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# Music from the Outskirts of Jakarta

## GAMBANG KROMONG



Mama Ong, heard in tracks 6-9.



Masnah, heard in tracks 2-5.



On the cover: Three musicians from Gambang Kromong Irama Bersatu, holding (from left) the konghayan, tehyan, and sukong. The player on the right is Oen Oen Hok, director of the ensemble.

MUSIC OF INDONESIA

3

## MUSIC OF INDONESIA 3

### Music from the Outskirts of Jakarta: Gambang Kromong

#### Lagu lama (old repertoire)

1. **Pobin Kong Ji Lok** 5:51
2. **Pobin Pe Pan Tau - Gula Ganting - Lopan Ce Cu Teng** 6:56
3. **Pobin Pe Pan Tau - Mas Nona - Lopan Tukang Sado** 8:21
4. **Pobin Poa Si Li Tan - Poa Si Li Tan - Pobin Poa Si Li Tan** 5:22
5. **Pobin Pe Pan Tau - Burung Nori - Lopan Seng Kyok** 7:31

*Gambang Kromong Irama Bersatu, directed by Oen Oen Hok*

#### Lagu sayur (modern repertoire)

6. **Balo-balo** 5:31
7. **Stambul Bila** 9:12
8. **Onde-onde** 4:55
9. **Stambul Lama** 8:38

*Gambang Kromong Slendang Betawi, directed by Ustari*

- 10 **Cinta Manis** 6:13

*Grup Tanjidor Kembang Ros, directed by Sarna*

Recorded, edited, and annotated by Philip Yampolsky

*Music of Indonesia* series. Research and publication sponsored jointly by the Office of Folklife Programs of the Smithsonian Institution and the Masyarakat Musikologi Indonesia, and funded by a grant from the Ford Foundation.

Series edited by Philip Yampolsky.

*Descriptive notes enclosed*



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*A wonderfully mixed-up music, gambang kromong combines Indonesian, Chinese, and sometimes Western instruments. These 1990 recordings focus on two repertoires: a body of old pieces, now rarely heard, that blend Chinese and Indonesian musical elements; and the most popular modern repertoire, which sounds like gamelan music crossed with small-group jazz of the 1920s and 1930s.*

*On the cover: Three musicians from Gambang Kromong Irama Bersatu, holding (from left) the kongahyan, tehyan, and sukong. The player on the right is Oen Oen Hok, director of the ensemble.*



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# MUSIC OF INDONESIA 3

## Music from the Outskirts of Jakarta: Gambang Kromong

Smithsonian/Folkways SF 40057  
Music of Indonesia 3  
Music from the Outskirts of Jakarta:  
Gambang Kromong

### The Smithsonian/Folkways Music of Indonesia Series

If Indonesia were superimposed on Europe, it would stretch from the western shore of Ireland almost to the Caspian Sea. Only four countries in the world (China, India, the USA, and the USSR) have larger populations, and few encompass a more bewildering diversity of societies and ways of life. Indonesia's people belong to more than 300 ethnic groups, speak almost as many languages, and inhabit some 3000 islands (out of nearly 13,700 in the archipelago). Most (about 90%) are Muslim, but there are substantial numbers of Christians, Buddhist/Taoists, Hindus, and animists as well. Three-quarters of the population lives in rural areas, yet the information and entertainment media are saturated with urban images, mostly from the capital, Jakarta, a megalopolis with more inhabitants than any city in the U.S. and more territory than Tokyo. The Javanese rice-farmer, the Buginese sailor, the Balinese *pedanda* (Hindu priest), the Achehese *ulama* (Islamic teacher), the Jakarta bureaucrat, the Jakarta noodle-vendor, the Minangkabau trader, the Chinese-Indonesian shopkeeper, the Sultan of Yogyakarta, the forest nomad of Kalimantan, soldiers, fishermen, batik-makers, bankers, shadow-puppeteers, shamans, peddlers, marketwomen, dentists—these are all Indonesians, and our picture of the country must somehow include them all.

Indonesia's music is as diverse as its people. Best known abroad are the Javanese and Balinese orchestras generally called *gamelan*, which consist largely of gongs and other metallophones, but *gamelan* is only one aspect (albeit an impressive one) of the whole. Solo and group singing and solo instrumental music (played typically on flute, shawm, plucked lute, bowed lute, plucked zither, or xylophone) are found everywhere, and so are ensembles of mixed instruments and ensembles dominated by instruments of a single type (most commonly flutes, drums, xylophones, zithers, or gongs).

Much of this music may be termed traditional, in the sense that its scales, idioms, and repertoires do not in any obvious way derive from European/American or Middle Eastern (or other foreign) music. On the other hand, some of the most prominent and commercially successful genres of popular music definitely do derive from foreign sources; but since these are sung in Indonesian, disseminated nationwide through cassettes and the mass media, and avidly consumed by millions of Indonesians, they must certainly be considered Indonesian, regardless of their foreign roots. Finally, along with the indigenous and the clearly imported, there are many hybrid forms that mix traditional and foreign elements in delightful and unpredictable ways.

The Smithsonian/Folkways Music of Indonesia series offers a sampling of this tremendous variety. In selecting the music, we are concentrating on genres of special musical interest and, wherever possible, will present them in some depth, with several examples to illustrate the range of styles and

repertoire. We are also concentrating on music that is little known outside Indonesia (and even, in some cases, within the country), and therefore much of our work is introductory and exploratory. Accurate histories of the genres we have recorded do not yet exist and perhaps never will: studies of their distribution and their variation from place to place have not yet been done. So our presentations and commentaries cannot presume to be definitive; instead they should be taken as initial forays into uncharted territory.

—Philip Yampolsky, series editor

### Music from the Outskirts of Jakarta: Gambang Kromong

by Philip Yampolsky

*Gambang kromong*, the genre featured in the present recording, comes from Jakarta and its environs—hardly uncharted territory, one would think. But this is a Jakarta that is virtually invisible, one that most people have forgotten exists.

The visible Jakarta is the capital city, the center of the Indonesian government and the national television and radio networks, and also the center of the film, recording, and magazine publishing industries. Practically all information and entertainment that is addressed to Indonesia as a whole emanates from Jakarta, and a great deal of it is also about Jakarta—about government officials in Jakarta, about the glamorous singers and actors in Jakarta, their clothes and their automobiles and their easy commerce with the big city and the modern world. The imagery of Jakarta is increasingly the only imagery common to all Indonesians: the nation's idea of itself is an idea of Jakarta. For the entertainment industry in particular, the rest of the country is made up of "regions," and what happens in the regions is of no interest, aside from touristic curiosity, to anyone who does not live there or come from there. (For example, the only cassettes of music by Indonesians that are distributed nationally are certain studio-polished genres of urban popular music, recorded almost without exception in Jakarta; cassettes of "regional" music are marketed only in their home regions and to emigrants who have maintained their regional ties.) Jakarta is thus the opposite of the regions: they are the disparate parts of the nation, Jakarta the unified whole.

Paradoxically, *gambang kromong* is the regional music of Jakarta. Its performers and audience are ordinary people, and the Jakarta they live in is no more sophisticated or cosmopolitan than other cities and towns elsewhere in Indonesia. Unlike the audience for national popular music genres, *gambang kromong's* audience can be defined quite specifically in ethnic, economic, and geographic terms. And, as it happens, the music itself reflects with unusual clarity the development of this audience. While the popular music produced in Jakarta's studios embodies the ideal of a uniform culture throughout the country, *gambang kromong* expresses one region's cultural history in all its particularity.

### Plan of the recording

These recordings focus on the two richest repertoires of *gambang kromong* music. The first is the *lagu lama* (tracks 1-5), a body of old pieces that are now rarely heard, despite their beauty. In their mixture of Chinese and Indonesian musical elements they bear witness to the fruitful intermingling of these cultures in the colonial era. The second repertoire (tracks 6-9) is the *lagu sayur*; these pieces, which dominate *gambang kromong* today, present a startling combination of Indonesian music with American and European popular music and jazz from before World War II. Track 10 is another demonstration of the impact of jazz: it is a piece from the modern *gambang kromong* repertoire but is played by a different ensemble, *tanjidor*, that sounds like a New Orleans jazz band that has somehow acquired Indonesian gongs and drums and a Chinese fiddle.

