

DEVELOPING A COMPOSITIONAL STYLE INTERGRATING  
*PATAH LAGU MELAYU* AND A WESTERN APPROACH  
TO MUSIC COMPOSITION

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## ABSTRACT

The author is a Malay student of music composition who researched his personal development as a composer by bringing together the traditions of his own Malay culture and traditions of Western composition techniques with his personal philosophical world-view. To represent the Malay-ness of his voice, the author examined and identified examples of *patah lagu Melayu*, the ornamentation employed in *lagu asli*, a type of Malay syncretic music. The examples of *patah lagu Melayu* were uncovered through score analysis, aural analysis and personal one-to-one interviews. The author's philosophical world-view is Muslim. The daily practice of being a Muslim, which acknowledges a power greater than him, Allah S.W.T, is a guiding force in the author's life. To grow the author's artistic voice, the identified elements of the *patah lagu Melayu* and the sacred text of Islam were then interpreted and embedded into five new music compositions: *Pujian*, *Dhikr Asli*, *Asli Row*, *Saxoasli* and *Takdir*. These pieces harness many of the Malay and Muslim characteristics, whilst at the same time using Western compositional techniques to produce a neoteric music. The characteristics of Malay and Islamic philosophies can be clearly heard in the composition created. A collection of audio files and hard data in written form is part of the research findings. The author's compositional voice has evolved and expanded as an outcome of the research.





## MEMPERKEMBANGKAN GAYA KOMPOSISI DENGAN MENGINTEGRASIKAN PATAH LAGU MELAYU DAN TEKNIK KOMPOSISI BARAT DI DALAM KOMPOSISI MUZIK

### ABSTRAK

Penulis adalah mahasiswa Melayu di dalam bidang komposisi muzik yang meneliti perkembangan peribadinya sebagai komposer dengan menyatukan tradisi budaya Melayu dengan teknik komposisi Barat serta pandangannya terhadap falsafah dunia. Untuk menzahirkan ciri-ciri kemelayuan di dalam suara hati penulis, beliau telah mengkaji dan mengenal pasti contoh-contoh patah lagu Melayu iaitu ornamen yang digunakan di dalam lagu asli, yang dikategorikan sebagai muzik sinkretik Melayu. Contoh patah lagu Melayu diperolehi melalui analisis skor dan pendengaran terhadap lagu-lagu Melayu asli dan wawancara secara individu. Pandangan falsafah penulis adalah melalui kacamata seorang Muslim. Hal ini adalah kerana amalan harian penulis sebagai seorang Muslim yang mengakui bahawa tiada tuhan yang maha berkuasa melainkan Allah S.W.T telah menjadi asas petunjuk di dalam setiap perbuatan penulis. Begitu juga apabila penulis ingin berkarya, penggunaan teks suci Islam bersama elemen patah lagu Melayu yang dikenal pasti telah digarapkan semula untuk menghasilkan lima komposisi muzik baru: Pujian, Dhikr Asli, Asli Row, Saxoasli dan Takdir. Karya ini menampilkan karektor Melayu dan Muslim dengan menggunakan teknik komposisi dari Barat. Ciri-ciri seni muzik Melayu dan falsafah Islam jelas kedengaran di dalam komposisi yang dihasilkan. Dapatan penyelidikan terdiri daripada koleksi audio dan data dalam bentuk penulisan. Implikasi kajian ini, kemahiran penulis untuk mengubah karya-karya kreatif telah berkembang dan berevolusi.



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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION



#### 1.1 Introduction

This research arose from the author's exploration of his personal compositional voice and his musical, philosophical, cultural and religious background. The author is a jazz saxophonist and composer. The starting point of the research was the existing jazz expression of his musical voice. The original intent was to use patah lagu Melayu found in lagu asli music in the creation of new music with a jazz emphasis. However, the nature of the research led the researcher in another direction. The author's philosophy deemed this to be his responding to the will of Allah SWT. In this research project, the author researched and identified examples of patah lagu Melayu, which were then used as a main element in the creating of the author's compositions.



It was hoped that each of the compositions would carry the sound and flavor of the Malay nuance. This Malay musical element, the patah lagu Melayu, would be extensively used to explore the conventional and unconventional Western composition theories and styles, such as choral writing (with traditional cadential points, four and five-part harmony and Western voice-leading), serialistic and atonal techniques and music of indeterminacy.

The main inspiration for all the author's composition in the research comes from genre lagu asli, specifically patah lagu Melayu. Lagu asli has existed for a long time. It has been classified as Malaysian syncretic music because the music elements contained in the Malay traditional songs already existed in the music of other cultures, such as the Portuguese, Arabic, India and European—all of whom have colonized Malaysia at some time (Mastusky, 2003). Other rhythms belonging to Malay syncretic music are *inang*, *masri*, *joget*, *ghazal*, *zapin* and *keroncong* (Ibid, 2003). When the listener hears Malay music, though it contains elements and influences from other cultures, as a syncretic art form, it has its own individuality that is readily identifiable as Malay.

In summary, lagu asli have melodies filled with melismatic decorations. Malay traditional musicians identify these elements with the terms patah lagu Melayu or *bunga melodi*. Lagu asli employs Western scales such as diatonic major and minor, *maqams* (the Arabic word for scale) from Arabic and Persian influences and those of Asia such as the Chinese pentatonic scale.



The rhythms used to accompany lagu asli are called rentak asli. Just as a jazz musician knows the difference between various jazz styles, so do Malay traditional performers of lagu asli know that a rentak asli groove is different from various other traditional rhythms, such as inang, masri, joget, keroncong and others. These rhythms are performed on membranophones and idiophones such as *rebana* (hand-held one-faced drum) and gong (Mastusky, 2003).

These multiple influences and elements that are evident in lagu asli music are indicative of its continual evolution; a growth that ensures the ongoing life of the music. Therefore, it is appropriate for the author to contribute to this evolving expression of Malay culture.



which is another mix in the complexity of the composer's voice. This is an Abrahamic Arabic influence, descending through the Prophet Muhammad, 'Peace be upon Him' (PBUH). This guiding philosophy affects all aspects of the author's life: how he sees reality, how he 'walks in the world' and how he chooses to express himself, which in this research is through music. This musical statement and communication is deemed to be an expression of personal spirituality.

Therefore, he desires his music compositions to not only express lagu asli elements and recent Western music theory breakthroughs, but also the mystical spirituality of the teachings in Islam. The author's personal self-discipline and daily practice comes to the fore in the music, through the integration of the Malay Muslim





practice of sacred chanting (dhikr) after the daily prayer and praise of Allah SWT that occurs in the Mosque and in the author's personal devotions, as well as the author's *sunnah* of the Nabi Muhammad PBUH. This metaphysical component of the research was not initially intended but surfaced as the research unfolded and it became more apparent that this was an integral part of his artistic voice.

## 1.2 Definition of Terms

Several Malay terms cannot be translated into the English language such as patah lagu Melayu, rentak asli, lagu asli and dhikr, or need clarification such as *Malay asli music*. In Malay culture, 'lagu melayu asli' refers to all Malay syncretic music.

However, in this research, the author uses the term lagu asli, which contains a style of rhythmic pattern called rentak asli.

### 1.2.1 Malay Asli Music

*Malay asli music* refers to the traditional Malay syncretic music that contains elements of classical Western music, Malay folk music, Arabic, Persian, Indian and Chinese music. According to Matusky and Tan:

Syncretic music is a combination among classic music and folk music as well as external elements such as Arab, Persian, India, China and Western. This



music has evolved through various stages of presentation by the ‘joget’ dancers and members of the ‘bangsawan’ (aristocracy) and also through the mass media. The genre consists of vocal music, dance music and music for stage (theatre) that employs rhythms derivative of Malay asli music and the ‘’, ‘joget’, ‘ghazal’, ‘dondang sayang’, ‘zapin’ and ‘keroncong’ are all present in the genre in one guise or another (1997, p.3).

### 1.2.2 Patah Lagu Melayu

*Patah lagu Melayu* refers to a style of ornamentation employed by Malay traditional musicians (Example 1). This is discussed further in Chapter 5.

*Example 1.1.* A typical ornamentation around the principal notes of a melody.

The uniqueness of lagu asli music lies in the beauty of its melismatic melody and the use of various ornamentations. In the Malay language, the term for these decorative melodies is known as patah lagu Melayu, *bunga-bunga melodi*, *lenggok melayu*, *grenek* and among others. There is no universally agreed upon term for this form of melodic decoration. The use of the terms patah lagu Melayu, *bunga-bunga melodi* and *lenggok melayu* is subject to the location of the traditional elders, the living heritage of Malay asli music. It differs from place to place. Therefore, the

author uses the term patah lagu Melayu to represent the entire tradition of melodic decoration.

### 1.2.3 Lagu Asli

*Lagu asli* is one of the sub-styles within the greater genre of Malay syncretic music. It has its own rhythmic pattern called rentak asli. In this document, every time the author refers to lagu asli he is referring to the rentak asli version of this style of music.

### 1.2.4 Rentak Asli

*Rentak asli* is one of the rhythmic patterns that occur in lagu asli music. The rhythm generally employs a pattern of eight (8) beats in a slow tempo (crotchet equals 50 – 60 beats per minute). When a rentak asli is performed, only the first statement of the first bar and first, second and third beats of the second bar are predetermined (Examples 2). All else is usually improvised (Examples 3). (Matusky, P., 1997, p.331)

Example 1.2 shows musical notation for a rentak asli pattern. It consists of two systems, each with a Rebana part (top staff) and a Gong part (bottom staff). The time signature is 4/4. The first system shows the first bar of the pattern, with a 'tak' note on the first beat and a 'dung' note on the second. The second bar has notes on the first, second, and third beats. The second system shows a triplet of notes above the first bar and continues the pattern in the second bar.

Example 1.2. A rentak asli pattern performed on a rebana, a one-skin membranophone.



Example 1.3. A transcription of a typical improvisation with an interlocking polyrhythm performed by rebana players

### 1.2.5 Dhikr

According to the Oxford Dictionary, *Dhikr* is a form of devotional chant, chiefly associated with Sufism, in which the worshipper is absorbed in the rhythmic repetition of God’s name and attributes”. (Oxford Dictionary, 2016) In the author’s

experience, Dhikr is a simple repetitive devotional chant performed both as individual ritual meditation and as a congregational ritual.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS RESEARCH

#### 2.1 The Significance of this Research

The significance of this research is the development of the artistic voice of the composer through a combination of:

- 1) the use of patah lagu Melayu ornamentation.
- 2) the use of Western music theory as applied to the craft of composition.
- 3) the Malay spirituality of the traditions of Islam.



The research questions that arose are:

- 1) How much can patah lagu Melayu be expanded and developed? Will it still be recognised as patah lagu Melayu?
- 2) How does Western theory help develop patah lagu Melayu?
- 3) How does a Malay Muslim compose with Western theory and philosophy while retaining his identity and worldview?

The practice-led method will be used in researching these three criteria stated above. Practice-led method is also known as action research where the author will keep on improvising and creating new ways in composing a piece. The hope is that through this practice-based and practice-led pathway of discovery, the author would create new music that contains a synthesis of the aforementioned influences.

Combining Malay and Western theories rarely found in Malay music is important because by integrating and experimenting with these concepts, it 'breathes new life' into Malay music. This new music would be understood to be a form of communication, a form of understanding and as such it represents new comprehension, a new truth—a contribution to the 'wealth of knowledge'.

Music is research ... Writing music is research. Practice-based and practice-led inquiry brings new understanding and ways of perceiving the world. New comprehensions are made, fresh insights uncovered. (Burrell, 2013, p. 44)

In current popular Malaysian music, there is no or little evidence of the influence of Malay Asli ornamentation because of the influence of popular culture



through the media (Shahanum, 2013). There is a popular music genre referred to as ethnic creative which does exhibit some Malay Asli elements, but this research project is endeavouring to create art music, not popular music. This is important because this research will not only save the Malay Asli elements, but it will also promote the element to be instilled into current popular Malaysian music. This will also make other composers to fully understand the elements of Malay Asli in their composition and they can also apply this into their popular music or art music.

Through the review and readings of the literature surrounding Malay asli music and the observations made through the analysis of music recordings and aural data, the author has concluded that the Malaysian music industry uses very little lagu asli elements in their works. Tan S.B. (1997) states;

Paradoxically, while the new *ronggeng* becomes national, the folk form is fast disappearing. Today, new styles of recorded ronggeng music, *Irama Malaysia*, and other types of Malay pop music are more popular at weddings and social functions. The predicament of the performers is indicative of the state of the folk ronggeng. Many of the veteran ronggeng musicians are old. They find it difficult to survive on live performances and have had to find other means of earning a living. (p. 307)

During the course of this research, it was found that there was not much literature or documentation about patah lagu Melayu, so the author took this



opportunity to collect examples of and make transcriptions of patah lagu Melayu in the lagu asli music. These are given in the appendices.

By combining the techniques of Western music composition with patah lagu Melayu, the author hoped to be able to give new impetus to the current usage of patah lagu Melayu in music composition. It was hoped that the research would show that this combination allowed for the patah lagu Melayu elements to be used in new ways:

- 1) As a motive from which a greater work was developed using Western techniques.
- 2) As the thematic material in a Western contrapuntal texture.
- 3) As a serialistic motive superimposed over a 12-tone row.
- 4) As melodic fragments in a work of chance and indeterminacy.



Another unique aspect of the research is the incorporation and usage of Malay Islamic lyrics in the creation of new Art music. The use of Malay language in delivering the message of Dhikr or *Istigfar* (the practice of seeking forgiveness from Allah S.W.T) is intended to provide an understanding that the general public would comprehend. The usage of Malay Islamic text has been practiced in the Malaysian popular music industry, such as the popular vocal *nasyid* groups Raihan, Rabbani and Hijjaz and the moving soloist Hafiz Hamidun. However, the focus of this research project is to create new art music, as opposed to popular music.





## CHAPTER 3

### LITERATURE REVIEW



#### 3.1 Literature Review

In this literature review, the author discusses patah lagu Melayu, the Western approach to art music composition and the metaphysical nature of the author's Malayness.

#### 3.2 Patah Lagu Melayu

There are a variety of music genres in Malaysian traditional music. It can be categorized to five main genres: classical music, folk music, syncretic music, popular



music and contemporary art music. (Matusky, 1997, p.2). Malaysian traditional music has been mixed with elements from outside of the Malay culture. Among the well-known genres in Malay syncretic music are *asli*, *inang*, *zapin*, *masri* and *joget*. Each of these genres is differentiated by its own rhythmic percussion pattern. In this study, the author explores the scope of the review of rentak asli, a genre within Malay syncretic music that is characterised by its own rhythmic pattern.

According to Mohd Nasir Hashim (2012), Malay asli music is a unique art-form. It has contributed to the raising of the cultural and intellectual prestige of the Malay culture. The uniqueness is a result of a number of elements from foreign cultures such as Europe, Eastern Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Malay asli music can therefore be classified as syncretic or hybrid music.

