

Tabuh *Leluangan* in the Piodalan Ceremony in Banjar Buagan, Pemecutan Kelod, Denpasar, Bali

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Abstract: *The development of the times has driven many changes in the community environment, including in the Balinese Karawitan community. One significant change is the rise of gending from Seka Gong Buagan, Pemecutan Kelod, Denpasar, Bali, namely gending leluangan, which origins and the form of the gending itself are unknown. Unwittingly, these tabuh tabuh have undergone changes in style over time by different trainers so that they can be debated by the penglingsir and Pemangku in the Dewa Yadnya ceremony. This study aims to investigate the origin of gending leluangan in Dewa Yadnya as well as its form and instrumentation. The research method used is a survey and statistical data analysis, with penglingsir who are still actively involved in Seka Gong Buagan. The results show that the gending used in the Dewa Yadnya Ceremony in Banjar Buagan is a leluangan type of gending that has experienced changes in rhythm, tempo, dynamics and harmony or different gangsa strokes so that problems arise in its structure. This finding indicates that the gending leluangan has the same structure as leluangan in general but has its own unique melody so that the percussion is not widely known by the local community and is only used in the Dewa Yadnya ceremony in Banjar Buagan.*

Keywords: piodalan, Dewa Yadnya ceremony, ritual music, tabuh *leluangan*, karawitan

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Introduction

Balinese traditional music possesses cultural values, musicality, musical expression, and a unique presentation style that distinguishes it from other traditional karawitan music. Traditional music serves at least three functions for the Balinese people: ritual, personal entertainment, and aesthetic presentation (Sugiarta, 2015).

As a ritual instrument, Balinese traditional music is presented to enhance the religious atmosphere of ceremonies (Sugiarta, 2015). Creating ritual music requires a deep instinct to ensure the presentation is ritual-oriented, with a majestic and religious atmosphere and feel. This is why many artists have created special instruments for specific ceremonies, particularly those dedicated to the Dewa Yadnya.

In the Dewa Yadnya ceremony there are many types of ceremonies, for example, the Ngaturang Idangan ceremony. The Ngaturang Idangan ceremony is a series of events as an expression of the gratitude of the community to him, so the community presents offerings in the form of rice containing side dishes, sarwa fruit, nutmeg, hanging nutmeg, these offerings are offered to him and all his troops as a reflection of gratitude for the waranugraha given (Dhana, 2023).

The penglingsir at that time intended to make a special *tabuh* for the ceremony with the *Leluangan* pattern and is still passed down to this day by the new generation. When the *tabuh* was inherited by new trainers, many changes occurred, so that the problem arose about how the musical structure of the *leluangan* *tabuh* should be.

The types of percussion and artists/gamelan players in Banjar Buagan, Pemecutan Kelod, Denpasar City, Province of Bali, are still unknown because many of the banjar elders have passed away, but according to the community it is true that Banjar Buagan used to have Seke Gong Semar Pegulingan. According to Gusti Anom, only a few figures are known, such as Tut Bina (a Janger gamelan figure), Bapak Tegug, and Pekak Nyarik. Then kekebyaran appeared in the area which was preceded by Seke Gong Jaya Kusuma Banjar Geladag. Therefore, the Banjar Buagan community intends to remodel the Semar Pegulingan gamelan into a Barungan Gong Kebyar.

Since 1975, efforts have been made to revive Semar Pegulingan, but the Banjar youth are more interested in the current kebyaran style. This allows the youth to explore various types of gending, such as *lelambatan*, kekebyaran, *lelonggoran*, *pelegongan*, and the most recent topic, gending *leluangan*. The penglingsir believe that the gending *leluangan* they created was inspired by existing *leluangan* gending, but with slightly different versions. According to the late Mr. Gusti Anom, perhaps at that time the composer listened to the *leluangan* gong beat and then worked on his own version, which was used at *piodalan* (pura's anniversary ceremonies) in temples in Banjar Buagan. He said that not only *leluangan* gending but also many other unknown gending, such as the Kekebyaran version of *Jejangeran*, other *piodalan* accompanying *tabuh*, and even the classic *tabuh* *Lelambatan*.

