

MUSIC OF INDONESIA

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NOTES BY RADEN SUWANTO

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Music of Indonesia

ILE-ILE (Sumatra)
TARI PIRING SADANG LAWAS (Sumatra)
TUMBA LELA-LELAN (Sumatra)
BAH MOTOH (Malaya)
UDAN LIRIS (Java)

SORBAN PALID (Java)
LAGU BABAR LAJAR (Java)
LAGU SRIHARDJONO (Java)
GANDA PURA (Bali)
PEPERANGAN SIRA PANDJI (Bali)

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

MUSIC OF INDONESIA

Sept. 1968

MUSIC OF

INDONESIA

RECORDED IN
JAVA - SUMATRA - BALI - MALAYA

INTRODUCTION AND NOTES ON THE
RECORDINGS BY RADEN SUWANTO

FOR MANY CENTURIES INDONESIA -- FROM THE MALAY PENINSULA THROUGHOUT THE VAST ARCHIPELAGO -- HAS BEEN SUBJECTED TO SUCCESSIVE FOREIGN CULTURAL INVASIONS WHICH HAVE LEFT THEIR DEEP IMPRINT ON THE INDIGENOUS WAY OF LIFE.

AMONG THE FIRST WAS THE MONGOLIAN INTRUSION FROM CENTRAL ASIA. HOW STRONG THIS INFLUENCE WAS, AND HOW IT CAME ABOUT, IS STILL UNCLEAR, BUT IT WAS COMPLETED LONG BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA.

A LATER CULTURAL WAVE CAME FROM INDIA WHEN HINDU MERCHANTS AND IMMIGRANTS INTRODUCED HINDUISM AND BUDDHISM INTO THE ISLANDS. THE VIGOROUS AND RICH HINDU-INDONESIAN CULTURE WHICH RESULTED GAVE RISE TO SUCH MIGHTY EMPIRES AS SRIWIJAYA AND MAJAPAHIT IN THE 7TH AND 12TH CENTURIES. TODAY, THE MAGNIFICENT BOROBUDUR TEMPLE IN JAVA STILL BEARS TESTIMONY FOR THAT GLORIOUS PERIOD IN INDONESIAN HISTORY.

SUBSEQUENTLY, ABOUT THE 13TH CENTURY A.D. ISLAMIC INFLUENCES PENETRATED THE ARCHIPELAGO. GRADUALLY THEY SUBMERGED THE HINDU INFLUENCE ON THE MAIN ISLANDS. ONLY ON THE SMALL ISLAND OF BALI WAS HINDUISM ABLE TO SURVIVE INTACT; TO THIS DAY BALI HAS REMAINED HINDUISTIC.

WORKERS PREPARING RICE FIELD
PHOTO REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA



FINALLY, IN THE 16TH CENTURY, WESTERN CULTURE AND CHRISTIANITY CAME INTO THE PICTURE. ALTHOUGH, AFTER FOUR CENTURIES, WESTERN CIVILIZATION HAS BY NO MEANS SUPERCEDED THE ISLAMIC HOLD ON INDONESIA (90% OF THE POPULATION ARE MOSLEMS), IT HAS ALREADY RESHAPED THE OUTWARD APPEARANCE OF INDONESIAN LIFE TO A CONSIDERABLE EXTENT.

THE INDONESIAN PEOPLE ARE COMPOSED OF MANY CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC GROUPS. THEY RANG FROM THE VERY SOPHISTICATED JAVANESE AND BALINESE TO THE STILL RELATIVELY PRIMITIVE DAYAKS IN CENTRAL BORNEO, AND THE TEMIAR PEOPLE OF MALAYA.* SOME INDONESIAN GROUPS WERE NOT



A JAVANESE WOMAN WEAVING A SARONG
PHOTO REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

DEEPLY EFFECTED BY THE CULTURAL INVASIONS; THE JAVANESE WERE THOROUGHLY HINDUIZED; SOME GROUPS WERE MORE RESPONSIVE TO ISLAMIC TEACHINGS; AND STILL OTHERS WERE CONVERTED TO CHRISTIANITY. BUT ALL OF THEM, WITHOUT EXCEPTION, STILL PRESERVE THE OLD ANIMISTIC PRACTICE OF ANCESTOR WORSHIP IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER. THE CULTURAL DIVERSITY IS NATURALLY REFLECTED IN THE MUSIC. WHEREAS ONE CAN FIND IN INDONESIA MUSIC CHARACTERIZED BY ELEMENTAL DRUMMING, THERE IS ALSO THE VERY ELABORATE AND HIGHLY DEVELOPED JAVANESE AND BALINESE GAMELAN MUSIC.

