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Music Education and Sustainability in Lombok, Indonesia

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Abstract: This article discusses the challenges of teaching and sustaining music and other performing arts on the island of Lombok in Indonesia. It follows my field research trajectory on the island over a period of 34 years and analyzes the efforts of government interventions, non-government actors, and teachers and educational institutions in the transmission and sustainability of the arts. Interpretations indicate that a combination of globalization, urbanization, social media, everyday mediatization, and Islamization over recent decades negatively impacted traditional musics in specific ways, by problematizing sustainability. However, several agents—individuals inside and outside the government who understood the situation and had the foresight to take appropriate action—developed programs and organizations to maintain or aestheticize the performing arts, sustain musician livelihoods, and engage a new generation of male youth in music and dance. These efforts, supplemented by the formation of groups of leaders dedicated to the study of early culture on Lombok and fresh initiatives in music education, have ushered in new opportunities and visibility for traditional music and performing arts and performing artists.

Key words: music education, music sustainability, *adat*, *gendang beleq*, *wayang kulit Sasak*

Abstrak: Artikel ini membahas tentang tantangan dari pengajaran dan keberlanjutan dari seni musik dan seni pertunjukan yang terdapat di Pulau Lombok, Indonesia. Hal ini selaras dengan penelitian lapangan yang telah saya geluti selama 34 tahun yang menganalisis tentang usaha-usaha intervensi dari

pemerintah, aktor non-pemerintah, dan guru serta institusi pendidikan dalam mentransmisi dan meneruskan keberadaan seni pertunjukan. Interpretasi-interpretasi yang menunjukkan adanya perpaduan dari globalisasi, urbanisasi, media sosial, meditasi sehari-hari, dan Islamisasi selama beberapa dasawarsa terakhir telah berdampak pada beberapa macam musik tradisi di Lombok dengan berbagai cara yang menghambat keberlanjutannya. Namun, sejumlah agen, yaitu para individu yang berada di dalam atau di luar pemerintah yang memahami situasi yang ada dan mempunyai visi untuk mengambil langkah-langkah yang tepat-telah mengembangkan program-program dan organisasi-organisasi untuk mempertahankan atau mengestetikakan seni-seni pertunjukan, mempertahankan keberlangsungan hidup para musisi, dan melibatkan diri dalam sebuah generasi baru yang terdiri dari kaum pria muda yang menyenangi musik dan tari. Usaha-usaha itu, yang didukung oleh adanya pembentukan kelompok-kelompok pemimpin yang berdedikasi pada studi budaya Lombok di masa awal dan pada inisiasi pendidikan musik, telah membuka kesempatan-kesempatan baru untuk menampakkan musik tradisional, seni pertunjukan, dan seniman seniwati.

Kata kunci: edukasi musik, keberlanjutan musik, adat, gendang beleq, wayang kulit Sasak

INTRODUCTION

As a society urbanizes and modernizes, the traditional musics from rural districts and pre-modern eras begin to wane in approval as younger generations turn toward globalized and national popular musics, styles hybridizing local with national or global, or other contemporary musics. This trend has been global but has particularly impacted developing countries that were newly independent after World War II and struggling to decolonize and modernize. As people transition to city life, earlier musics frequently no longer fit their lifestyle and experience.

The island of Lombok (province of Nusa Tenggara Barat) has experienced these changes. Traditional arts - which originally served public rituals and life-cycle rites (births, puberty, weddings, funerary) and to enculturate and educate communities on their histories and values - became considered *kampung* (backward, "of the village") in the transition to city

dwelling, modern education, nationalization, globalization, and mediatization. In response, national and provincial government offices developed arts intervention strategies to identify those performing arts that *tonjol* (stuck out) and could be cultivated and sustained for local and state purposes and identity construction. Other efforts were centered in schools and curricular and extra-curricular programs were established for students to learn about their own musics and try their hands at playing and singing. Officials and educators were concerned that if steps were not taken to maintain traditional performing arts, citizens could begin to emulate western values and lose their Indonesian and Lombok identities.

I began researching on Lombok in 1983. At that time, Sasak (the indigenous and vast majority population) were beginning to move into more urban areas, particularly in the capital city, Mataram, where Lombok was still in its earlier stages of modernization and was in transition. Politically, it was in the New Order period where students learned about Pancasila, acquired skills in the Indonesian language, and had some limited exposure to the arts. In the era, many kinds of traditional musics, had already lost relevance and were even sometimes banned by charismatic religious leaders, such as Tuan Guru, because most of those kinds of musics developed during a pre-Islamic era or an early Islamic era and were considered no longer acceptable for Muslim consumption. Several Tuan Guru leaders, stated that the traditional arts in Lombok were a distraction from Islam. This positioning by Tuan Guru problematized music educators, programs, and the overall sustainability of traditional performing arts.