Malay asli music is a syncretic or hybrid music genre which is enriched with fine cultural qualities that portray a strong identity of the Malays; this includes the lifestyle and daily activities of the community. The music is a strong hybrid identity in terms of both harmony and melody. The somewhat melancholic melody utilizes a lot of ornamentation in each song; the placement of harmony (chord progression) as well as the organized use of melodic and harmonic minor is also an important feature. All these portray a strong Malay identity. (Hashim, Ying, & Chiat, 2012, p. 2)

According to Azura (2014), lagu asli melodies are usually performed with the addition of many ornamentations and melismas (Azura, 2014, p. 48). Performers are



expected to render these in a humble and sincere manner with a certain softness of heart and spiritual perspective. They are not adding the ornamentation to draw attention to them so much as to draw attention to the melodic line. Therefore, the role of the ornamentation is very important: To accurately interpret the style of lagu asli, because the music requires this ornamentation. The characteristics of each lagu asli are reflected in the choice of ornamentation. Trills, turns, mordents, sequences, appoggiaturas, glissandos and subtle rhythmic alterations to the duration of notes through augmentation and diminution are common, and the performers of lagu asli never miss an opportunity to add these to their renditions.

Not only that, according to other opinion, the ornamental devices mentioned above are especially favoured where there are long notes, at the end of a phrase and at



cadential points. (Zaba, N., Jamil, N., Salleh, S. S. & Rahman, N. A. (2011).

Singing Malay asli music requires the singer to perform ornamentation or known as patah lagu Melayu at every central notes (or any suitable longer notes) and end of the cadence. However, patah lagu Melayu is not indicated in *asli* music, *Seri Mersing*, thus every performer has different styles of improvising the patah lagu Melayu (p. 46).

According to Matusky, the use of ornamentation in lagu asli, (using various terminology such as patah lagu Melayu, *bunga melodi*, *lenggok* and flavouring a song) produces a distinctive character. Even the terms used are different among



musicians, but it shares the same sound and approach in using the ornamentation. Based on the characteristics, listeners will identify that it is a lagu asli.

In the lagu asli, melody or cadence pattern, called the unique patah lagu Melayu is found. When someone listening to this melodic pattern, it will realise that the song is an Asli song. Every player will improvise patah lagu Melayu with different cadence and *bunga*. (Matusky, 1997, p. 311)

*[Translation]*

The variety of ornamentation should be realised by a skilled musician or singer and get specific guidance from an elder, more experienced musician. It requires creativity for a musician to perform an improvised version of patah lagu Melayu to

suit the song's phrasing.

Patah lagu Melayu has its own ways of being identified by listeners. Anyone who listens to patah lagu Melayu can easily identify all the special characteristics of a lagu asli. Patah lagu Melayu is unique and it can be considered as a symbol or identity of a lagu asli; anyone who hears patah lagu Melayu will recognize that it is Malay asli music (Matusky, 1997). Because of these characteristics, singers or musicians must be careful to improvise it in the right way either in places or phrases that are suitable and appropriate with the selected patah lagu Melayu.

There are many other names of styles of ornamentation in Malay asli music. Both Malay and Indonesian music practice the decoration or ornamentation style on



the same melody found in Malay asli music. According to a study done by Rizaldi (2010), a lecturer from Institut Seni Indonesia, he found that there were differences in the terminology used by musicians from Indonesia and Malaysia. In the Indonesian language, the term for ornaments used in Malay music in Deli (Medan) is *grenek* and *cengkok*. There is also *gamat* music which comes from Malay Minangkabau and uses terms like *garinyak* and *variasi*. However, Rizaldi could not find a term that is often used in Malaysia to replace the ornament. Rizaldi (2010) also says:

Giving name to a decorative tone is played or sung is not so important among these music players. They often give the name is so common as the *bunga melodi* which will provide an understanding that the term, the musicians will be making decorations to embellish a melody. (para. 4)



Appropriate use of ornamentation, the choice of the right rhythm percussion patterns and many more questions are debated and are still in dispute among Malay asli music musicians and researchers of ethnomusicology who defend the character of the lagu asli. Mohd Nasir Hashim in his writings (2012) states, “These individuals has [sic] their own opinion and interpretation in trying to decide which version or variation is authentic or asli” and Hashim points out that Herzog (1950, p. 1034) says: “The creative process is not one begun and finished by a single individual; it is spread over many individuals and generations. And it never comes to an end as long as the tradition is alive” (2012, p. 2). It shows that the change is a habit because it involves the process or experience of the individual against the understanding of a culture. How to express the individual’s understanding of the music lies in the tastes and



desires of the performer as long as the individual is still using the elements contained in a culture. “Every culture throughout history has invented its own unique approach to ‘dressing up’ melodies” (Lieberman, 2002. p. 78). This makes available a variety of names for an ornamentation styles. For example, Indian music has names for its ornamentation, like ‘gamakas’. These ornamentations adds diversity to the music, and this allows the musician or singer to show their musicality. Each culture has created something valuable in shaping the character of the music of that culture. Lieberman states,

In some world styles, each time you play the tune or melodic line, the essence of the improvisation is created by suffusing the melody with new meaning and articulation through variations in the ornamentation. ... These might include

the placement of rests and accents, scale and interval preference, instrumentation and structural attributes. However the true character of the music is also shaped by the effect of note-to-note transitions, and even – in some cases- how the notes are held. (Ibid)

### 3.3 Western Approaches to Music Composition

In music, style refers to a characteristic way of using melody, rhythm, tone color, dynamics, harmony, texture and form. The particular way these elements are combined can be result in a total sound that’s distinctive or unique. We speak of the musical style of and individual composer, a group of



composers, a country or a particular period in history. Compositions created in the same geographical area or around the same time are often similar in style, but individuals using the same musical vocabulary can create a personal manner of expression. (Kamien, 2011, p. 53)

By definition, musical composition is an artistic pattern of sound that incorporates instrumental and or vocal tones in a structured and continuous manner. Western composition is generally considered to have existed since the introduction of the Western musical notation system. Kamien (2011) enlightens us to the fact that Music is probably as old as the human race itself” and goes on to say that it was the introduction of notation that changed the nature of music from a purely performed art into a documented art-form, and this was the beginning of the craft of composition which introduced harmony and counterpoint. “Through the power of notation, music created over 1,000 years ago can come alive today. (Ibid. p. 53)

The Western world has been documenting and producing musical theories, starting from the basic theory of music, instrumental techniques, music technology, instrument making, to the theory on the business of music and the theory of composition. In the Western compositional approach, it is the culture of the West to do research in order to produce newer theories that would be usable by the masses.

Pitch and rhythm are found in all aspects of Western music and permeates their cultures. This can be seen in the words of Duckworth (2007) states:



The key to reading and writing Western music is to realize that the written music ... focuses on and encodes two major elements: pitch, which is the basis of melody and harmony; and duration, through which the rhythm flows. While a lot of additional information is given in music notation, these two elements – rhythm and pitch is the primary one. (p. 21).

In his introduction, Duckworth states,

... music theory is the planned and systematic study of how a particular types of music works, in our case, tonal music. But this is equally true whether we are talking about Western European art music, American popular music, various styles of electronic music, or music from cultures such as Bali, Morocco, or Japan. As mentioned earlier, no matter what type of music is being studied, basic music theory examines the various parts, or elements, of the music- rhythm, melody, timbre, harmony, texture, form- and the ways in which these individual elements combine and interact to create a piece of music within a particular style. (Ibid. p. xxii)

Characteristics of music have evolved from over time, for example from the Renaissance to 20<sup>th</sup> Century eras. Also, in an individual, while the composer is still young, the music is different when they are matured in both aging and musicality. Music in history evolved from a tonal center or instruments playing traditional methods to music that has a chromaticism, atonality, new techniques of playing the instruments and exploration of sound and timbre of the instruments.

Morgan (1991) said that Schoenberg is one of the major composers who had been part of the late Romantic Era. He created his own style in the first fifty years of the new century. Schoenberg is also the most defining composer who had applied the late nineteenth century chromaticism in his compositions. He had decided to break the rules and abandon the tonal and harmonic convention that had been done before nineteenth-century Western music. Schoenberg explored a wide range of melody and harmony using a 12-tone matrix that can be used in multiple ways and sounding as structured and involving certain disciplines. Composers now can choose conventional theories for experimenting with new concepts of 20<sup>th</sup>-century practices.

Morgan (1991) also said that Schoenberg believed in less constricting methods of composition, but still retained the elements of older composition techniques. This means the new compositions had the chromatic elements while retaining the chords structures of the classical music. Schoenberg had success in changing and developing a system of chromatic scale that had succeeded in combining the dissonance melody and chordal structure. He believed that with this approach, composers would have a space for experimentation and exploration of this system with the Western traditional values and approach such as tonal harmony and diatonic scale. These values and approaches could be extended into other forms.

Ackerman and Denver (2009) said a lot of the 20<sup>th</sup> century experienced an evolving phase from conventional techniques of composition to new musical composition practices. They manipulated the basic concept of the Western music

theories that they had learned from the conservatoire and the previous composers into the newer musical theories derived from the culture of the 1940s. An example can be seen that has been stated by Ackerman and Denver (2009) that Berg had craftily combined the elements of romantic music with atonal and 12-tone compositions.

Compared to Schoenberg 12-tone system and Webern's *Klangfarbenmelodie*, Berg's extreme workmanship and attention to detail had proven that these techniques could be use as expressive tools (Ackerman & Denver, 2009, p. 105). The disappearance of the tonal center had given impact on harmony and melodic movement with the use of all chromatic pitches.

Another approach that had been developed in 20<sup>th</sup>-century music is extended techniques of instruments such as plucking strings inside the piano, preparing the piano, multiphonic techniques for wind instruments and other new timbres for instruments such as key-clicks on the saxophone or blowing air without sound. Ackerman and Denver (2009) explains:

Crumb is best known for his idiosyncratic compositional style, which features timbral effects produced by playing instruments or singing in a non-traditional manner. Despite the incorporation of exotic scales, unmetered rhythms, and other twentieth century practices, his music is familiar and deeply expressive. (p. 322)

A lot of 20<sup>th</sup>-century music used the approach of nontraditional sounds played by the instruments inspired by nature, describing specific feelings or a situation. Ackerman and Denver (2009) explains:

Cage's music is meant to challenge traditional aesthetic values; in contrast, Crumb uses nontraditional sounds and effects as means to express such extra musical concepts as cyclical conceptions of time, nature, life death, the human condition, and supernatural events. Although Crumb incorporates radically new sounds, these are meant to recall those heard before, both in music and nature. (p. 324)

Morgan (1991, p. 378) stated that these new techniques enabled the composers to experiment with newer notation such as graphic notation. Traditional notation had evolved into graphic notation, in which every composer has a choice to create symbols used only in their compositions. Graphic notation is one-way composers imagined a way that indeterminacy could be notated. The shape of the notation itself could explain the piece's intention, and some composers intentionally connected the graphic scores with the title of the piece.

Music now has been affected by technology, and is constantly developing or evolving. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as technology has advanced, the media has played a role this evolution. It is no longer necessary to visit Africa to know or learn the character of African music, but it can be accessed using only the Internet and smartphones to access information. It gives the ability to current composers to experiment with

various elements or characters from different musical regions. In this study, the author combines patah lagu Melayu with the theory of Western composition to enable the authors to experiment and explore to produce works that sound new.

### 3.4 Spirituality in the Author's Voice

The author's supervisor discussed author's worldview. He explained that the author's worldview is important because it would influence every action of the author. This indirectly would impact the pieces created. The music would contain views that align with a Malay Islamic understanding of reality because the author is a Muslim and would like to do something that would give a contribution to Islam.

The author hoped that Allah SWT would accept his composition and arts as a kind of submission to Allah SWT with the knowledge that had been given by Him. This composition fits the practices of a Muslim in terms of the lyrics contain praises to Allah SWT which also provides a variety of religious songs in Malaysia. The author also wants to compose a piece that is aligned with the Islamic way of life. The daily life of a Muslim must be filled with the practices that can bring them nearer to their creator Allah SWT. Every practice must be based on the laws of the Quran and Hadith that was revealed by the Prophet Muhammad PBUH. Among the practices preferred by Allah SWT is the reciting of the dhikr, which are sentences in Arabic used by Muslims to remember, to praise, to practice thanksgiving, and to give praises to the greatness of Allah SWT for the blessings He has bestowed upon mankind. As a



Muslim, everyone must practice living a right life, a life that always keeps him or her from doing wrong, and, more importantly, obeying all His commands and avoiding wickedness. The following Quranic verses are taken from the book of Muntakab Ahadith by Maulana Muhammad Yusuf Kandhalavi (Rah) (2014.)

Al-Quran verse:

Allah SWT said to His Prophet PBUH: So, remember the name of your Sustainer, and devote yourself to him with complete devotion..”

(Al-Muzzammil: 8) (p. 297)

Allah SWT says : Verily, in the remembrance of Allah SWT hearts do find peace and satisfaction. (Ar-Ra’d: 28) (p. 297)



Allah SWT says: O you who believe! Remember Allah SWT with much remembrance. And glorify His praises in the morning and in the evening.”

(al-Ahzab: 41-42) (p. 299)

As a writer who adheres to the values of Islam, the author is not alone in producing works that have religious elements. Many musicians have woven spiritual mysticism and beliefs into their music. Palestrina, Bach, Schumann, Mendelssohn, as well as Cage, Pärt, and Coltrane. These composers have inspired jazz musicians such as John McLaughlin, Dave Liebman and Jan Garbarek.





## CHAPTER 4

### METHODOLOGY AND CREATIVE PROCESS



#### 4.1 Methodology

The methodology for this research is primarily qualitative, from a practice-based and practice-led position. There are also philosophical approaches that generally apply to the author's composition process. This method is rarely used when it comes to conduct a research in composition of music.

Philosophically, the author is post-positivist and leans more towards the constructivist view of reality. Constructivism sees human learning at comprehension and insight from experiences and the interrelatedness of things, people and matters (Whisker, 2008 p. 69). The author prefers a more freestyle method and does not



follow things according to its natural behaviour. The author prefers to relate the pieces produced to constructivism. For example, what the author will compose will not exactly sound like a lagu asli. The author prefers to experiment more on all the available options when given the chance and resources. The author does not share the same view with John Cage and the author is obliged to the author's religion.

The methodology differs from a positivist approach, in which all things, including human behaviour, are measurable and can be trusted to conform to fixed laws. Positivism is identified with empirical and naturalistic concepts of knowledge (Ibid).

Because of the author's Muslim stance, elements of structuralism also apply, where knowledge is historically and socially handed down and is interpreted through laws, language and politics. The author sees the meaning of Islam as informing human activity, thinking and interpretations of perceived reality. For example, everything is according to Allah SWT's will and the author must follow what has been taught by Islam and not to deviate from the true purpose of life.

#### **4.1.1 Practice-led Research**

Practice-led research is "based on or rooted in practice, ... where practice plays a lead role in the investigating process ... experiments are frame ... [to] investigate how practice can be improved." (Niedderer and Roworth-Stokes, 2007). In practice-led

research, the practice of the investigation leads the researcher into new territory (Niedderer and Roworth-Stokes, 2007). Through trial and error, experimentation and repetition, the process of the investigation directs the research. In this investigation, the term refers to the way the author practices the craft of music composition and how this practice leads the author into new skills and comprehension (Burrell, 2013, p. 131). It is closely aligned with practice-based research; the difference being that practice-based research results in a product or artefact. In the author's case, this is the advancement of author's skills as a practicing composer.

