

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The Malaysian state of Kelantan and the Southern Thai states of Yala, Pattani and Narathiwat, represent a significant corner of the Malay world bound together by a unique history. These states are source and home to many of the region's most vital and potent performing arts and rituals. Within this rich performance tapestry lies the Mak Yong theatre. Known for its court and folk history as well as its ritual practice, Mak Yong continues to be performed on rare occasions by the Malay-speaking inhabitants of this region till today.

The Mak Yong performance is opened by an invocatory song called the Lagu Menghadap Rebab, the Rebab Salutation Song, as known to the Kelantanese. The rebab or spiked bowed lute is the principal melodic instrument which accompanies the piece. To the South Thai Malays, the piece is known as Lagu Gerak Bangun, or, Song for the Arousing of Angin. Angin is an energy force and a core value in Malay society, operating as one of the differentiations of semangat, the vital animating source of life in traditional Malay society.

## Definitions of Mak Yong, Lagu Menghadap Rebab and Angin

The Mak Yong theatre genre is a pristine example of a uniquely Malay cultural expression. It is said to predate the advent of Islam to the Malay peninsula,<sup>1</sup> and is linked to ritual forms of healing such as shamanism.<sup>2</sup> Mak Yong's complex performance structures interweave elements of dance, music, a unique dramatic repertoire, and formal and improvised styles of speech, bound together within a tradition of healing as well as entertainment.

According to documented history on Mak Yong in Kelantan, the genre enjoyed the brief patronage of the Kelantan court in the early twentieth century.<sup>3</sup> Mak Yong has also been a major ritual and entertainment theatre vform in the villages and towns of the states of Yala, Pattani and Narathiwat, as well as Kelantan, Trengganu and Kedah. There is little evidence to support any conjecture as to Mak Yong's specific origins from a South Thai location, court or village.

Today, performances of Mak Yong in its traditional context are rare.<sup>4</sup> Those that occur are usually carried out for Mak Yong's ritual healing function either in conjunction with or without the shamanistic trance-healing form of Main Peteri.<sup>5</sup> Other performances of Mak Yong take place outside its traditional context as when Malaysian government agencies and

institutions of higher learning sponsor performances in urban auditoriums. Mak Yong's days as a travelling show playing from village to village alongside the popular Malay folk theatre called Bangsawan, are long since over, leaving behind an odd trace of its existence in village festivals where a melodramatic folk theatre sometimes masquerades in the name of Mak Yong.<sup>6</sup>

Mak Yong's artistic and aesthetic finesse can be said to have been achieved during its days of patronage by the Kelantan court. Its unique musical structures however, point undeniably to its ritual origins.<sup>7</sup>

Lagu Menghadap Rebab or Lagu Gerak Bangun, opens every performance of Mak Yong. It is the first music and dance event to be sung by the lead actor, a woman who plays the role of a mythic kingly hero called the Pak Yong (cf. PLATE 1). In this piece, the Pak Yong prepares to assume the role of the mythic character of the drama that is about to be enacted.

The Pak Yong performs this piece in her first appearance in the performance arena, and is seated directly in front of the rebab, which is placed on the east side of the performance arena. The wives of the Pak Yong character, called the Mak Yong, are seated behind the Pak Yong, who join her in the dancing and the chorus singing. The piece, sung solo by the

Pak Yong with the musical support of the rebab, is accompanied by a pair of drums called the gendang, a pair of hanging gongs called the tetawak, and a chorus of singers.<sup>8</sup>

The thesis uses the title Lagu Menghadap Rebab based on the title's familiar usage in the documented literature of Mak Yong in Kelantan. Lagu means musical piece.<sup>9</sup> To Mak Yong practitioners, a Mak Yong lagu refers to all the other performance elements in addition to music, such as dance and acting. The word menghadap means to face, or to have an audience or formal meeting with a ruler or a distinguished person.<sup>10</sup> Thus, the title Lagu Menghadap Rebab literally means the song in which the performer enters into an audience with the rebab in respectful homage. This title implies the rebab's musical and ritual significance in the Malay world,<sup>11</sup> as well as the cosmological symbolism of the rebab's placement on the eastern side of the performance arena.<sup>12</sup>

In the title Lagu Gerak Bangun, gerak means to move, and bangun means to arouse or to awaken. Together, gerak bangun, is used in the common Northeast Malaysian and Southeast Thai Malay dialect to describe the phenomenon of the invocation and arousal of angin.<sup>13</sup> The South Thai title Lagu Gerak Bangun therefore implies the important function of the musical piece which is to invoke the Pak Yong's angin, conceptualised as a mythic king. This process precedes the Mak Yong performance



proper.

