



## **Gender Performance Practice and Pathet Interpretation in *Miling: A Gendhing Kethuk 4 Awis Minggah 8 in Pelog Pathet Nem***

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| <b>Abstract</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                |                             |
| <p><i>This study examines gender performance practice (garap gender) in Miling, a gendhing kethuk 4 awis minggah 8 in pelog pathet nem, with particular attention to the musical strategies employed to negotiate the modulation from slendro pathet manyura to pelog pathet nem. This topic warrants scholarly attention due to the limited literature addressing gender performance practice within the context of modal and pathet transitions in this composition. The study aims to analyze the forms and principles of garap gender used in interpreting the balungan structure and the pathet characteristics embedded within the piece. A qualitative research design was employed, utilizing observation, literature review, and interviews as data collection techniques. The analysis was guided by Rahayu Supanggah's concept of garap, focusing on the dimensions of pathet interpretation (tafsir patet), cengkok interpretation (tafsir cengkok), wiledan, dynamics, and rambatan. The findings reveal that the gender performance practice in Miling does not adhere rigidly to the characteristics of a single principal pathet. The presence of balungan structures encompassing both pathet nem and pathet sanga requires performers to adapt their cengkok interpretations according to contextual musical demands. Consequently, the continuity of the gending's musical character is maintained through a creative negotiation between balungan structure, principal pathet orientation, and the practical conventions of garap gender.</i></p> |                                |                             |
| <b>Keywords:</b> Gender performance; Karawitan; Musical Modulation; Pathet Interpretation; Javanese Gamelan                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                |                             |
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### **Introduction**

Javanese *karawitan* in the Surakarta tradition has undergone significant transformation over the past century, extending beyond the cultural and institutional boundaries of the *keraton* and developing within broader social, educational, and community-based contexts. While the Surakarta court historically functioned as an important center for the formation of musical conventions and aesthetic standards, contemporary *karawitan* practice increasingly involves musicians, educational institutions, community ensembles, and independent artistic networks operating outside court structures (Supanggah, 2002; Supanggah, 2007; Karawitan Karaton Surakarta Research Report, 2020). This expansion has encouraged greater interpretative flexibility and contributed to the emergence of diverse performance approaches that continue to reshape the tradition while maintaining its cultural foundations.

The creativity of *pengrawit* is inseparable from the concept of *garap*, which occupies a central position in Javanese musical thought. Rather than functioning as a fixed performance model, *garap* operates as a dynamic interpretative system through which musicians negotiate musical material, instrumental technique, performance context, and aesthetic intention. As emphasized by Rahayu

Supanggah, *garap* constitutes an inherent form of creativity within traditional arts and serves as one of the defining characteristics of Javanese *karawitan* itself.

Within this framework, *pengrawit* continuously engage with established performance concepts such as *mrabot*, *mandheg*, *alih laras*, and *wolak-walik*. However, interpretative freedom remains regulated by aesthetic principles and performance norms including *enak*, *kepenak*, *mungguh*, *mulih*, and *trep*. These principles function as evaluative criteria through which performers assess the appropriateness and coherence of a musical realization. Consequently, innovation in *karawitan* is not understood as a departure from tradition but as a process of negotiating new possibilities within an existing aesthetic framework. This perspective is consistent with broader discussions in contemporary *karawitan* scholarship that view creativity as the reinterpretation and reconfiguration of inherited musical resources rather than the production of entirely new forms.

Grounded in these conventions, *pengrawit* continually modify and develop the realization of a *gending* through alternative *cengkok*, *wiledan*, instrumental treatments, and modal reinterpretations. Such practices demonstrate that Javanese *karawitan* remains a living musical tradition whose continuity depends upon ongoing processes of adaptation and creative engagement. In this regard, the development of new *garap* strategies reflects not only artistic experimentation but also a broader effort to sustain the relevance of traditional music within changing cultural environments and contemporary performance contexts (Wawancara Sukamso, February 7, 2022).

According to the *Catatan Gending Ing Atmawardawan* compiled by Warsadiningrat in 1926, *Miling* is classified as a *pratelan gendhing rebab* in *slendro pathet manyura*. Referring to the Sanskrit dictionary compiled by Purwadi and Eko Priyono, the word *miling* means “to see” or “to observe.” It is often combined with the word *milang*, forming the expression *milang-miling*, which conveys the meaning of “looking around” or “observing attentively.”