In the commentary, the modern repertoire and situation of *gambang kromong* (as heard in tracks 6-9) are discussed first, then the older repertoire (tracks 1-5) and its historical background.

### Gambang kromong today

The performers and audience for *gambang kromong* today live at the edges of Jakarta and in the towns and semi-rural areas beyond (Bekasi, northern Bogor, and Tangerang). They belong to two groups: the so-called Peranakan Chinese, whose ancestry is mixed Chinese and Pribumi ("native"—that is, with Chinese or other immigrant admixture), and the Betawi, Pribumi Indonesians who during the colonial period came or were brought as slaves to Jakarta (then known as Batavia or Betawi) from many regions of Indonesia and who over time lost ties to their homelands, becoming instead Betawi (Batavians). While the two groups differ in at least one crucial respect—the Peranakan are Christian or Buddhist/Taoist, and the Betawi are Muslim—they are nevertheless very much akin. They live in the same or adjacent neighborhoods; they both speak as their primary language the Betawi dialect of Indonesian; and for the most part they live at the same relatively low economic level, working as small farmers, fishermen, peddlers, factory hands, laborers, jitney drivers, and so on.

Most of the musicians heard in the present recordings live in Tangerang, about an hour and a half west of Jakarta, and the descriptions here of social and musical practices are based on observations made in the Sewan/Kampung Melayu/Dadap/Mauk region of Tangerang. (For an ethnographic study of this area, see Go Gien Tjwan 1966.) Perhaps especially in Tangerang, the shared conditions and circumstances of the Betawi and Peranakan have led to a degree of mutual acceptance and integration that is unusual in the rest of Indonesia, where there is often friction between "Chinese" and Pribumi. For instance, in Tangerang, the hosts of Peranakan wedding celebrations expect Pribumi (i.e., Muslim) guests and are careful to accommodate them in the matter of pork dishes: sometimes they provide two separate food tables, one with pork and one without; often they hold the celebration over two days and nights and refrain from serving pork on the first.

### Ensemble and style

The *gambang kromong* ensemble is a mixture of Chinese, Indonesian, and, often, European instruments. It takes its name from two Indonesian instruments:

- a xylophone (*gambang*) with 18 keys tuned pentatonically over 3 1/2 octaves; and
- a set of 10 small kettle-gongs (*kromong*), tuned pentatonically over 2 octaves and played melodically.

The other instruments that together with the *gambang* and *kromong* form the nucleus of the modern ensemble are:

- a two-stringed fiddle of Chinese origin, with an attached bow whose hair passes between the playing-strings; the instrument is usually called *tehyang*, though some musicians say its name is properly *konghayang*;
- a side-blown flute (*suling*), also Chinese; and
- a battery of Indonesian non-melodic percussion: two hanging gongs (*kempul* and *gongg*); drums (*gendang*); and *kecrek* (clashing metal plates mounted on a wooden block).

Then there are male and female singers, and a number of optional but commonly-found Western instruments:

- one or more electric or amplified guitars playing bass and rhythm; and
- one or more Western melody instruments: trumpet, clarinet, saxophone, electronic keyboard (usually a two-octave Casio organ), Hawaiian guitar.

In the present recordings, all of the Chinese and Indonesian instruments listed above, plus a trumpet, are heard in tracks 6-9, and a Hawaiian guitar is added in tracks 7-9. The ensemble for the old repertoire (tracks 1-5) is somewhat different and will be described later.

*Gambang kromong* is dominated by melody instruments. In some songs of the modern (*lagu sayur*) repertoire, such as *Balo-balo* and *Onde-onde* here, several of the instruments (*tehyang*, *gambang*, *kromong*) carry a basic melody, but each one uses its own distinctive idiom and adds its own variations to the line; meanwhile, other instruments (trumpet, flute, and, in *Onde-onde*, the Hawaiian guitar) seem to bustle around the melody, underlining phrases, popping up with swirls and fills and then subsiding. The singer also drops in and out, adding another melodic line and idiom, meeting the others at the ends of phrases. Other *lagu sayur*, such as *Stambul Bila* and *Stambul Lama* here, are based on the chords of Western harmony; in these pieces it seems to be the harmonic progression rather than the melody that drives the music, and thus there is even less to tie the various lines together. Underneath all this runs what is essentially a Sundaese (West Javanese) percussion pattern, with intricate and tonally-varied drumming straining against and then resolving into an unvarying cycle of gong-punctuation.

In short, *gambang kromong* has a loosely integrated, highly polyphonic texture, with at least five melodic or harmonic lines in contrasting timbres and idioms all riding above a largely autonomous rhythm section. Overall, the texture simultaneously resembles various forms of Javanese and Sundaese gamelan music and small-band American and European jazz of the 1920s and '30s. And in fact most of the modern

*gambang kromong* repertoire originates in the period before World War II, when there were jazz bands active in Batavia and jazz was also popular on radio and records. That there was contact between jazz and *gambang kromong* seems indisputable when one listens to the *lagu sayur* recordings here, for what they sound like is precisely a jazz band playing Indonesian music, or a gamelan playing jazz.

But notice in all of this that while the music is full of Indonesian and Western features, there is nothing Chinese about it, aside from the fiddle and the flute, whose music could easily be played by Indonesian or Western counterparts. The audience is largely "Chinese" (i.e., Peranakan), and so are many of the players and a few of the instruments, but the music is not. This is another paradox of *gambang kromong*, which we will return to below when we discuss the old repertoire.

#### Performance contexts; the modern repertoire

There are two main contexts for *gambang kromong* music: at Peranakan weddings and other family celebrations, and as the musical accompaniment for performances of the theater-form *lenong*. These contexts occur mainly in the outlying areas of Jakarta, not in the city proper, where both *gambang kromong* and *lenong* are considered unsophisticated and low-class.

At weddings the central entertainment is dancing, and the music of *gambang kromong* is essential to it. The dance is of a particular sort (found in varying forms in many parts of Java and Sumatra) that is here called *ngibing*, in which male guests dance with hired female dancers known as *wayang coker*, *coker*, or, most commonly, *wayang*. The *wayang* may be affiliated with the *gambang kromong* group that is playing—most groups have a contingent of 8-12 *wayang*, who during the wedding season live at the house of the group's leader—or they may be from other groups that are not working that day. The women are invariably Pribumi, and they usually come from the Sundanese regions to the east of Jakarta. There may be fifty or even more *wayang* at a wedding: every male dancer must have his own partner, so crowds of *wayang* show up at every wedding, hoping for a big turnout of guests. A popular *wayang* can make a substantial amount of money in tips from her male partners. *Wayang* are not, however, prostitutes, according to what everyone says and to what I could observe, though they do allow themselves to be fondled by the male dancers.

The men dance in styles ranging from a torpid swaying to showy movements derived from the Sundanese display dancing called *jaipongan*. The role of the women is not so much to dance as to be danced at; no matter what the men are doing, the *wayang* stick to swaying listlessly. Meanwhile, male guests and some older women who oversee the *wayang* move among the dancing couples, pressing drinks on the men. As they get drunker, some men clasp the *wayang* tightly and some let their hands wander, but many simply droop over their partners or press sloppy kisses on them. The *wayang* remain passive or resist feebly. At the weddings I attended, the dancing was curiously spiritless, and the men seemed more to be dreaming about licentiousness than actually engaging in it. (Most of them came to the wedding hall with their wives, who promptly went into the back rooms, leaving the men to it.) There are signs posted in the wedding halls saying "No pointed weapons or firearms," so perhaps the weddings I went to were unusually sedate.

The music, on the other hand, is always energetic, and extremely loud. The singers, *tehyang*, and guitars are all amplified in performance, and they and any electronic instruments are generally cranked up so high that nothing else but the drums is audible.