The present thesis uses a definition of angin which focuses on its occurrence as a core spiritual value in the traditional Malay performing arts and traditional Malay notions of illnesses and cures. As mentioned previously, this interpretation sees angin as a differentiation or specialisation of semangat.<sup>14</sup>

### The Hypothesis

The hypothesis of the present thesis states that there is a creative dynamism between the musical performance of Lagu Menghadap Rebab and the operations of angin. This hypothesis supports the general view that music is reflexive of society, just as society is reflexive of music. In other words, the hypothesis states that as a micro cultural artifact, Lagu Menghadap Rebab is reflexive of certain social ritualistic structures, and that these ritualistic structures are in turn, reflexive of Lagu Menghadap Rebab. These ritualistic structures are the operations of angin.

There are some essential spiritual values in Malay society, e of which is semangat. Semangat is the all-encompassing energising force which is the source of all creation. In

South Thailand, the equivalent of semangat is said to be nenek moyang. One of the operations of semangat is to be found in angin.

The thesis explores the relationship between music and social psyche through a demonstration of the operations of angin within the musical processes of Lagu Menghadap Rebab. As angin is a critical energy and therefore a core value in Malay society, analysing performance, in this case the music of Lagu Menghadap Rebab, involves an intricate analysis of Malay psyche.

The hypothesis has as its basis the search to understand the unique musical structure of Lagu Menghadap Rebab which remains unclarified by previous musical theories. In Lagu Menghadap Rebab, angin is the energy that links ritual and musical structures resulting in its unique musical form and style. The South Thai title Lagu Gerak Bangun supports the present hypothesis of the primary function of angin. The Kelantanese title Lagu Menghadap Rebab implies that the rebab is a prominent symbol in this performance event, bridging the ritual, social and musical spheres of performance. The rebab is not exactly a manifestation of angin, but because the interchange between the rebab and rebab-player produces a semangat-like energy, the rebab plays a central role in the operations of angin in Mak Yong, in its interaction with a

core value in Malay society.<sup>15</sup>

In order to understand the manifestation of angin in the performance of Lagu Menghadap Rebab, it is necessary to investigate the overall operations of angin as an energy-force in Malay society which occurs in illness and cures. The explanation provided in the thesis, illustrates the link between the healing function of spiritual performances of Mak Yong theatre and traditional forms of ritual healing such as the elaborate Main Peteri ritual, both of which are centred on angin.

In addition, the thesis reviews the various aspects and interpretations of angin as defined by previous writers. Among these are the concepts of angin as nafsu (desire), angin as a personality force, angin as a performance energy called flow,<sup>16</sup> the different types of angin, and the different intensity levels of the expression of angin which includes trance, the altered state of consciousness. In the present thesis, all these concepts are drawn together, promoting an interpretation of angin that includes its expression as the unique aesthetic energy of Lagu Menghadap Rebab.

Indigenous concepts on the acquisition of Mak Yong knowledge and skill, including the concept of nenek moyang (ancestors), provide further information regarding the nature of angin.

The present thesis thus reveals that the idiom of the arousal of angin and the related concepts such as nenek moyang, is the performance event of Lagu Menghadap Rebab itself. The piece invokes and arouses angin which is conceptualised as a mythic king in residence within the psyche of the beneficiary, i.e., Pak Yong or patient.<sup>17</sup>

In Lagu Menghadap Rebab, the interchange between the rebab and rebab-player produces angin. In other words, rebab music invokes the angin of the Pak Yong. At the same time, the attitude of the Pak Yong acknowledges the original and archetypical teacher, a traditional source of all knowledge and inspiration (cf. PLATE 2).

Evidence of the ritual importance of the rebab in Mak Yong is outlined as follows:

- 1) in the preliminary invocations to the guardian spirits of the musical instruments which invoke the ritual potency of its musical attributes,
- 2) in the rebab's role as a catalyst for performance,
- 3) in the anthropomorphic significance of the rebab,
- 4) in the implications of the rebab's centrality in origin myths of Mak Yong from South Thailand.