Over the years of research on Lombok, I noticed some arts declining and even disappearing, because of this, I frequently published on the changes of the music culture. In the field of ethnomusicology, the notion of the sustainability of music and musician's livelihoods arose earlier in this century, was championed by such Western scholars as Titon, J. T. (2009), Schippers, H. (2015), Schippers, H. & Grant, C. (2016), and Grant, C. (2014, 2017). These scholars suggested that ethnomusicologists conducting fieldwork should consider music culture as a crucial part of the ecology of a people and address how local educators, leaders, and artists can safeguard intangible cultural heritage and arts sustainability.

As a society modernizes and contemporary music is given media platforms; transmission systems, commercial visibility, and patrons, the ecology for traditional kinds of musics cannot be maintained. I then met some local leaders on Lombok - in government, outside of government, and

in education – who indeed were attempting to sustain the performing arts, and focused on these topics in several field projects.

This article encapsulates my field research over decades and discusses how many elements – music, musicians, arts institutions, government offices and personnel, schools and teachers, and religious officials – factor into the shaping of education and sustainability for the traditional performing arts. The contributions of many agents, individuals with influence and foresight who made decisions to promote the arts, and their agendas are also identified in this article.

METHODOLOGY

The majority of data in this article derive from ethnographies conducted on Lombok for an on-and-off of over 34 years. As a foreigner conducting research in Indonesia, I was required to gain approval from various national and provincial government offices. On Lombok, I was requested to report to the Arts Section of the Department of Education and Culture (*Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan*). The director and staff were very pleased that I chose to research music culture on Lombok because most foreigners only went to Bali or Java, so they helped guide some of my projects and allowed me to participate in some of theirs. The director during my early fieldwork, Haja Sri Yaniningsih, and a staff member, Endah Setyorini, became sponsors to some of my later fieldwork. I have visited Lombok for field research for 16 times. Some of my projects were many months long; others were weeks long. The most recent fieldwork was for two-months in 2017.

My first project was to research Balinese' kinds of musics on Lombok and to compare them with musics on Bali and Sasak musics. The working theory was that the long cultural interactions between Balinese and Sasak on the island resulted in some shared practices, while local Balinese also retained practices from their original areas in Bali, which had somewhat changed over centuries.

I concentrated for years on the musics and culture at the temple festival at the Lingsar temple in West Lombok, an annual nexus point for Balinese and Sasak. I began researching on Sasak musics particularly in 1985 and have focused on traditional musics, music and religion/Islam, contextualization, festivalization, pedagogy, culture theory (especially gender and social class),

dance ethnology, and folk and popular musics. Projects on music education and sustainability were initiated or continued in the 1980s and in 2008, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2015, and 2017.

Fieldwork always entailed numerous interviews with government and cultural leaders, musicians, composers, and teachers. The method of participant-observation was utilized particularly in the early years of my work on Lombok. Interpretations were always necessary to analyze changes and categories for music behaviors, and I had many opportunities for feedback interviews with individuals over the years. Later theories sought to sound out the voices of local musicians and artists on Lombok: to report their interpretations and biases of music styles, practices, and changes. Now that so many years have passed, I can compare periods to see how cultural, musical, religious, and political changes have impacted musics on Lombok, and can also identify those individuals, those agents, who helped shape artistic directions.

Lombok is a complex island with rich and diverse histories. It has influences from Java, Bali, Sulawesi, the Malay world, and the Arab world that informed notions of culture, community, artistic and religious practices, aesthetics, interreligious relationships, and much more. During interviews it was clear that these histories are sometimes very current in everyday imaginations, and they set the scene for my years on Lombok and for the localized ideas of music education and sustainability.

CULTURAL HISTORY

To understand how educational and cultural institutions formed, it is necessary to look at histories. Peoples started settling the coasts of Lombok thousands of years ago and eventually made their way inland. One Sasak historian, Lalu Wacana (1978), found data suggesting that Javanese nobles were sent to establish courts on Lombok as early as the 7th century. If correct, the court religion could have been a Hindu-Buddhist mix while villages maintained previous complexes of beliefs. Over the next 700 years, the pattern of Javanese nobles establishing a small court and placing a sibling on the thrown continued. A *lontar* (palm-leaf) manuscript from the 14th century, *Nagarakertagama*, places the island as a vassal state of the Javanese Majapahit empire, absorbing the most potent local court, Selaparang, into a Hindu-Buddhist ruling house around 1357. Selaparang declined during the late 15th

century and other courts, such as Penjanggik, which rose to try and dominate it.