The author used autoethnography in this research. Autoethnography is one of the approaches in qualitative research. According to Adams and Holman Jones (2008), "A researcher uses tenets of *autobiography* and *ethnography* to *do* and *write* autoethnography. Thus, as a method, autoethnography is both process and product."

The author uses himself as the subjects and his autobiography and ethnology combined. The author uses his own ethnicity, which is Malay Muslim, in this research. Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2010) say that "[a]utoethnographers recognize the innumerable ways personal experience influences the research process." This can be related to the author's own experience. The author felt that the traditional music of his own culture, which is the Malay culture, was disappearing. Therefore, the author researched traditional Malay music by experimenting with it using a contemporary Western approach. This is to make Malay music to thrive in the current music age and to the next generation. The author also applied his Islamic beliefs in composing his creative works so that his identity as a Muslim could also be heard in his compositions.



Haseman (2006, p. 4) emphasizes the other side of the practice-led component. This research is “intrinsically experiential and comes to the fore where the researcher creates new artistic form for performance”. Problems arose from the creation of one aspect of the work, which led to a search for solutions, which led the music and the author into new areas of endeavour. Table 1 shows the process and the steps taken for the author to develop his compositional style from *Pujian* to *Takdir*. As seen in Table 4.1, the author uses new techniques of composition in each piece, starting with choral writing, then moving to quartal chord harmony, 12-tone matrix, cluster chords and indeterminacy. The additional characteristics of each piece gradually moves the asli sound further from the original use. The author’s first piece *Pujian* had evolved to another sound when the patah lagu Melayu fused with indeterminacy in *Takdir*. Generally, the characteristics of *Pujian* is tonal, where the listener still can hear the diatonic chord progression and the major or minor scale. This tonal structure was demolished when serialism and indeterminacy took over as the elements for the new creative works.



Table 4.1.

*Chart of the main elements in the author's compositional voice: The use of patah lagu Melayu, Western theory and Islamic aspects.*

Title	Elements of Composition
<i>Pujian</i>	Patah lagu Melayu and rentak asli played by the string section. Western theory of melodic development, choral writing, string writing, counterpoint, Jazz harmony and Rondo Form. <i>Dhikr</i> and prayer of repentant (Istigfar) with text translation from Arabic to Malay language.
<i>Dhikr Asli</i>	Patah lagu Melayu and Asli rhythm played by piano. Quartal chord harmony, voicing of intervals of 6ths in piano, syncopated rhythm, asymmetrical meter (10/8) and Rondo form. The use of <i>Dhikr</i> from Hadith Rasullullah PBUH taken from the book of Muntakab Ahadith.
<i>Asli Row</i>	Patah lagu Melayu and Asli rhythm. Free Serialism, 12-tone matrix, sub-sets, inverted tetrachords and through composed form. Superimposed the script of Allah SWT. (read right to left) over a 12-tone matrix.
<i>Saxoasli</i>	Patah lagu Melayu and Asli rhythm. Free Serialism, 12-tone matrix, sub-sets, inverted tetrachords and through composed form. Superimposed the script of Allah SWT. (read right to left) over a 12-tone matrix.
<i>Takdir</i>	Patah lagu Melayu and Lagu Asli phrasing. Indeterminacy, graphic score, new notation, extended saxophone and saxophone quintet techniques. Concept of faith in Islam.

#### 4.1.2 Practice-based Research

The research is also practice-based. Burrell (2013, p. 31) argues that the score is a product and therefore the composing is practice-based because it results in an artefact.

Burrell, as a composer, “associates a new artistic form with the production of a music



score”. He goes on to state that “like a statue, painting or novel; it exists of its own ... [it is] a map of the procedures utilized, a method record book”.

The compositions are in the form of a physical score and recording of all the performances. All the pieces are considered as an artefact and it is also the result of a practice-led process. Therefore, this research is also considered as a practice-based research. In short, because the act of composition exists in documented form it can be deconstructed, analysed, questioned and critiqued, like a document that might be written in a language or in mathematical equations. The analyst would have to be a specialist.

The author came up with the compositions by researching what is patah lagu Melayu and used it as the main element in all the author’s compositions. The author also applied Western theory using concepts from the Renaissance period up until the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The author produced five different compositions: *Pujian*, *Dhikr Asli*, *Asli Row*, *Saxoasli* and *Takdir*. The sequences of the periods of Western music can be heard in the compositions. For example, *Pujian* has more Renaissance characteristics. *Dhikr Asli* has more late 19<sup>th</sup> century characteristics. It progressed up to the characteristics of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in *Takdir*.





## 4.2 The Creative Process

The focus of this research project is to bring together Malay musical elements and a contemporary Western composition approach. To fulfil the requirements of this research project, the author had to produce thirty minutes of new music composition. In the composition, the Western theory was used as a guideline to compose and experiment with patah lagu Melayu. In the course of creating and researching towards the act of composing, the author gained much knowledge and skills from the various compositional methods.

The author's goal was to develop a new artistic voice. The research looked into combining Malay music traditions of patah lagu Melayu and Western approaches to modern-art-music composition. It was a long process that started with identifying what is patah lagu Melayu and the characteristics of patah lagu Melayu from the aspects of ornamentation, rhythmic patterns that were used or the variation to the melismatic scale.

The ideas from the first piece, *Pujian*, which contained the nuance of typical lagu asli, were transformed into 20<sup>th</sup>-century style pieces with an atonal system and lost its tonality. It was challenging to fuse the patah lagu Melayu with atonality because patah lagu Melayu could become unrecognisable.

By delving into the philosophy and the avant-garde pieces by Western composers such as Cage, Schonberg and Britten as stated in the literature review, the





author took another step in the process by creating an indeterminacy piece, *Takdir*, for a saxophone quintet.

The author embarked on background research and study to gain the initial skills required to begin the practice-led process of creative writing. The author looked back at the techniques and theory discussed and used as references by modern composers. The author also did not limit to one technique or style of composition because he believed it would limit the creativity. By using the ideas of harmony, motives and melodic development, forms, scales and other established ideas, the author chose the suitable theory that would fit with each of the author's compositions.

To research the theories and the composers of Western modern art-music composition, the author studied books on Western modern art-music composition by such authors as Dallin, Cope and Pease and books that analyse relevant works from the Classical and 20<sup>th</sup> century eras.

The author studied several Renaissance vocal works and 'nasyid' (Islamic spiritual songs) as his reference in order to create his composition. For choral writing used in the first composition, the author studied musical scores from the Renaissance such as the *Mass in Fives Voices* by William Byrd and the book *Choral Arranging* (Ades, 1966) and the Kyrie from the *Missa Papae Marcelli* by the Italian Renaissance master Giovanni Pirluigi da Palestrina. The author looked at the contemporary Malaysian spiritual music is the vocal group Raihan. Some examples of their work are 'Demi Masa' and 'Ingat Lima Perkara sebelum Lima Perkara'. The author also





studied the style of the group Rabbani who performed ‘Pergi tak Kembali’, ‘Intifada’ and ‘Setinggi Kasih’.

In searching out spirituality and musicians that use a sacred element in their music, the author found jazz saxophonist John Coltrane was a musician who also sought for a spiritual expression in his music. The author chooses him because the author is also a jazz saxophonist and includes spiritual expressions in his songs. Coltrane had explored Indian sacred music characteristic in his research towards improving his own composition and improvisations (Clements 2008, p.156). This is also evident in the use of Indian sacred music terminology in the titles of his compositions. One of John Coltrane’s pieces entitled ‘*Om*’ (referring to the sacred syllable in Hinduism) is about chanting in Hinduism. Coltrane also employed Indian ‘ragas’ when developing a musical or melodic idea. Ravi Shankar, a master in sitar playing, and Coltrane began lessons in 1964. Prior to studying with Shankar, Coltrane was mainly a jazz saxophonist and afterwards, Coltrane’s main focus was Indian music and spirituality. This was one factor that moved the author to produce a work that relates to the individual mystical practices found in Islam.

#### 4.2.1 The Creative Process of *Pujian*

The author’s first composition uses a choir and string ensemble, though the work began as a purely vocal work. This was intended to emulate the Malay style dhikr, a



simple devotional chant. As the work grew in complexity, the string ensemble was added under the tutelage of the author's supervisor.

Vocal textures in this research were conceived from a Western Renaissance perspective.

In the Renaissance, as in the Middle Ages, vocal music was more important than instrumental music. The humanistic interest in language influenced vocal music, creating a close relationship between words and music. Renaissance composers wrote music to enhance the meaning and the emotion of the text. (Kamien, 2011. p. 53)

*Pujian* is the first result of researching patah lagu Melayu, Western composition and the author's Islamic way of life. The author decided to compose a piece that contains patah lagu Melayu whether in the creation of the melody or in the music arrangement. The Western techniques of composition were applied in various ways such as choral writing and tonal harmony. To represent the Islamic way of life, the author decided to use dhikr as the medium of lyrics. The author used the name of Allah SWT. Because of the chanting associated with repetition, the author sketched a simple repetitive melody.

The author created a melody inspired by the ornamentation in lagu asli by studying the common intervals in transcription scores. For example, the interval between the first and last notes in the pick-up melody of *Pujian* is a perfect fifth,



developed from the song ‘Gunung Banang’, which also uses the same interval. This process will be further discussed in Chapter 5 (Example 5.9). To develop this work, the author began to think of a contrasting melody but in the same mood as the first melody.

The author composed the melody of the song with the lyrics translated from the chanting of istigfar drawn from a book of chanting and daily prayer. The author reflected on how to educate the Muslim community in Malaysia so that they can understand the meaning of chanting in Malay such as that performed by Raihan and more recently, Voices of Ummi. The author chose this translation because the chanting in Arabic is widely practiced by Malay Muslims but not all of them are familiar with the meaning in Malay language.



The author found it difficult to paraphrase some of the words to suit the melodic line of *Pujian* because the translation of istigfar has no rhyme scheme as in Malay poetry.

Ku memohon ampun,  
Pada-Mu, yang maha Agung.  
Tiada tuhan, yang di sembah,  
Selain Allah.  
Yang Maha hidup,  
Lagi terus, menerus, mengurus, makhluknya..  
Aku bertaubat,





Bertaubat Pada-Mu,

Ya Allah.

Translation, “I seek forgiveness of Allah SWT who is: ‘There is no god but Him, the self-subsisting and I turn repentant unto Him.’”

After the author completed the basic melody of parts A and B, the author experimented with incorporating patah lagu Melayu ornaments into the melody. This process was difficult because it is sung by the choir ensemble instead of a soloist who can add ornaments freely. The author used patah lagu Melayu using only semiquaver rhythms to enable the singers in the ensemble to sing together.



The author continued to develop this composition by searching an idea on how to create a different section from sections A and B. The author’s supervisor Dr Robert Burrell suggested the author to create a section that using contrapuntal technique. He proposed listening to and analysing a number of works to use as a reference, such as Kyrie from the *Mass in Five Voices* by William Byrd, *Angus Dei* from the *Missa Papae Marcelli* by Palestrina and *Præterita Parant* composed by Dr Robert Burrell himself.

The author also uses patah lagu Melayu at the end of phrases sung as countermelodies. The author avoids the use of complex patah lagu Melayu as semi-





demi quaver, triplet semiquaver or trill because the mood of this song wants to highlight the main melody and such use of complex patah lagu Melayu will interfere with the main melody.

The author originally tried not to use musical instruments apart from percussion because there is some debate among Islamic scholars on the rulings related to musical instruments. However, to create more lagu asli musical identity, the author first decided to use the violin, and then the entire string family itself. When the strings were added, it created an immersive mood with the melodious tunes of the violin.

After the author added a string ensemble, the author was interested in utilising pizzicato techniques. The author imagined what rentak asli played by the rebana pattern would sound like if played by a string section, similar to pitched percussion. The author divided the ‘rentak asas’ (basic rhythmic pattern), ‘rentak tingkah’ (in between rhythmic pattern) and ‘gong’ (downbeat) to be played by the strings.

#### 4.2.2 The Creative Process of *Dhikr Asli*

In the process of the author’s second creative work, his inspiration was based on the practices of dhikr (practices used in Muslims’ everyday life taught by Prophet Muhammad PBUH) to show his thought of Islamic worldview. From his reading in





*hadith* (the words of wisdom spoken by Prophet Muhammad PBUH), the author chose one dhikr, written in hadith Prophet Muhammad PBUH from the book of Muntakab Ahadith by Maulana Muhammad Yusuf Kandhalavi Rahimullah, (2014.)

#### Hadith from Prophet Muhammad PBUH

Abu Hurairah R.A narrates that Prophet Muhammad PBUH said that: I say; SubahanAllah (Glory be to Allah SWT who is above all faults), Alhamdulillah (Praise be to Allah SWT), La ilaha illallah (none is worthy of worship but Allah SWT), and Allahuakbar (Allah SWT is the Greatest). Is [sic] dearer to me than everything on which the sun rises. (Muslim) (p. 327)



Many dhikr practices are taught to a Muslim from childhood. Performing the

dhikr tends to soften the heart of the reciter and draw them closer to Allah SWT. The translation of the text of *Dhikr Asli* from Arabic to English is ‘Allah Al-Mighty, Praise be upon Him, there is no God except Allah SWT.’

Overall in the composition, D natural and harmonic minor scales are used to construct the melody, and patah lagu Melayu of lagu asli are used as decorative elements. Irregular phrasing is also applied in constructing the melody.

As part of the author’s growing understanding of harmony, polychords, tension chords, and quartal chords were used. This type of harmony can be seen in many 20<sup>th</sup>-century music works.





The rhythmic pattern known as *rentak asli* (refer to Example 1.2 above) is used in this composition with some alteration. In *Dhikr Asli*, the rhythm of the rebana is used in the piano part. The basic pattern for *rentak asli* consists of two bars where the gong will play on the first beat (crotchet) in first bar and third beat (quaver-quaver) in second bar. In this composition, the author altered the gong rhythm to generate the basic pattern into one bar pattern. *Dhikr Asli* is in rondo form (ABACA). In the C section, the author uses an asymmetric 10/8 time signature with the division of 3+3+1+3. This is to contrast with the A and B sections.

#### 4.2.3 The Creative Process of *Asli Row*



*Asli Row* is the author's third composition, and it employs the author's first use of serialistic techniques and an atonal approach. Prior to this work, most of his compositions used the diatonic tonal system, so this new approach the author found it challenging. He decided to give it a try for the following reasons. 1. It had pushed him into a new personal area of compositional craft. 2. He found this technique of writing gave him greater melodic and harmonic flexibility, different from the composing disciplines that existed before the 20<sup>th</sup> century. 3. Most importantly, it gave him a 'clean canvas' to begin from a new ability in creating what he desires in his musical expressions.



The use of 12-tone procedures typically avoids traditional harmonies. Regardless of the strictness implied by the process or the nuances of personal style, 12-tone procedures remain important conceptually for all composers to grasp and an extremely useful technique even for those who do not apply it explicitly in their works. (Cope, 1997, p. 58)

Taking the advice of the above-mentioned authors which are Dallin, Smith-Brindle and Cope, as well as the guidance of his supervisor, the author spent some time to develop his tone-row. The explanation on how the author had developed his *Asli Row* can be seen in the Critical Analysis of *Asli Row* section of Chapter 5.