The majority of *leluangan* music compositions are very simple, both in terms of melodic composition and ornamental interpretation. The Gong Luang repertoire includes classical music, typically used for religious rituals (Mcphee, 2007). Its presence reflects the concept of "luang" or "silence," considered an ideal condition for welcoming and purifying the ceremonial space. Therefore, this music is not only seen as an aesthetic offering, but also as a means of symbolic communication between humans and spiritual elements. Over time, the presentation of *Tabuh Leluangan* has begun to shift, both in terms of musical composition, playing techniques, and its social function. However, in-depth textual studies of the structure, melodic motifs, and musical function of *Tabuh Leluangan* are still relatively limited (Muryana *et al.*, 2020). In fact, understanding the musical text in detail is very important for the preservation of local cultural values, as well as as a foundation for the development and innovation of traditional musical forms in the future. Based on this background, this paper aims to examine *Tabuh Leluangan* textually, by tracing its musical structure, the aesthetic elements contained, and its meaning in the ritual context. It is hoped that this study can contribute to the documentation and preservation of gending, especially in the realm of sacred traditional music.

Many previous researchers have studied ritual music in the context of Balinese gamelan (*karawitan*) using various approaches that highlight its

function, structure, and symbolic meaning. Sugiarta (2015) explains that traditional Balinese music has three main functions: as a ritual medium, personal entertainment, and aesthetic presentation. In a ritual context, traditional music serves to strengthen the religious atmosphere and create a profound spiritual impression for the community performing the ceremony. This research emphasizes the importance of deep musical and spiritual instincts in the creation and presentation of ceremonial instruments such as Dewa Yadnya.

In his study of the *luang gong* repertoire, Ardana (2012) highlighted that classical pieces such as *leluangan* reflect the concept of "luang" or silence, which is interpreted as a spiritual space to purify the ceremonial atmosphere. He emphasized that the simple and slow musical form actually reinforces the sacred value and depth of religious feeling within. This view demonstrates that the simplicity of structure in ritual music does not imply limitations, but rather an expression of subtlety and spiritual harmony between humans and the supernatural.

Putra (2019) focuses more on the technical aspects of playing, or *gagebug*, in Balinese gamelan. He argues that technique is not merely physical skill but also has symbolic meaning that reflects the musical and spiritual behavior of the performer. In this context, playing technique is a crucial element that differentiates classical and innovative pieces. *Gagebug* is understood not only as a technical aspect but also as a manifestation of the musician's aesthetics and *taksu* (musical soul) in the presentation of ritual works.

Dhana *et al.* (2023) examined the Ngaturang Idangan ritual as one of the rituals in the Dewa Yadnya ceremony. Their research demonstrated that offerings in the form of music and *sesajen* represent a manifestation of gratitude and symbolic communication between humans and spiritual powers. This research provides an understanding that ritual music functions not only aesthetically but also holds profound social and spiritual value in Balinese life.

Compared to previous studies, this paper has a more specific focus, namely tracing the origins, musical structure, and social context of the *leluangan gong* in Banjar Buagan Pemecutan Kelod. This research combines direct observation, interviews with *penglingsir* (leaders), and literature studies, resulting in contextual data regarding the transformation of the form and function of the gong. In this regard, the article makes an important contribution to the documentation of local traditions that have not previously received much scientific study. Compared with Ardana's (2009) study, which highlighted the conceptual aspects of *gong luang* in general, this study places more emphasis on the concrete application of the *leluangan* form, which has undergone changes in rhythm, tempo, and harmony due to differences in trainers from generation to generation. Similarly, compared with Arya (2015) and Putra (2019), this paper not only discusses function or technique, but also integrates structural analysis and musical notation as a form of scientific documentation of a tradition that is increasingly less known by the public.

Methodology

This study uses a qualitative method, where the analysis of various reviews and analyses contained therein is the result of processing data obtained through observation, interviews, literature review, and documentation. An interview is a purposeful conversation conducted by two parties: the interviewer who asks questions and the interviewee who provides answers (Pepatuzdu, 2016). The results of the interviews include the structural form of the *leluangan* gamelan. Observation techniques were also used to conduct direct observations with the remaining gamelan organizers to ensure the gamelan is as it is. In this study, data was collected through interviews and observations with the gamelan organizers of the banjar/sekehe (the village head) who manage the gamelan. Interviews with the banjar organizers, I Gusti Anom Jiwa and Kak Kontra (the former head of the banjar), revealed that many arts have become extinct, and several Kebyar gong gamelan pieces have been forgotten and unknown. However, the percussion accompanying the Yadnya ceremony is still passed down to this day.

The data processing method will go through several stages including data checking (editing), classification (classifying), verification (verifying), analysis (analyzing), and drawing conclusions (Rusli, 2025). The data is processed into an informative form so that it can be used. This information is combined from interview and observation data and converted so that the information is unified. This data processing is done manually and is used when the amount of data is not too large. The data processing process takes a long time, because it must be interviewed directly and observe the tool directly with great care. The function of this data processing is to store the results until the end of the process and obtain accurate final results.