Buka .i26 ..23 55.. 6356 .3.2

Merong

|| .53 .253 .253 2356 .... 6623 55.. 6356 .... 6623 55.. 6356 33.. 3353 6521 6132

.123 2126 2321 6535 .555 2235 2353 2126 .... 6656 3561 6535 .356 3563 6521 6132

.123 2126 2321 6535 .555 2235 2353 2126 .... 6656 3561 6535 .356 3563 6521 6132 \*

5653 2126 3565 2232 5325 2356 3565 2232 11.. 11.. 3212 .i26 ..23 55.. 6356 3532||

Umpak

\*.5.3 1.6 .2.3 .1.6 .3.5 .1.6 .1.6 .3.2

Inggah

|| .5.3 .5.2 .5.3 .i.6 .i.6 .i.6 .2.1 .5.3 .2.1 .2.3 .1.2 .i.6 .i.6 .i.6 .2.1 .5.3

.2.1 .2.3 .1.2 .6.5 .6.5 .i.6 .i.6 .2.1 \*.3.2 .1.6 .3.2 .6.5 .6.5 .i.6 .i.6 .3.2

Suwuk

.3.2 .1.6 .3.2 .1.6 .3.2 .3.2 .3.1 .3.2

Figure 1. Balungan of *Miling*, *Gendhing Kethuk 4 Awis Minggah 8* in *Pelag Pathet Nem*.

Traditionally, *Miling* has been performed in *slendro pathet manyura*, employing *kendang kosek alus* in the *inggah* section. This study, however, seeks to develop an alternative realization of the composition by transposing it into *pelag pathet nem* and incorporating *kendang ciblon* in the *inggah*

section. Such an approach is consistent with the long-standing interpretative flexibility found in Javanese *karawitan*, in which musical realization is shaped not only by compositional structure but also by performance context, modal orientation, and the creative decisions of *pengrawit* (Supanggah, 2007; Sumarsam, 1995; Sutton, 1991). The possibility of transferring a composition across modal environments further reflects the dynamic relationship between *pathet*, *cengkok*, and performance practice within the gamelan tradition, where modal identity is often negotiated through interpretation rather than fixed exclusively by notation or formal classification (Hastanto, 2009; Perlman, 2004; Becker, 1980).

*Miling* was selected as the object of study due to its diversity of performance practices, continued existence within the repertory, rich developmental potential, and musical complexity. The study is approached through the theoretical framework of *garap gender*, reflecting the author's practical expertise as a *gender* performer. Several innovations are explored in this realization, including modal transposition (*alih laras*), the application of *ciblon wiled* treatment, *rangkep*, *mandheg*, and *kalajengaken*. These innovations are grounded in the understanding that *garap* functions as a creative interpretative system through which performers actively construct musical meaning rather than merely reproduce inherited models (Supanggah, 2007; Saraswati, 2013). Contemporary scholarship on Javanese music likewise emphasizes that creativity within *karawitan* emerges through the reinterpretation of existing musical resources and through the continuous negotiation between convention and innovation (Sutton, 1993; Sumarsam, 2013; Becker, 1980).

Previous scholars have examined *Miling* as a research subject; however, no study has specifically investigated its realization in *pelog pathet nem*. This aspect constitutes the primary distinction between the present study and earlier research. Moreover, while previous discussions of *pathet* have often focused on modal classification and structural analysis (Hood, 1954; Hastanto, 1985; Perlman, 2004), relatively little attention has been given to how modal transformation affects the practical realization of *cengkok*, *wiledan*, and *garap gender* in performance. By examining these relationships, the study contributes to a more performance-oriented understanding of modal reinterpretation in Javanese *karawitan*.

This study aims to explain the historical background, performance practice (*garap*), *pathet* characteristics, and documentation process of *Miling*, while simultaneously contributing to the development and preservation of traditional *gending* through alternative interpretative approaches. Through these objectives, the study seeks to enhance understanding of the knowledge, history, structure, and diversity of *gending* performance practices within Javanese *karawitan*. Furthermore, it is expected to enrich scholarly discourse on *gending* studies and provide a useful reference for future research in the field of Javanese musical traditions. More broadly, the study engages with current ethnomusicological discussions that view musical traditions not as static cultural inheritances but as dynamic systems continually reshaped through performance, interpretation, and creative agency (Becker, 1980; Sumarsam, 1995; Perlman, 2004; Sutton, 1991; Weiss, 2006).

## Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research approach to examine the *garap gender* of *Miling*, *gendhing kethuk 4 awis minggah 8 laras pelog pathet nem*. A qualitative design was selected because the research focuses on processes of musical interpretation, performance decision-making, and artistic considerations that emerge through practice and cannot be adequately explained through

quantitative measurement. The study seeks to understand how performers construct musical meaning and negotiate modal transformation through the application of *garap* principles in Javanese *karawitan* performance. This approach is consistent with qualitative traditions that emphasize the interpretation of meaning, lived experience, and cultural practice as central objects of inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Within ethnomusicology, musical knowledge is increasingly understood as embodied, performative, and context-dependent, requiring analytical approaches that integrate musical structure with performance practice (Merriam, 1964; Nettl, 2015; Rice, 2014).

The primary analytical framework is the concept of *garap* proposed by Rahayu Supanggah. This framework is employed to examine the realization of *Miling* from the stage of musical interpretation to its practical performance. According to Supanggah, *garap* constitutes a system of interconnected activities undertaken by individuals or groups, in which each component performs a distinct function while collectively contributing to a unified artistic outcome (Supanggah, 2007:3). Accordingly, the analysis focuses on the interaction among *materi garap* (musical material), *penggarap* (interpreter), *sarana garap* (performance media), *piranti garap* (performance devices), *penentu garap* (determinants of interpretation), and *pertimbangan garap* (artistic considerations). These elements provide the analytical basis for understanding how *Miling* is transformed from its conventional realization in *slendro pathet manyura* into a performance setting in *pelog pathet nem*. The use of *garap* as an analytical framework is further supported by studies that view Javanese musical performance as an interpretative process in which musicians actively construct meaning through interaction with inherited musical materials rather than merely reproducing fixed compositions (Becker, 1980; Sumarsam, 1995; Brinner, 1995).

To evaluate the appropriateness of interpretative decisions, this study also adopts Bambang Sosodoro's concept of *mungguh*. Within this perspective, *kemungguhan* is understood as a contextual rather than absolute principle. The appropriateness of a musical realization depends on performance context, the performer's aesthetic orientation, and the conventions governing Javanese *karawitan*. Although judgments of *mungguh* are inherently subjective, they remain grounded in established musical norms, values, and performance practices rather than arbitrary personal preference (Bambang Sosodoro R.J., 2015:30). In this study, the concept serves as an evaluative framework for assessing the suitability of *cengkok genderan*, particularly in *irama wiled* and *rangkep*, and for determining whether specific interpretative choices remain consistent with the aesthetic conventions of the tradition. Such an understanding resonates with broader ethnomusicological discussions that regard musical value and appropriateness as culturally negotiated rather than universally fixed (Blacking, 1973; Nettl, 2015).

In addition, the study employs Sri Hastanto's concept of *pathet* to analyze the relationship among *laras*, *pathet*, *cengkok*, *wiledan*, and *seleh*. This framework is particularly important for identifying how melodic characteristics associated with both *pathet nem* and *pathet sanga* within the *balungan* influence the selection and adaptation of *gender* patterns during performance. The analytical significance of *pathet* has also been emphasized in studies by Hood (1954), Becker (1980), Perlman (2004), and Sumarsam (1995), which demonstrate that modal organization in Javanese music functions not only as a theoretical system but also as a practical guide for musical interpretation and performance realization.

Data were collected through three complementary techniques: literature review, observation, and interviews. The literature review examined historical records, theoretical discussions, and previous

studies concerning *Miling*, *garap gender*, *pathet*, and modal transformation in Javanese *karawitan*. Observation focused on the *balungan* structure, modal organization, performance form, and practical realization of the composition on the *gender* instrument. Interviews were conducted with experienced *karawitan* practitioners to obtain insights into interpretative strategies, *cengkok* selection, and performance considerations related to the realization of the piece. Combining documentary sources, observation, and practitioner perspectives enabled methodological triangulation and strengthened the credibility of the findings (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, categorization, interpretation, and verification. Musical findings derived from observations and interviews were interpreted through the integrated perspectives of *garap*, *mungguh*, and *pathet*. Particular attention was given to the relationship between *balungan* structure and *cengkok* selection, the negotiation of modal characteristics across different *pathet* regions, and the strategies used to maintain musical coherence following the transformation from *slendro pathet manyura* to *pelog pathet nem*. Through this analytical procedure, the study demonstrates how *garap gender* functions not merely as a performance technique, but as a creative interpretative system that mediates between compositional structure, modal logic, and aesthetic convention in Javanese *karawitan*. This perspective aligns with contemporary ethnomusicological approaches that regard musical performance as a site where cultural knowledge, artistic agency, and musical structure are continuously produced and negotiated (Rice, 2014; Nettl, 2015; Sumarsam, 1995).