The first step in this technique is to create a series of 12 tones, a row of notes that uses every different pitch in the chromatic scale. According to Smith in Cope (1997) on serialism composition techniques:

The first step in creating 12-tone music involves establishing a 12-tone row (Smith Brindle, 1966 and Spinner, 1960). Building a good row is essential because the style and musicality of the resultant work rests in large part of the row's logic, inner consistency and inventiveness. (p. 58)

Dallin (1974) mentioned that there are no consistent rules in creating a tone-row if all the 12 pitches still exist in the tone-row.



In strict 12-tone music all pitch relationships are governed by a predetermined note series consisting of 12-tone of tempered chromatic scale in a fix linear order without repetitions. The crux of the series lies in the disposition of the 12-tone and the resulting intervals between them.

(p. 190)

Taking the advice of the above-mentioned authors, as well as the guidance of his supervisor, the author spent some time in order to develop his series of tones, his tone-row. The explanation on how the author had developed his *Asli Row* can be seen explicitly in the chapter of Critical Analysis of *Asli Row*.

When hearing the phrase 12-tone matrix or serialistic work, the author imagines a piece that has a lot of dissonance, leaping melodies, and irregular phrasing. However, in this creative work, the author attempts to use a serialistic approach with a more conjunct melody. Using melismatic movements from the patah lagu Melayu, the author enhanced the melody by using the tone-row method, but with rhythmic repetition of pitches found in patah lagu Melayu. The most common melodic leaps were major and minor thirds, and there is rarely a leap of a perfect fifth or above, unlike the works produced by Schoenberg or strict serialism that uses a lot melodic leaps and does not repeat a pitch before the row has been sounding the all pitch in a row in order.

The instrumentation used in this composition comprises of flute and piano and the duration is approximately three minutes. The reasons why the author chose the





flute for this piece is because the flute is the signature instrument for lagu asli. This flourishes the feeling and characteristics of patah lagu Melayu in this piece.

#### 4.2.4 The Creative Process of *Saxoasli*

*Saxoasli* for saxophone quintet is a development from the serialistic *Asli Row*. The author wanted to continue experimenting with the 12-tone matrix of *Asli Row* and develop it into a new composition because the tone-row created by the author was born from the ideas from the patah lagu Melayu.

In this piece, serialism and indeterminacy were fused together to explore a new sound of melodic and harmonic fragments. The author crafted the patah lagu Melayu with the 12-tone tonality, while indeterminacy happens when the piece is being performed. Every player is allowed to improvise based on the conductor's signals even there are notations to be followed.

The practice-led component of the research continued during the creative work. As the author began to create and write the music, the practice of making decisions, and doing the actual task of composing became the process that led and taught the author how to write better music: How to solve problems that arose during the creative process. For example, in the work *Saxoasli*, the author firstly created a short score sketch (Example 4.1). This initial sketch used a matrix that was found and developed in the previous work *Asli Row*, however, this same use of free-serialism



was developed by integrating a different approach through the inclusion of indeterminacy in the composition process which is further explained in Example 4.2.

Example 4.1. The first sketch of *Saxoasli*

The main addition made from the first sketch of *Saxoasli* to the final score of *Saxoasli* is the motive of the trill played by each instrument. Each instrument performs a call and response style of playing as seen in Example 4.2. This is different for the baritone instrument because its role is to play the first beat to give a sense of melodic progression. Next, at the end of the main motive, leaping notes are present as seen in Example 4. This motive is also applied to the melody development in the final sketch of *Saxoasli* as seen in Example 4.2. This is a bit different because the motive from the first sketch is developed further into a phrase. At the end of each phrase, leaping notes are also used to let listeners experience the feeling of suspense.

The image shows a musical score for five saxophone parts: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Tenor, and Baritone. The score is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It includes dynamics like *mf* and *mp*, and a tempo marking of quarter note = 52. The score is divided into three measures by vertical bar lines.

Example 4.2. Final score of *Saxoasli*

In serialism, the music sometimes sounds strange to a listener accustomed to traditional tonality. Some genres or musical styles that use serialism contain unconventional in its melody or harmony. Here, the author expanded the patterns of *patah lagu Melayu* to create unconventional melodic phrases and harmonic structures. The author experimented with ‘*patah 3*’, ‘*patah 5*’ and ‘*patah 9*’ as the elements of Malay asli music. The author intended to adapt the *patah lagu Melayu* that is familiar to Malay people into something unfamiliar.

The piece has an A and B section. By using a mirror concept, the author expanded the form into A-B-A’-B’-B’’-A’’-B’’’-A’’’. Throughout the piece, the harmony is created by extending the rhythmic value of a pitch from the tone row.

Section A uses many trill patterns to create active melodies (Example 4.3). Section B uses passive rhythms such as minims, crochets and semibreves (Example 4.4).

Musical score for Example 4.3, Melodies of section A. The score is for five saxophone parts: Soprano Saxophone, Alto Saxophone, Tenor Saxophone (top), Tenor Saxophone (bottom), and Baritone Saxophone. The music is in 4/4 time and includes various dynamic markings such as *mf*, *mp*, and *f*. The score shows active melodic lines with trill patterns.

Example 4.3. Melodies of section A

Musical score for Example 4.4, Melodies of section B. The score is for five saxophone parts: Soprano Saxophone, Alto Saxophone, Tenor Saxophone (top), Tenor Saxophone (bottom), and Baritone Saxophone. The music is in 4/4 time and includes various dynamic markings such as *mp*, *mf*, *f*, and *pp*. The score shows passive rhythms with minims, crochets, and semibreves.

Examples 4.4. Melodies of section B

The second half has a form of B''-A''-B'''-A''', which is a retrograde of the first half. In the example below (Examples 4.5 and 4.6), the author made a pitch and rhythmic retrograde with variation. E-flat is the last pitch in the 'Allah SWT' script played by the tenor saxophone at the end of the B' section as seen in bar 15 (Example 4.5). After that, the pitch A, which is the first note of the primary tone row, is used as a short two-bar transition that anticipates the beginning of B'' section. The retrograding process begins in bar 18 when the baritone saxophone pick-up the notes to play the pitch C# as seen in bar 18 (Example 4.5).

The author used the same motive as the introduction in the two-bar transition based on 'patah 9'. All the instruments are playing the same motive but starting from different pitches. Because the piece uses the scale from the tone row, chord clusters, call and answer melody and the immediate repetition of the melody—all which contrast with the lagu asli music—the appearance of the repeated motive reinforce the characteristics of lagu asli music as seen in bar 17 (Example 4.5).

Example 4.5. Two bar transition before the retrograde process

The retrograde process could be seen in the usage of rhythms and pitches that is the same as the previous section but in modified retrograded patterns. The author chose random places to freely substitute what would be a direct retrograde with the first half with a selection of the various eight pitches in the letter ‘ha’ in the script. The eight pitches are C<sup>#</sup>, D, G<sup>b</sup>, E, F, E<sup>b</sup>, B, and B<sup>b</sup>. The author needed to change the harmony for the sections to vary the harmonies by manipulating the eight pitches as seen in bar 18, 19 and 20 in Example 4.6. If the author had done direct retrograde of the first half, the harmonies in the second half would sound as the same as the first half.

In the process of retrograding the rhythm, the author rearranged the order in which the instruments enter. As seen in Example 8, the rhythm of bar 15 and 16 was played by soprano. In Example 4.6, the rhythm of soprano was played by tenor instead. It is the same rhythm but starts at a different beat in the bar.

Example 4.6. Retrograde process



#### 4.2.5 The Creative Process of *Takdir*

The author, as part of the process of development his compositional voice, chose to compose a work with elements of indeterminacy. Indeterminacy in music gave a new meaning to the author in developing his compositional voice. Philosophically, this created a conflict with the author's understanding of the predestined nature of reality as it is understood in Islam. The conflict revolved around modern Western thought and its understanding of the indeterminacy of nature, how all of reality is the result of chance and evolution, and the religious teaching of the Abrahamic traditions that Allah SWT created the world. The author had to find a way to write music that was indeterminate yet not indeterminate. The resolution came down to the issue of faith.

Though the music is written using chance and indeterminacy, the author believes that the will of Allah SWT will be present in the moment of the performance.

Sometimes [Cage] also employed the complicated and arduous dice and coin-tossing procedures relevant to the I Ching (Book of Changes), perhaps the most ancient book of China. (Kostelanetz, p. 10)

Cage used wagering procedures to produce the outcome in his works. Sometimes the piece would sound differently in different situations and places, even if there is a specific score for the piece and the same musicians. For example, *Imaginary Soundscape No.4*, he used radios as a medium to produce the music. Logically, the sound from the radio would be different each time. However, the author



chose to modify this concept according to the author's faith because Islam is against the concept of chance. Muslims strive and then submit to the fate determined by Allah SWT in order to be blessed.

To reconcile the possible philosophical internal conflict, the author believes that the will of Allah SWT will determine the musical outcome. This is an act of faith. The author could plan how the players should play and give them the technical instructions: choice of notes or rhythm, and guidance into the mood and feel of the music in preparation for the performance. So, the author still uses indeterminacy, because ultimately, the resulting music becomes the will of Allah SWT.

Because this work is composed with indeterminacy procedures, this brought the author to research graphic scores, new combinations of sound or pitch, new styles of writing music and ways of realizing this score.

Always opposed to the expressionistic orientation generally characteristic of mainstream composition, Cage desired "to provide a music free from one's memory and imagination. (Kostelanetz, p. 10)

Even though patah lagu Melayu is known to have a very gentle, melancholic melody as described in previous chapter, the author tries to challenge the perception of the originality of patah lagu Melayu by taking its characteristics into *Takdir*. This gives the patah lagu Melayu a new dimension. For example, the scale of patah lagu Melayu uses the scale derived from the same 12-tone matrix as the previous pieces.

Another example is the use of saxophones rather than the rebana to accompany the melodic line in this composition.

The author chose the saxophone ensemble to explore new techniques of contemporary saxophones playing. New techniques invented by contemporary players or composers include multiphonics, overtone series, clicking keypads, percussive sound of saxophones body and slap tongue. For example, the author used the contemporary extended techniques of playing saxophones as the rebana's replacement for the rhythmic patterns (Example 4.7).

The musical score for Example 4.7 is written for a saxophone ensemble. It consists of five staves. The top two staves are for Alto Saxophones, and the bottom three are for Tenor and Baritone Saxophones. The music is in 4/4 time and begins at measure 34. The Alto Saxophones play a melodic line with triplets. The Tenor Saxophones play a rhythmic pattern with eighth notes and rests. The Baritone Saxophone plays a rhythmic pattern with eighth notes and rests, including percussive markings (+ and x) above the notes.

Example 4.7. Pattern of rentak asli play by saxophones ensemble



## CHAPTER 5

### ANALYSIS OF PATAH LAGU MELAYU AND THE COMPOSITIONS



#### 5.1 Analysis of Patah Lagu Melayu

In this section, the author discusses the uniqueness and characteristics of patah lagu Melayu. This is done through transcriptions of lagu asli by the author himself: ‘Jalak Lenteng’, ‘Gunung Banang’, ‘Makan Sireh’ and ‘Laksamana Mati di Bunoh’. Two scores used in this research, ‘Burung Putih’ and ‘Dondang Sayang’, were transcribed by other musicians. The author also includes outcomes of previous research by lecturers, one from Indonesia, and others from Malaysia. There are also some sources that are taken from articles and unpublished theses.



### 5.1.1 The Characteristics of Patah Lagu Melayu

The identity of the lagu asli song lies in the patah lagu Melayu played and sung by the instrumentalists and vocalists. In an interview that was taken from a thesis of Fauzila (2003) entitled *Lagu Melayu Asli: Teknik Vokal, Stail nyanyian dan Latihan*, a well-known lagu asli singer, Tan Sri Dato' S.M. Salim said,

The lagu asli song of the Malay had the rhythm or tempo that is melancholic and the melody that are soft and graceful, which resembles the values held by the Malay people. Singers nowadays that intend to sing these songs would need to study to gain the necessary discipline, practicing and learning so that when they perform, they do not ruin the style with a performance that is too

Patah lagu Melayu is an important element in lagu asli, which is used to embellish the melody and lift the aesthetic of the whole work. In the Western music tradition, this is termed and referred to as ornamentation. Each ornamentation is given a specific label such as turns, acciaccaturas, mordents, grupetos, vibrato and trills, however, in Malay asli music, all of these come under the one term patah lagu Melayu. Therefore, for a Malay traditional musician to accurately interpret any patah lagu Melayu, an extensive training period of study under a master is required, in order for the performer to be able to deliver the ornamentation correctly and appropriately. It takes many years of training to learn the unique Malay patah lagu Melayu quality. Below (Example 5.1) is an example of patah lagu Melayu ornamentation.



*Example 5.1.* Showing examples of patah lagu Melayu, from a musical excerpt in the violin part in the introduction to the song ‘Seri Kedah’ by Rahim Jantan

Another sub-style found in the overall genre of Malay asli music is keroncong, another syncretic form of Malay asli music. Both lagu asli and keroncong employ similar musical techniques when realizing a traditional song with ornamentation. A vocalist or instrumentalist needs to employ high levels of creativity when performing improvisations, variations and additions to a melody. According to Mahzan (2006), there are a few factors that come into play when performing a keroncong song artistically and true-to-style.

The second important factor is that a vocalist needs to be able to employ all the range of their timbres and their musical ability to create improvised variations that allow them to freely interpret the written notation. If the vocalist is able to sing in syncopation or off-beat (the notes does not fall on the beat) the result of the singing produced will become beautiful, interesting, and sweet. (Mahzan Manan, 2006)

*[Translation]*

The following musical extract is an example of how a performer may create syncopation as referred to in the above quote by Mahzan Manan. Example 5.2 shows how the late Allahyarham Rahim Jantan (the famous asli vocalist) performed the off-beat style in bars four and five of the extract.

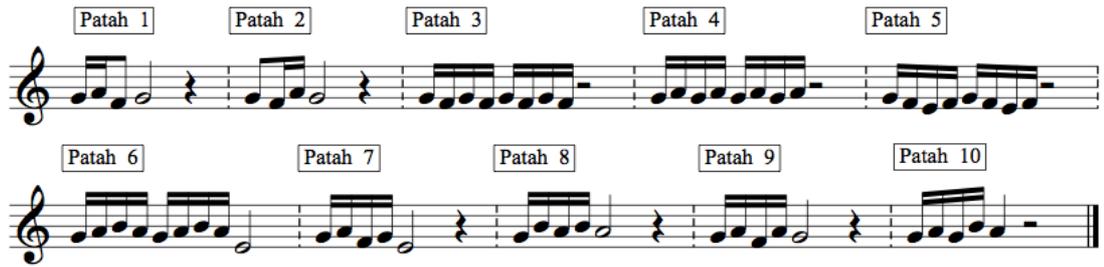
Pa - gi - lah pa - gi a - du hai lah sa -  
yang Pa-gi lah pa - gi hen - dak ke la - dang

*Example 5.2.* A transcription of an example of syncopation in the song ‘Seri Kedah’ as performed by Allahyarham Rahim Jantan

### 5.1.2 Patterns of Patah Lagu Melayu

The educator and performer Nor Azura (2014) in her thesis draws attention to a number of decorative melody patterns used by the traditional musical elders. Nor Azura uses the Western music theory approach when documenting these patterns, such as the terms ‘conjunct movement’ to indicate the development of the decorative melody step-wise ascents or descents, and ‘disjunct movement’ to indicate the development of melody which ascends or descends in leaps. She also uses terms like ‘rise-curve’ to indicate a descending decorative ornament.