*WHILE MALAYA IS NOT CONSIDERED PART OF PRESENT DAY INDONESIA, IT HAS STRONG HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL TIES WITH THE ISLANDS. - ED.

HOWEVER, EVEN IN THE CASE OF THESE HIGHLY ADVANCED FORMS, RESIDUES OF THE OLD CULTURE STILL REMAIN.

MANY INSTRUMENTS OF THE JAVANESE GAMELAN, FOR EXAMPLE THE GONGS, MAY BE TRACED BACK TO OLD HINDU ORIGINS, AS EVIDENCED BY CARVINGS IN THE STONE WALLS OF ANCIENT TEMPLES. ANOTHER INSTRUMENT, THE REBAB, A TWO STRINGED VIOLIN, CAME ORIGINALLY FROM PERSIA, BROUGHT TO INDONESIA BY MOSLEM TRADERS. THE WOODEN XYLOPHONE-LIKE INSTRUMENT CALLED GAMBANG AND THE BAMBOO FLUTE BY THE NAME OF SULING ARE AMONG THE FEW REMAINING INSTRUMENTS OF THE ORIGINAL INDONESIAN MUSIC. IN THE SAME CATEGORY IS ANOTHER PECULIAR BAMBOO INSTRUMENT, CALLED ANGKLUNG, THAT IS STILL VERY POPULAR AMONG THE SUNDANESE PEOPLE IN WEST JAVA. IT CONSISTS OF TWO OR MORE OBLIQUELY CUT BAMBOO PIPES LOOSELY SUS-

INSTRUMENTS, PROBABLY HAD ITS BEGINNINGS IN THOSE DAYS. IN SEVERAL PLACES IN INDONESIA THE EUROPEAN VIOLIN HAS BECOME AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE INDIGENOUS ORCHESTRA.

INDONESIAN MUSIC, GENERALLY SPEAKING, SERVES AS ACCOMPANIMENT FOR SOCIAL ACTIVITIES, SUCH AS THE PERFORMANCE OF RELIGIOUS RITES OR DANCES. ONLY IN THE MORE DEVELOPED CULTURES OF INDONESIA HAS MUSIC BECOME, TO A CERTAIN EXTENT, AN INSTRUMENT FOR THE EXPRESSIONS OF EMOTIONS OR FEELINGS OF BEAUTY. BUT EVEN THERE, IN JAVA AND BALI, MUSIC IS STILL LARGELY A COMMUNAL ART AND IS INSEPARABLY LINKED TO DANCE AND DRAMA.

JAVANESE GAMELAN ORCHESTRA
PHOTO BY ALBERT FOX; COURTESY U.N.



PENDED IN A FRAME. WHEN THE FRAME IS SHAKEN, THE BOTTOMS OF THE PIPES STRIKE AGAINST THE FRAME, PRODUCING REMARKABLY CLEAR, ALMOST METALLIC TONES. THE PITCH DEPENDS ON THE LENGTH AND THE DIAMETER OF THE PIPES, AND ALSO THE MANNER IN WHICH THEY HAVE BEEN CUT. AN ORCHESTRA IS MADE UP OF SEVERAL PEOPLE PLAYING ANGKLUNGS OF DIFFERENT TONES.

WESTERN CIVILIZATION ALSO HAD ITS INFLUENCE ON INDONESIA'S MUSIC. IN THE 16TH CENTURY WHEN THE PORTUGUESE WERE THE ONLY EUROPEANS TRADING IN THE ISLANDS, EUROPEAN SONGS AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS WERE INTRODUCED. THE KRONCHONG MUSIC WHICH IS VERY POPULAR AT PRESENT AND WHICH IS PLAYED ALMOST ENTIRELY WITH EUROPEAN