In presenting data, editing (checking the data) is necessary again to ensure the data is valid. Data analysis, starting from the introduction containing the initial history, the research method used, the preparation of the tabuh *leluangan* notation, as well as the gamelan barungan used and analysis, writing the research report is very necessary. In presenting data, many things must be arranged, organized so that the research report that has been collected can be understood and analyzed according to the desired objectives.



[Source: Maherwan, 2025]

Figure 1. Part of a Dewa Yadnya Ceremony

Results and Discussion

Tabuh *Leluangan* is a classical composition in the Balinese gamelan gong gede or gong kebyar tradition, characterized by melodic, ritualistic, and symbolic elements. This instrument is typically played in the context of Dewa Yadnya ceremonies, such as temple piodalans, and serves as a musical offering to the gods. The name "*leluangan*" comes from the word "luang," meaning space or openness. Therefore, Tabuh *Leluangan* is often interpreted as a medium for opening a spiritual space between the niskala (invisible) and sekala (visible) worlds (Sutyasa et al., 2023).

The author conducted direct observations of the Tabuh *Leluangan* performance by the Eka Swara Mekar Jaya gong group in Banjar Buagan, Pemecutan Kelod Village, during the piodalan ceremony at the Dalem Tegeh Gumi Temple. Observations indicate that the average duration of the tabuh is approximately 5–10 minutes, depending on the ceremony. It is performed by a complete gamelan gong kebyar ensemble, featuring instruments such as gongs, kempur, kemong, kajar, gangsa, reong, male/female drums, ceng-ceng, and flutes. A sacred ceremonial element, Ngaturang Idangan, is performed after the maecan-ecan or kincang-kincung ceremony. The Tabuh *Leluangan* is believed to be a medium for communication with ancestral spirits and the gods, a form of yadnya ceremony.

Musical Structure and Elements

Overall, the gending *leluangan*, which comprises various musical elements such as melody, rhythm, and harmony, utilizes a unique sequence of notes. This uniqueness stems from its traditional playing style. Balinese karawitan does not stand alone as entertainment, but is closely embedded in the social and ritual context of Balinese society. This music serves as an accompaniment to religious ceremonies, dance performances, and traditional events, thus containing profound spiritual and symbolic values.

The application of playing techniques in Balinese gamelan can create a work pattern that can produce a classic work of art or a new innovation (Purna, 2022). In other words, these techniques can be used to identify a work of art, whether it is a classic or a new innovation. Therefore, playing technique is a crucial aspect in character analysis. The structure of this *leluangan* music piece, Pangawit, begins with slow tempos of terompong, jegog, and kendang, creating a silent and solemn atmosphere. This section aims to open the sacred (niskala) space for the presence of spiritual energy. Then, Pengawit, featuring more active gangsa and reong playing, creates a complex norot pattern. The short, slow tempo melody strongly supports the sacred ritual atmosphere. Finally, Pengecet, with its increasing tempo and dynamics, plays a more varied pattern of kendang, supported by ceng-ceng, which strengthens the rhythm. This section marks the culmination of the offering (sometimes with pengurat/tedun) and is marked by the Kale music piece.

Playing Techniques and Aesthetics

Technique or *gegebug* in Balinese gamelan is a fundamental aspect. Playing technique is not merely a skill but has a deeper connotation (Putra, 2019). In Gending *Leluangan*, it is the same as the gong *luang* gending in general, namely not dominated by *ubit-ubitan* or *kotekan*. The classicity of a gending is greatly influenced by the striking method applied. This striking method is called *gegebug*, which refers to the method of striking gamelan instruments. In the Lontar *Prakempa*, it is explained that *gegebug* is not only limited to the skill of striking and closing the musical instrument's blades, but has a deeper meaning. *Gegebug* is closely related to the way the music is arranged, where almost every musical instrument has a distinctive striking method and reflects the "physical behavior" of the instrument. In the group of classical gending, such as Gending *Palegongan*, Gending *Lelambatan*, Gending *Leluangan*, and Gending *Semar Pagulingan*, traditional playing techniques are used.

The Gong *Luang* playing technique is also the source of other Balinese gamelan playing techniques. In the Gong *Kebyar* gamelan, this technique is transformed into the term "*leluangan*". There are several playing techniques used, such as the *Terompong* instrument, there is a *Ngembat* stroke, which is hitting two identical notes simultaneously in one octave. Secondly, there is the *Ngempyung* stroke, which is hitting two unequal notes simultaneously, namely hitting two notes with two notes in the middle. Finally, there is the *Nyilih Asih* stroke, which is hitting several notes one by one, either done with one or two hands, sequentially or apart. In addition to the *terompong*, there is the *riong* instrument that only uses the *norot* technique, hitting two notes that follow the melodic pattern. There is also a playing technique on the *kendang* instrument in the gending *leluangan*, which is only played when looking for a gong or at the end of a song and is struck using the *pelvis*. As a characteristic of the gending *leluangan*, there is a *ceng-ceng kopyak* played at the end of the song.