The following examples show several types of patah lagu Melayu identified by Nor Azura in her thesis (Example 5.3).



Example 5.3. Nor Azura’s ten examples of patah lagu Melayu patterns

The author found other common examples not mentioned by Nor Azura given below. Some of these are possibly retrograde variations on Azura’s examples (Example 5.4).



Example 5.4. Retrograde variations on Azura’s patterns

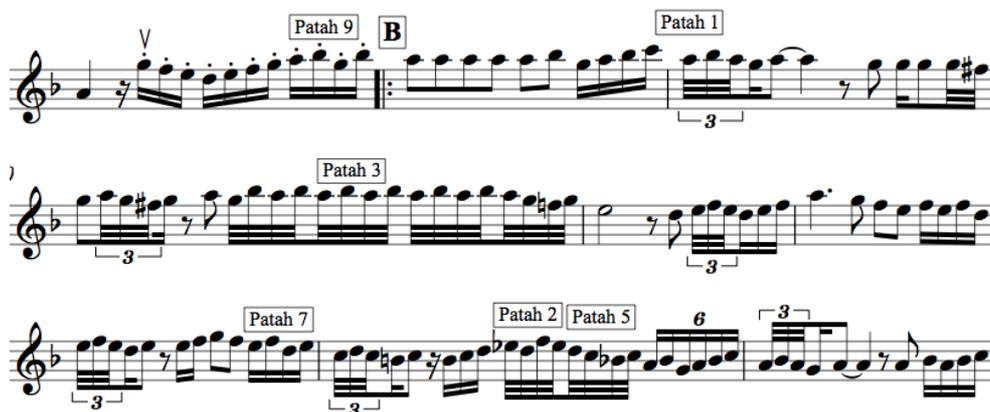
Some ornamentation varies enough away from the examples given by Azura to warrant their own identification. To create clarity, the author has labelled these as PB. The PB s being an acronym of Patah/Bunga (Example 5.5).



Example 5.5. PB pattern in the song ‘Jalak Lenteng’ played by violin

In the song ‘Gunung Banang’ transcription for violin by Rizaldi (2011), the patah lagu Melayu patterns that were introduced by Azura are used extensively, and this illustrates the unique patterns of the Malay patah lagu Melayu. These rhythms are related to the patterns identified by Nor Azura. The use of demisemi-quavers is most probably due to the slower tempo in the transcription of the song (Example 5.6).

Whether the notes are semiquavers or demisemi-quavers, the ornamentation uses the same pattern but at different speed.



Example 5.6. ‘Gunung Banang’ transcribed for violin by Rizaldi

The melodic pattern of Malay music has similarities with Indian and Arabic Music, which can be seen through the similar melismatic melodic patterns (a style of

singing melody that uses grenek, which is also a synonym for the patah lagu Melayu). Malay music has a great Islamic influence in it in the form the use of scale and scalar pattern. This is explained by Munif A Bahasuan where the style in *mengaji* (the melody produced when a Muslim recites the Al-Quran) comprises of Arabic Hawas (Maqam), which had largely affected the music of Malay melodies. Malay music thereafter developed its own characteristics with unique styles and patterns. A special *grenek* was developed known as *Grenek Muzik Melayu* (Munif A Bahasuan, 2003).

Research by Nor Azura confirms patterns in the author’s transcriptions of ‘Jalak Lenteng’. In ‘Jalak Lenteng’, the author found some patah lagu Melayu mentioned by Nor Azura. Also, there are a few patah lagu Melayu that have been altered to suit certain phrases. Variation can be applied in rhythmic speed, contour movements, and omitting pitches. As seen in bars 13, 14, 15, 16, 19 and 23 of Example 5.7, the elements of patah lagu Melayu correspond with those identified by Nor Azura.

The image shows a musical score for the violin part of 'Jalak Lenteng'. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff (measures 12-15) features several trills labeled 'Patah 6', 'Patah 5', and 'Patah 2'. The second staff (measures 16-19) includes trills labeled 'Patah 7'. The third staff (measures 21-24) has a trill labeled 'Patah 8'. The fourth staff (measures 25-28) shows a melodic line with a trill at the beginning. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4.

Example 5.7. ‘Jalak Lenteng’ violin part with the author’s identification of patterns



From the analysis, there is a need for improvisations in lagu asli. The pieces should not be restricted with written notation. The writer noted there were many unique patah lagu Melayu that not written down. Players' own styles and preferences to perform the patah lagu Melayu when they are given a song such as 'Jalak Lenteng' are not static, requiring the player to improvise, and that is the uniqueness of patah lagu Melayu.

These examples of patah lagu the author researched are used throughout the composition, transformed to create new melodies, counter-melodies, motives and Malay asli music phrases.



In this section, the author addresses the development of patah lagu Melayu. The author analysed how patah lagu had been used as main elements in the all five compositions: *Pujian*, *Dhikr Asli*, *Asli Row*, *Saxoasli* and *Takdir*. In this chapter, the author also discusses the expansion of his knowledge of Western composition techniques and theories to create tonal, to modern harmony, to atonal compositions.



### 5.2.1 Critical Analysis of *Pujian* (Praise to Allah SWT)

In this critical analysis of the composition, the author addresses the musical elements. This includes melody, harmony, rhythm, harmonic rhythm, melodic contour, form and structure, texture (monophonic, homophonic and polyphonic), timbre, performances characteristics, genre and style, mood and text. The instrumentation used in this composition comprises of tenor and soprano voice soloist, SATB for choir ensemble, string ensemble, piano and rebana. piano, and flute, and the duration is approximately 10 minutes.

#### 5.2.1.1 Melody: The Use of Patah Lagu Melayu as a Repetitive Motive

The main motive in *Pujian* is one of the patah lagu Melayu contained in lagu asli, specifically from the song ‘Gunung Banang’ song as reference. The example below shows how the pick-up notes used in the song ‘Gunung Banang’ connects the movement from A to E (Example 5.8). Musical lines such as this are normally used in asli songs to connect the interval of a perfect 5<sup>th</sup>.



Example 5.8. ‘Gunung Banang’ transcription by Rizaldi

The author uses the style of the patah lagu Melayu as main motive of this work. The author makes some changes by simplifying the elaborate ornaments to adapt to the abilities of a choir ensemble. The author also changes the major 3<sup>rd</sup> to minor 3<sup>rd</sup> because this work is in G Dorian mode. To create the mood of asli music in this work, the asli motive was heard immediately at bar 5 with a little additional ornament as often use in lagu asli. This time the author uses choir to announce the asli motive that begins with a D (Example 5.9).



*Example 5.9.* The use of patah lagu Melayu as main motive to construct the melody

The author also augments the movement from this vocal in the introduction of this work mainly on the main motive to highlight the mood of the asli song (Example 5.10).



*Examples 5.10.* The use of patah lagu Melayu played by violin in the introduction of *Pujian*

The melody of this work is easily remembered because the melody and lyrics the author is trying to highlight are chanted repeatedly. This is inspired by the Muslim practice of sitting while doing rhythmic chanting (dhikr) after finishing the five prayer times alone or with a congregation. These are short repetitive chants that use monotone or a only few pitches, which are echoed by congregation, and dhikr are



In this introduction section, the author announces a motive sung by the choir and soloist at section A. The strings double the choir. Low strings play the main motive in the tenor range and high strings help the soprano and alto melody to answer (Example 5.12).

The musical score for Example 5.12 is presented in a grand staff format. The top staff is for Soprano and Alto, and the bottom staff is for Tenor. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into two systems. The first system contains the lyrics "Al lah Al lah Al lah" for Soprano/Alto and "Hu Ya Al- lah" for Tenor. The second system contains the lyrics "Ya Mu ham mad Ya Ra- sul - lul lah" for Soprano/Alto and "ya Mu ham mad ya Al - lah" for Tenor. Above the Soprano/Alto staff, the text "Double up with violin" is written. Above the Tenor staff, the text "Double up with cello" is written in red. The music consists of eighth and quarter notes, with some rests.

Example 5.12. Patah lagu Melayu sung by choir

### 5.2.1.2 Structure of Melody in Section A

The melody of this section A consists of 12 bars. The main motive of this song is altered using augmentation (Example 5.13). The author uses call and response and repeats the melody until the end of this section.

The musical score for Example 5.13 is a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It starts at measure 13. The melody consists of a sequence of notes: a half note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note Bb4, a quarter note C5, a quarter note Bb4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note G4, a quarter rest, a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note Bb4, a quarter note C5, a quarter note Bb4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note G4, a quarter rest, and a quarter note G4. Above the staff, the chord progression is indicated as Eb, A Gm, F/G, Gm, F/G, Gm, F/G, Gm, F/G. Below the staff, the lyrics are "lah\_ Al - lah\_ Al-lah Al - lah Al - lah Al - lah\_ Al-lah Al - lah Al - lah Al -".

Example 5.13. Repeated melody for tenor soloist

All scales may start on any note, but it is their total intervallic content and potential for exploration of interval relationship that gives each scale or mode its unique color and identity. (Boras: 2005 p.18)

After the soloist sings the melody, tenor and bass answer the melody using the G Dorian scale, specifically to highlight the character of G Dorian (compared to natural minor) which is the note E (Example 5.14). The author includes an E in the accompaniment to also highlight the character of Dorian mode (Example 5.15).

14 **A** *mp*

La il lah ha il\_lal lah Mu ham mad Ra sul lul lah

Example 5.14. The use of G Dorian mode sung by tenor and bass

**A**

### 5.2.1.3 Phrasing in Section B

In Section B, this piece continues the G Dorian mode to emphasize the notes A, C and E. The author uses a syncopated rhythm to create a different mood from section A. In addition to the syncopation, the singer is instructed to sing in a laid-back style to suit the style of lagu asli singing. A triplet rhythm in the voice, one of the characters singing lagu asli, also highlights the ‘asli’ sound (Example 5.16).

39  
Ku me-mo-hon am pun pa da... Mu yang ma ha A gung Ti-a da tu han yang di-

42  
sem bah se la in Al lah... Yang ma ha hi dup. la gi te rus me ne rus me ngu rus makhluk Nya ooo...

Example 5.16. Melody of B section

The repeated high E notes of the melody in bar 48 in *Pujian*, introduce a dissonance to the harmony that is similar in effect to that of Schubert’s use of an extended dissonant note in *Der Erlkonig*, where the child screams in terror after having seen the ghost and cries “My Father, my Father”, thus adding to the drama of Schubert’s song. In the author’s work, the note functions as a dramatic plea, a call to Allah SWT for forgiveness—an example of the synthesis of text melody and harmony to achieve the artistic outcome desired (Example 5.17).

Musical score for Example 5.17. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features a melodic line with lyrics and chords. The lyrics are: "A-ku ber-tau bat... ber-tau-bat pa-da Mu Ya... ya Al - lah... Ya Al - lah". The chords are: C7, C(sus4) C7, Bb, Gm, F, Gm, F. There are triplets in the first two measures.

Example 5.17. The last phrase of B section (bars 48-52)

### 5.2.1.4 Counterpoint and Phrasing in Section C

Section C uses Baroque and Renaissance-inspired contrapuntal writing techniques. In section C, the author maintains the same motive as the previous sections, but the tonality modulates to C Dorian to distinguish the C section with others.

This approach resulted in combining contrapuntal techniques similar to Byrd, Palestrina, and Burrell using patah lagu Melayu ornaments as a main element of this melody (Example 5.18).

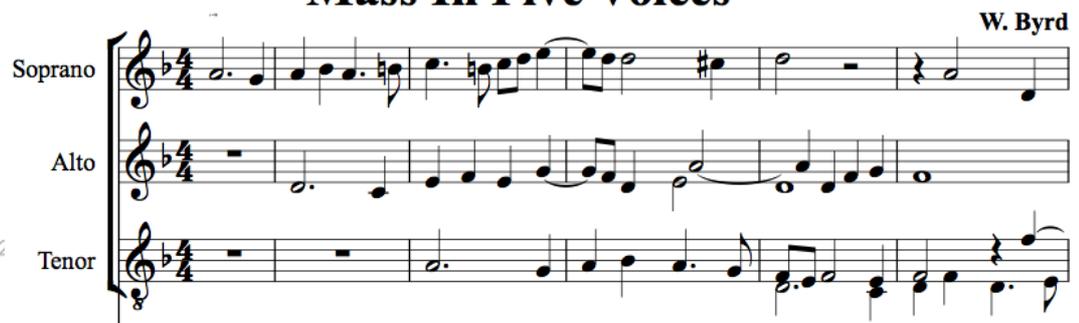
Musical score for Example 5.18. The score is in C Dorian (two flats) and 4/4 time. It features a vocal line (Soprano) and a choir line. The lyrics for the Soprano are: "Ti-a - da tu - han yangber-hak di sem bah se - la - in Al - lah". The lyrics for the Choir are: "Hu ya Al - lah... Ti-a - da tu - han se-la - in Mu ya Al lah... Al - lah hu ya Al - lah Al - lah... Al - lah... Al - lah hu ya Al - lah Mu ham". The score includes a Gm chord in the choir part.

Example 5.18. Introduction of section C with counterpoint entrances in the choir (bars 80-85)

The author retains the motive of ‘Gunung Banang’ and the same pick-up notes as the intro in bar 5 in terms of rhythm and pitch movement, but this melody is in C Dorian mode. The soprano solo begins by appealing to confess that there is no god who is entitled to invoke besides Allah SWT. The choral sopranos repeat the line on the next bar a perfect fourth lower than the solo soprano, and then the altos echo starting on an E-flat. Tenor supports the chord on the first bar by holding a C. This style of writing was adopted from the Renaissance piece *Mass in Five Voices* by William Byrd (Example 5.19).

**Mass In Five Voices**

W. Byrd



Soprano

Alto

Tenor

05-4506832

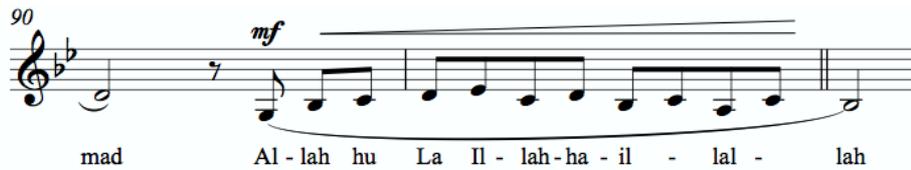
tbupsi

Example 5.19. Excerpt from William Byrd’s *Mass in Five Voices*

At bar 90, the author explores a different type of patah lagu Melayu, shown below (Example 5.20) transcribed by Matusky (Matusky: 1997 pg. 331). By using rhythmic augmentation, the author adapted the melody sung at the end of the phrases in the C section (Example 5.21).

