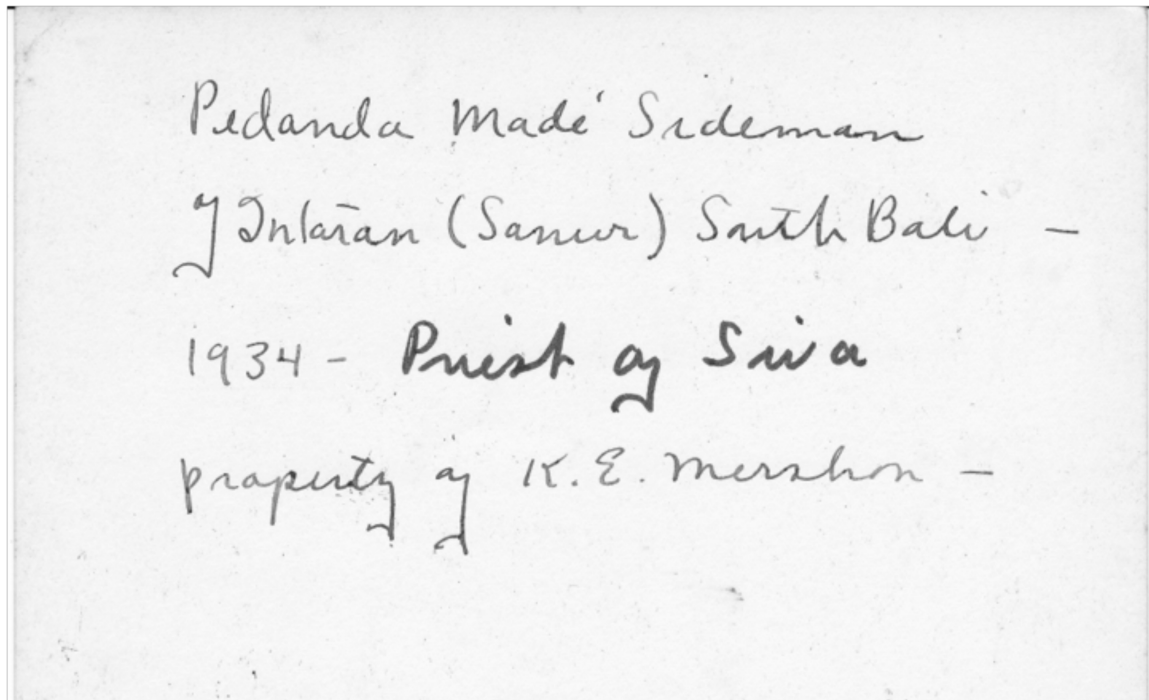
### *Kakawin Smaradahana* Track #22 Frequency Chart<sup>185</sup>



<sup>185</sup> See description of frequency terminology on pages 42–43. *Guru ding-dong* is not indicated here because *wirama kakawin* singers do not use it in teaching or discussion. As with the chart for Track #4, it should again be noted that in any musical tradition a solo, unaccompanied singer will show a degree of variability in which a given tone (in the “scale”) changes its precise pitch over the course of a song. Such variabilities likely increase even more due to the frequent “interruptions” of the *juru basa*. These slight variations are not included in the chart as distinct pitches and the specific hertz measurement assigned to each tone is based on the most often-occurring variant within this performance.



Ida Pedanda Madé Sidemen (Photo presumably by Jack Mershon, courtesy of Katharine Edson Mershon & I Madé Bandem)



Reverse side of photograph on previous page. We include this image since no one today had been able to recognize the *pedanda* in the McPhee film until we discovered this photograph. Also, the 1934 date offers corroboration of his lifespan (see below).

## Information Regarding Archival Films & Videos Online

For more information, updates, and additional video excerpts please visit [www.arbiterrecords.org](http://www.arbiterrecords.org) and in bahasa Indonesia at <http://www.bali1928.net>

**Colin McPhee** (1900–1964) was a Canadian composer and pianist living in New York when he heard some of the 1928 Odeon recordings soon after their release. In his memoir, *A House in Bali*, he wrote, “It was quite by accident that I heard a few gramophone records that were to change my life completely, bringing me out here in search of something quite indefinable—music or experience, I could not at this moment say.” McPhee and his wife, anthropologist Jane Belo, came to Bali in 1931 and conducted research during the period of 1931–38, and these are some of the films that he shot. Individuals and locations were not identified in the footage, requiring research on our part to enhance the documentary value of the scenes and activities.