## Result and Discussion

*Garap* constitutes a fundamental element in the realization of a *gending*, as it determines how musical material is interpreted and transformed into an aesthetic performance. In this study, the analysis of *Miling* is organized into three interconnected aspects: musical analysis, *pathet* interpretation, and the interpretation of *gender cengkok*. These analytical components are employed to explain the musical considerations underlying the performance realization of the composition.

The *merong* section of *Miling* is performed in *irama dadi* using the *kendhangan setunggal merong kethuk 4 arang slendro* pattern. The selection of *cengkok* and *gender wiledan* is closely related to the melodic contour of the *balungan* and the musical character intended in the performance. Given the refined (*alus*) and tranquil nature of the *merong* section, the realization employs *kembang tiba* patterns accompanied by relatively simple *wiledan*. This approach supports melodic clarity while preserving the restrained aesthetic character associated with the section.

In contrast, the *inggah* section is designed to project a more animated and expressive (*prenes*) character. To achieve this effect, a *kendhangan ciblon* pattern in *irama wiled* is employed. The rhythmic vitality generated by the *ciblon* treatment contributes to a greater degree of interaction among the instrumental parts and creates a more dynamic musical atmosphere than that found in the *merong* section.

An examination of the *balungan* structure in the first and second *kenong* phrases of the *inggah* reveals melodic configurations that provide opportunities for the application of *andhegan*. From a *garap* perspective, the insertion of *andhegan* serves not merely as a structural pause but also as an interpretative device that highlights important melodic points, creates variation in musical flow, and reinforces the expressive character of the performance. The decision to apply *andhegan* in these

passages is therefore based on both structural considerations within the *balungan* and aesthetic considerations related to the overall realization of the composition.

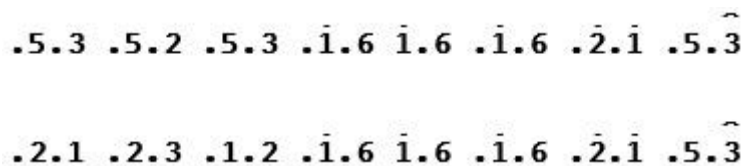


Figure 2. Balungan notation of the first and second *kenong* phrases in the *inggah* section of *Miling*.

## Garap Gender

The interpretation of *garap* in Surakarta-style *karawitan* encompasses several musical dimensions, including *pathet*, *cengkok*, *irama*, *laya*, dynamics, *wiledan*, instrumental articulation, and vocal realization. In this study, the discussion of *garap* is organized progressively, beginning with the analysis of *pathet* as the fundamental modal framework and proceeding toward specific interpretative techniques applied to the *gender* instrument.

### Pathet Analysis

The analysis of *pathet* in *Miling* is based on the concept proposed by Sri Hastanto. The identification of *pathet* begins with an examination of its fundamental musical indicator, namely *biang pathet*. According to Sri Hastanto (2009:117), *biang pathet* refers to short melodic formulas capable of shaping the performer's perception of particular tones and establishing a stronger sense of melodic resolution (*seleh*) than other tones. Examples of *biang pathet* include *thinthingan*, *grambyangan*, *senggrengan*, *pathetan*, *adangiyah*, *ayak-ayakan*, and *srepegan*.

The determination of *pathet* in a *gending* was conducted through a phrase-by-phrase analysis of the *balungan*. The modal identity of the composition was established by identifying the most dominant *biang pathet* occurrences across individual *gatra*. The analysis indicates that *Miling* exhibits a mixed modal character consisting of *manyura*, *sanga*, and *nem* elements. The distribution of *biang pathet* reveals that *manyura* accounts for approximately 80% of occurrences, while *nem* and *sanga* account for 9% and 11%, respectively. The predominance of *manyura* characteristics therefore justifies the classification of *Miling* as a *gending* in *slendro pathet manyura*.

This modal condition has significant implications for the realization of *garap gender*, particularly in the process of modal transformation from *slendro pathet manyura* to *pelog pathet nem*. Although the composition is performed in a different tuning system, traces of its original modal identity continue to influence the selection of *cengkok*, *wiledan*, and melodic resolution patterns.