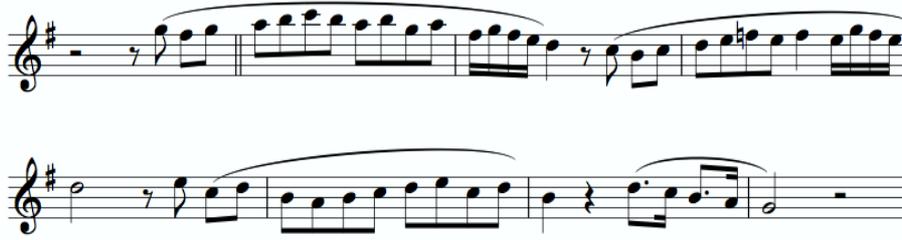


Example 5.20. Matusky transcription of patah lagu Melayu played by viola



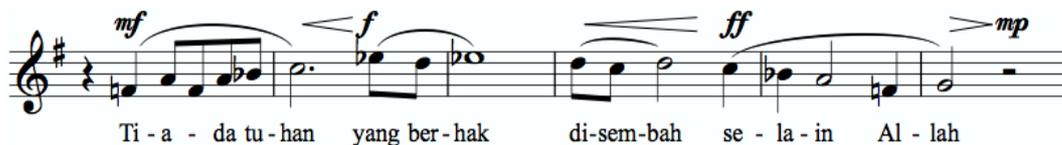
Example 5.21. Use of patah lagu Melayu for vocal (alto)

Part C also consists of irregular phrasing formed by using an odd number of bars, rather than four-bar phrasing in the A and B sections. Irregular phrasing is also found in the lagu asli song ‘Sayang di Sayang’, where the B section of this song is seven bars in length (Example 5.22).



Example 5.22. ‘Sayang di Sayang’ irregular phrasing (B section) composed by Zubir Said

In section C in the soprano solo, the author inserts a bar in the middle of a four-bar phrase, repeating the rhythm on the third beat of the second bar in the first beat of the third (Example 5.23).



Example 5.23. Pujian irregular phrasing (Bars 80-85)



### 5.2.1.5 Rhythm

*Pujian* uses the typical Malay rentak asli in this work is the main source of rhythm using rebana and gongs. This is to create an authentic traditional Malay mood because the rhythm is very important and it is the backbone of any music genre (Starr: 2009 pg. 142). The asli rhythm is in a slow (crotchet equals 56) tempo throughout to make this work more dramatic and give it a laid-back feel (examples of asli rhythm can be viewed at Example 1.2).

This rhythm can have a dramatic impact because most asli songs can be filled with pleas, sadness, life advice and ‘mendayu-dayu’ (melancholy). In the study made by Patricia Matusky, she states:



‘Asli’ is the name for a slow, sad song or dance in quadruple meter. Asli songs use an eight-beat rhythm produced by the rebana. (Matusky, 1997).

*[Translation]*

According to Matusky (1997), asli rhythm is often used to present a sad mood. Similarly, in the aristocratic music (Muzik Bangsawan), asli rhythm is played during sad scenes

A unique feature of *Pujian* is the rhythm of the rebana adapted to pizzicato strings. Low strings play ‘in between strokes’ (pukulan meningkah) and high strings



play a basic pattern (pukulan asas). There is also a triplet rhythm often used by low strings that fills in at the end of a phrase (Example 5.24 and 5.25). The strong beat of this asli rhythm is usually played by the gong, and in this piece, the author has written this beat to be played by double bass. The string section serves as both percussion and rhythm with both the ‘in between strokes’ and the basic pattern to sound like rentak asli.

Example 5.24. Basic pattern (pukulan asas ‘tangan kanan’) and in between stroke (pukulan menengkah ‘tangan kiri’)

Example 5.25. Rentak asli pattern written for string pizzicato

### 5.2.1.6 Harmony

To inject variation in this work, the author used modal harmony (in addition to modal melodies) similar to the G Dorian (Example 5.26) extended chords as described in the

book of Ted Pease. Jazz composers frequently make use of major sevenths, minor sevenths and the use of ninths, elevenths and thirteenth as tension and harmony.

T. *Al - lah - Al lah Al - lah Al - lah - Al lah Al - lah Al -*

Piano *Gm F/G Gm F/G Gm F<sup>9</sup> Gm/E<sup>b</sup> F/E<sup>b</sup> Gm/E<sup>b</sup> F/E<sup>b</sup>*

Example 5.26. Chord progression (bars 16-20)

When the main melody of the A section is repeated, the writer uses the same melody with different harmonic texture or melodic presentation. By using a concept

by Ades, the author uses five-part voicing by doubling the tenor and soprano voices (Example 5.27).

Melody doubling strengthens the melodic line, adds to the feeling of movement, and results in an effect less rigid than traditional four-part writing. (Ades, 1966)

*Hu Ya Al - lah - Al - lah Al - lah Al - lah - Al - lah Al - lah*

Example 5.27. The use of Five-voices writing for choral

The simplest orchestral accompaniments are those in which the accompanying instruments exactly or approximately duplicate the vocal parts. The use of string quintet with the voices adds warmth without disturbing the musical mood or obscuring clarity of the text. (Ades 1966).

The author adopts the art of duplicating vocal parts to highlight the praises of Allah SWT, this style of composition is very appropriate because it will create more melodies and the text to be sung. Techniques such as this can also help the singer to find the correct pitch more easily (Example 5.28).

05-4506832

Choir

*mp*

Hu Ya Al lah Al lah Al lah Ya Mu ham - mad ya Al

*mf*

Al - lah Ya Mu ham mad ya Al

Strings

*mf*

ptbupsi

Example 5.28. Duplicating vocal part as accompaniment (Bars 5-8)

### 5.2.1.7 Texture

Most of the textures in *Pujian* are in the form of homophony and polyphony. In the introduction of this work, the author uses polyphony when the low voice sings the



‘mendayu-dayu’ melody by using long rhythm while the high voice uses a quaver rhythm (see example 5.28)

Homophonic texture can be seen in section A’ as seen in Example 5.27. The author also creates a transition using a monophonic texture (the bass and tenor voices in octaves) from section B to the introduction again. In the author’s observation of the texture produced by an asli music ensemble during a performance is mixture of polyphony and heterophony. This is because of a combination of instruments such as violin and accordion, will play either the melody or countermelody with improvised variation. This mixed texture occurs at the coda in *Pujian*, when all A and B melodies and countermelodies are played at the same time by the chorus, soloist and instruments.



### 5.2.2 Critical Analysis of *Dhikr Asli*

In this critical analysis of the composition *Dhikr Asli*, the author addresses the musical elements. This includes motive and melody, irregular phrasing, the use of patah lagu Melayu, rhythms, time signature and piano patterns. The instrumentation used in this composition comprises of vocal, piano, and flute, and the duration is approximately 6 minutes.



### 5.2.2.1 Motive and Melody

The technique of developing the motivic material in this composition was created through the repetition of motives with slight modification. Kawakami (1978) says: “Excessive repetition motives can become monotonous. Variations should be made by at least the third repetition”. Kawakami also gives examples from other great composers on how they construct the melody: repetitive motives only happen in two semi-phrases, and changes occur during the third semi-phrase.

Based on the lyrics, the above-mentioned technique is used to create a complete phrase (Example 5.29). The entire phrase of the excerpt is used as an introduction of the composition played by the flute.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in a single system. The first staff contains two semi-phrases: the first is labeled 'a motif' and the second is labeled 'a' repetition motif with with slight modification'. Both semi-phrases begin with a dynamic marking of *mf* and feature a triplet of eighth notes. The second staff contains a third semi-phrase labeled 'b', which is a variation of the first two, also featuring a triplet of eighth notes.

*Example 5.29.* Motive of *Dhikr Asli* for vocal. The first semi-phrase (a) is repeated in the second semi-phrase (a') with added pick-up notes. In the third repetition (b), the author varied the entire melody (Bars 10-16)

During the process of writing the melody, the author faced a problem in phrasing. The dhikr is divided into two-parts, a) Subahanallah, Alhamdulillah and, b) La I'lahha Illallah and Allahhuakbar (Table 5.1). The words of dhikr translated from Arabic to Malay do not fit into conventional phrasing as the dhikr has many syllables.

Hence, the author decided to construct the melody in an irregular phrasing form by using six-bar phrasing (Example 5.30).

Table 5.1

*Arabic, Malay and English text of dhikr*

Form	Arabic text	Malay text	English text
A	SubahanAllah	Maha suci Allah	Glory be to Allah.
	Alhamdulillah	Segala pujian hanya bagi Allah	All praises to Allah
B	La I'laha Illallah	Tiada tuhan yang disembah selain Mu Allah.	There is no God worthy of worship except Allah
	Allahhuakbar	Allah maha besar.	Allah is the greatest.

Example 5.30. Irregular phrasing and the lyrics that have been added into the melody (Bars 10-16)

### 5.2.2.2 The use of Patah Lagu Melayu in *Dhikr Asli*

The author uses the pattern of patah lagu Melayu to express the characteristic of the lagu asli nuance in the composition. The author decorated the melody with a few patah lagu Melayu for the flute part. In bar 4 after the pick-up note, ‘patah 4’ is used to decorate the melody on the first and third beats (Example 5.31). In the song ‘Damak’ (Example 5.32) transcribed by Azura (2014), the author discovered the movements of the altered patah lagu Melayu on the first beat of bar 8 (similar to a turn in Western music theory) are slightly different from the ‘patah 1’ pattern. In the B section of *Dhikr Asli* (Example 5.33), the author uses augmentation of rhythm of the ‘patah 1’ pattern compared to the rhythm used in the Damak song (Example 5.32).

Example 5.31. The use of ‘patah 4’ pattern (Bars 3-9)

Example 5.32. The use of ‘patah 1’ one of pattern in patah lagu Melayu

Musical notation for Example 5.33. The melody is in G major (one sharp). The lyrics are "Ti-a - da tu han yang di sem - bah". The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. Chord annotations include **B** A7 and Dm. There is a triplet of eighth notes in the second measure.

Example 5.33. The used of augmentation of rhythmic pattern (Bar 17-20)

The melody of section C (Example 5.34) was constructed using ‘patah 9’ and ‘patah 7’ from in ‘Seri Kedah’ by the late Rahim Jantan (Example 5.35).

Musical notation for Example 5.34. The melody is in B-flat major (two flats). It consists of three staves. The first staff starts at measure 36 and includes a tempo marking of ♩=110. Annotations include "Patah 9" and "Patah 7". The second staff starts at measure 39 and includes a triplet of eighth notes. The third staff starts at measure 41 and includes a sextuplet of eighth notes. A trill is marked in the first staff.

Example 5.34. Melodic line of C section

Musical notation for Example 5.35. The melody is in B-flat major (two flats) and 4/4 time. It consists of two staves. The first staff starts with a "Patah 9" annotation and ends with a triplet of eighth notes. The second staff starts with a "Patah 7" annotation.

Example 5.35. Patah lagu Melayu in ‘Seri Kedah’ by late Rahim Jantan

In this composition, the author uses the piano to play patah lagu Melayu as part of the transition and cadences. Normally, in a lagu asli performance, the

transition and cadential sections are played by the violin, accordion or flute (Example 5.36).



Example 5.36. The use of patah lagu Melayu in the piano part of *Dhikr Asli*

### 5.2.2.3 Rhythm, Time Signature and Piano Patterns

Another unique feature of *Dhikr Asli* is piano's use of rentak asli, which are normally played by the rebana. The author did not use the exact rhythm of rentak asli in the piano, but adapted the part to work idiomatically on the instrument.

One of the features of rentak asli the author wanted to highlight is the gong part, which normally sounds on the third beat of the first bar. In *Dhikr Asli*, the gong sound is being imitated in the bass register of the piano (Example 5.37). The 'in between' strokes (as discussed in the critical analysis of *Pujian*) on the rebana is now transferred to the right hand of the piano (Example 5.37) in the treble part is influenced by the interlocking pattern of the rebana.



Example 5.37. Rentak asli modified for piano

In section B, the gong rhythm pattern is played in every bar compared to origin of 'rentak Asli' which is two bars (Example 5.38). The bass sound is important in bringing out the syncopated rhythm played by the right hand, which frequently uses two-part voicing in 6<sup>th</sup>s or quartal chords.

Musical score for Example 5.38, labeled 'B'. It consists of two systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The first system starts at measure 18 and includes a dynamic marking of 'mf'. The right hand (treble staff) plays a syncopated melody with many beamed notes and some accidentals. The left hand (bass staff) plays a steady accompaniment with quarter and eighth notes. The second system starts at measure 22 and continues the same musical texture. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4.

Example 5.38. Piano accompaniment for B section

In section C, the author uses a 10/8 meter to create a different interpretation of Lagu asli, which is typically in 4/4, and to contrast it with previous material. This is because current composers frequently experiment with time signatures to create a variation of rhythmic patterns and phrases. A time signature as such as this allows the author to express himself with a great deal of freedom. Dallin (1974) says:

Complete rhythmic freedom is now taken for granted. Cataloging all of the new devices is not feasible, but a survey of the more fruitful trends will suffice as an introduction to 20<sup>th</sup>-century rhythm. (p. 55)

In this composition, the author divides the 10/8 meter into 3+3+1+3 beats. This division is interesting to the author because it avoids the feel of 5/8. The author could create a sense of freedom in the flute melody semi-independent of the time signature, resulting in a sense of improvisation and sounding as if it is overlapping the bar line (Example 5.39).

37  $\text{♩} = 110$

T.  $\frac{10}{8}$

Fl.  $\frac{10}{8}$  3+3+1+3 tr

Pno.  $\frac{10}{8}$  3+3+1+3

39

T.  $\frac{10}{8}$

Fl.  $\frac{10}{8}$  3 3

Pno.  $\frac{10}{8}$

Example 5.39. Written Solo for flute

### 5.2.3 Critical Analysis of *Asli Row*

In this critical analysis of *Asli Row*, the author addresses melody, harmony, rhythm, harmonic rhythm, melodic contour, form and structure, texture (monophonic, homophonic and polyphonic), timbre, performance characteristics, genre and style, mood and text.

#### 5.2.3.1 The Use of Patah Lagu Melayu in Developing a Tone-row

In making sure that the author still uses patah lagu Melayu in every composition, patah lagu Melayu in ‘Gunung Banang’ was used to inspire the tone-row. By using the first three notes in patah lagu Melayu from ‘Gunung Banang’ (A – C<sup>#</sup> - D - E), the author created a subset of A, C<sup>#</sup> and D. From this first sub-set, four new sub-sets of the row were derived. The then author repeated each subset transposed down a major second. Using this pattern, all 12 pitches were revealed without repetition (Example 5.40).

Example 5.40. Tone-row of *Asli Row*

The author’s approach in using three notes groups from patah lagu Melayu in ‘Gunung Banang’ fits some approaches to creating tone rows.

Rows may also be constructed around hexachords (six-notes grouping), Tetrachords (four-notes grouping) and unbalanced collections (two and ten, for example). (Cope, 1977)

After the tone-row had been created, the author set about creating a matrix of all possible transpositions, inversions, and retrograde inversions of the tone-row (Example 5.41).