Most of the songs come from a single repertoire, mysteriously named *lagu sayur*. *Sayur* means "vegetable," and the repertoire is the ordinary, everyday fare of *gambang kromong*; so *lagu sayur* can perhaps be translated (after switching food groups) as "bread and butter" or "meat and potatoes" songs. The most common *lagu sayur* in Tangerang are: *Balo-balo*, *Onde-onde*, *Jali-jali* (this is a class of songs), *Persi*, *Cente* (or *Cinta*) *Manis*, and *Stambul* (again, a class of songs). As I mentioned earlier, it is remarkable that they are all songs that were widely popular in Batavia in the first decades of the twentieth century. Although today they are played almost exclusively by *gambang kromong*, they were at that time also played by *kroncong* ensembles, and in performances of the theater-form called *Komedi Stambul*. *Kroncong* and *stambul* were initially Eurasian entertainments that then spread to performers and audiences throughout Batavian society, except among the most snobbishly Europe-oriented elite. (The Eurasians were the Dutch-Indonesian counterparts of the Peranakan Chinese, combining elements of both parent cultures into a new Indonesian mix.) Also *lagu sayur* are probably Betawi in origin and were borrowed by *kroncong* from *gambang kromong*; like *Balo-balo* and *Onde-onde* here, these use a predominantly five-tone scale (the Western major scale with the fourth and seventh tones omitted) and have an Indonesian melodic idiom giving little or no sense of underlying chords. Others, however, like the two *stambul* songs and *Cinta Manis*, use the Western major scale and Western harmony; they presumably came into *gambang kromong* from the *stambul* theater, bringing with them the elements of jazz style that are now found throughout the *lagu sayur*.

*Lagu sayur* are by far the most frequently performed music at weddings, but certain other kinds of music are also heard. From time to time the ensemble will play two or three songs from *dangdut*, a nationally-known urban music that arose in the 1970s and is mainly popular in the lower economic strata. The *gambang kromong* ensemble can only approximate the sound of *dangdut*, and several of the instruments just sit out or play minimal parts, while others (tamboirine and a special *dangdut* drum) are added. (An example of *dangdut* played on *gambang kromong* is heard in Volume 2 of the *Music of Indonesia series, Indonesian Popular Music*, SF 40056.) After a few *dangdut* numbers the ensemble switches back to *lagu sayur*. Other non-*dangdut* popular songs and Sundanese (West Javanese) pieces are also sometimes adapted to *gambang kromong*.

Yet another repertoire that is sometimes heard at weddings is called *gambang moderen* or *gambang kromong pop*. The style was pioneered in the late 1960s by Benyamin S., a Betawi singer who is now famous also as a film actor and television comedian. Most *gambang moderen* melodies are similar to what are called "novelty songs" in the US; they are mainly vehicles for comic sketches or dialogues sung in Betawi dialect. Benyamin's popularity has made this style well known nationally, and many Indonesians have no idea of *gambang kromong* apart from Benyamin. *Gambang moderen* songs are occasionally played at weddings as warmup pieces, before the dancing starts.

The other important context for *gambang kromong*, besides weddings, is the *lenong* theater. *Lenong* performs mainly at Pribumi

celebrations, but its musicians include both Peranakan and Pribumi. *Gambang kromong* plays before the show begins, to attract an audience, and it plays incidental music to accompany the action. The repertoires are the same for *lenong* and for Peranakan weddings, but often there is a higher proportion of *dangdut* songs in *lenong*. (For more on *lenong*, see Grijs 1976.)

#### Lyrics

The lyrics of *lagu sayur* (and also of *lagu lama*, discussed below) are sung in Indonesian with many elements of Betawi dialect and are for the most part set in the verse-form known as *pantun*, common throughout the Malay/Indonesian world. Classical *pantun* are typically (but not exclusively) quatrains in which the first couplet uses "specific, concrete images to describe nature or the human world," and the second uses "abstract words to state an observation or maxim." The second couplet is referred to as the "intent" or meaning of the quatrain, while the first couplet is the "shadow of the intent"; there is argument, however, over whether the couplets are always meaningfully related. In any case, they are usually related in sound, matching each other in end rhymes and (often) internal rhymes. (This description is adapted from Thomas 1979.)

The *pantun* sung at Peranakan weddings follow the classical pattern in their rhyme schemes, but the second couplet is rarely abstract, and the relation in meaning between the couplets is often invisible (to me, at least). In fact, it seems a possibility (though not one enunciated by any of the singers) that in the rather unclassical context of Tangerang weddings many *pantun* are composed on the poetic principle that the couplets should not be related except by rhyme—that, as in Cockney rhyming slang, the fun of the *pantun* is the creation through rhyme of incongruous juxtapositions.

Here, as examples, are texts and translations for a few of the *pantun* from these recordings:

*Gunung Sindur pasirnya kuning /  
Tangguk udang airnya dalam / Bangun  
tidur kepala pusing / Habis begadang  
sehari semalam*

Mount Sindur has yellow sand / A  
shrimp trap deep in the water / You  
wake up with a headache / After staying  
up all night

*Saya heran kereta api / Begitu  
panjang tidak kudanya / Saya heran si  
jantung hati / Kalau mandang tidak  
sudahnya*

A funny thing about trains / They're  
so long but there's no horse / A funny  
thing about my sweetheart / He can't stop  
looking at me

*Anak ikan beranak ikan / Ikan di laut  
panjangan dirinya / Sanak bukan beraya  
bukan / Kenapa baik manis budinya*

The children of fish have more little  
fish / Ocean fish have long bones / We're  
not related in any way / Why are you so  
nice to me?

Some songs (such as *Onde-onde* and *Balo-balo*) have a set refrain, and some *lagu lama* (such as *Burung Nuri*) have single lines or couplets, in addition to and independent of the *pantun* quatrains, that include the words of the title. But beyond that the texts are not fixed: the singers simply choose from the stock of *pantun* that they have memorized.

In performance, in order to make the lines fit comfortably with the music, or just for the sake of embellishment and variation, the singers frequently repeat words and insert stock words and phrases (or the names

of friends or musicologists) into the lines. For example, the first *pantun* given above, from *Stambul Bila* (track 7), is sung in the recording this way:

*Gunung lah Sindur nona Gunung  
lah Sindur sayang pasir-pasirnya  
kuning / Kalau tangguk lah udang  
tangguk lah udang jiwa manis  
airnya dalam / Bangun lah tidur  
nona bangun lah tidur sayang kepala-  
pala pusing / Aduh habis begadang habis  
begadang jiwa manis sehari semalam*

*Lah* is a particle without definite meaning here; *sayang* and *jiwa manis* both mean "sweetheart"; and *nona* means "young lady." But the function of these words in this context is rhythmic not semantic; another singer would insert different words or put them in different places in the line.

Although every performing group has one or more female singers whose job it is to sing *pantun*, they are not the only ones who sing in performance: virtually everyone knows at least a few verses, and the melodies are totally familiar, so in the relaxed atmosphere of a wedding the microphone often passes around among the male guests and male associates of the ensemble. The older women who manage the *wayang* and who are themselves usually former *wayang* will also take turns singing. There is apparently no expectation that a man who takes the microphone should have a pleasing voice or be able to sing well—indeed it seems to be a structural premise of *gambang kromong* that women are professionals while men (aside from the instrumentalists) are guests and amateurs.

#### Tanjidor

*Tanjidor* (track 10) is a European brass band with Sundanese percussion, to which a *tehyang* and singers may be added. Like *gambang kromong*, it is found in the outlying regions of Jakarta but not in the city. Although it is a separate ensemble, historically independent of *gambang kromong*, it now shares some of *gambang kromong*'s repertoire. The genre is thought to derive from slave orchestras that played for Dutch and Eurasian landowners before the emancipation of 1860, and European marches and waltzes probably dating from that era are still part of the *tanjidor* repertoire. In later years *tanjidor* became a common entertainment at Pribumi (Betawi and Sundanese) festivals; it now also plays at some Peranakan temple festivals, and at some Peranakan weddings, where it alternates with a *gambang kromong*. The genre can be seen as the mirror image of *gambang kromong*: while *gambang kromong* serves both Peranakan and Pribumi audiences but is more closely linked to the Peranakan, *tanjidor* serves both audiences but is more closely linked to the Pribumi. *Tanjidor* players are usually Betawi, not Peranakan. Their repertoire includes the European marches and waltzes, the *lagu sayur* of *gambang kromong*, *dangdut* songs, and a greater amount of Sundanese music than is needed for Peranakan weddings. We will give *tanjidor* a fuller presentation in a later volume in the *Music of Indonesia series*, but we include here one example of a *lagu sayur* played by *tanjidor*. (An example of *dangdut* played on *tanjidor* is included in Volume 2 of the *Music of Indonesia series, Indonesian Popular Music*, SF 40056.)