THE MOST POPULAR DRAMA IN INDONESIA BY FAR IS THE WAYANG A SHADOW-PLAY PERFORMED WITH LEATHER PUPPETS. IT IS OPERATED BY ONE MAN, CALLED THE DALANG, TO THE ACCOMPANIMENT OF A GAMELAN ORCHESTRA CONSISTING OF FROM NINE TO SIXTEEN PLAYERS. IT IS USUALLY PERFORMED AFTER DARK AND LASTS THE WHOLE NIGHT. THE STORIES DEPICTED ARE FROM THE WELL-KNOWN HINDU EPICS MAHABHARATA AND RAMAYANA. THE FIRST TELLS THE STORY OF THE FIVE PANDAWA BROTHERS WHO WAGED A LONG WAR TO REGAIN THE KINGDOM OF THEIR FOREFATHERS, AND THE SECOND TELLS HOW KING RAMA, WITH THE HELP OF HIS MONKEY ALLIES, LIBERATED HIS WIFE WHO WAS STOLEN BY THE DEMON KING, RAHWANA. THAT THIS WAYANG SHOW WAS ALREADY POPULAR A THOUSAND YEARS AGO IS EVIDENT IN AN OLD BUT

STILL PRESERVED LITERARY WORK, THE "ARJUNA WIWAHA," WRITTEN IN THE 11TH CENTURY, DURING THE REIGN OF KING AIRLANGGA OF KADIRI, JAVA. IN THIS BOOK ONE MAY READ: "THERE ARE PEOPLE, WHO, WHEN LOOKING AT THE PUPPETS, WEEP, LOOK SAD AND ARE TROUBLED IN THEIR MIND, ALTHOUGH THEY KNOW VERY WELL THAT THE PUPPETS WERE CUT OF LEATHER, AND ARE ONLY MADE TO ACT AS THOUGH THEY SPEAK."

SOME EIGHT CENTURIES LATER, SIR THOMAS STAMFORD RAFFLES, WHO WAS FOR SEVERAL YEARS THE BRITISH GOVERNOR OF JAVA, AND WHO WAS AN ARDENT STUDENT OF THE JAVANESE CULTURE, WROTE ABOUT THE WAYANG: "THE INTEREST EXCITED BY SUCH SPECTACLES, CONNECTED WITH NATIONAL RECOLLECTIONS, IS ALMOST INCONCEIVABLE. THE EAGER MULTITUDE WILL SIT LISTENING WITH RAPTUROUS DELIGHT AND PROFOUND ATTENTION FOR WHOLE NIGHTS TO THESE DRAMAS."

AT PRESENT THE WAYANG IS STILL ENJOYED BY OLD AND YOUNG, AND NO OCCASION OF ANY IMPORTANCE IS COMPLETE WITHOUT A WAYANG PERFORMANCE.

THE GAMELAN MUSIC IS PRIMARILY COMPOSED OF BRONZE PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTS. THEY ARE OF TWO KINDS, THE GONG-TYPE AND THE KEY-TYPE. THE GONGS ARE EITHER SUSPENDED OR LYING ON AN UNDER-FRAME OF CROSSED ROPES. THE KEY-TYPE IS ALSO OF TWO KINDS -- THOSE IN WHICH ALL THE KEYS ARE PUT ABOVE ONE COMMON SOUND-BOARD, AND THOSE WHERE EACH KEY HAS ITS OWN SOUNDING-PIPE. OF THE SUSPENDED GONGS, THERE IS THE GONG GEDE WHICH SOMETIMES HAS A DIAMETER OF MORE THAN THREE FEET. IT HAS IN THE CENTER A KNOB ON WHICH IT IS STRUCK; IT GIVES A LONG SONOROUS TONE THAT CAN BE HEARD FOR GREAT DISTANCES. A SMALLER SUSPENDED GONG IS CALLED THE KEMPUL. THE LYING GONGS ARE SMALLER BUT HAVE A MUCH HIGHER SIDE. THEY ARE CALLED KENONG, KETUK, AND BONANG IN THE ORDER OF DIMINISHING SIZE. THE KEY-INSTRUMENTS MADE OF METAL ARE THE DEMUNG, SARON, PEKING, GENDER, AND PENERUS. THERE IS ANOTHER ONE MADE OF WOOD, CALLED GAMBANG. ALL THESE INSTRUMENTS ARE PLAYED WITH WOODEN MALLETS, SOME OF WHICH ARE SOFTENED WITH CLOTH WRAPPINGS. THERE ARE ALSO THE DRUM (KENDANG), PLAYED WITH THE FINGERS; TWO STRING INSTRUMENTS, THE REBAB AND THE CHELEMPUNG, A ZITHER-LIKE INSTRUMENT WITH 13 DOUBLE STRINGS. AND FINALLY THERE IS THE BAMBOO FLUTE OR SULING. THE GAMELAN MUSIC IS ESSENTIALLY UNISONAL.