### • Scenes of the Natural Environment and Everyday Life

#### • **Ida Pedanda Madé Sidemen** filmed by Colin McPhee circa 1931–38

Raechelle Rubinstein writes:<sup>186</sup>

“Pedanda Made was born in 1878 and was a resident of Intaran, one of two customary villages that comprise the modern administrative unit (perbekelan) of Sanur...Pedanda Made was one of the great figures of 20<sup>th</sup> century Bali, renowned for his accomplishments in diverse fields, among others as a Brahmana high priest (*pedanda*), an offerings expert, a carver of masks, a maker of wooden split drums (*kulkul*), a traditional architect (*undagi*), and a poet, author, illustrator, commentator, interpreter and scribe of *lontar*. He was not merely competent in each of these fields but was an expert, a perfectionist, a master craftsman.”

“Local media reports and other media accounts relate that Pedanda Made died between 125 and 136 years of age. (see, e.g. Made Surita, “Pesan Mengesankan Almarhum Ida Pedanda Made Sidemen”, Bali Post, 12 September 1989, pp. I, XI). However, scrutiny of the colophons in the *lontar* manuscripts that he copied consistently demonstrate that whenever he stated his age, it corresponded to the final two digits of the saka year. Hence, he calculated it in saka years rather than Balinese years. This meant that he lived to the age of 106 or 107.”<sup>187</sup>

• **I Gusti Ketut Kandel** was a prominent mask carver from Jeroan Abasan, Badung (now Denpasar). He was also an accomplished *undagi* ‘traditional architect’ and was one of several designers of the Bali Museum beginning in 1910. The museum opened officially

<sup>186</sup> Rubinstein 1996: 173–191

<sup>187</sup> *Sosok Seniman & Sekaa Kesenian Denpasar* (1999: 161) published by Pemda Kodya Denpasar, also gives his year of birth as 1878 (Saka 1800).

in 1932. In addition to *topéng* masks owned privately by dancers, his *barong*, *Rangda*, *barong landung* and *jauk* masks are sacred personages performed at numerous *pura* ‘temples’ in the regencies of Badung and Denpasar.

- **Ida Boda** was filmed teaching *légong* with the *gamelan palégongan* of Kelandis.
- **Mamik Ambar** (1920/1922–2014) was for decades the most celebrated singer of *cepung*, a *Sasak* musical genre based on the lontar manuscript *Monyeh*, written in a *Sasak*-Javanese script and sung in a combination of *Sasak*, Balinese and Javanese languages. A *cepung* group consists of *suling* ‘bamboo flute’, *redep* (*rebab* ‘bowed, upright, spiked fiddle’), *pemakhitanaos* ‘reader-singer’, *punggawa* ‘translator’ and *penyokong* ‘supporter’ who joins in the singing. In Lombok, the public perception of *cepung* could not be separated from the persona of Mamik Ambar, often referred to simply as Ambar. We visited him at his home in Cakranegara, Mataram, western Lombok, during two extended visits in 2006 and 2009, with an evening music session at the nearby home of his friend Ida Ketut Pidada. The posted video was made by Edward Herbst during a daytime singing session at Ambar’s home. Another video of Ambar singing *Dangdang Sasak* will be made available online with the publication of *Bali 1928: CD #5. Cepung* from Lombok recorded in 1928 (lyrics transcribed from the recording with the help of Ambar and Ida Nengah Pidada) will be on *Bali 1928: CD #5* and one can also hear Mamik Ambar on a cassette recorded in the 1970s and produced in Bali.<sup>188</sup>

*Pangkur Sasak*                      Sung by Mamik Ambar  
Video Recorded in Cakranegara, Lombok (2006)  
<http://arbiterrecords.org/catalog/category/world-arbiter/>  
<http://www.bali1928.net>

Transcribed and translated from *Kawi-Bali* to Indonesian by Ida I Déwa Gdé Catra<sup>189</sup>