The rebab is also considered to be the musical leader of the Mak Yong orchestra, as the teacher of musical performance, or

guru sekalian permainan (cf. PLATE 3). Musically, the rebab leads in establishing the tonalities utilised in Mak Yong, in negotiation with the vocal part. This is performed through the solo rebab introduction to each musical piece found in the Mak Yong repertoire, which informs the musicians and actors of the musical piece about to be performed. In addition, this function as tonal and melodic guide is an integral part of the overall melodic structures of Lagu Menghadap Rebab as it cues the singer in her melodic entries by providing the particular pitch or pitches about to be sung. This function is most evident in the first of the two-part Lagu Menghadap Rebab.

The operations of angin are evident in the music of Lagu Menghadap Rebab in the following ways. The sung-text is a metaphor for the invocation and arousal of angin. The melodic style of the lead actress, called the Pak Yong, indicates angin through its distinct vocal expressivity. The Pak Yong's melodic expressivity is such that it results in control over compositional aspects of the piece, such as form and rhythm, in negotiation with the rebab part.

Thus, angin is evident in the two-part structure of the piece which, in its first part is formally determined by the Pak Yong's expressive melodic style. Secondly, the operations of angin are evident in the musical intensification of the second part of the piece, where structure, tonality, dance,

compositional strategies, melodies and motivations combine to effect a unique temporal dynamism.

The present thesis culminates in a theory whereby Lagu Menghadap Rebab is seen to represent an Ur-form or archetypical form of Mak Yong music.

The twentieth century dynamics of social and political change in the Peninsula have brought about accompanying changes in the traditional Malay performing arts. Today, the very foundation of Mak Yong - its traditional Malay concepts and beliefs - is succumbing to intense social, religious, political and economic change as Malaysia undergoes rapid industrialisation coupled with the impact of a nation-wide Islamisation process. (cf. PLATE 4).

The purpose of this thesis is to highlight the dynamics of a key Malay expressive system chiefly through the musical analysis of the principal musical piece taken from the ritual performance of Mak Yong. The research and text, as of 1993-96, represent a historical and ethnographic present. The thesis describes attitudes, beliefs, practices and knowledge gained from a review of previous writing on Mak Yong and observed during field work with key Mak Yong personalities. For these leading Mak Yong exponents, the described events remain socially and ritually potent.

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## Scope

The significance of the present thesis is justified in its contribution to the following areas outlined below.

As an ethnomusicological study on an aspect of Malay culture, the present thesis investigates the previously unanalysed musical piece, Lagu Menghadap Rebab. Lagu Menghadap Rebab is the most complex and most important piece in the musical repertoire of Mak Yong. Furthermore, its musical form contains structures not found in the most common formal structures of Mak Yong music in general, which have been previously researched.<sup>18</sup> The thesis presents the transcription and analyses of three versions of Lagu Menghadap Rebab as material basis. Three samples of the piece are analysed, as opposed to one, in order to accurately reflect the stylistic variability of musical performance which is one of the hallmarks of traditional Malay performance. Of these three versions, one represents the contemporary Southern Thai style, one represents the historic Kelantanese court style, and one the contemporary Kelantanese style. See APPENDIX A. All three sample versions are part of the outcome of original fieldwork which I undertook during the course of research. They are taken from performances of Mak Yong which I personally witnessed, recorded and transcribed.

In addition, the present thesis extends the scope of the present knowledge of Mak Yong to include information regarding the Southern Thai practice, which is documented. As mentioned previously, one of the versions transcribed for the present thesis represents an example of the South Thai style of Lagu Menghadap Rebab. Extensive interviews with South Thai practitioners contributed much to understanding the ritual implications of angin in Mak Yong. In general the information generated from the research into Mak Yong in South Thailand, has provided profound insight into the ritual element in Mak Yong's musical practice.

The present thesis is also justified in that previous studies have not dealt with the performance methodologies of Mak Yong, nor undertaken a description of the relationship between music and ritual. The present thesis upholds Alan P. Merriam's three-part model of ethnomusicological study in its endeavour to demonstrate that musical sound is the outcome of certain concepts and beliefs held by a society, which govern the behaviour of its people, which in turn affects their cultural and performative practices.<sup>19</sup> This method of analysis states that musical structures can speak of some of the deepest beliefs of a society. So far, no study on the traditional utilisation of performance energies has been carried out, in terms of understanding the motivations and ideas that drive the performance's musical systems. The present thesis has set



out to link the musical structures of a micro-cultural artifact, the musical piece, Lagu Menghadap Rebab, to some of the deepest-held beliefs of the traditional Malay society, in this case, the concept of angin. In order to understand the role of angin in Malay society, the present thesis utilises Krishen Jit's theory of angin as a specialisation of semangat, as mentioned previously.