The *lontar* of *Babad Lombok* explains that one of the legendary Wali Sanga evangelists, Sunan Praben (or Sunan Giri; sometimes locally called Pangeran Sangupati), was sent by his father, the Susuhunan Ratu of Giri (East Java) to convert the populations and propagate Islam. Sunan Praben arrives in the northern Lombok village of Bayan in the 16th century around 1545. These teachings were based in Javanese Sufism, which were then strongly localized into local beliefs and customs (*adat*). Later in the century, Makassar in southern Sulawesi became a dominant and Islamic trading power, took over the neighboring island of Sumbawa, and made incursions into East Lombok. Soon, courts like Selaparang and Penjanggik were transformed into Muslim ruling houses following normative Islam, rather than Hindu-Buddhism or Sufism. These two types of teachings – the *adat*-centered Islam of Bayan in North Lombok and the normative practice of courts and communities in East Lombok – led to the recognition of two different groups of Muslims: *Wetu Telu* (Three times or stages, referring to ritual complexes of “three”) and *Waktu Lima* (Five times, referring to both the pillars of Islam and the prayers each day) (see Budiwanti, 2014).

Balinese, primarily from East Bali, began entering West Lombok in the 14th century but most eventually lost their identity and became Sasak. Others came in the 16th century and maintained their identity as Balinese. The successful battles in 1645 between the Balinese Gelgel kingdom and Makassarese provided the Balinese some short-lived control over trade. However, Gelgel fell toward the end of century, which resulted in the rise of Klungkung and other contesting kingdoms, including Karangasem in East Bali. By the late 17th century, a Balinese ruling house from Karangasem took control of West Lombok and a Balinese noble in West Lombok controlled the entire island around 1740. Different Balinese palaces on Lombok then dominated Lombok until 1894, when the Dutch, invited by Sasak nobles and always wanting to control trade, defeated the Balinese in a series of battles and colonized Lombok. This long occupation of Lombok by Hindu Balinese over Muslim Sasak remains a sensitive and tense issue. The Japanese expunged the Dutch in 1942, departed in 1945, and Indonesian leaders declared independence that year, wasrealized a few years later.

Lombok was at first grouped politically with Bali in the 1950s, then was joined with the Islamic Sumbawa to form NTB (Nusa Tenggara Barat) in 1958. By 1960, there may have been nearly equal numbers of *Wetu Telu* and

Waktu Lima. But, after the mass anti-communist killings of 1965-66 throughout the country, the official numbers of *Wetu Telu* dramatically dropped. *Wetu Telu* were not communists but, as agriculturalists who were losing farmlands, favored land reform and thus were targeted by local vigilante groups. Thousands of *Wetu Telu* (and Chinese) on Lombok were killed because their beliefs were “unacceptable” (Muller, 1991, p. 54). Shortly later, many *Wetu Telu* declared themselves “Muslim” and followed Tuan Guru to protect themselves and their families. Over decades, their numbers have continued to fall. NTB was administered by governors from Java until 1998. There have since only been governors from the province, including three Sasak men.

Islam was the rallying point against the Hindu Balinese and the Christian Dutch, and the religion is a cornerstone of Sasak identity. Lombok has been progressively Islamized since the 19th century. The original Tuan Guru figures are thought to have accompanied the original Javanese missions in the 16th century, and then remained to continuously teach. The most important religious figure in Lombok’s history was Tuan Guru Haji Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Majid (1906-97), who rose to the status of a national hero for the province in 2017. This Tuan Guru founded the first modern reformist organization on Lombok, Nahdhatul Watan (NW), in 1936. He studied in Mecca for twelve years, took a government position in the 1950s and led the charge of other Tuan Guru into the provincial and local governments and into education (see Harnish, 2011), and established many *pondok pesantren* to systematize teachings (which included music) and mosques.¹ Tuan Guru and Hajjis control the majority of government posts. Reformist Islam has, thus, become the center of authority on Lombok in the 21st century.