AS FOR THE DANCES IN INDONESIA, AGAIN THERE IS GREAT VARIETY, FROM THE VERY SIMPLE ONES TO THE DELICATE AND INTRICATE JAVANESE AND BALINESE COURT-DANCES. MOST INDONESIAN DANCES ARE PART OF RELIGIOUS RITES, BUT THEY ARE ALSO RECREATIONAL.



THE BEST KNOWN DANCES IN JAVA ARE: SRIMPI PERFORMED BY FOUR GIRLS, BEDOYO (9 GIRLS), AND THE WAYANG-WONG, WHICH IS A PERSONALIZATION OF THE WAYANG DRAMA. THE PLAYERS IN THIS WAYANG-WONG ARE ACTORS AS WELL AS DANCERS AND SINGERS. IN BALI THERE IS THE LEGONG (2 GIRLS), THE KEBYAR (1 MAN) AND THE RELATIVELY MODERN JANGER. THERE ARE ALSO THE TOPENG, OR MASK-DANCES. FROM SUMATRA COMES THE TARI PIRING, A PLATE DANCE. AND FINALLY THERE IS THE PENCHAK, A FIGHT-DANCE PRACTICED EVERYWHERE IN THE ARCHIPELAGO TO THE ACCOMPANIMENT OF THE MODERN KRONCHONG MUSIC.

ILE-ILE - THIS IS A SAMPLE OF OLD BATAK MUSIC OF THE PRE-HINDU PERIOD. THE MAIN INSTRUMENT IS A XYLOPHONE-LIKE INSTRUMENT, WITH KEYS MADE OF HARD WOOD. THEY ARE SUSPENDED IN A ROW ON TWO PARALLEL CORDS. WHEN BEATEN WITH WOODEN HAMMERS, THEY GIVE A CLEAR METALLIC SOUND. ANOTHER INSTRUMENT USED IN THIS MUSIC IS A SPLIT CYMBAL, CALLED THE HAWAR-HAWAR. IT REPLACES THE DRUM THAT USUALLY MARKS THE RHYTHM. THIS KIND OF MUSIC IS OFTEN USED TO ACCOMPANY A DANCE OF THE MEDICINE-MAN. THE BATAKS ARE CONSIDERED LOCALLY TO BE AMONG THE MOST MUSICAL RACES IN INDONESIA. THEY DO NOT LIKE LOUD VOICES, AND EVEN SUBDUED THE TONE OF THEIR GONGS

TARI PIRING SADANG LAWAS - THE TARI PIRING IS A VERY POPULAR DANCE IN MINANGKABAU, WEST SUMATRA. IT CAN BE DANCED BY EITHER SEX, SOLO OR IN A GROUP. ORIGINALLY

IT WAS A HARVEST-DANCE, DEDICATED TO THE RICE GODDESS, BUT TODAY IT IS PERFORMED ON ANY GAY OCCASION, PREFERABLY AT NIGHT. THE DANCER HOLDS A PLATE WITH A LIGHTED CANDLE ATTACHED TO IT IN THE PALM OF EACH HAND. WHILE PERFORMING THE DELICATE MOVEMENTS HE TAPS OUT THE RHYTHM ON THE BOTTOM OF THE PLATE WITH A RINGED FINGER. THE ACCOMPANYING MUSIC IS PLAYED BY A VIOLIN, A REBANA, A TAMBOURINE AND A KIND OF FLUTE OR CLARINET.

TUMBA LELA-LELAN - THIS IS A CHILDREN'S PIECE, SUNG TO MAKE JOY AND MERRIMENT. A GROUP OF CHILDREN GATHERS AROUND A LEADER WHO MAY BE ONE OF THEM OR AN ADULT MAN. THE SINGING LEADER OR HIS ASSISTANT PLAYS THE VIOLIN, WHILE THE CHILDREN CLAP HANDS TO MARK THE RHYTHM. AT THE APPROPRIATE PLACE, THEY JOIN IN THE SINGING. THIS SONG IS A RECITATION OF POPULAR VERSES CONTAINING TEACHINGS OF WISDOM.