The definition of angin used in the present thesis has been developed specifically to include its function as an aesthetical and energising force in performance. During the course of research, an extensive review of previous writings on angin and other traditional Malay cosmological symbols was undertaken. Previous writings have contained disparate interpretations of angin. In some cases, the interpretations have been found to be confined to the ritual realm, and in others, such performative theories of traditional Malay performance have remained in the theoretical arena. The thrust of the research was to develop and demonstrate an interpretation of angin as a phenomenon in performance, in addition to ritual. This particular theory of angin as a performance energy was first advanced by Krishen Jit, as mentioned previously. In the present thesis, the previous findings are consolidated and extended to include, and demonstrate, a definition of angin as an aesthetical and energising agent in performance.

In the process of research, the link between Mak Yong and Main Peteri has been reinforced via the analysis of the operations of angin, as well as the ritual agency of the rebab. This has also reinforced the common ground between the ritual and non-ritual performances of Mak Yong.

Research findings on the rebab are presented which demonstrate the ritual and musical significance of this musical instrument. The symbolic and sonic properties of the rebab and the significance of the rebab-player can almost be said to represent a crucial link between the ritual and performative dimensions of Mak Yong, as well as of Main Peteri.

As an ethnomusicological study, the thesis has advanced the understanding of Mak Yong music in the following areas.

Firstly, it has developed a working methodology for the performance of the rebab, one of the Malay world's most striking musical instruments. Using this methodology, the present thesis has demonstrated the influence of the performance style of the rebab on the tonalities of Lagu Menghadap Rebab's rebab and vocal melodies. This knowledge has contributed to understanding the melodic procedure of Lagu Menghadap Rebab, and thus Mak Yong music general, where there is a close relationship between the tonal range of the vocal melodies with that of the rebab. Additionally, the thesis has

provided an explanation for a principal characteristic of Mak Yong melodic style found in the deliberate expressivity by which both the vocal and rebab parts are performed. This characteristic is the key ingredient which shapes Lagu Menghadap Rebab's unique formal structure. This melodic style of song has been found to be based on angin.

During the course of research, it was found that often, more than one name existed for a musical piece in the Mak Yong repertoire. The best example of this is the usage of the title Lagu Gerak Bangun by the South Thai practitioners as compared with Lagu Menghadap Rebab by the Kelantanese. This raises the issue that of the titles of pieces gathered by various writers thus far,<sup>20</sup> no comprehensive work on the categorisation of Mak Yong music has been carried out linking the specific melodies with their variously known titles. This issue is beyond the scope of the present thesis. However, investigation of this kind extends the possibility of cross-genre studies of the music of traditional Kelantanese performance such as Mak Yong, Main Peteri, Wayang Kulit Siam and Manora.

Additional information has been provided by the thesis to support the speculations of Mak Yong's origins in animism and the ritual practice of shamanism. The thesis also extends previous commentary on the performance style of the singer,

based on its hypothesis. The agency of the nenek moyang as a specialisation of semangat, and its connection with the concept of angin, has been found to exist extensively within the ritual complexes of the South Thai practitioners. It is thus presented alongside the discussion on angin.

Lastly, the thesis provides a socio-political commentary of the significance of the Laqu Menghadap Rebab, and with it, of Mak Yong.

Twenty years ago at Mak Yong's latest revival,<sup>21</sup> the traditional practitioners of Mak Yong were old, and dying away with no younger generation to continue the tradition. In particular, national policies on culture, the fundamentalist state government in Kelantan, the largely neglected Malay minority culture in South Thailand, and increasing religious conservativeness, conspire to eradicate or alter the conceptual basis of cultural forms from their very important ritual birth-places.

The present thesis has been undertaken in the belief that research of this nature can illustrate that the music of Mak Yong is centred in the human condition, through angin, a core value in Malay society.

## Research Methodology, Techniques and Procedures

The present study is the outcome of research into previously documented resources on Mak Yong, and original fieldwork carried out in Kelantan, Trengganu, Narathiwat, Pattani, and Yala, including a visit to the Riau island of Penyengat.