Several Tuan Guru began prohibiting traditional performing arts a century ago as a way to decrease villagers’ access to sounds and narratives that connect them to ancestors and the landscape; with the intent to sever webs of *adat* beliefs. Some banned bronze gamelan due to the traditional value placed the sound of struck bronze (Harnish, 2016a). In response, musicians created new ensembles, based on traditional structures but featuring instruments made of goatskin (e.g., *rebana* drums) or iron. Prohibitions of traditional arts increased from around 1968-1990. During those years, it became difficult for

¹ Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and other organizations established followers and institutions a few decades later. NU has been increasing membership and now perhaps equals the numbers of NW members.

shadow play puppeteers (*dalang*) and theatre troupes to get permits to perform in public. Other traditional kinds of musics that accompanied such life-cycle events as circumcisions and weddings were curtailed as the provincial government required that families follow the proper Islamic procedures as enforced by the government Office of Religion (*Kantor Agama*).

Though prohibitions against many arts were lifted around 1990, one 21st-century governor, Tuan Guru Haji Bajang M. Zainul Majdi, who served for over 10 years (2008-2018), sought to have music directly related to Islam (*musik Islam*, consisting of such forms as *sholawat*, *qasidah*, *burdah*, and *hadra*) to replace traditional Sasak music and represent Lombok at all state events. He was a leader of NW and his grandfather was Tuan Guru Haji Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Majid, the organization's founder. Tuan Guru Bajang (as he is called) united the top authority of governance and religion into one person and he wielded great influence over government offices. His successor as governor, Zulkieflimansyah, appears to be more progressive, though it is too early to know his policies toward the arts.

Although there were challenges over the decades - particularly from globalization, urbanization, mediatization, and Islamization - there were always advocates for the traditional arts. Many educators and officials at the Arts Section of the Ministry of Education and Culture (*Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan*) and at the Cultural Center (*Taman Budaya*) in the 1980s and 1990s initiated projects. In the 21st century, more educators and officials from various government offices developed programs. Community leaders established organizations to support the arts, and musicians founded *sanggar* (troupes that sometimes offer instruction) whenever they could to stage performing arts. A great many people have been concerned that if Sasak arts are not sustained, that youth will be lured by western values. A more recent concern was the Arabization (*Arabisasi*) of the arts with the result of creating Muslims without any cultural roots. The section below discusses the interventions by the government to both sustain and to modernize the traditional performing arts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Government interventions

The first two Indonesian governments - under President Sukarno (1945-1967) and President Suharto (1967-1998) - viewed traditional

performing arts as the cultural capital for the new nation. President Sukarno's government sought an arts policy to bring these forms to the fore to modernize them and use them for political gain. The Suharto administration went much further and developed true arts intervention policies by 1970. The federal government requested provincial governments to "dig up" (*menggali*) and develop (*mengembang*) music and dance "to meet perceived national (read: Javanese) standards" (Harnish, 2007, p. 61). Since there were tensions on Lombok between Tuan Guru and the local government on the role of performing arts, the initial projects were simply to take inventories of arts on the island throughout most of the 1970s.

Haja Sri Yaningsih (Bu Sri), an educated Javanese woman, who married to an elite Sasak, became director of the Arts Section (*Bidang Kesenian*) of the Ministry of Education and Culture from 1983-95, which was a period of unparalleled arts intervention. She was a strong advocate of the national arts policy (*Pembinaan Kesenian*) and demanded competent work from her highly qualified staff. One of her first steps was establishing competitions and festivals to bring together active troupes in music and dance and providing grants for new instruments and dance costumes and training with government specialists. Bu Sri and her staff created a *Pusat Latihan Kesenian* (PLK: Center for Arts Rehearsal) in the provincial capital of Mataram, an organization that had been operating successfully outside of NTB that could be utilized to develop and teach the performing arts. Teachers, composers, and choreographers were engaged to establish troupes at PLK. In the 1990s all districts of Lombok and several districts in Sumbawa had centers as well, which worked cooperatively with the center in Mataram, has actively performed throughout the province, and performed for tourists at hotels and other venues as needed. The Arts Section convinced the Ministry of Education to require an arts requirement for middle- and high-school students in Mataram. To advance to the next grade, students had to pass a test in a performing art, and PLK members administered these tests (Harnish, 2016b). This project was one effort that combined the forces of the Arts Section and principals and teachers in the capital to provide meaningful arts education to students in the city.