#### The old repertoire

The first half of this recording (tracks 1-5) is devoted to a repertoire very different from the *lagu sayur* of the second half (tracks 6-10). The *lagu lama* ("old

melodies") are still recalled by some musicians, but nowadays they are virtually never performed. Yet in the early part of this century these pieces were apparently more important than the ones now called *lagu sayur*: the early 78-rpm recordings of *gambang kromong* favour *lagu lama* by a substantial margin. It is not clear when they began to decline. In a 1949 article, Phoa Kian Sioe gives a list of *lagu lama* (including most of the ones heard here) and says that she could not find any musicians who could play them; but several were issued on a commercial cassette in the mid-1970s, and the present recordings are proof that in 1990 there were still performers who remembered them (without, incidentally, the aid of any form of notation).

People in Tangerang say that the reason why the *lagu lama* became obsolete is that they are no fun at weddings, because they can't be danced to. There is another likely reason, however, that is not mentioned. Up until the mid-1960s, the Chinese of Indonesia (Peranakan and Totok) maintained openly a number of cultural forms that were explicitly Chinese in origin and atmosphere:

boisterous New Year celebrations with lion dances, boat races for the Pe Cun holiday with *gambang kromong* ensembles and *cokek* performing in the boats, Chinese-language theater, Indonesian-language theater using Chinese stories, and so forth. But in 1965 and 1966 political events turned against the Chinese. An attempted coup against the Sukarno government was attributed to the Indonesian Communist Party, and, in retaliation, hundreds of thousands of real and alleged Communists were massacred. The Chinese-Indonesians, who were believed to be Communist sympathizers, and who were unpopular in any case for what is seen as their unfairly gained economic superiority over Pribumi Indonesians, suffered greatly during the upheaval. Since that time Chinese-Indonesians have by and large tried to be inconspicuous, and many of the customs that differentiated them from other Indonesians have been voluntarily suppressed. *Lagu lama*, which were exclusively Peranakan, have fallen victim to this caution. Nevertheless, the Peranakan of Tangerang still continue to make one gesture asserting their musical uniqueness: the first piece played in any public event involving *gambang kromong*, be it a wedding or a *lenong* performance, is an instrumental *lagu lama*, *Pobin Kong Ji Lok* (track 1 here).

## History

Phoa's article, which is based on her conversations with "old people, who heard these things from their ancestors," is the only source I know on the history of *gambang kromong*, and the brief account here is derived from it. The melodies originated in the Fujian province of southern China and were brought to Batavia by Hokkien-speaking Chinese, presumably in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Attempts to play them on instruments available in Batavia led to the development of an ensemble of Chinese fiddles, Chinese flute, and Indonesian *gambang*; this ensemble was already well established by 1743. At some point (perhaps from the start), female singers (*cokek*) were incorporated into this ensemble, and then as now they were Pribumi rather than Peranakan.

These "*gambang* orchestras" of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries played for Peranakan Chinese in Batavia and surrounding regions, performing at weddings and family celebrations and also serving as private entertainment for wealthy Peranakan

men who lavished presents—jewelry, clothing, houses, carriages, swimming pools (!)—on their favorite *cokek* and built special pavilions in which to enjoy their music. During this period men did not dance with the *cokek*, they simply listened to them sing.

In the 1870s, however, the situation began to change: a number of commercial venues, probably taverns of a sort, were opened in Batavia, where customers could hear *gambang* ensembles and *cokek* performing neither as part of a family celebration nor for the private delectation of a rich patron, but simply as public entertainment. Here, perhaps stimulated by a Betawi audience attracted when the music became publicly available, a new kind of ensemble emerged around 1880, in which the fiddles, flutes, and *gambang* were augmented with drums, gongs, and *kromong*. The introduction of these instruments—that is, the creation of *gambang kromong* out of the earlier "*gambang* orchestra"—opened up a channel for Sundanese and Betawi music to enter the Peranakan context, and it is through this channel that the Peranakan acquired the Betawi songs now called *lagu sayur*. And this is also how they began dancing, in the Pribumi fashion, with the *cokek*.

Thus far Phoa Kian Sioe. A couple of remarks to add: on the evidence of 78-rpm records from about 1910 on, the additional instruments were quickly absorbed into the whole repertoire, not reserved for the Betawi songs. *Lagu lama* on 78s all use *kromong*. Dancing, on the other hand, was restricted to what are now the *lagu sayur*: as was noted above, there is no dancing during *lagu lama*. And incidentally, in the old days only three or four *wayang* would dance at a time, not the dozens and dozens of today.

## Repertoire, ensemble, style

The *lagu lama* that survive today were all known in the 1910s and 1920s (though, if Phoa is correct, their melodies date from much earlier and are in fact Chinese in origin). There are two categories: instrumental pieces, called *pobin*, and pieces with vocal. *Pobin* may be played on their own, like the *pobin Kong Ji Lok* (track 1) that always opens a *gambang kromong* performance, but they are also played before and after vocal pieces. The titles of most *pobin* are personal names, but what the connection is between the person and the *pobin* is not clear. Most of the vocal *lagu lama* have Indonesian-language titles. Some important *lagu lama*, aside from the ones recorded here, are: *Semar Gunem*, *Tanjung Burung*, *Pecah Piring*, and *Cente Manis Berdiri*.

The *lagu lama* ensemble differs from the one for *lagu sayur*. It contains, in addition to a female singer:

- three Chinese fiddles (see cover photograph): *kongahyan* (smallest), *tehyan*, and *sukong* (largest); the first two play mainly in the same octave, while the *sukong* mutters and hums two octaves below;
- *gambang*, *kromong*, and *suling*;
- *kempul*, *goong*, *gendang*, and *kecekr*, plus some additional small Chinese percussion instruments: *pan*, a woodblock, and *ningning*, two small shallow gongs in a frame.

No Western instruments are used in *lagu lama*. Chinese shawms, called *trompet* in Indonesia, are added in some pieces (as in track 1).

Compared to the later *lagu sayur* (tracks 6-10), the vocal *lagu lama* seem almost transparent. This impression has several sources: there are indeed fewer instruments; there is scarcely any drumming; there are frequent rest points, where all the

instruments and the singer come together on a single pitch and hold for a moment. Also, the relationship among the instruments is different: in *lagu sayur*, some instruments carry a melody most of the time and others contribute decorative fragments in fits and starts, while in *lagu lama* all of the performers, except the vocal and perhaps the flute, are continuously involved with the melody. And their various versions of the melody are more similar, more tightly integrated, than in *lagu sayur*. The *lagu lama* are calmer; there is less commotion. In a word, the texture here is more heterophonic than polyphonic.

This heterophonic texture—the sense that most participants are performing closely related versions of a single melody—is one of the features that make the *lagu lama* seem Chinese. The formal construction of the melodies also seems to be non-Indonesian, and hence putatively Chinese: recurring patterns of gong-punctuation, modular phrasing, and generalized formal structures, all of which are common in Javanese/Sundanese/Balinese ensemble music, are absent here; instead, each *lagu lama* seems formally *sui generis*. Finally, the presence of bowed strings across three octaves is so far as I know unique in Indonesian ensembles, which usually contain only one bowed lute if any. These Chinese-seeming features<sup>2</sup> are blended in *gambang kromong* with the distinctively Indonesian timbres and idioms of the xylophone and the gong-row, Indonesian-language lyrics, and the pan-Malay *pantun* verse-form—and perhaps, to go out on a limb, with an Indonesian tendency toward *looseness* in the heterophony—to produce a thoroughly mixed and beautiful style.