The thesis employed three methods of research work in the field. These included interviewing informants, taking lessons to learn to play the rebab, and taping, videoing and photographing. The musical material obtained was then subjected to detailed analysis.

The initial preparation for this research project consisted of library research and viewing of previously recorded performances of Mak Yong. Over a period of about six months I also took rebab lessons, and was introduced to the basics of the gong and drumming systems from a Kelantanese musician currently working at one of the principal, privately-sponsored cultural centres in Kuala Lumpur.<sup>22</sup> Subsequent lessons on the rebab with other rebab specialists were undertaken at random, during the different field-trips.<sup>23</sup>

The major part of the fieldwork took place between November 1992 and September 1994. During this time, I made several trips to the states of Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat, as well

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as to Kelantan and Trengganu. No contacts had previously been established with Mak Yong practitioners in South Thailand, so preliminary visits involved sourcing Mak Yong practitioners through interviews with university personnel at the Prince of Songkhla University in Pattani, and teachers and students at Yala Teachers College. These word-of-mouth contacts were then followed up by locating the practitioners mentioned, interviewing and eventually sponsoring two Mak Yong performances by two different troupes for recording purposes.

The decision was made to sponsor these performances in order to overcome the logistical difficulty in obtaining live sound material on South Thai Mak Yong. This was due to the fact that in South Thailand, there is hardly any government-sponsored activity pertaining to the documentation of Mak Yong to the extent that has occurred in Malaysia.<sup>24</sup> However, subsequent to these recordings, I was most fortunate to hear of and witness a three-night Mak Yong ritual in one of the Thai villages. Not all contacts obtained were personally verifiable. This was the result of logistical difficulties, compounded by financial and time constraints, which included getting transport to go to the villages.

Field work in Kelantan consisted of visits to survey the range of Mak Yong practitioners still surviving, followed by personal interviews and the recording of performances as and

when they occurred. I was also able to attend a significant number of performances of Mak Yong, Mak Yong-Peteri,<sup>25</sup> Main Peteri, Manora,<sup>26</sup> Wayang Kulit Siam,<sup>27</sup> Tarik Selampit,<sup>28</sup> and Silat<sup>29</sup> between October 1993 and September 1994. Of these, a total of eighteen nights of Mak Yong and Mak Yong-Main Peteri performances in Kelantan, Trengganu, Kuala Lumpur and Penang were witnessed and recorded, consisting of ritual performances, as well as government-sponsored shows. This involved roughly seven groups or group combinations.<sup>30</sup>

Most of the performances in Kelantan and Trengganu were performed in their traditional context.<sup>31</sup> In other words, they were requested for and sponsored by Malays seeking its traditional therapeutic properties.<sup>32</sup> The other performances consisted of a series of Mak Yong and Manora recordings conducted by Ghulam-Sarwar in the field,<sup>33</sup> and those sponsored by government agencies such as the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism and Kuala Lumpur City Hall. Video and audio recordings were made of most of these performances.

Towards the end of the research period, two trips were made to the Sumatran island of Bintan to record a rare two-night performance of Mak Yong in the Riau archipelago on the occasion of a Malay wedding.

My principal informants were Paksu Seman Besar from Teluk

Renjuna, leader of a Mak Yong group, bomoh and rebab-player, also in his youth a silat-player and gendang or drum player. The legendary Che Ning alias Che Som binti Sulong originated from South Thailand and used to lead her own Mak Yong and Bangsawan troupe.<sup>34</sup> Mariam Titisan Air Mata in Trengganu, Wok Leh and Mak Timah his wife in Saiburi, Pattani, and Pak Hamzah Awang, the award winning Dalang or shadow-play puppeteer from Kelantan were also principal and valued informants.

Most of the information on the implications of angin and other ritual concerns in Mak Yong performance came from the South Thai Pak Yong actresses and bomohs, and the Kelantanese Mak Yong bomohs and rebab-players. In particular, these practitioners are distinguished by the fact of their involvement in and knowledge of the healing rites of Mak Yong. In comparison, it was found that contemporary Kelantanese Pak Yong actresses, with the exception of Mak Yong bomohs and rebab-players, belong to a generation of performers, who have inherited much less of the complex rituals and knowledge which pervade the practice of Mak Yong.