### Cengkok Analysis

Within *gender* performance practice, *cengkok* represents the realization of melodic interpretation and constitutes one of the most important components of instrumental expression in Javanese *karawitan*. Traditionally, *cengkok* patterns are identified through names that have become widely recognized within formal *karawitan* education, such as *Ayu Kuning*, *Jarik Kawung*, *Puthut Gelut*, and *Dua Lolo*. These naming conventions function not only as pedagogical tools but also as practical references for interpreting *gending* notation.

In interpreting the *cengkok genderan* of *Miling*, the author draws upon pedagogical approaches acquired through formal instruction as well as performance practices inherited from previous generations of *pengrawit*. The selection of *cengkok* is guided by considerations of *pathet*, technical

feasibility, melodic continuity (*rambatan*), and the nature of the *seleh*, particularly the use of *gembyang* and *kempyung* resolutions.

Several passages require modifications to conventional *cengkok* realization due to the interaction of multiple *pathet* characteristics within the *balungan*. One example occurs in the melodic phrase 2321. Based on *pathet* analysis, this phrase belongs to *manyura*, whereas the following phrase (*ytet*) suggests a *sanga* orientation. To negotiate this modal transition, the author employs the *Dua Lolo cengkok* followed by *Tumurun 5*. In conventional *manyura* practice, *Dua Lolo* generally concludes with a *gembyang seleh*. However, in this realization a *kempyung seleh* is chosen to facilitate a smoother transition toward the subsequent *cengkok*. From a *garap* perspective, this solution is considered more practical, aesthetically coherent, and *mungguh* because it accommodates both technical movement and modal continuity. The use of *Dua Lolo Kempyung* therefore functions as an alternative interpretative strategy that mediates between *manyura* and *sanga* modal tendencies within the composition.

The analysis further demonstrates that the choice of *wiledan* is inseparable from the interpretation of *cengkok*. Consequently, the realization of *wiledan* in *Miling* is determined by the interaction among *pathet*, instrumental technique, *rambatan*, and the selected *seleh* patterns.

### Wiledan

*Wiledan* refers to ornamental elaborations introduced by performers to enrich and beautify a musical realization. In *gender* performance, the application of *wiledan* is highly dependent upon musical intuition, the character of the composition, and the prevailing *irama*. Two principal techniques are commonly employed in *gender* playing: *ukel pancaran* and *kembang tiba*. Because *wiledan* reflects individual interpretative choices, variations among performers are inevitable and form an essential aspect of artistic expression within Javanese *karawitan*.

### Cengkok Rambatan

*Rambatan* refers to the melodic connection that links one *seleh* to the next. In *gender* performance practice, it functions as a transitional pattern that facilitates the movement between melodic destinations while maintaining a coherent and *mungguh* realization. This principle is consistent with Suwito's statement that *gender* patterns should avoid leaping across more than two keys between successive points of melodic resolution (Suwito, interview, September 7, 2021).

The realization of *Miling* requires the frequent use of *rambatan* due to the coexistence of multiple *pathet* characteristics within the composition. In addition, transitions between *seleh gedhe* and *seleh sedang* often necessitate the application of *rambatan* to ensure ergonomic hand movement and maintain melodic continuity. As a result, *rambatan* serves both a technical and an aesthetic function, enabling performers to negotiate modal complexity while preserving the coherence of the *garap*.

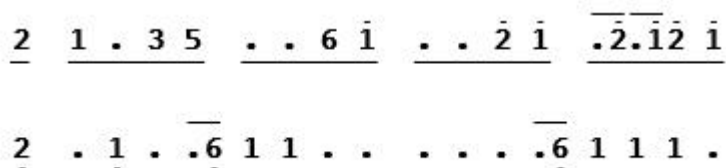


Figure 3. Example of a *rambatan* pattern in *Miling*.

In the example above, reaching the *Gantung 1 cengkok* from a *gembyang seleh* on tone 2 requires the application of *rambatan*, as the movement from low-register tone 2 (*gedhe*) to middle-register tone 1

(*sedang*) spans three intermediary tones. Without a *rambatan* pattern, the resulting melodic connection would appear less natural and would diminish the sense of *kemungguhan* in the performance realization.

### Gender Performance Techniques

The realization of *garap gender* in *Miling* involves a range of instrumental techniques that contribute not only to technical execution but also to the expressive and aesthetic character of the performance. These techniques function as important interpretative tools through which performers articulate melodic contours, shape musical phrases, and reinforce the character of particular *cengkok* and *pathet* contexts. The following discussion outlines the principal techniques employed in the realization of *Miling*.