*Ida Dané sinamian,*  
All in attendance,

*kaula parek angemban tugas suci,*  
this servant comes to bear a sacred task,

*kaula darma kautus,*  
the responsibility of a servant sent

*saking guru negara,*  
from the land’s ruler

*angerambat berana haji pisuka luhur,*  
whose wealth and property are a noble legacy,

<sup>188</sup> *Cepung: Jagaraga-Cakranegara Lombok Barat*. B-558. Denpasar: Bali Record

<sup>189</sup> August 22, 2013



*sangat sisip kaula,*  
this servant (devoted one) is very much at fault,

*ampura siu ping saketi.*  
a thousand apologies multiplied by one hundred thousand.

### Acknowledgments

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I Nyoman Suarka did the first textual transcriptions and translations from Balinese and *Kawi* to Indonesian, working in 2003 from cassettes I had acquired from the UCLA Ethnomusicology Archive. Subsequently, as the quality of our audio resources improved with Arbiter’s Sonic Depth Technology, we were able to better discern the singers’ words and in 2006 we assembled a translation team of performers and scholars that included I Nengah Medera, Ni Nyoman Candri, I Ketut Kodi, I Nyoman Catra, Ni Désak Madé Suarti Laksmi, I Wayan Dibia and myself. I Wayan Juniarta contributed many subtle nuances to the English translations of the *tembang*. Endo Suanda helped envision and organize the Bali 1928 project at its inception and participated as advisor for the Indonesian publication of Volume I: *Bali 1928: Gamelan Gong Kebyar*.

Our initial research in 2003 involved a wide range of *gamelan* and vocal genres, with a team that included Ketut Suryatini, I Madé Arnawa (Tunjuk), Wayan Dibia (Singapadu) and myself. Our core 2006, ‘07, and ‘08–‘09 research team consisted of Ketut Kodi, Ketut Suryatini and myself, with Ketut Arini, Wayan Dibia, and project assistant I Nyoman Suryandana (Ongki).

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**Edward Herbst** made his first visit to Bali in 1972 while working toward his B.A. at Bennington College and sponsored by the Indonesian Insititute of Sciences (LIPI), spending one year studying *gendér wayang* and *palégongan* with I Madé Gerindem in Teges Kanginan, gong-smithing practices and acoustics in Tihingan, Klungkung, and the inter-relationship between *gamelan* and dance-theater. He and Beth Skinner studied with I Nyoman Kakul, master of *gambuh*, *baris*, and *topéng*, while living with his family in Batuan. In 1980–81, Herbst spent fifteen months on a Fulbright-Hays grant in Bali focusing on vocal music performance with *gamelan* and dance-theater, studying with I Madé Pasek Tempo of Tampaksiring, Ni Nyoman Candri, I Wayan Rangkus and Pandé Madé Kenyir of Singapadu, I Ketut Rinda of Blahbatuh, and I Madé Sija of Bona among others. He was commissioned by Sardono Kusumo's experimental Indonesian dance theater company to collaborate as composer and solo vocalist on *Maha Buta* in Switzerland and Mexico as well as Sardono's film, *The Sorceress of Dirah*, in Indonesia. After receiving a Ph.D. in Ethnomusicology from Wesleyan University he returned to Bali for four months in 1992 (funded by the Asian Cultural Council) to complete research for a book, *Voices in Bali: Energies and Perceptions in Vocal Music and Dance Theater*. He continues to balance research, lecturing and creative projects in Indonesia with his role in the U.S. as co-artistic director and composer for the performance company Triple Shadow. He is currently a Research Associate in the Department of Anthropology at Hunter College–City University of New York. A 2014-15 Fulbright Senior Scholar Research Award is allowing him to conduct field research and seminars in Bali relating to continuities between the music of 1928 and that of contemporary Bali.



Bali 1928 research team with *gandrung* master I Madé Sarin in Ketapian Kelod.  
 Right to left: Madé Sarin & great-grandson; Ongki (I Nyoman Suryandana),  
 I Ketut Kodi, Edward Herbst, Ni Ketut Suryatini (Photo: I Wayan Teller, 2009)

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