Following these field trips, transcriptions of different versions of Lagu Menghadap Rebab were carried out and analysed.



## Review of Previous Literature on Mak Yong Music

The following section reviews extant literature on the music of Mak Yong.

Mak Yong is a well documented subject. The most comprehensive research on Mak Yong in general has been carried out by Ghulam-Sarwar beginning with his unpublished doctoral thesis,<sup>35</sup> followed by several articles recently brought together in Panggung Semar, a collection of some previously published essays on traditional Malay theatre. Ghulam-Sarwar's analysis of the Dewa Muda metaphor (the principal figure in Mak Yong mythology), states that it is a key indicator of Mak Yong's hypothesised roots in shamanism.<sup>36</sup> This analysis also contains an important reference to the ritual significance of the rebab. The far-reaching significance of his work must be recognised as it records and documents the most essential aspects of Mak Yong in terms of its performance structures, use of music and dance, rituals and origins.

Other significant works in which Mak Yong is documented are those undertaken by W.W. Skeat (1965 [1900]), J. Cuisinier (1936), Mubin Sheppard (1969, 1971, 1974 etc), W.P. Malm (1969, 1972, 1974a, 1974b, 1977), Mohamed Affandi Ismail (1973). These have been reviewed by Ghulam-Sarwar.<sup>37</sup>

The chief contributors to knowledge regarding the music of Mak Yong are Ghulam-Sarwar, Malm<sup>38</sup> and Matusky<sup>39</sup>. The works of all three, in particular those of Matusky, have been referred to extensively during the course of writing the present thesis. Ghulam-Sarwar provides an analysis of the traditionally defined categories of the extant musical repertoire of Mak Yong according to their use in theatre.<sup>40</sup> Malm's introductory survey of Mak Yong music makes insightful observations into musical style, commenting on the external influences which have pervaded the history of Malay musical culture. Matusky's work stands out as the principal ethnomusicological study of Mak Yong music. Her descriptive analysis of musical form links the music of Mak Yong with the neighbouring genre of Wayang Kulit Siam<sup>41</sup> in the usage of the gong-unit as the basis of form. Collectively, these works establish a strong foundation for further research into Mak Yong music. Their work is discussed further below.

The chief informants of Ghulam-Sarwar and Malm were court performers in the Kelantanese palace prior to the Second World War. The gathering of the remaining old Kelantanese court practitioners and their relatives from before the Second World War for Professor Malm's archival recordings of Mak Yong plays, constituted a pool of informants who continued to be a major source of information well into the 1970s, i.e. well into Ghulam-Sarwar's period of research.<sup>42</sup> They are among the

performers in the recordings of the Mak Yong pieces analysed by Matusky.<sup>43</sup> This distinction has been made to clarify the varying contexts of Mak Yong performance, and backgrounds of Mak Yong informants, because the present thesis utilises in addition, new sources of information.

A perceptive analysis of the function of Lagu Menghadap Rebab by Ghulam-Sarwar<sup>44</sup> is revealed principally through his investigation of the origin myths of Mak Yong and analysis of song-text where he points out the symbolical transformation of the lead singer into the mythic king-hero. In Lagu Menghadap Rebab there is a "ritualised legitimisation of this transformation"<sup>45</sup> as the actress prepares to take on the role of this chief character in the Mak Yong drama. According to Ghulam-Sarwar:

"...[the] rebab is regarded as a sacred instrument, as a symbol of the ultimate teacher: guru yang usul, guru yang mula. Hence the need for the ornate and highly elaborate menghadap rebab dance and song sequence which salutes both this instrument and the mysterious awakening east."<sup>46</sup>

Information on the musical instruments of the Mak Yong musical ensemble - the rebab, a pair of hand-beaten double-headed drums called the gendang ibu and gendang anak, and a pair of hanging gongs called tetawak - is covered by Ghulam-Sarwar,

Malm and Matusky. The most comprehensive descriptions are by Matusky in her book "Malaysian Shadow Play and Music: Continuity of an Oral Tradition" as well as her article on "Music of the Mak Yong Theater of Kelantan". The performance techniques on the gendang are described in Matusky's article on "Musical Instruments and Musicians of the Malay Shadow Puppet Theater."<sup>47</sup>

General discussion on the musical repertoire of Mak Yong has been carried out by Sheppard, Malm and Ghulam-Sarwar,<sup>48</sup> and the problems related to the categorisation of repertoire was mentioned previously.