#### Ukel

*Ukel* is a left-hand technique that combines *samparan* and *sarugan* in a continuous motion, producing a melodic effect that appears to circulate around a group of tones (Djoko Purwanto, 2020:50). Mastery of this technique is essential for achieving an expressive *gender* performance because it enhances melodic fluidity and ornamental richness. In the realization of *Miling*, *ukel* is frequently employed in *irama wiled* and *rangkep*, where denser melodic elaboration is required. Beyond its technical function, *ukel* contributes to the refinement and continuity of musical phrasing, allowing the performer to maintain a flowing melodic line while emphasizing important points of resolution.

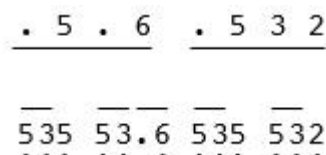


Figure 4. Example of the Application of the Ukel Technique Samparan

Etymologically, *samparan* derives from the word *sampar*, meaning “lightly touched” or “slightly brushed” (Poerwadarminta, 1939:542). In *gender* performance practice, *samparan* refers to a left-hand technique in which three pitches are struck sequentially from high to low, with the third pitch coordinated with a right-hand stroke on either a *gembyang*, *kempyung*, or another supporting tone (Djoko Purwanto, 2020:47).

In *Miling*, *samparan* is used extensively in the *ingga* section. The technique supports the elaboration of *cengkok* and contributes to the creation of a *kebak* (full and dense) sonic texture. Its use enriches melodic movement while reinforcing the dynamic interaction between the left and right hands, thereby enhancing the expressive quality of the performance.

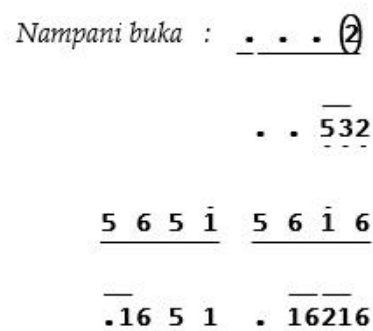


Figure 5. Example of the Application of the Samparan Technique in the Buka Section.

### Sarugan

*Sarugan* or *nyarug* is essentially the reverse of *samparan*. The technique involves striking three pitches sequentially from low to high with the left hand, while the third pitch is coordinated with a right-hand stroke on a *gembyang*, *kempyung*, or another supporting pitch (Djoko Purwanto, 2020:48). A distinctive characteristic of this technique is that the first two pitches are dampened simultaneously after the third pitch is sounded.

In the realization of *Miling*, *sarugan* functions as both a technical and expressive device. Together with *samparan*, it creates variation in melodic articulation and contributes to the performer's individual expression. The absence of these techniques would significantly reduce the ornamental richness and expressive depth characteristic of *gender* performance practice.

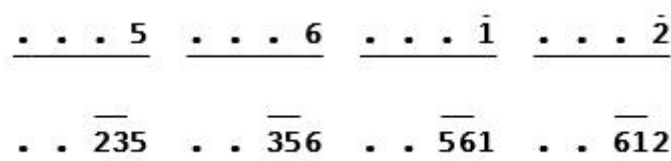


Figure 6. Example of the Application of the Sarugan Technique.

### Genukan

*Genukan* is a left-hand technique involving the repeated articulation of the same pitch. It is executed by damping a note immediately after it is sounded and before striking it again, thereby producing a discontinuous or interrupted sonic effect. In contrast, the right hand maintains a continuous and connected melodic flow (Djoko Purwanto, 2020:49). Consequently, the articulatory functions of the two hands differ significantly.

In *Miling*, *genukan* is primarily employed in the realization of *cengkok gantung*. The technique provides rhythmic emphasis and helps distinguish important melodic points, creating contrast within otherwise continuous melodic passages.

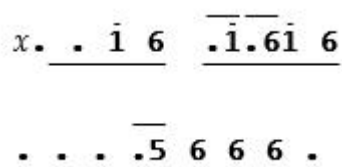


Figure 7. Example of the Application of the Genukan Technique.

### Mipil

*Mipil* refers to an alternating playing technique in which both hands strike the *gender* keys sequentially and continuously (Djoko Purwanto, 2020:45). The technique is based on the concept of *banyu mili* ("flowing water"), whereby the sound produced by the alternating movements of the right and left hands remains uninterrupted as it progresses from one pitch to another.