	I0	I4	I5	I3	I7	I8	I6	I10	I11	I9	I1	I2	
P0	A	C#	D	C	E	F	Eb	G	Ab	Gb	Bb	B	R0
P8	F	A	Bb	Ab	C	C#	B	Eb	E	D	Gb	G	R8
P7	E	Ab	A	G	B	C	Bb	D	Eb	C#	F	Gb	R7
P9	Gb	Bb	B	A	C#	D	C	E	F	Eb	G	Ab	R9
P5	D	Gb	G	F	A	Bb	Ab	C	C#	B	Eb	E	R5
P4	C#	F	Gb	E	Ab	A	G	B	C	Bb	D	Eb	R4
P6	Eb	G	Ab	Gb	Bb	B	A	C#	D	C	E	F	R6
P2	B	Eb	E	D	Gb	G	F	A	Bb	Ab	C	C#	R2
P1	Bb	D	Eb	C#	F	Gb	E	Ab	A	G	B	C	R1
P3	C	E	F	Eb	G	Ab	Gb	Bb	B	A	C#	D	R3
P11	Ab	C	C#	B	Eb	E	D	Gb	G	F	A	Bb	R11
P10	G	B	C	Bb	D	Eb	C#	F	Gb	E	Ab	A	R10
	RI0	RI4	RI5	RI3	RI7	RI8	RI6	RI10	RI11	RI9	RI1	RI2	

Example 5.41. Tone-row of Asli Row 12-tone Matrix

Because the author found the matrix challenging to use, under the guidance of his supervisor, he had chosen to not use strict or integral serialism, but rather ‘free’ serialism, where one can move from row to row of the matrix at any given intersection. One could begin with one row and four tones in, change direction on the matrix and begin to employ the order of tones in another connected row. This created a plethora of options that overwhelmed the author. He felt that because there was no specific direction, or that the direction could be altered on a whim, the random quality of this approach negated the discipline of the method. The author needed an order, a determining factor in what should guide the choice of direction when moving from one row to another.

The rhythm of Joan Tower’s ‘Wings’ (Example 5.42) was used as a guideline for the author in first constructing *Asli Row*. The author first combined the pitches from a tone row in his created matrix with the rhythm of ‘Wings’ (Example 5.43), then experimented with rhythmic and melodic development (Example 5.44). To create a Malay sound, the author used the rhythmic structure of patah lagu Melayu and included the 12-tone as a scale with repeated intervals in various rhythms.



Example 5.42. Excerpt from Joan Tower’s *Wings*

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The first staff is in 4/4 time and features a melodic line with dynamic markings *ppp*, *p*, *ppp*, and *pp*. It includes a box labeled 'P0' and a triplet of eighth notes. The second staff continues the melody, marked *mf* and *f*, with a box labeled 'Add appoggiatura' above a triplet and another box labeled 'R10' above a note. The time signature changes to 3/4 and then 3/4.

Example 5.43. First sketch of *Asli Row* melody

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The first staff is in 4/4 time, marked *mf*, with a box labeled 'A' and 'P0'. It features a triplet of eighth notes and a fermata. The tempo instruction 'poco accel.' is placed above the staff. The second staff continues the melody, marked 'rit.' and 'A tempo', with a quintuplet of eighth notes and a trill 'tr' over a note. The time signature changes to 5/4.

Example 5.44. Final melody of *Asli Row* after experimenting with melodic development inspired by patah lagu Melayu

### 5.2.3.2 The Islamic Perspective of Using the Matrix

Because of the author’s Islamic worldview, he needed to interpret the matrix in a manner that brought spiritual meaning and order to the selection of notes from the rows of the matrix. This problem haunted the author and he made it a subject of his prayers and looked for a spiritual solution to the problem of how to bring order to a matrix that offered too many random options. It came to him that he could superimpose the script of Allah SWT over the matrix and allow this to determine which tones to choose and which to ignore.

In this manner, order was created in what appeared to be a matrix of randomness. Because the script of Allah SWT is read or written in the Arabic tradition of reading and writing from right to left, the selection of tones for this composition followed the same tradition (Example 5.46). The melody would also be injected with patah lagu Melayu (Example 5.47).

	I0	I4	I5	I3	I7	I8	I6	I10	I11	I9	I1	I2	
P0	A	C#	D	C	E	F	Eb	G	Ab	Gb	Bb	B	R0
P8	F	A	Bb	Ab	C	C#	B	Eb	E	D	Gb	G	R8
P7	E	Ab	A	G	B	C	Bb	D	Eb	C#	F	Gb	R7
P9	Gb	Bb	B	A	C#	D	C	E	F	Eb	G	Ab	R9
P5	D	Gb	G	F	A	Bb	Ab	C	C#	B	Eb	E	R5
P4	C#	F	Gb	E	Ab	A	G	B	C	Bb	D	Eb	R4
P6	Eb	G	Ab	Gb	Bb	B	A	C#	D	C	E	F	R6
P2	B	Eb	E	D	Gb	G	F	A	Bb	Ab	C	C#	R2
P1	Bb	D	Eb	C#	F	Gb	E	Ab	A	G	B	C	R1
P3	C	E	F	Eb	G	Ab	Gb	Bb	B	A	C#	D	R3
P11	Ab	C	C#	B	Eb	E	D	Gb	G	F	A	Bb	R11
P10	G	B	C	Bb	D	Eb	C#	F	Gb	E	Ab	A	R10
	RI0	RI4	RI5	RI3	RI7	RI8	RI6	RI10	RI11	RI9	RI1	RI2	

Example 5.45. Asli Row 12-tone Matrix with superimpose the script of Allah SWT

Prime of Matrix (1)

	I0	I4	I5	I3	I7	I8	I6	I10	I11	I9	I1	I2	
P0	A	C#	D	C	E	F	Eb	G	Ab	Gb	Bb	B	R0
P8	F	A	Bb	Ab	C	C#	B	Eb	E	D	Gb	G	R8
P7	E	Ab	A	G	B	C	Bb	D	Eb	C#	F	Gb	R7
P9	Gb	Bb	B	A	C#	D	C	E	F	Eb	G	Ab	R9
P5	D	Gb	G	F	A	Bb	Ab	C	C#	B	Eb	E	R5
P4	C#	F	Gb	E	Ab	A	G	B	C	Bb	D	Eb	R4
P6	Eb	G	Ab	Gb	Bb	B	A	C#	D	C	E	F	R6
P2	B	Eb	E	D	Gb	G	F	A	Bb	Ab	C	C#	R2
P1	Bb	D	Eb	C#	F	Gb	E	Ab	A	G	B	C	R1
P3	E	F	G	Ab	Gb	Bb	B	A	C#	D	E	F	R3
P11	Ab	C	C#	B	Eb	E	D	Gb	G	F	A	Bb	R11
P10	G	B	C	Bb	D	E	C#	F	Gb	E	Ab	A	R10
R10	R14	R15	R13	R7	R8	R16	R10	R11	R19	R11	R12		

Example 5.46. The direction of the matrix is interpreted

Example 5.47. Melody representing ‘Alif’ (Arabic Letter) while incorporating patah lagu Melayu

By using the row above, the piece was arranged by using a through-composed method (Example 5.48). The author established every Arabic letter to represent a section. The A section introduces the prime tone-row. After a transition, the B section introduces the next tone-row, followed by a C section which is repeated with variation, which is followed by a D section and an E section. Each section is connected with transitional material, which almost functions like a *ritornello*. Each transition is altered slightly to ensure that continuing flow of the work.

ASLI ROW in THROUGH COMPOSED FORM											
Form	Intro	Trans		Trans		Trans		Trans		Trans	
	A	I	B	II	C	II'	C'	II'	D	I'	E
Arabic letter	-	-	Alif	-	Lam	-	Lam	-	Ha	-	-
Tone-row	P0	-	I2	Piano works	I9	RI6	I6	RI3	Group notes	Piano works	-

Example 5.48. Asli Row form

### 5.2.3.3 Rhythm and Harmony

The harmonic structure of *Asli Row* is made of tetrachord subsets (four note sets of the tone-row). Each tetrachord was taken from the ‘ha’, the final letter of the script of Allah SWT, which formed a square on the matrix, each side of which consisted of four tones. This gave the author four sets of tetrachords to work with (Example 5.49).

The musical notation shows three tetrachord subsets in 4/4 time. The first subset is labeled 'Bass up min 3rd', the second 'Bass down maj 2nd', and the third 'Bass up maj 3rd'.

Example 5.49. Subset of tetrachords

In the transitions, the author also used the original rentak asli rhythm on the piano instead of unpitched percussion, but with variations on rentak asli rhythmic pattern. Through trial and error and experimentation, the author arrived at moving the third beat of the second pattern to become the first beat (Example 5.50). By using this

rhythm, the author applied the harmony of the tetrachords in the piano (sub-set: C<sup>#</sup> - E<sup>b</sup> - B - B<sup>b</sup>) (Example 5.51). These patterns in the transitional material separate each structural section.

Kiraan asal 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

Kiraan 3rd bit as 1st bit 3 4 1 2 3 4 1 2

Kiraan baru 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

Example 5.50. The original rentak asli pattern offset by two beats

asli rebana pattern :  
treat the 3rd beat as 1st beat

mf

f

Example 5.51. Rentak asli pattern played by piano

The author noticed that ‘patah 7’ is one of the most commonly employed pattern in lagu asli music (Example 5.52).

Seri Kedah patah 7 tr

violin

Example 5.52. Showing the lagu asli violin descending melodic line in ‘Seri Kedah’

The author used this pattern to guide him in the choice of how he would use the order of the tone-row. Because ‘patah 7’ uses leaps and returns, this enabled the author to leap over tones in the row before returning to the tone that was leapt over



The image shows two musical staves. The top staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It contains a sequence of notes: G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, Bb5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, Bb6, C7. A bracket labeled '3' is placed under the notes G5, A5, and Bb5. The word 'becomes' is written above the first few notes. The staff ends with a dynamic marking 'pp'. The bottom staff is similar but shorter, ending with a bracket labeled '3' under the notes G5, A5, and Bb5.

*Example 5.54.* Three examples of subsets developed using patah lagu Melayu contour and rhythm

## 5.2.4 Critical Analysis of *Saxoasli*

In this critical analysis of *Saxoasli*, the author addresses the usage of patah lagu Melayu to develop the motivic structure and the mix between patah lagu Melayu and the 12-tone matrix.

### 5.2.4.1 Motive and Melody

By using the same 12-tone matrix as *Asli Row*, the author implemented the scripture of ‘Allah SWT’ as a guideline to create melodies. The technique of reading from left to right was maintained. Even though the piece uses the same matrix, the author created clear differences between *Asli Row* and *Saxoasli*. As seen in Example 5.55, the melody of *Asli Row* emphasizes the movement of melodies in a single line, supported by the harmonies by the piano. In *Saxoasli* (Example 5.56), the melody of

each instrument also forms a harmony structure. This movement of the melodic lines at various intervals to provide a harmony different than *Asli Row*.

The image displays a musical score for Flute and Piano. The top system shows the Flute and Piano staves. The Flute part begins at measure 52 with a dynamic of *mf* and includes a *poco accel.* marking. The Piano part starts with a *fff* dynamic and also includes a *poco accel.* marking. The bottom system continues the Flute and Piano parts, featuring a *rit.* (ritardando) marking followed by *A tempo* (Allegretto tempo). The Flute part includes a triplet of eighth notes and a trill (*tr*). The Piano part includes a *rit.* marking and a dynamic of *f* (forte).

Example 5.55. Melody and harmony in *Asli Row*

Example 5.56. Melody and harmony in *Saxoasli*

The piece also has contrapuntal techniques. The melody contains repetition of melodic fragments, but every repetition that occurs is different (Example 5.57). The author had used the theory of Cope (1997, p. 28) about the New Roles of Melodies. He states:

Melodic lines may begin with a motive and blossom into full melodies based on variations of that motive. This process can be effective if the melody does not become a simple exposition of the various versions of the motive (p. 28).

Musical score for five saxophones: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Tenor, and Baritone. The score is in 4/4 time and starts at measure 52. It features various melodic lines with dynamics such as *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *f* (forte). The Soprano part includes a triplet and a trill. The Alto part has a melodic line with a slur. The Tenor parts have more complex rhythmic patterns with slurs and dynamics like *mp* (mezzo-piano).

Example 5.57. Motivic fragments

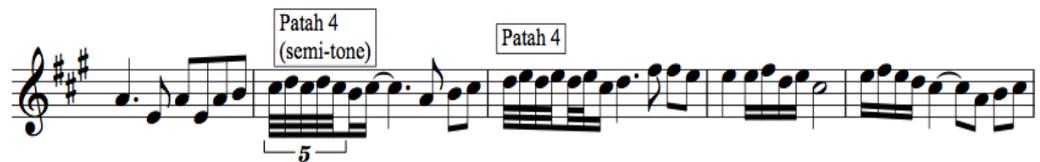
### 5.2.4.2 The Use of Patah Lagu Melayu in Saxoasli

The usage of patah lagu Melayu elements are included, intended to create an asli song mood. In the introduction section of this piece, the writer uses pattern ‘patah 9’ (Example 5.58) as a motive. In the author’s re-examination of asli songs, ‘patah 9’ is mentioned by Nor Azura (2013) as also being used in other asli songs such as ‘Gunung Banang’ transcribed by Rizaldi (2011).

Musical notation for the 'patah 9' motif. It is written in bass clef, 4/4 time, starting at measure 52. The motif consists of a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, with a dynamic marking of *mf* (mezzo-forte).

Example 5.58. The used of ‘patah 9’ as introduction

The author frequently uses ‘patah 3’ and ‘patah 4’, which are similar to Western trills (see example 5.1 in the critical analysis of patah lagu Melayu), because they are common in asli music. The intervals between the notes in the ornaments of ‘patah 3’ and ‘patah 4’ may be semitones or whole-tones, and both are found in this piece. In this piece, the author prioritised the usage of ‘patah 3’ and ‘patah 4’ in semitones to create long melodic phrasing (Example 5.59 and 5.60).



Example 5.59. The counter melody played by the violin in the song ‘Jalak Lenteng’ sung by Rosiah Chik



Example 5.60. The used of ‘patah 3’ and ‘patah 4’

The author has also adapted the same melody contours of ‘patah 2’ (Example 5.61) in the piece, but with different intervals determined by the matrix and a modified rhythmic pattern of semiquavers only (Example 5.62).



Example 5.61. Contour of ‘patah 2’



Example 5.62. Melody of *Saxoasli* share the same contour as ‘patah 2’ but different interval

The matrix is a guide in how the direction of the script created this composition using ‘patah 2’. For example, the tenor melody starts with F, the second final pitch of I<sup>9</sup> and moves down to E and to the left to G-flat and F in R<sup>10</sup> (Example 5.62 show in notation, Example 5.63 shown in matrix). The baritone also uses the same pattern in I<sub>6</sub>, starting with the second final pitch of I<sub>6</sub>, D.