When they first began searching for performance forms, Bu Sri and her staff looked for the oldest and most traditional rural arts but discovered that some of these, such as the folk theatre *Amaq Abir*, had limited aesthetic appeal and could not be developed for a broader public. So, they looked for performing arts that stuck out and represented apexes of local culture. They

identified three primary forms for further development: *gendang beleq* (lit. big drum, an ensemble featuring gong chimes, cymbals, gongs, bamboo flute, and large drums), the song-dance form *rudat*, and the social dance, *gandrung*. The office also conducted projects on *wayang kulit* Sasak (the Sasak version of the shadow play) and such forms as the dynamic *Tandang Mendet* dance of the traditional mountainous village, Sembalun Bumbung. Out of all of these efforts, *gendang beleq* became the most successful project by far. However, there were complications on the road to cultivate this ensemble as the performative icon of Lombok.

Gendang beleq, sometimes known by district names, was a *Wetu Telu* ensemble used in traditional contexts, such as harvest and planting rituals, big feasts, teeth-filings (now obsolete), circumcisions, and weddings. The music performance also includes dance among the musicians. In the older forms of *gendang beleq*, the dance is more restrained and the major dance roles are given to the large (*beleq*) drummers and the *oncer* (small gong) player. In the newer forms cultivated by the Arts Section and Culture Center, the dance is far more dynamic, the ensemble far larger, and the music faster and more complicated (see Harnish, 2016a).

Because it is a bronze ensemble with performance contexts in *adat* events, *gendang beleq* was a form disallowed by Tuan Guru in many areas of Lombok but was still maintained in some traditional villages by the mid-1980s. At the time, the Cultural Center had identified 12 active or semi-active ensembles on the island. In 1983, I accompanied a team from the Arts Section to the village of Rembitan in Central Lombok, where the *gendang beleq* club had agreed to participate in an Arts Section project. This rural 1983 version of the ensemble featured eight elder male musicians performing a static repertoire while wearing mismatching shirts and *dodot* (a type of sarong), playing instruments a bit out of tune, and lightly dancing as they performed (Harnish, 2007). In 2001, I accompanied another team to a hamlet outside of the district of Narmada in West Lombok; by that time, the Culture Center had counted over 500 ensembles on Lombok. In this presentation, twenty-four male teens and young adults performed multi-sectional music compositions at various *tempi* and dynamic choreography on quality instruments. Though I had heard *gendang beleq* ensembles many times over the years, I was curious how these drastic changes – many more instruments and musicians, more varied and dynamic music and dancing, older and then younger musicians, and numbers of ensembles from 12 in

1983 to 500 ensembles in 2001 (and 2017 estimates range up to 6,500 ensembles) on Lombok – had come about.

In the 1980s, Bu Sri and her staff identified *gendang beleq* as a peak of local culture and sought to develop the ensemble to a national standard to “educate and modernize Sasak citizenry, to stand for Lombok and Sasak culture nationally and internationally, and to become an *atraksi budaya* (cultural attraction) for use in the tourist industry” (Harnish, 2016a, p. 156). They took the ensemble out of context, secularized it to please religious officials, and engaged PLK members to craft new choreography and music elements to make performances as spectacular as possible. *Gendang beleq* highlighted the list of performance forms modified to create a national “aesthetic of respectability” (Yampolsky, 1995, p. 712).

Festivals were arranged to showcase the new style, grant monies were available to acquire new and more instruments for clubs to use, young men were targeted as musicians, and specialists rehearsed clubs over months before performances. The ensemble had thus transitioned from ritual to stage, and noted Tuan Gurusupported these efforts to galvanize youth in a disciplined and crafted cultural display. Some, however, had dropped prohibitions against bronze instruments and traditional arts as long as they were secularized and performed outside of ritual contexts. “Membership in a *gendang beleq* club was to maintain modern Sasak values and nurture better Indonesian and Sasak citizenship among young men” (Harnish, 2016a, p. 156-57). Performances were staged and aestheticized spectacles that presented ahistorical Sasak culture in a dynamic and modernized light. Political and religious leaders supported and advocated for this new *gendang beleq*, though some older musicians relented the loss of *khas* Sasak (original, authentically Sasak) elements in the modernized style.

While *gendang beleq* is by far the most successful of the Arts Section’s intervention projects, other forms such as *rudat*, *wayang kulit* Sasak, and *gandrung* were sustained during Bu Sri’s tenure and beyond the fall of the New Order in 1998. When provincial autonomy took hold in Indonesia (1999, though not fully in effect in NTB until 2002), political officials downsized and reconfigured the Arts Section, and slashed education budgets for music and the arts in schools. By then, *gendang beleq* was still growing in popularity and was self-sustaining, though other forms began to decline. In the late 1980s and into the early 21st century, musicians had been engaged to teach curricular or extra-curricular courses in ensemble performance to

students in urban and some rural schools. Nearly all of these programs were eliminated by or before 2004.