The technique is employed in the *umpak inggah* section, particularly on the *balungan* pattern .5.3.. Its primary function is to create melodic continuity and maintain a smooth flow of musical motion,

thereby supporting the transition between phrases and reinforcing the fluid character of the composition.

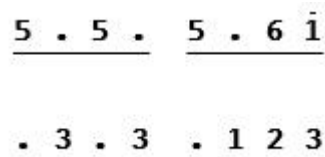


Figure 8. Example of the Application of the Mipil Technique.

### *Gembyungan*

*Gembyungan* is a technique in which both hands strike the instrument alternately while producing paired intervallic sonorities across the *gender* keys (Djoko Purwanto, 2020:50). The resulting sound emerges from the continuous interaction between the two hands, creating a sustained and interconnected melodic texture.

Within *Miling*, *gembyungan* appears in numerous *cengkok* realizations and functions as one of the principal techniques for articulating melodic resolutions. Its frequent use contributes to the fullness of the musical texture and strengthens the continuity of the melodic line. Moreover, *gembyungan* plays an important role in emphasizing structural points within the *cengkok* while preserving the aesthetic balance between melodic elaboration and modal orientation.

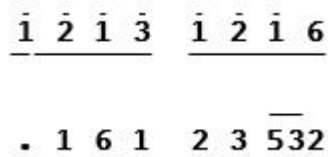


Figure 9. Example of the Application of the Gembyungan Technique.

### *Performance Dynamics*

Dynamics in Javanese *karawitan* extend beyond variations in volume and tempo; they encompass the ways in which musical interpretation is shaped to support the expressive needs of a performance. In the context of *garap gender*, dynamics are reflected through the selection of *cengkok*, the density of *wiledan*, the intensity of instrumental articulation, and the overall character projected by the musical realization. Consequently, dynamic contrast is not solely determined by changes in loudness or softness but also by differences in melodic elaboration and textural complexity.

More broadly, dynamics may be understood as a force that generates musical change within a performance. In Javanese *karawitan*, dynamic expression is manifested through fluctuations in volume, tempo, and musical energy, which contribute to the formation of particular emotional atmospheres. Through dynamic manipulation, performers communicate qualities such as refinement, calmness, excitement, liveliness, or intensity. These expressive effects emerge from the interaction between compositional structure and the interpretative decisions made by musicians during the performance process.

In *Miling*, dynamic development is primarily articulated through the realization of the *gender* part. Distinct dynamic characteristics can be observed between the *merong* and *ingga* sections. The *merong* is conceived as a refined (*alus*) and contemplative section; therefore, it is realized through relatively simple *wiledan*, employing *laku papat* patterns and the *kembang tiba* technique. This approach produces a clear melodic texture and supports the restrained character associated with the section.

By contrast, the *inggah* is designed to project a more animated, energetic, and expressive character. To achieve this effect, the realization employs *laku wolu cengkok* accompanied by denser and more elaborate *wiledan* through the application of the *ukel pancaran* technique. The increased complexity of melodic elaboration generates a fuller sonic texture and contributes to a stronger sense of movement and vitality. As a result, the dynamic contrast between the *merong* and *inggah* sections is created not only through differences in intensity but also through the strategic transformation of *garap gender*, enabling the performance to progress from a calm and restrained atmosphere toward a more vibrant and expressive musical character.

### Critical Reflection on the Artistic Process

The realization of *Miling* in *pelog pathet nem* raises an important question concerning the relationship between compositional structure and modal identity in Javanese *karawitan*. Conventional classifications identify *Miling* as a *slendro pathet manyura* composition. However, the present analysis reveals that the modal identity of the *gending* cannot be reduced solely to its conventional classification. The distribution of *biang pathet* demonstrates a predominance of *manyura* characteristics, yet melodic traces associated with *pathet sanga* and *pathet nem* are also embedded within the *balungan*. This finding suggests that modal identity in *karawitan* is not exclusively determined by nominal *pathet* designation but is continuously negotiated through melodic structure and performance realization.

From this perspective, *alih laras* should not be understood merely as a process of transferring a composition from one tuning system to another. Such an understanding risks reducing modal transformation to a technical operation. The findings of this study indicate that *alih laras* simultaneously requires a reinterpretation of melodic logic, phrase structure, *seleh* orientation, and *cengkok* selection. When *Miling* is transferred from *slendro pathet manyura* to *pelog pathet nem*, the original relationships among these elements are partially destabilized and must be reconstructed through *garap*.