Research into musical form has been touched upon by Malm and dealt with most comprehensively by Matusky. Malm pointed out the three layers of musical events which occur in Mak Yong music. These consist of the structural layer, played by the gongs, the rhythmic layer played by the drums, and the melodic layer carried by the rebab and vocal parts, and the alternating chorus of voices.<sup>49</sup> Malm writes thus:

"...[a]nyone familiar with Southeast Asian music will recognize that the gong part forms a colotomic structure, that is, it divides the music into temporal units by the regular entrance of specific sounds in a specific order on specific beats."<sup>50</sup>

Extending beyond the scope of Malm's work is that of Matusky which stands out for its detailed analysis of two principal songs in Mak Yong. This study demonstrates the function of the gongan, i.e. gong-unit, as the determinant of formal structure.<sup>51</sup> In this study, Matusky's analysis of the two songs Lagu Sedayung Pak Yong and Lagu Sedayung Mak Yong demonstrates two of the most common types of formal structures found in Mak Yong music.

In these pieces, the melody of the vocal and rebab parts as well as the rhythmic component are demonstrated to be oriented around gongan. Through such structural analyses Matusky provides the larger regional context for Mak Yong's musical style in its links with the widespread usage of bossed gongs in Southeast Asia and the occurrence of the concept of cyclical time which is marked by the gongs. The transcriptions and visual aids utilised in the musical argument of the present thesis are based on models developed by Matusky. These models illustrate her work and include precise Western-style scoring as well as other visual models to demonstrate the various structural aspects of the music.<sup>52</sup> These models were originally developed in Matusky's structural analyses of the musical repertoire of Wayang Kulit Siam.<sup>53</sup>

The complex interplay between the rebab and vocal parts has been described by Malm as a heterophonic relationship where

both parts give "different versions of the basic melody at the same time."<sup>54</sup> Matuksy's analysis also points out that the highly ornamented melodies and the ornaments themselves as well as the occurrence of the heterophonic relationship mentioned above, and the actual presence and use of the rebab are the very factors which establish a strong connection with the Middle East.<sup>55</sup>

Both writers have thus attempted to situate the music of Mak Yong within the context of the multi-layered influences borne upon it, and the syncretic development of Kelantanese Malay culture.

As regards Mak Yong melody, Malm used the term "tonal emphasis" to denote its basic characteristics, specifically referring to that of the rebab. The melodic line of the rebab part is highly ornamented, and operates around the embellishment of specific tonal centres or emphases with the neighbouring tones. Malm's analysis is but a preliminary comment on rebab music and does not contain detailed musical transcriptions. However, this concept directed my examination of rebab and vocal melody.

Matusky takes melodic analysis a step further in her categorisation of the kinds of melodic ornamentation found in the vocal part.<sup>56</sup> To her, the vocal melodic ornaments "are

also heard in the rebab part whenever it is possible for the bowed lute to imitate the voice."<sup>57</sup>

However, Matusky later states that of the two melody parts performed vocally and by rebab, the vocal part leads the development of the melody to the accompaniment of the rebab-player, according to what the singer needs to express beautifully from her heart.<sup>58</sup> This led me to an hypothesis of the workings of angin in music.

As far as the rhythmic layer is concerned, Matusky is most articulate and precise, pointing out characteristic rhythmic features of the drumming system. Additionally, her research links the music of Mak Yong to that of the Southeast Asian region through its formal and drumming system.

Ultimately, all parts, melodic, rhythmic and structural, work together to create what Malm described as a "sense of musical tension and release."<sup>59</sup>

In summary, the previous studies on Mak Yong music provide a secure foundation with which to deal with the musical issues raised by the present hypothesis.

### Review of Previous Literature on Malay Magic:

The following section discusses the review of concepts such as angin, semangat, the archetypical teacher, and the ancestors, which are understood as specialisations of semangat.<sup>60</sup> It concludes with a review of the theory of the sociopolitical implications of the utilisation of certain symbols in Malay society.