B. Non-government actors and sustainability

Over the years, I was fortunate to meet a lot of non-government agents working in their own ways to sustain traditional music and performing arts. Some developed their own organizations. One such agent was Amaq Rahil, a proud *Wetu Telu* of Lenek village in East Lombok, who created an arts institution and a self-sufficient ashram that also served as an orphanage and emphasized traditional arts of the area - *wayang kulit* Sasak, *Pakon* (a trance/healing dance), and *kecimol asli* (featuring the *gambus* lute) - and farming for all residents. He brought provincial recognition, national and international touring, and an enhanced profile to the area. After his death, the village sold many instruments and puppet collections, but over recent years his descendants are now working to revive the historically significant arts of Lenek. A few other institutions and orphanages, led by a variety of cultural leaders, continue to work to preserve performing arts in their corners of Lombok.

Many intellectuals and artists have felt that to sustain music and performing arts in any society, they have to be taught over a long period of time in schools. Mochammad Yamin and his organization, *Lembaga Pendidikan Seni Nusantara* (LPSN: Institute for Arts Education of the Indonesian Archipelago), have been at the forefront of such efforts. A dancer in West Java, Endo Suanda, founded the national LPSN in 2002. Pak Yamin worked with Pak Suanda to open a branch in Lombok in 2005. The national office was awarded a Ford Foundation grant and the Lombok office received resource assistance from 2005-2007. The institute in Lombok invited over 100 teachers in Lombok to come to Mataram to train in the arts and learn how to produce such artefacts as masks (*topeng*) and lutes (*gambus*). The teachers were given materials (booklets and video-compact disks) for presenting local and national arts in classrooms and extra-curricular programs, and were awarded certificates upon completion of the training. Since 2007, this training, which has now reached at least 250 teachers, has been provided for a nominal cost. While the numbers of participants have declined, the programs are continuing. Pak Yamin frequently goes out to villages to observe school programs, and sometimes he funds the programs himself (Harnish, 2016b). He is a kind of folk hero to arts educators, who sometimes reach out to him to develop their own programs.

Over the past few years, a number of Hajjis and intellectuals have formed *adat* study groups to research early Sasak Islam and culture, particularly as these are embedded in some traditional performing arts and literature. Haji Lalu Gus Fathurrahman (called Mamiq) was engaged in the arts as a painter and in deep studies of Islam; I knew him when he served as director of the Culture Center. He spent 11 years going around Lombok, living in traditional villages, and learning about local *adat*. He founded the *adat* study group, *Lembaga Rowot Nusantara Lombok* (Institute of Lombok's Archipelago Star); they shorten the title to Rowot Rontal. Mamiq copies and translates *lontar* and teaches old literature at the University of Mataram; several other Rowot Rontal members also teach at the university.

Mamiq studied the traditional but almost forgotten Sasak calendar called *warige* in older villages and encouraged their productions onto wood. Rowot Rontal now produces a paper *warige* calendar and makes thousands of these available to communities throughout Lombok. *Warige* calendars are similar to the Balinese and Javanese 210-day calendars, specifying a series of different weeks and indicating days for certain activities, for instance, holding life-cycle rites, visiting friends, and so forth. Rowot Rontal meets weekly for discussions on *adat*, traditional literature and on the characters, ethics and morals in the shadow play *wayang kulit* Sasak, based on the Menak cycle of tales featuring the uncle of Prophet Muhammad, Amir Hamza, who paves the way for Islam. These characters are also affixed to the days of *warige*. In this way, Rowot Rontal promotes and advocates for *wayang kulit* Sasak, traditional literature, and traditional Sasak *adat*. Mamiq also regularly visits the primary *Wetu Telu* center of Bayan village where, due to his *adat* studies, he is a leader of ceremonies.