The most significant implication concerns the role of *garap gender* in mediating modal ambiguity. Several *balungan* phrases generate situations in which conventional *manyura cengkok* no longer provide the most coherent musical solution. In such cases, the performer must negotiate between competing modal tendencies. The selection of *Dua Lolo Kempyung* rather than a conventional *gembyang* resolution exemplifies this process. The decision was not based solely on technical convenience but emerged from the need to maintain continuity between phrases exhibiting different modal orientations. This finding demonstrates that *cengkok* functions not as a fixed melodic formula but as a contextual interpretative resource whose realization depends upon the interaction among *pathet*, *seleh*, and phrase direction.

The analysis further reveals that *wiledan* and *rambatan* perform structural functions beyond ornamentation. In conventional pedagogical discourse, these elements are often treated as embellishments that enrich performance. In the realization of *Miling*, however, they function as mechanisms for maintaining modal coherence following *alih laras*. The frequent use of *rambatan* reflects the necessity of connecting melodic resolutions that, in the transformed modal environment, no longer possess the same degree of continuity found in the original version. Likewise, the expansion of *wiledan* in the *inggah* section serves not only to create dynamic contrast but also to reinforce modal direction and stabilize the listener's perception of *pathet*.

These findings point toward a broader implication for the study of Javanese *karawitan*. The results suggest that *pathet* should not be understood solely as a static modal category attached to a composition. Rather, *pathet* emerges through an ongoing interaction among *balungan*, instrumental realization, *cengkok* interpretation, and performance context. In this sense, the realization of *Miling* demonstrates that the continuity of modal identity depends as much on interpretative practice as on compositional structure itself.

Nevertheless, the findings of this study should be interpreted within several limitations. First, the analysis is based on a single case study, namely *Miling*, and therefore cannot be generalized to all forms of *alih laras* in Javanese *karawitan*. Different *gending* may possess distinct modal structures that produce different interpretative possibilities and constraints. Second, the realization examined in this study reflects a specific artistic perspective shaped by the author's training, aesthetic preferences, and performance experience. Alternative realizations by other *pengrawit* may produce different *cengkok* choices, *wiledan* patterns, and assessments of *kemungguhan*. Third, the study focuses primarily on the perspective of *garap gender*; consequently, the implications of *alih laras* for other instrumental parts, vocal realization, and ensemble interaction remain beyond the scope of the present analysis.

Despite these limitations, the study demonstrates that *alih laras* can function as a productive analytical and artistic strategy for reexamining the relationship between modal structure and performance practice. More importantly, it shows that innovation within Javanese *karawitan* does not necessarily emerge through the abandonment of tradition, but through a critical reinterpretation of the musical possibilities already contained within the tradition itself.

## Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that *garap gender* in *Miling*, *gendhing kethuk 4 awis minggah 8*, should not be understood merely as the application of instrumental techniques, but rather as a process of musical interpretation involving the negotiation of *balungan* structure, *pathet* orientation, *cengkok* selection, and aesthetic considerations in performance practice. The analysis of *biang pathet* reveals that although *Miling* is conventionally classified as a *slendro pathet manyura* composition, its melodic structure contains indications of *pathet sanga* and *pathet nem*. This finding suggests that *pathet* identity in Javanese *karawitan* is more dynamic and context-dependent than a fixed modal classification would imply.

By employing the concepts of *garap*, *biang pathet*, and *mungguh*, this study demonstrates that the transformation of *Miling* from *slendro pathet manyura* to *pelog pathet nem* can be achieved without compromising the musical coherence of the composition. Such a transformation requires the reconstruction of relationships among *cengkok*, *seleh*, *wiledan*, and *rambatan*, positioning *garap gender* as a critical mechanism for preserving musical continuity while enabling new interpretative possibilities. In this sense, *alih laras* should be understood not simply as pitch transposition, but as a process of modal reinterpretation that combines analytical reasoning with artistic decision-making. Within the broader context of contemporary global scholarship on traditional music, this study contributes to ongoing discussions concerning the relationship between tradition, creativity, and performance practice. Consistent with current ethnomusicological perspectives that view musical traditions as dynamic systems of knowledge rather than static cultural artifacts, the findings demonstrate that innovation can emerge through critical engagement with the internal logic of

tradition itself. Accordingly, this article proposes that *pathet* should be understood not only as a modal framework but also as a performative construct continuously shaped through *garap*. This perspective opens new avenues for research on modal flexibility, repertoire reinterpretation, and the role of performance practice in the construction of musical identity across diverse musical traditions.

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