## These recordings

The present recordings were made in 1990, after research conducted in the Tangerang region to the west of Jakarta. Our research consisted of attending weddings and *lenong* performances where *gambang kromong* was played, and interviewing *gambang kromong* performers. We tried recording in Tangerang, in the *rumah kawin* (wedding halls) where *gambang kromong* is usually performed, but most of these are very close to Jakarta's international airport, and engine noise engulfed almost every take. Track 1 was recorded in a *rumah kawin*, but eventually we gave up and rented a recording studio in West Jakarta, where we recorded tracks 2-9, using our own equipment but taking advantage of the studio's soundproofing. Track 10 was recorded in Tangerang, farther from the airport, outdoors. All recordings were made using a Sony TCD-D10 Pro DAT recorder, a Sonosax SX-PR mixer (six in, two out), four Sennheiser MKH-40 cardioid condenser microphones, and two Electro-Voice RE18 cardioid dynamic microphones.

## Notes

1. Until the twentieth century, virtually all the "Chinese" born in Indonesia descended from unions between China-born men (immigrants from the Hokkien-speaking region of Fujian, in southern China) and Indonesian women. Then as now, Peranakan culture combined Chinese and Indonesian elements and used local languages rather than Chinese; in the Batavia region, for instance, the Peranakan spoke (and still speak) the local dialect of Malay (the colonial-era name for the language now known as Indonesian). The mestizo Chinese-Indonesians are now often called Peranakan (meaning, in effect, "miscegenated") and distinguished from the Totok, who descend

on both sides from China-born immigrants more recently arrived in Indonesia (often from Hakka- or Cantonese-speaking regions). Totok in general continue to speak Chinese and are felt to be culturally oriented more toward China than Indonesia.

2. Another feature, which I am uncertain how to attribute, is the presence in *lagu lama* vocal lines, and in the more voice-like instrumental parts such as the fiddles and the flute, of pitches not available to the pentatonic *gambang* and *kromong*. If we assign to *gambang* and *kromong*, as Tangerang musicians do, the pitches D E F-sharp A B, then the additional pitches from the singer and the "vocal" instruments are G and C-natural. Is this partial heptatonism a Chinese or an Indonesian trait? In either case, it is another indication of duality in the music.

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## Commentary on the selections

The lyrics of many of the *pantun* in these recordings are quite obscure—especially the initial couplets, the "shadow of the intent." The translations given below are both tentative and selective, sometimes using only a few of the *pantun* sung in the recording. Listeners who would like copies of the song texts in the original Indonesian should send a check for \$2.00 (for postage and handling) made out to the Smithsonian Institution along with their name and address to: Indonesian Films 1-2-3, Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings, Office of Folklife Programs, Smithsonian Institution, 955 L'Enfant Plaza, Suite 2600, Washington, D.C. 20560, U.S.A.

## The old repertoire: lagu lama

Performed by Gambang Kromong Iraema Bersatu.

### 1. *Pobin Kong Ji Lok*

This instrumental piece (*pobin*) is played as the opening to any performance by the *gambang kromong* ensemble. In the version recorded here, Chinese shawms (*trompet*) are added to the ensemble.

2. *Pobin Pe Pan Tau - Gula Ganting - Lopan Ce Ca Teng*.  
Vocal: Masnah.

Instrumental pieces consist of two sections, a *pobin* (this is also the term for the piece as a whole) and a *lopan*. These may be used as the prelude and postlude, respectively, to a vocal piece. Frequently the prelude and postlude are taken from different pieces. For most vocal pieces, the *pobin* and *lopan* are not prescribed; instead, they are chosen by the *gambang* player, who announces them simply by starting to play. Here the *pobin* or first section of *Pe Pan Tau* introduces the vocal piece *Gula Ganting*, and the *lopan* or second section of *Ce Cu Teng* is played in closing. *Gula Ganting* contains two melodic units, each ended by a gong.

... / ... / Where have you been for so long / Why do you turn up only now?  
... / ... / I want the tall one [i.e., man] / I'll keep the short one in reserve

[Not *pantun*.] *Gula Ganting* is the name of this song  
[Not *pantun*.] *Mas Nona* came home from a celebration

3. *Pobin Pe Pan Tau - Mas Nona - Lopan Tukang Sado*.  
Vocal: Masnah.

*Mas Nona* consists of one long melody, with two gongs close together at the end. This long unit is stated twice here. *Tukang Sado* is unusual among instrumental pieces in that its title is not a Chinese personal name but is instead a phrase in Indonesian (meaning "horse-cart driver"). Perhaps it is a more recent addition to the repertoire than other *pobin*.

From Tanjung Burung to Kampung Melayu / A checked handkerchief made in France / Like a bird on a branch / I want to catch it but it's too high up

A ship sails to Juda / ... / If you remember days gone by / Your heart gets tired and you wring your hands [lit., rub your chest]

[Not *pantun*.] *Mas Nona* is the name of this song

4. *Pobin Poa Si Li Tan - Poa Si Li Tan - Pobin Poa Si Li Tan*.  
Vocal: Masnah.

*Poa Si Li Tan* is a story of Tang Dynasty China, sung in *pantun*, concerning Li Tan, a child-prince who later became Emperor Rui Zong (r. 707-712). According to this version of the historical events, the concubine Bu Cek Tian (known in history as the Empress Wu) usurped the throne after Li Tan's father died, and had the queen, Li Tan's mother (Ong Ho), killed. Before she could do the same to Li Tan, the boy was abducted by a loyalist and entrusted to someone outside the court. Unlike most of the *lagu lama*, *Poa Si Li Tan* is still sometimes requested at performances. Masnah, the singer here, owns a published text, apparently printed in the 1920s or '30s, in which the story takes 33 *pantun* verses, but she usually sings only the opening five or six verses in performance.

Typically, the *pobin* for *Poa Si Li Tan* is fixed, and is repeated in place of a *lopan*. Although in other recordings by this ensemble the woodblock (*pan*) is played only in the *pobin* and *lopan* sections, here it is played in the vocal section as well, and the strokes on the *pan*, which fall at regular intervals, provide a convenient way to measure the length of the repeating melody; each statement lasts nineteen *pan*-strokes, ending with a gong on the last stroke.

5. *Pobin Pe Pan Tau - Burung Nori - Lopan Seng Kyok*.  
Vocal: Masnah.

*Burung Nori* consists of one long melody repeating after the third gong-stroke (not

counting ones in the *pobin*). The melody is stated twice.

Sweet potatoes here, sweet potatoes there / They're not the same as sacred sweet potatoes [? *ubi keramat*] / Prophets here, prophets there / They're not the same as the Prophet Muhammad

... / ... / You want the tall one [i.e., man] / Keep the short one in reserve

[Not *pantun*.] Song of Palembang, the nori bird [*burung nori*] / If you see her in the daytime, you'll look for her at night

The modern repertoire: *lagu sayur*

Tracks 6-9 performed by Gambang Kromong Slendang Betawi. Track 10 performed by Grup Tanjidor Kembang Ros.

6. *Balo-balo*.  
Vocal: Mama Ong.

*Balo-balo* uses a mainly pentatonic scale, although a sixth pitch occasionally appears. It is Indonesian in melodic idiom and does not depend on a sequence of underlying chords. In these respects it differs from such *lagu sayur* as the two *stambul* and *Cinta Manis*, which use the seven-tone scale and the harmonies of Western music.

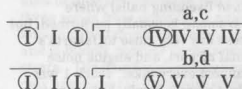
The children of fish have more little fish / Fish in the sea have long bones / We're not related in any way / Why are you so nice to me?

The bananas up above, the banana flower down below / Pour vinegar into a coconut / They can chop me up or sentence me to hang / If I like you they can't make me stop

\*... / ... / I've looked all around the world / I've finally found him

7. *Stambul Bila*.  
Vocal: Mama Ong, Wi Sun.

There are many songs with *Stambul* in their titles—*Stambul Bila*, *Stambul Lama*, *Stambul Rusak*, *Stambul Siliwangi*, *Stambul Dua*, and more. All have the same chord structure, which may be diagrammed as:



Circles indicate where strokes on the larger gong fall. The lower-case letters indicate how the four lines of the *pantun* (abcd) are set into the structure. (The opening *pantun* does not follow this pattern, but all subsequent ones do.) One *pantun* takes two cycles of the chord-structure.

Within this structure there is considerable melodic leeway—five different vocal melodies are heard in the two *stambul* recorded here (tracks 7 and 9). Probably each singer knows several melodies that he or she can use. The main difference between the two *stambul* here seems to be in register: *Stambul Bila* is pitched a fifth higher than *Stambul Lama*.