Ki Ageng Sadarudin is another agent in the study of *adat* and supporter and musician of traditional Sasak arts. He founded an organization called *Lembaga Pengemban Budaya Adat Sasak* (Institute for Caretaking Sasak Adat Culture) and is principal at an elementary school in Mataram, where arts education is readily available to students. Ki Sadarudin has studied to be a *dalang* of *wayang kulit* Sasak. Like Mamiq, he is a noted and respected Hajji and has studied traditional literature and is a proponent of the singing and translation of these texts in the music style called *tembang* Sasak or *pepaosan*. He organizes weekly meetings for discussions and rehearsals and performances of *wayang kulit* Sasak, and assists in organizing *pepaosan* and seminars on the *Jejawan* script that is used on *lontar* for the Menak cycle and other traditional literature. While I was in Lombok in 2017, we attended a

wayang kulit Sasak performance in Central Lombok by an old friend, *dalang* Ki Budiman, and a festival of *pepaosan* attended by hundreds of men (including many *dalang* but also Hajjis and intellectuals) in full *adat* clothing.

One other individual to mention in this new movement toward *adat* and traditional performing arts is Haji Lalu Anggawa, the head of the PEPADI *wayang kulit* organization on Lombok. He also formed his own study group, *Lembaga Konsultasi dan Mediasi Budaya Adat Sasak* (Sasak Cultural Adat Consulting and Mediation Institute) and is an Islamic authority with the power to issue *fatwas* if the behavior in *wayang kulit* is wrong. But, he is strongly against the Arabization of Sasak culture, which was spearheaded by religious leaders from the mid-20th century, and he stated directly that if a Tuan Guru declares traditional music forbidden, he is mistaken. Haji Lalu Anggawa and other Hajjis have dismantled the approach of developing Islam without *adat* (*agama menghilang adat*, another initiative by Tuan Guru from the last century), and want modern Islamic practice to be informed by the early history and performing arts of the religion on Lombok.

The new movement toward studying *adat*, spearheaded by Hajjis and modernist Muslims, surprised me, and only in 2017 was I able to meet and discuss agendas with these organizations and leaders. My publications earlier in the 21st century predicted the continual decline of traditional arts, and then suddenly some arts had renewed support outside of government interventions. This movement also reverses the trajectory of discrediting *adat*, an effort that engaged so many Sasak leaders until several years ago. Importantly, some traditional performing arts functioning within *adat* could suddenly be studied and celebrated. It must be added, however, that not all older arts fall into this category of support. Several forms have indeed disappeared or are on the brink of doing so. In my opinion, those latter arts – mostly lesser-known ensemble traditions or rural theatre forms – were too *kampung* (of the village, backward) or could not be reconciled into a conceived early Islamized *adat*. These same forms also could not be modernized in government interventions and will likely disappear within a generation. The *adat* study groups hold that early Sasak society was almost always Islamic and they are fascinated with those practices of Islam, which are no longer considered *haram* (forbidden) but rather point to early cultural identity, and many Hajjis and intellectuals today are seeking a distinctive Islamic identity – non-Arabic and non-Javanese – but particular to Lombok and to the Sasak. The literary forms loved by these communities, especially *wayang kulit* Sasak and *pepaosan*, provide a rich lineage to this identity.

C. Music education, teachers, and the Ministry of Education

While agents like Mochammad Yamin worked outside the Department of Education to introduce performing arts into schools, many school teachers and *sanggar* leaders worked within education to offer curricular and/or extra-curricular opportunities for academic and practical training in music and the arts. Some of the musicians and dancers have been *seniman alam*, (natural masters) without formal training in teaching the arts. In 1983, some of the aged arts masters were still not fully literate, but they were exceptional teachers. Styles like *gendang beleq*, *gamelan rebana* (ensemble of *rebana* drums), *rudat*, and others were available for study and some students went on to work with PLK (disbanded in the 21st century) or within the government in education or arts positions. Today, some masters and other artists are going through certificate programs offered through the Ministry of Education. As artists, particularly those removed from farming, these compensated teaching positions at schools have been essential for both the professionalism and livelihoods of active musicians. Interestingly, some local Balinese musicians well-versed in Sasak performing arts have also filled these positions. A majority of schools have acquired or been gifted *gendang beleq*, though some have *gamelan rebana* or other ensembles, or more than one ensemble for student participation.

One of the staff members of Bu Sri's 1980s Arts Section and also a former teacher at PLK, Abdul Hamid was one of the leading Sasak dancers, teachers, and choreographers on Lombok. He retired from all offices in 2006 but still performs occasionally and joined faculty at some schools to teach dance. I met him at a middle school in Mataram in 2017 to interview him and watch him teach a class on *rudat*, the music theatre form based originally on and both Turkish and Malay forms and colonial-period *stamboel* theatre in Java. The theatre form is often reduced to a song and dance of Arab soldiers often singing songs of victory and love in the Malay language. Pak Hamid was uniquely teaching girls this dance of Arab, male soldiers; in fact, he had been teaching girls for years and several of his female dance troupes had won provincial and national awards. Such training for girls was unthinkable in 1983, the first year, in which I met Pak Hamid.