It can be concluded that the *gegebug* or striking techniques in the Gong *Luang* gamelan are largely the same as those in the Gong *Kebyar* gamelan, so there are only slight musical differences compared to the Gong *Luang* gamelan. Musicality encompasses rhythm, melody, harmony, tempo, and dynamics, all packaged in a structure or composition. Another aspect is the Balinese gamelan's rich tuning system, which creates a variety of sounds to support the musical atmosphere. The conveyance of atmosphere in Balinese music is called musical expression, which is the various atmospheres created to influence mood. The aesthetics used in this percussion demonstrate the unity and togetherness between the musicians. There is a combination of *polos* and *sangsih* techniques that create a dense yet harmonious musical texture. The aesthetics of this percussion lie not only in the complexity of the techniques, but also in the strength of the feeling and *taksu* displayed by the musicians, making the music a living offering.

Gending Leluangan Notation

Notation is a system used to write musical pieces (gamelan pieces), containing specific meanings, namely pitch (tone) and duration (pitch range) for

each player (Suryanegara, 2018). Ornamentation is often left to the player's memory. However, in traditional practice, players often rely on memorization rather than notational references, resulting in differences in compositions even within the same notation. The tetabuhan (gamelan song) notation system is descriptive in nature, a recording system that records only the main melody of the song for memorization, rather than for presentation purposes. In this paper, the author notes the notation forms of various instruments so they can be understood and practiced.

Pengawit

Notasi Terompong :

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Pukulan Jublag :

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Pukulan Jegogan :

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Function and Meaning

Balinese gamelan is particularly closely linked to religious ceremonies (Handayani, 2024; Hendra, 2025; Hendra & Saptomo, 2025; Sari, 2024), particularly the Dewa Yadnya ritual. In its relationship with society, it serves as a carrier of art. In this case, religious characteristics are linked to their places of worship, namely temples. Piodalan ceremonies are almost always held, at least every full moon. They are held at every temple, especially at the Dalem Tegeh Gumi temple, Khayangan Rembingin temple, and Manik Toya temple, as well as the piodalan held at Merajan Banjar in the village environment. The *leluangan* drum serves as a medium for summoning spiritual powers and accompanies ritual processions. However, more deeply, this drum carries symbolic meaning, such as a space of spiritual openness. As its name suggests, "*leluangan*" depicts the space between the real/worldly (*sekala*) and invisible/spiritual (*niskala*) worlds (Ardana, 2012). The layered structure of the music reflects the Tri Hita Karana philosophy—the harmonious relationship between humans (*pawongan*), nature (*palemahan*), and God (*parhyangan*) (Mudana et al., 2018; Mudana et al., 2021; Mudana et al., 2023a; Mudana et al., 2023b; Parwati et al., 2022). The involvement of the gong group also serves as a form of community solidarity and togetherness in the ceremony.

Conclusion

The *leluangan* music performed by Sekaa Gong Eka Swara Mekar Jaya Banjar Buagan is a type of *leluangan* music that utilizes the gong kebyar gamelan as its medium of expression. The *leluangan* version with gong kebyar is slightly different from the *leluangan* gamelan with gong luang. In the Denpasar region, the phenomenon of *leluangan* music in yadnya rituals using gong kebyar gamelan has undergone significant development. Textually, this *leluangan* music has several repertoires that generally share similar characteristics and forms. The musical elements, consisting of melodic patterns, rhythm, harmony, and playing techniques, still adhere to the general structure of Balinese gamelan. However, what distinguishes it from other repertoires, such as *lelambatan*, is its relatively short form and the presence of patterns that combine gamelan luang and gong kebyar. The melody, rhythm, and harmony remain balanced and symmetrical.

The form of this *leluangan* music, derived from the patterns of the gong luang, can be said to be part of a group of ritual music that is simpler compared to other ritual music, such as classical *lelambatan*, *gambang* music, and the like. Textually, this *leluangan* music can give a majestic and magical impression. The ritual feeling radiated from the melody, rhythm, and harmony is then combined with the *maecan-ecan* ritual procession, thus touching the divinity of the *pemedek*. The symbolism of the tones contained in this *leluangan* music creates the beauty of the music. This message reflects that in every piodalan ceremony, there is a tone (musical feeling). Therefore, the presence of karawitan music in general, especially ritual music, is very important in the implementation of piodalan ceremonies.

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