A black dog called Si Dayung [= The Rower] / Was shot in the leg and died / At night you feel that you're rocking / As though tossed on the waves

Mount Sindur has yellow sand / A shrimp trap deep in the water / You wake up with a headache / From staying up all day and all night

A funny thing about trains / They're so long but there's no horse / A funny thing about my sweetheart / He walks past again and again

8. *Onde-onde*.  
Vocal: Mama Ong, Kwi Ap.

Like *Balo-balo*, this is one of the melody-based, Indonesian-idiom *lagu sayur*. *Onde-onde* are fried balls of rice flour rolled in sesame seeds, with a sweet center. They are deep fried, and, as the song says, when they are done they pop to the surface.

[Refrain:] *Onde* cakes taste the best / There are small ones and big ones / The people who make them are the cleverest / *Onde* cakes, when they're done they pop up  
Spongecake, *rengginang* snacks / All kinds of cakes on a tray / It's been said since long ago / Half-hearted isn't worth much  
A funny thing about trains / They're so long but there's no horse / A funny thing about my sweetheart / He can't take his eyes off me

There are a few horses running around / They're not the same as a spotted horse / There are one or two who are easy to find / They're not the same as ordinary people

The children of fish have more little fish / Fish in the sea have long bones / We're not related in any way / Why are you so nice to me?

9. *Stambul Lama*.  
Vocal: Mama Ong, Wi Sun, Wani.

Throw away a stone, you'll get a coconut / A shrimp trap in Pasir Mayang / Throw one away, it doesn't matter / When I was single there were many who liked me

... / ... / I thought you were just playing around / I didn't realize you really liked me

A ship sailing to Lampung / Heading for Lampung, the sails are set / It's not that I'm leaving home / I'm looking for my relatives

Play the *gambang* with five keys / If you pull up the grass you'll feel the ground / Your heart's anxious about that guy / You want to know what his name is

An officer's daughter named Rohayang / A kitten jumping about / You have set yourself free from me / We will each go our own way

10. *Cinta Manis*.

*Cinta Manis* (or, in Betawi dialect, *Cente Manis*) is a popular *lagu sayur*, here played by a *tanjidor* ensemble that has added a *tehyang*.

**Gambang Kromong Slendang Betawi:**  
Ustari, director; Suhaery Mufti, Hawaiian guitar; Zanian, trumpet; Karta, *gendang*; Kwi Ap, *tehyang*; O Lip, *gambang*; Barung, *suling*; I Nin, *kromong*; Subur, *goong/kempul*; Sanen, *kecrek*; Mama Ong, vocals; Wani, vocals; Kwi Ap, vocals; Wi Sun, vocals.

**Gambang Kromong Irama Bersatu:**  
Oen Oen Hok, director; Oen Oen Hok, *sukong*; Ibut, *gambang*; Ang, *kromong*; Kim Tjong, *kongayhan*; Gojin, *tehyang* (2-5); Inan, *tehyang* (1); Ambran, *gendang*; Ongkayan, *trompet* (1); Suling (2-5); Apin, *goong/kempul*; Endang, *pan*; Nisan, *ningning*; Acim, *kecrek*; Nor, *trompet* (1); Masnah, vocals.

**Grup Tanjidor Kembang Ros:**  
Sarna, director/clarinet; Ibut, *tehyang*; Kwi Ap, *gendang*; Suryana, *trombone*; Siman, *tuba*; Misna, *tenor saxophone*; Cinang, *trumpet*; Asnan, *goong/kempul*; Kemah, *kecrek*.

All tracks recorded in Indonesia. Track 1 in Tangerang, 31 July 1990. Tracks 2-5 in Jakarta Barat, 7 December 1990. Tracks 6-9 in Jakarta Barat, 18 September 1990. Track 10 in Tangerang, 21 September 1990.

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Production coordination by Matt Walters

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About the editor

Philip Yampolsky is a musicologist who has been studying Indonesia since 1970. His discography of Lokananta, the Indonesian national recording company, is the initial product of his long-term research on the recording industry in Indonesia and Malaysia.

The *Music of Indonesia* series (Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings) is available through Roundup Records at 1-800-443-4727.

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*Music of Nias, the Toba Batak, and the Karo Batak* (Sumatra)  
*Tanjidor, Topeng Betawi, and Ajeng* (West Java)



## **MUSIC OF INDONESIA, VOL. 3:**

### **Music from the Outskirts of Jakarta: Gambang Kromong**

*Liner note supplement 04/04/2008*

Recorded, edited, and annotated by Philip Yampolsky. 73 minutes. SWF 40057 (1991)

Gambang Kromong comes from a virtually invisible part of the capital of Indonesia, one that most people have forgotten. Today, both performers and audience for this music live at the edges of Jakarta and in the towns and semi-rural areas beyond. The music is wonderfully disorienting. It combines Indonesian, Chinese, and sometimes European-derived instruments in music that at times is reminiscent of gamelan music and at other times recalls small-group jazz of the 1920s and 1930s.

#### **Track List**

1. Pobin Kong Ji Lok
2. Pobin Pe Pan Tau - Gula Ganting - Lopan Ce Cu Teng
3. Pobin Pe Pan Tau - Mas Nona - Lopan Tukang Sado
4. Pobin Poa Si Li Tan - Poa Si Li Tan- Pobin Poa Si Li Tan
5. Pobin Pe Pan Tau - Burung Nori - Lopan Seng Kyok
6. Balo-balo
7. Stambul Bila
8. Onde-onde
9. Stambul Lama

#### **Updates by Philip Yampolsky**

Dr. Han Kuo-Huang of Northern Illinois University, in a review of this recording published in the electronic journal *Ethnomusicology Research Digest* (#58, 6 September 1991),\* provides some important information about the Chinese roots of the lagu lama, particularly the instrumental preludes and postludes. Dr. Han writes:

The instrumental pieces [in Tangerang] are derived from the Chinese qupai (tunetype) tradition. There are hundreds of qupai in Chinese music some of which have texts and some instrumental. They are used [in Tangerang] as preludes (pobin) and postludes (lopan; literally, "dropping beat") to a vocal work in Gambang Kromong. This is also a practice in southern Fujian music. Therefore, the names such as Pe Pan Tau, Ce Cu Teng, Seng Kyok, etc., are qupai names, not personal names. In fact, different versions of Pe Pan Tau (literally, "eight-beat head," consequently, in 8 or 16 beats; Mandarin: Baban Tou) are still used as preludes and postludes (most often as preludes) to folk dances and other important works in western Fujian.

This relation of pobin and lopan to the instrumental repertoire of Fujian is apparently unknown to the Tangerang musicians, who, as I wrote in the commentary, say that the pieces are named for individuals.

Dr. Han also notes that the title Kong Ji Lok (track 1) is, in Mandarin, Kongzi Le and means "Confucius's Happiness."





For an eventual revision of the commentary, I am eager to learn more about the relations between gambang kromong and Chinese music. Any information on the topic will be gratefully received (and acknowledged in the final publication). Please contact me through the Smithsonian Folkways website. -- Philip Yampolsky (1991)

In March 2000 we visited Tangerang for the first time in several years. We were saddened to learn that in the interval several of the musicians heard in this album have died: Oen Oen Hok (died August 1994), Suhaery Mufti, Mama Ong Yasin, Ustari, Inan, and Misna. We are grateful for the music they left with us.

During our March 2000 visit, we heard another term for the lagu lama: lagu dalem, "inside melodies."

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## Transcriptions and Translations

The following transcriptions and translations were made by Philip Yampolsky in consultation with the singers. In a few instances the translations in this supplement include improvements over the versions in the insert published with SF 40057.

In these translations, the standard "filler" words and phrases used to extend the line (e.g., *sayang disayang, ayun diayun, ada, lah, saya*, etc.) are ignored. (An entire line of such fillers is marked in the translations by a dash.) Also, sometimes the individual words are clear, but how they fit into a sentence is not; in such cases (and when not even the words are clear) no translation is attempted. (Unclear lines are indicated by a question mark.)

After the transcriptions, some notes and bibliographical references not found in the published commentary have been added.