Prime of Matrix (1)

	I0	I4	I5	I3	I7	I8	I6	I10	I11	I9	I1	I2	
P0	A	C#	D	C	E	F	Eb	G	Ab	Gb	Bb	B	R0
P8	F	A	Bb	Ab	C	C#	B	Eb	E	D	Gb	G	R8
P7	E	Ab	A	G	B	C	Bb	D	Eb	C#	F	Gb	R7
P9	Gb	Bb	B	A	C#	D	C	E	F	Eb	G	Ab	R9
P5	D	Gb	G	F	A	Bb	Ab	C	C#	B	Eb	E	R5
P4	C#	F	Gb	E	Ab	A	G	B	C	Bb	D	Eb	R4
P6	Eb	G	Ab	Gb	Bb	B	A	C#	D	C	E	F	R6
P2	B	Eb	E	D	Gb	G	F	A	Bb	Ab	C	C#	R2
P1	Bb	D	Eb	C#	F	Gb	E	Ab	A	G	B	C	R1
P3	C	E	F	Eb	G	Ab	Gb	Bb	B	A	C#	D	R3
P11	Ab	C	C#	B	Eb	E	D	Gb	G	F	A	Bb	R11
P10	G	B	C	Bb	D	Eb	C#	F	Gb	E	Ab	A	R10
R10	R14	R15	R13	R17	R18	R16	R10	R11	R11	R19	R11	R12	

Example 5.63. The specific melodic guide in *Asli Row* of the matrix based on the Allah S.W.T script

The same technique is used by the baritone in the fourth beat of the 12<sup>th</sup> bar (Example 5.64). Each time the pitches using the script pass through tone row R<sup>10</sup>, the melody uses ‘patah 2’.



Example 5.64. Melody of the Baritone saxophone using ‘patah 2’

### 5.2.5 Critical Analysis of *Takdir*

In this critical analysis of *Takdir*, the author addresses the use of indeterminacy procedures, specifically how patah lagu Melayu is encompassed in indeterminacy procedures, unconventional notation symbols and extended saxophone techniques.

The percussive techniques combine with *rentak asli* to produce a percussive background accompaniment. There is also the use of the tone-row from *Asli Row*.

### 5.2.5.1 Motive

Like the other compositions in this research, the motives in this piece were influenced by the motives of *patah lagu Melayu* in *asli* music. The *patah lagu Melayu* used in this piece still holds to the motives of ‘*Gunung Banang*’ (Example 5.8 and 5.9). The author expanded and modified these motives into three-bar phrases (Example 5.65).



Example 5.65. Expanded motives of ‘*Gunung Banang*’ uses in *Takdir*

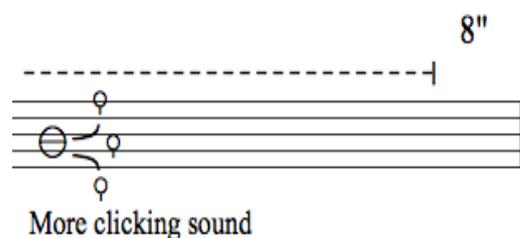
### 5.2.5.2 Extended Techniques

The author had the idea of inserting extended techniques (or ‘special effects’) after researching them. Quoting Cummings, Cope (1997) states that:

Many special effects for brass and woodwind instruments evolve from using mouthpieces alone or performing on the open bore of the instrument (Cummings, 1984). These effects extend from varieties of squeaks and

squawks, particularly on oboe and bassoon mouthpieces, to controllable pitches on brass instrument. ... The success of most of these varies from player to player. Composers should consult performers before expecting accurate performances. (Cope, 1997, p. 141)

There are several extended techniques used by the author in *Takdir*. The first is the percussive sound effect created by sounding the keypad without closing it and letting the keypad bounce back. This creates a natural sound from the saxophones' metallic material. This is combined with exhaling through the saxophone without sounding any pitches (Example 5.66). The air techniques of the saxophone in *Takdir* are used so that the author could create the mood of nature, intending the listener to sense peacefulness. The intention is to also create a lonely situation, where only the sounds of the wind and the objects' motion caused by the wind accompanying that person. It is also to represent a gift that was given by Allah SWT to mankind so that they could breathe on this earth, abide to Allah SWT's orders and be thankful at all times.



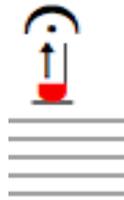
*Example 5.66.* Notation combining breathing with key clicking to create a wind sound

There is also usage of feathered beaming rhythms (accelerated and decelerated rhythmic patterns), which the author uses to create a tense and suspenseful mood (Example 5.67).



*Example 5.67. Feathered beaming*

Another technique is using an indeterminate high pitch in the altissimo range for saxophone (Example 5.68). In this piece, it gives a distorted sound that the author uses to change the atmosphere of the piece interrupting the sound of the wind.



*Example 5.68. Indeterminate high pitch notation*

### 5.2.5.3 The Use of Patah Lagu Melayu in *Takdir*

At the end of the section, the author uses the motive of patah lagu Melayu from ‘Gunung Banang’ as a melody to present the feeling of hope and begging (Example 5.69). The use of asli characteristics is in a sense, its own extended technique, as Malay asli music is known for its melancholic mood full of repentance, sadness, mellowness and soulfulness, similar to the mood intended by the other extended techniques.

Musical score for Example 5.69, featuring Alto Sax, Tenor Sax, and Baritone Sax parts. The score is in 2/4 time and includes melodic improvisation boxes. The Alto Sax part starts with a forte (f) dynamic and features a melodic line with improvisation boxes. The Tenor Sax part starts with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic and features a rhythmic pattern with improvisation boxes. The Baritone Sax part starts with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic and features a rhythmic pattern with improvisation boxes. The score is marked with a 60" tempo indicator.

Example 5.69. Melodic improvisation box in patah lagu Melayu

The author combines percussive saxophone techniques with the pattern of rentak asli (traditionally played by rebana) as accompaniment. The sound effect is created by hitting the keypad firmly producing a pitch (which do not match the saxophone fingering). The baritone plays the basic rentak asli pattern, and the alto and tenor saxophones play the interlocking rentak asli patterns (Example 5.70).

Musical score for Example 5.70, featuring Alto Sax, Tenor Sax, and Baritone Sax parts. The score is in 2/4 time and includes extended techniques for the rentak asli pattern. The Alto Sax part starts with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic and features a rhythmic pattern with improvisation boxes. The Tenor Sax part starts with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic and features a rhythmic pattern with improvisation boxes. The Baritone Sax part starts with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic and features a rhythmic pattern with improvisation boxes. The score is marked with a 60" tempo indicator.

Example 5.70. The use of extended techniques to create the rentak asli pattern



The duelling melodies between alto and tenor create a chaotic and disturbing mood for the piece. This is because the author wanted to portray the uncertainty and confusion of interpretation within his faith in current society. The usage of serialism and indeterminacy were successful because it is frequently associated with chaotic and high tension situations. This tension is closely related to daily life where every day consists of indeterminate situations such as theft and weather conditions. However, this still supports the author's philosophy where the author believes and accepts the fate in Islam and everything will be according to Allah SWT's will regardless of the result.

Kostelanetz (1996) states:



[Cage] continued to create indeterminate compositions, partly to expose his audience to the aurally chaotic character of the environment... Cage also took from Indian philosopher Ananda K. Coomaraswamy the suggestive principle that art imitates nature in its manner of operation. (Kostelanetz, p. 12)

The author used several rows (as opposed to following the script in *Asli Row*) for the alto and tenor (Example 5.71). This is to allow the saxophone players to improvise with notes given. Both the players play according to their own desire, but at the same time they need to emulate patah lagu Melayu in asli music to be different from a typical indeterminate composition. The players were provided with an instruction of the score as a guide for them to incorporate one another.



One theme is that indeterminacy differs from improvisation because indeterminacy incorporates imaginative constraints. The idea of the poetry-jazz duets was the speaker and musicians would respond to one another.... The principle of indeterminacy allows each performer to work apart from the other, indeed in this case unaware of each other, each with scores designed to minimize habit. (Kostelanetz, 1996, p. 82)

In this piece, the author sets the improvisations based on rhythmic patterns, melodic contours and the melismatic nature of patah lagu Melayu. In the improvisation box given in Example 5.71, the players can freely play the notes as they like played on the sequence given.

The musical score for Example 5.71 consists of five staves. The top staff is for Alto Sax. (treble clef), the second and third staves are also for Alto Sax. (treble clef), the fourth and fifth staves are for Ten. Sax. (treble clef), and the bottom staff is for Bari. Sax. (bass clef). The score is divided into three measures, each with a 60-second time limit indicated by a dashed line and '60"'. The first measure contains the instruction 'Avoid tempo (Play after each other)'. The second measure contains the instruction 'Play when appropriate these pitches at the indicated rhythm' and shows a melodic sequence with a crescendo. The third measure contains the instruction 'Play when appropriate' and shows a melodic sequence with a decrescendo. The Bari. Sax. staff starts with a dynamic marking of *mp* and features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with '+' signs above them. The Ten. Sax. staff has dynamic markings of *pp* and *f* with triplet markings '3'.

Example 5.71. The improvisation of patah lagu Melayu by using the scale from the tone row



In whole, this piece combines two cultural elements from two different eras in order to create a futuristic compositional element. However, the traditional elements of Malay asli music are still maintained in the piece by the author. Some of the sounds were completely changed, while the others were retained faithfully to the original sources. The piece creates several possible situations intended to leave the listeners with melancholy, enlightenment, and a new consciousness.





## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION



#### 6.1 Conclusion

The main goal of this research was to develop the author's creative compositional voice. The author approached this development by deliberately bringing together several divergent approaches to the craft of music composition. The first was the use of patah lagu Melayu and the second was the study of Western composition techniques. A third component, which is a more philosophical and metaphysical one, is the influence of the author's personal spirituality.

The author's new voice is distinctly different from other serialistic composers because of its Malay content. The inclusion of patah lagu Melayu, the rhythm of asli





music, makes this music different from those that were researched before. This research has shown the progression from one piece to another piece in presenting the understanding of the author in composing new pieces. It has different characteristics from the first composition that uses a tonal harmony approach, while the second piece employs more techniques of jazz harmonization. In the third piece, the atonal approach has been used to expand the knowledge and challenge the author's composition skills. By using the tone row of one composition, the author has created two more, one of which has a 12-tone system and the other piece relies on indeterminacy.

During this research, new knowledge of asli music, especially on patah lagu Melayu, was discovered. The material discovered regarding patah lagu Melayu and its patterns is new knowledge for the author because there is little official research on patah lagu Melayu. The author identified 10 patterns of patah lagu Melayu in existing songs based on Azura's thesis, and there are like more yet to be discovered. The research aided the author in identifying patah lagu Melayu in current Malay songs.

As mentioned before, patah lagu Melayu plays an important role in Malay asli music. The flourishing ornaments in the melodic line patterns identify the compositions as Malay asli music. The use of patah lagu Melayu in author's compositions changed the author's perspective on Malay asli music and tonality. The combination of the traditional Malay and the 20<sup>th</sup> century music has given birth to something previously inexperienced by the author. After countless experiments to





breathe new life into patah lagu Melayu, the process has introduced new knowledge in understanding and new philosophies to the author.

In the end, this research has expanded the author's paradigm on Malay asli music and philosophies of the *avant garde* movement music alike. Patah lagu Melayu represents the mellowness and gentleness of the Malay culture. These had been manipulated from the aspects of rhythmic patterns or scale movement and the characteristic of Malay asli music. In order to highlight the sound of patah lagu Melayu in the author's compositions, the usage of rentak asli has been injected into the piece to create the mood of Malay asli music. In the earlier pieces composed during this research, the usage of rentak asli had been the core to associate with their traditional characteristics because without it, it would be difficult to be accepted by



the audience due to the awkwardness of the music.

The author experimented with the integration of free-serialism and indeterminacy with elements of patah lagu Melayu, bonding Western and Malay approaches towards composition, hoping to gain new perspectives into composition and advance his understanding about compositional techniques. The practice of using 20<sup>th</sup> century methods of music composition is intentional for two main reasons. One is to explore and challenge the compositional skills of the author: The author rarely engaged into this kind of composition before, mostly writing pop and jazz compositions. At the end of this research, the author gains and widens his compositional skills especially through using the 20<sup>th</sup> century theory or concept in his composition. Secondly, the author's combined both Malay (patah lagu Melayu) and



Western compositional techniques in creating harmony and balance of these two elements. By this integration of both traditional and western elements, the author believes that it can be explored in a greater dimension.

Therefore, the uses of that new knowledge to the author of Western techniques have widened the author's understanding of the music composition processes. The author found that his ability to manipulate pitches to create new music has become more diverse and thus the author has a greater palette. Prior to this study, the author only wrote jazz and pop music but now, through this practise-led research, his creative voice expresses itself in modern art-music styles. This is shown significantly through the implementation of more sophisticated and complex formal structures, extended harmonic and melodic vocabulary, extended techniques, soundscapes beyond tonality, and new notation and graphical scores. Because of these changes, the author's artistic voice has changed considerably from a tonal and popular sound to a more elaborate and philosophically profound resonance.

Whilst developing his compositional voice, using Western techniques and thinking about Western thought and philosophy, the author wanted to keep intact his Malay metaphysical comprehension of reality. The Malay Muslim position of the author is a result of how Islam has been accepted by the Malay people, which stems from the Sunni tradition. The author is a Malay Muslim and this philosophy permeates his world-view: therefore, it is in his music. It is imperative that he makes music and art that is at one with his philosophical view of reality. Beginning with *Pujian* and ending with *Takdir*, the author portrays his comprehension of the notion of



‘faith’, as it is taught in Islamic theology. It is important to the author that the music speaks in a manner that aligns with Islamic thought and at the same time draws people’s attention to the beauty of a life of faith.

Therefore, the author’s creative musical voice embraces and employs Western music composition techniques yet maintains its Malay Islamic spirituality. In this way, the author preserves his personal beliefs and the influence of it in his music. These compositions balance his worldview and the approach of Western composition techniques.





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APPENDIX B

# Dondang Sayang

Hamzah Dolmat (transcribed)

Violin

Faridzz Muhamat Roli  
Copyright Controlled

$\text{♩} = 65$

*f* *mp*

*f* *mp*

*f*

*p*

*mf* *f*

*p* *pp*

2 Dondang Sayang

15 *f* *tr* *mp* 3

18 *V* *V*

21 *V* *V* *V* *tr* *tr*

24 *V*

28 *tr* *ff*

31 1. *tr*

34 2. *f*

APPENDIX C

# Burung Putih (Hamzah Dolmat)

Violin

## Score Analysis

Copyright Controlled  
Scoring by : Faridzz Muhamat Roli

♩ = 58

Violin

2 Burung Putih (Hamzah Dolmat)

Musical score for 'Burung Putih (Hamzah Dolmat)' in G major, 2/4 time. The score consists of seven staves of music, numbered 16 through 30. The notation includes treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), and various rhythmic values such as eighth and sixteenth notes. It features several trills (tr), triplets (3), and slurs. The piece concludes with a double bar line at measure 30.

APPENDIX D

**DAMAK**  
(sing by Rahim Jantan)

Transcribed by  
Nor Azura Binti Abu Bakar

**A**

Sa-yang-lah Da mak mu-dik-lah ke hu

lu Sing-gah mem-be -

li Si A-sam pa - ya A-hai Da-

mak ku sa - yang Sa-yang-lah

**B**

Da- mak sa-yang Da- mak mu di ke-hu

lu Sing-gah-mem-be - li Si-A-sam

pa - ya A-hai Da mak ku

sa - yang