BAH MOTOH - THIS IS TEMIAR MUSIC FROM THE JUNGLE-COVERED MOUNTAINS OF THE MALAY PENINSULA. AMONG THE TEMIAR DREAMS HAVE IMPORTANT MAGICO-RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE. THE SHAMAN, OR HALA AS HE IS CALLED, IS THE MEDIUM BETWEEN THE TRIBE AND THE SPIRIT WORLD, AND HE RECEIVES HIS SANCTION OR DIRECTIVE DURING DREAMS. IN SUCH DREAMS, A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP IS SET UP BETWEEN THE HALA AND A PARTICULAR SPIRIT, WHO PROMISES TO BE HIS GUIDE OR PROTECTOR. THESE PROTECTING SPIRITS MAY BE IDENTIFIED WITH TREES, STONES, CROPS, MOUNTAINS, WILD ANIMALS, OR ANCESTORS. THE SONGS WHICH THE HALA SINGS, AND IN WHICH HE IS JOINED BY THE WORSHIPPERS, ARE CONCEIVED IN HIS DREAMS. THIS SONG, BAH MOTOH, IS A TEMIAR DREAM SONG. IT WAS INSPIRED BY THE OUTBOARD MOTOR BOATS THAT BRING RICE AND SUPPLIES UP THE TELON RIVER. THE SPIRIT OF THE OUTBOARD MOTOR APPEARED IN A DREAM TO THE HALA OF THE TELON VALLEY, AND GAVE HIM A SONG AND A DANCE.

HAROLD COURLANDER - EDITOR
MOSES ASCH - PRODUCTION DIRECTOR

UDAN IRIS - THIS IS A SUNDANESE SONG, THE NAME OF WHICH LITERALLY MEANS "DRIZZLING RAIN." IT IS A LOVE-SONG OF A WOMAN WHO TELLS ABOUT HER SORROW IN BEING LEFT BY HER HUSBAND. IT IS ACCOMPANIED BY A ZITHER WITH A LONG SOUND BOX, CALLED THE KATJAPI.

SORBAN PALID - THIS IS A POPULAR SUNDANESE TUNE WITH VIOLIN AND KATJAPI ACCOMPANIMENT. THE SINGER IS A WOMAN. RECORD 1438A: LAGU SRIHARDJONO - THIS IS JAVANESE GAMELAN MUSIC OF THE SOFT TYPE IN A JAVANESE TONE-SCALE CALLED THE "SALENDRO," AND IS CHARACTERISTIC OF THE REGION OF SURAKARTA. IN THIS MUSIC THE REBAB, THE GENDER, AND THE SULING CAN BE HEARD.

LAGU BABAR LAJAR - HERE IS JAVANESE GAMELAN MUSIC OF THE "FORCEFUL" TYPE, IN WHICH THE SARON AND THE BONANG ARE PREDOMINANT. THE TONE SCALE USED IS THE SO-CALLED "PELOK," WITH SEVEN TONES TO THE OCTAVE. THE WAY OF PLAYING IS TYPICAL IN JOGJAKARTA. IT IS OFTEN USED TO ACCOMPANY THE DANCE OF A WARRIOR.

GANDA PURA - THIS IS BALINESE MUSIC FOR THE DANCE CALLED "DJANGER." IN THE INTERVALS BETWEEN THE CHORUS ONE CAN HEAR DISTINCTLY THE REBAB, WHICH IS DROWNED OUT WHEN THE OTHER GAMELAN INSTRUMENTS COME IN. IN THE "DJANGER," THE DANCERS SIT IN A QUADRANGLE OR IN TWO ROWS, THE GIRLS FACING THE MEN. THEY SING WHILE DANCING WITH THEIR TORSOS, HANDS AND HEADS. SOMETIMES GIRLS AND BOYS SING TOGETHER, SOMETIMES THEY ALTERNATE. BALINESE MUSIC IS GENERALLY LIVLIER AND GAYER THAN THAT OF THE JAVANESE. RECORD 1439B: PEPERANGAN SIRA PANDJI - THIS IS PART OF A BALINESE OPERA, DEPICTING THE DIALOGUES AND THE BATTLE BETWEEN AN ANCIENT HERO PANDJI AND ONE OF HIS ENEMIES. DURING THE DIALOGUE THE GAMELAN MUSIC IS MUTED, AND THE SOFT TONES OF THE GENDER DOMINATES.