### 2. Gula Ganting

Sayang di sayang  
 Hati si nona  
 Sirih lama di laksamana  
 Ai ketok karang ada kolong jembatan  
 Sayang hati si nona  
 Ya sudah lama nona pergi di mana  
 Ya sudah lama memang pergi di mana  
 Hati si jiwa  
 Ya baru sekarang sayang saya lah  
 kelihatan  
 Sayang-sayang, ayun diayun  
 Gula Ganting ini lagunya

Ai gludug ada saya udan lah pagi  
 Sayang hati si nona  
 Kampung Norbek [=Noordwijk] ada ya  
 kebanjiran  
 Ya saya hibuk si nona sama yang tinggi  
 Sayang hati si gunung  
 Ya kalau yang pendek saya ada buat  
 pikiran  
 Ya saya hibuk sama yang tinggi  
 Ayun diayun  
 Mas Nona ada pulang kondangan

### Gula Ganting

--  
 --  
 ?  
 ?  
 --  
 Where have you been for so long  
 Where have you been for so long  
 --  
 Why do turn up only now  
 --  
 Gula Ganting is the name of this song  
 Thunder and rain in the morning  
 --  
 The Norbek [=Noordwijk] neighborhood is  
 flooded  
 I'm interested in the tall one  
 --  
 But I'll keep the short one in mind  
 I'm interested in the tall one  
 Mas Nona returning home after a gathering



### 3. Mas Nona

Tanjung Burung Kampung Melayu  
 Ai selampek pelekat ada jahit Parenggi  
 Sayang disayang  
 Selampek pelekat ada jahit Parenggi  
 Sayang disayang  
 Selampek pelekat ada jahit Parenggi  
 Sayang si nona  
 Ayun Mas Nona disayang  
 Sayang disayang  
 Laksana burung di cabang kayu  
 Saya mau pikat terlalu tinggi

Ayun-ayun Mas Nona  
 Nona diayun pulang kondangan

Sayang disayang  
 Mas Nona ada sayang ini lagunya  
 Mas Nona ada di turi rembang

Kapal belayar pergi di Juda  
 Sampai di Juda ada kecap dan lada  
 Sayang disayang  
 Sampai di Juda saya kecap dan lada  
 Sayang disayang  
 Ya kalau saya ingat saya yang sudah-sudah  
 Sayang disayang  
 Ya capek hati saya mengurut dada

Ayun-ayun Mas Nona  
 Sayang disayang  
 Ya Mas Nona ada di turi rembang  
 Sayang disayang

### 4. Poa Si Li Tan

Ikan kelenger beruntun-runtun  
 Ya ada teruntun sama gurita  
 Saya mendengar  
 Mengatur pantun di dalam pantun  
 Di dalam pantun ada cerita  
 Di dalam pantun ada cerita  
 Sayang si nona

Teruntun lagi sama gurita  
 Gurita masuk di sero rotan

### Mas Nona

From Tanjung Burung to Kampung Melayu  
 A checkered crocheted handkerchief  
 --  
 A checkered crocheted handkerchief  
 --  
 A checkered crocheted handkerchief  
 --  
 --  
 --  
 Like a bird on a branch  
 I want to catch it but it's too high up

--  
 Nona [--] returning home after a gathering

--  
 Mas Nona is the name of this song  
 Mas Nona in Turi Rembang [?]

A sailing ship goes to Juda  
 In Juda eat sauce and pepper  
 --  
 In Juda eat sauce and pepper  
 --  
 If you remember days one by  
 --  
 Your heart gets tired and you wring your  
 hands [lit. rub your chest]

--  
 Mas Nona in Turi Rembang [?]  
 --

### Poa Si Li Tan

Kelenger fish swimming in a line  
 In a line along with an octopus  
 --  
 Arranging pantun within pantun  
 In the pantun there's a story  
 In the pantun there's a story  
 --

In a line along with an octopus  
 The octopus is caught in a trap



Di dalam pantun ada cerita  
Cerita yang ada  
Cerita yang ada Poa Si Li Tan  
Cerita ada Poa Si Li Tan  
Sayang si nona

In the pantun there's a story  
--  
The story is about Li Tan  
The story is about Li Tan  
--

Gurita masuk di sero rotan  
Kerbau hutan seret pedati  
Cerita yang ada Poa Si Li Tan  
Bu Cek Tian ada Bu Cek Tian si Ong Ho  
mati  
Bu Cek Tian ada si Ong Ho mati  
Sayang si nona

The octopus is caught in a trap  
The water buffalo draws a cart  
The story is about Li Tan  
Bu Cek Tian and Ong Ho who died  
Bu Cek Tian and Ong Ho who died  
--

Kerbau hutan seret pedati  
Muat yang rotan ku dengan yang tali  
Ada cerita  
Si Ong Ho mati  
[...] Li Tan  
Lantas Li Tan menuju rari  
Lantas Li Tan menuju rari  
Sayang si nona

A water buffalo draws a cart  
With bundles of rattan in it  
There's a story  
About Ong Ho who died  
[...] Li Tan  
Then Li Tan ran away  
Then Li Tan ran away  
--

### 5. Burung Nori

### Burung Nori

Ke sana ubi ke mari ubi

Sweet potatoes here sweet potatoes there

Ya tidak sama ubi keramat

They're not the same as sacred sweet  
potatoes

Sayang disayang  
Ke sono ubi ke mari ubi

--  
Sweet potatoes here sweet potatoes there

Ya tidak sama memang ada ubi keramat

They're not the same as sacred sweet  
potatoes

Ke sana nabi ke mari nabi  
Tiada sama Nabi Muhammad

Prophets here prophets there  
They're not the same as the Prophet  
Muhammad

Dendang Palembang lah burung nori  
Siang dipandang ada malam dicari

Song of Palembang, the nori bird  
If you see her in the daytime, you'll look for  
her at night

Gludug ada hujannya pagi  
Hujan siang ada lah kebanjiran  
Pikiran hibuk sama yang tinggi  
Yang pendek ada buat pikiran

Thunder and rain in the morning  
Rain in the afternoon.flooding  
I'm interested in the tall one  
But I'll keep the short one in mind

Sayang disayang  
Kalau tidak karena bulan

--  
If it weren't for the moon



Ya tidak tahu nona sari melati  
[*baris yang dilompati?*]  
Ya tidak tahu saya memang si jantung hati

?  
[*skipped line?*]  
?

Sayang disayang  
Kereta api kabarnya murah  
Ya jalan-jalan ada di Tanjung Pura  
Sayang disayang  
Kereta api kabarnya murah  
Ya kita jalan-jalan ada di Tanjung Pura  
Ya kita jantung hati lagi gumbira  
Ya kalau cari kita sampai sana sudara

--  
They say it's cheap to take the train  
Take a trip to Tanjung Pura  
--  
They say it's cheap to take the train  
Take a trip to Tanjung Pura  
We have a good time  
?

Jalan-jalan ke Pintu Besi  
Sayur ketupat sayurnya basi  
Anak sapa putih bersih  
Mau dipinta tiada dikasi

Going to Pintu Besi  
The vegetables and rice spoil  
Who is that, so white and clean  
I asked for him but I didn't get him

Sayang disayang  
Kebo bule beranak bule  
Ya mau dicancang ada di kolong balik  
[*baris yang dilompati?*]  
Mpoknya boleh adiknya boleh

--  
A white water buffalo has a white calf  
? [dicancang = tied]  
[*skipped line?*]  
The older sister's willing, the younger one's  
willing  
Song of Palembang, the nori bird  
The one you saw is the one you look for at  
night

Dendang Plembang memang si burung  
nori  
Yang dipandang sayang malam dicari

## 6. Balo-balo

Ei anak ikan beranak ikan  
Ikan di laut panjang durinya  
Ikan di laut panjang durinya  
Sayang adiknya  
Sanak bukan Om Philip saudara bukan  
saya  
Ei kenapa baik hati budinya

## Balo-balo

The children of fish have more little fish  
Fish in the sea have long bones  
Fish in the sea have long bones  
--  
We're not related in any way  
Why are you so nice to me?

Akang mas balo-balo  
Ei sayur kacang di mana taruh

?  
Where should I put the vegetables and  
peanuts?