While gender equity or at least equal access to arts for girls has been a government and education goal, on Lombok these efforts for females were restricted mainly to vocals or dance and to forms choreographed for women or girls. However, in recent years the *marawis* ensemble, taught at some public and in many religious schools, has been open to male and female

participation, though all-male or all-female groups, rather than mixed groups, tend to form. *Marawis*, a vocal and percussion ensemble with Yemeni and Betawi roots often consisting of three types of drums and devotional songs (and sometimes popular songs) in Arabic, has existed on Lombok for many decades but grew in popularity as international Muslim weddings and honeymoons held in Lombok needed performance. Suddenly, more and more Sasak became interested in the ensemble and soon both public schools and *pesantren* featured it in educational settings. The ensemble features choreographed movements by the musicians and has become an important medium in this century, performed on religious holidays, at state holidays and events and in processions. Thus, some girls are learning musical instruments in addition to dance and vocals, and other barriers are slowly eroding.

Over the past five years or so, a movement linking civil and education leaders arose to advocate for increased arts education in schools. Several offices – Education, Arts Section, LPSN and *Taman Budaya* (Culture Center) – launched the “80 Artists in 80 Schools” (*Delapan puluh Seniman dalam Delapan puluh Sekolah*) project in 2017. As the title suggests, 80 artists visited 80 schools and worked with thousands of elementary through high school students. In 2018, the program expanded and added more artists, more schools, and more students. Of course, *gendang beleq* has been the main form taught in this program, but less-thriving styles like *gambus* lute playing, *cilokaq* folk ensembles, *gula gending* tin drum musics, and *Zikrazamman* Islamic dances were also included in the program.

Lalu Surya was the head of the revised Arts Section within the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2017. He mentioned that the current mission of the Arts Section is to facilitate this program across Lombok and work with *Taman Budaya* to identify appropriate teachers. Like many other officials, he believes that maintaining the arts is essential to instill and sustain cultural identity, therefore, suggesting that the arts are the main vehicle to cultural identity.

CONCLUSION

Traditional music and performing arts were somewhat endangered into the 1980s on Lombok. Prohibitions were in place for many forms, based on both instrument material (bronze) and the ritual, pre-Islamic reform contexts

of traditional arts. In 1983, there were no professional musicians (only one professional *dalang*), no codified method of transmission, no codified music theories, no music education system in place, and very few settings for these arts, except for the few remaining *Wetu Telu* villages. Lombok was slowly modernizing and urbanizing but most traditional arts had little relevance for the majority of citizens.

The situation began to change with the appointment of Bu Sri as Head of the Arts Section of the Ministry of Education in 1983. As festivals and programs were launched, PLK was organized, composers and choreographers were involved, and a number of students became proficient at the modernized and aestheticized styles of such arts as *gendang beleq*. Some of these teachers and students began approaching schools to teach in-school or extra-curricular ensembles as Lombok, particularly in the urbanizing areas, had gradually opened up.

When traditional arts were secularized and removed from traditional contexts, many Tuan Guru dropped their prohibitions and some actively encouraged the participation of male youth to develop Sasak and national citizenry and curtail western ideas from influencing younger generations. Some officials and elder musicians relented the loss of *khas* Sasak in the modernized forms, but those forms have helped bring visibility and identity to Lombok in an unprecedented way.

As the situation in music education suddenly deteriorated in the early part of this century, agents like Mochammad Yamin understood the situation and worked with educational institutes to develop teacher training programs and provide materials for instruction all over the island. Over recent years, more officials and educators successfully lobbied government offices to fund such dynamic ongoing programs as 80 Teachers in 80 Schools. Currently, music education is geared toward sustaining music on Lombok into the next generation and perhaps beyond.

In the meantime, *adat* study groups among religious leaders and intellectuals have worked to sustain or revive such literary-related forms as *wayang kulit* Sasak and *pepaosan* and some organizations, for instance the one headed by Ki Sadarudin, actively organizes festivals on these forms. Overall, though some forms remain endangered, the traditional performing arts on Lombok are in a healthier condition than I have ever seen. Many individuals – government officials, non-government actors, and music educators – have

spearheaded projects and training to help sustain these arts throughout most of the rest of this century.

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