Kangmas pagar kedondong  
Pergi ngaji pulangnyanya ngendong

?  
You go off to read the Qur'an but you end  
up sleeping away from home [ngendong  
(Sund.) = sleep overnight]



Ei di atas pisang di bawah jantung

Tuang cuka di kelapain  
Di atas pisang di bawah jantung

Tuang cuka di kelapain  
Sayang adiknya  
Biar dicincang dihukum gantung

Ei kalau suka mau diapain

Akang mas balo-balo...

Anak balang bertiti balang  
Balang bertiti gandarianya

Anak balang bertiti balang  
Balang bertiti gandarianya

Sayang adiknya  
Saya cari seputer alam  
Baru ketemu Om Philip ini dianya

Akang mas balo-balo...

## 7. Stambul Bila

Anjing lah hitam anjing lah hitam aduh  
nama Si Dayung  
Ai mati ditembak mati ditembak Mas Joko  
kena kakinya  
Ya malam Mas Joko rasa diayun  
Seperti ombak aduh banting dirinya

Gunung lah Sindur nona Gunung lah Sindur  
sayang pasir-pasirnya kuning  
Kalau tangguk lah udang tangguk lah udang  
jiwa manis airnya dalam  
Bangun lah tidur nona bangun lah tidur  
sayang kepala-pala pusing  
Aduh habis begadang habis begadang jiwa  
manis sehari semalam

Saya heran sayang-sayang saya heran Mas  
Joko kereta api  
Aduh begitu panjang Mas Joko begitu  
panjang tidak kudanya

The bananas are up above, the banana  
flower is down below

Pour vinegar into a coconut  
The bananas are up above, the banana  
flower is down below

Pour vinegar into a coconut

--

They can chop me up or sentence me to  
hang

If I like you they can't make me stop

?

Grasshoppers in a swarm  
Grasshoppers swarm around a gandaria  
fruit

Grasshoppers in a swarm  
Grasshoppers swarm around a gandaria  
fruit

--

I've looked all around the world  
I've finally found him

?

## Stambul Bila

A black dog called Si Dayung [=The  
Rower?]  
Was shot in the leg and died

At night you feel that you're rocking  
As though tossed on the waves

Mount Sindur [in Kali Prumpung, Bogor] has  
yellow sand  
A shrimp trap deep in the water

You wake up with a headache

From staying up all day and all night

A funny thing about trains

They're so long but there's no horse



Ya Lip saya heran saya heran si jantung  
hati  
Aduh begitu liwat sayang begitu liwat ya Lip  
tidak sudahnya

Anak lah balang nona anak lah balang  
sayang bertiti-titi balang  
Aduh balang bertiti balang bertiti jiwa manis  
sedari gandarianya  
Saya lah cari nona saya lah cari sayang ke  
puter-puter alam  
Aduh belum ketemu belum ketemu jiwa  
manis sama dianya

**8. Onde-onde**

Paling enak lah kue onde  
Ada yang kecil ada yang gede  
Yang bikinnya paling pande  
  
Kue onde matengnya timbul  
Sayang hati si nona  
Kalau sayang onde paling enak lah kue  
onde  
Alah onde onde onde kue onde matengnya  
timbul  
Onde-onde ada lagunya nona (Tarik, Ap)

Kue bolu kue rengginang  
Roti-roti dalam tetampah  
Dari dulu sudah dibilang

Setengah hati sih buat apa

Onde kue onde-onde matengnya timbul

Onde-onde matengnya timbul

Saya heran kereta api  
Begitu panjang tidak kudanya  
Saya heran si jantung hati  
Kalau pandang tidak sudahnya sayang

Paling enak kue onde  
Kue onde ada lagunya  
Onde lah ya onde alah onde onde  
Ada yang kecil ada yang gede

A funny thing about my sweetheart

He walks past again and again

Grasshoppers in a swarm

Grasshoppers swarm around a gandaria  
fruit

I've looked all over the world

But I still haven't found her

**Onde-onde**

Onde cakes taste the best  
There are small ones and big ones  
The people who make them are the  
cleverest

Onde cakes, when they're done they pop up  
--

Onde cakes taste the best  
Onde, onde, onde, onde cakes, when  
they're done they pop up  
Onde-onde is the name of this song (Take  
it, Ap)

Spongecake and rengginang snacks  
All kinds of cakes on a tray  
It's been said since long ago

Half-hearted isn't worth much

Onde cakes, onde-onde, when they're done  
they pop up

Onde-onde, when they're done they pop up

A funny thing about trains  
They're so long but there's no horse  
A funny thing about my sweetheart  
He can't take his eyes off me

Onde cakes taste the best  
Onde cakes is the name of this song  
Onde onde onde  
There are small ones and big ones



Onde-onde matengnya timbul sayang

Satu dua si kuda lari  
 Tidak sama si kuda belang  
 Satu dua gampang dicari  
 Tidak sama biasa orang  
 Satu dua gampang dicari  
 Tidak sama biasa orang  
 Onde onde onde mateng-matengnya timbul

Onde-onde matengnya timbul

Anak ikan beranak ikan  
 Ikan di laut panjang durinya  
 Anak ikan beranak ikan  
 Ikan di laut panjang durinya  
 Sayang disayang hati lah si nona  
 Sanak bukan beraya bukan  
 Kenapa baik tuan manis hati budinya

### 9. Stambul Lama

Ai buang lah batu buang lah batu timbul  
 kelapa  
 Tangguk udang tangguk udang di pasir  
 Mayang  
 Buang satu Om Joko tidak kenapa  
 Kalau saya bujang banyak yang sayang

Saya kira aduh ya Lip kain-kainan  
 Ya Lip kain lah putih kain putih di atas peti  
 Saya kira aduh main-mainan  
 Tidak lah ya tahu tidak lah tahu Om Joko  
 senang di hati (Tarik, Wi Sun)

Kapal belayar menuju Lampung nona  
 Lampung dituju tarik bendera  
 Bukannya saya meninggalkan kampung  
 Saya lah cari sanak saudara

Biruan gajah biruan nona  
 Kalau gajah mati di tanduk kambing  
 Dibuang ada biar lah dibuang  
 Biar lah jadi jiwa lah manis darah daging  
 (Tarik, Bu Wani)

Pukul lah yang gambang aduh sayang  
 pukul gambang si lima-lima

Onde-onde, when they're done they pop up

There are a few horses running around  
 They're not the same as a spotted horse  
 There are one or two who are easy to find  
 They're not the same as ordinary people  
 There are one or two who are easy to find  
 They're not the same as ordinary people  
 Onde onde onde, when they're done they  
 pop up

Onde onde, when they're done they pop up

The children of fish have more little fish  
 Fish in the sea have long bones  
 The children of fish have more little fish  
 Fish in the sea have long bones

--  
 We're not related in any way  
 Why are you so nice to me?

### Stambul Lama (Old Stambul)

Throw away a stone you'll get a coconut

A shrimp trap in Pasir Mayang

Throw one away, it doesn't matter  
 When I was single there were many who  
 liked me

I thought it was [false cloth?]  
 A white cloth on top of a box  
 I thought you were just playing around  
 I didn't realize you really liked me (Take it,  
 Wi Sun)

A ship sailing to Lampung  
 Heading for Lampung, the sails are set  
 It's not that I'm leaving home  
 I'm looking for my relatives

?

An elephant killed by a goat's horn  
 Throw it away, let it go  
 ? (Take it, Bu Wani)

Play the gambang with five keys





Cabut rumput kena tanahnya sayang cabut  
lah yang rumput aduh lah sayang kena  
tanahnya  
Kalau hatinya bimbang aduh sayang  
hatinya bimbang saya sama-sama si Anu  
Kalau mau lah yang disebut sayang mau  
lah yang disebut aduh lah sayang siapa  
namanya

Anak lah upas nona anak lah upas jiwa  
manis nama Rohayah  
Kalau anak lah kucing anak lah kucing jiwa  
manis banting dirinya  
Sudah dilepas nona sudah dilepas di badan  
saya  
Kalau masing lah ya lah masing masing lah  
masing jiwa manis bawa dirinya

If you pull up the grass you'll feel the ground

Your heart's anxious about that guy

You want to know what his name is

An officer's daughter named Rohayah

A kitten jumping about

You have set yourself free from me

We will each go our own way