Many of these concepts are described in one way or another in the literature pertaining to Malay magic and traditional healing rites, especially Main Peteri, and also in texts on the Malay performing arts. Significant writings include W. W. Skeat ([1900] 1965), N. Annandale (1903, 1904), J. D. Gimlette (1913, [1929] 1971), R. O. Winstedt ([1925] 1961, 1985), J. Cuisinier (1936), R. Firth (1967, 1974), B. H. Kramer (1970), Mohd Taib Osman (1971, 1989), P. L. Amin Sweeney (1972, 1987, 1994), David J. Banks (1976, 1983), C. S. Kessler (1977), K. M. Endicott (1985), Mubin Sheppard (1986), C. Laderman (1991, 1993) and Ghulam-Sarwar Yousof (1995a&b).

Given the substantial amount of literature on Malay magic and Main Peteri, the following summary of writings applicable to this thesis must suffice.

Among the principal interpretations of angin we find angin as



being sited within the individual's psyche as a personality force, angin as outright trance or lupa, angin as nafsu or feelings and desires, angin as a state of being in performance similar to the Western conceptualised notion of performance "flow", and the different types and intensity levels of angin.

Ghulam-Sarwar's analysis considers the implications of angin in Malay society.<sup>61</sup> Firstly, he generally sees angin as a "causal agent of disease." Secondly, Ghulam-Sarwar states that angin is conceived of as the unfulfilled desires existing in the conscious and unconscious mind. Thirdly, angin has its basis in either traditional Malay theatre or as characters in the indigenous mythology derived from Carl Jung's theory of the collective unconscious. According to Ghulam-Sarwar, "[t]he identification with such a character results in disorientation and allied symptoms," which is a kind of complex whose final cure comes through performance of the character, in the respective traditional performing arts form. In general terms, Ghulam-Sarwar conceives of angin as "obsessions." Ghulam-Sarwar also comments on some additional aspects of angin such as the different locally-conceived angin types, and the notion of the acquisition of angin through direct or indirect inheritance. What is most valuable about this definition of angin is that it is the most comprehensive yet, bridging the gap between angin in its occurrence in illness and angin in the performing arts.

Laderman describes angin as a personality force whose archetypes are present in indigenous Malay mythology and the dramatic repertoire of traditional Malay theatre.<sup>62</sup> Her concept of angin as the "inner winds" is manifested as trance, which is cajoled into fullest expression in Main Peteri. Laderman's analysis of Main Peteri attempts to reconcile this magical rite that leads to healing, with its Western counterpart in psycho-therapeutic practice, and to acknowledge the efficacy of this mode of healing consistent with Malay curative philosophy. This definition of angin supports the present thesis, where angin is seen as a central inner force sited within the personality. However, it is to be noted that this interpretation of angin limits its manifestation to the trance state of being.

Other definitions of angin are not as comprehensive. For Sweeney, angin is the "susceptibility to be moved greatly by the rhythm of speech and orchestra, and it may cause the experiencing of intense emotion, which, if not controlled, may result in trance."<sup>63</sup> Sweeney also points out the existence of angin-types in his observation that every individual is said to have a specific angin for different types of performance.<sup>64</sup> This definition of angin provides evidence of angin as a manifestation within the performative state of being. While this definition is limited to the performative experiences of the practitioners and the audiences, it

describes the range of the expression of angin in performance and how this is linked to trance.

Banks' theory of angin as manifested in Kedah, is also less comprehensive but similarly notes the link between traditional performance and trance.<sup>65</sup> It includes "the notions of angin as magical power, as the essences of wayang puppets, and as the part of human beings that can be made to vibrate with spirits and allow them to communicate, particularly by means of trance."<sup>66</sup> For Banks, "[e]vocation of angin as the essence of primordial theatrical or quasi-theatrical roles is present in all of the trance exorcisms of North Malaya, although it is most overtly present in ma'yong and wayang kulit where supposedly secular performances begin with special spells (buka bangsal) serving to stimulate the angin and to remind spectators that performers were protected."<sup>67</sup> He describes the evocation of angin in terms of the bringing to life of angin in the patient.

Firth sees angin merely as the means by which the bomoh goes into trance.<sup>68</sup> To him, the bomoh can assume the state of trance "because of his own peculiar ancestral endowment, a hereditary disposition or humour, known by the same word as for wind (angin)."<sup>69</sup> Kessler uses the concept of angin to mean the emotions or dispositions.<sup>70</sup>

The notion of angin as nafsu which literally translates as desire, emerged during the course of my fieldwork, and for perspective it is necessary to refer to documented definitions of nafsu. Banks describes nafsu as "worldly human desire"<sup>71</sup> which must be regulated and controlled by akal, or reason,<sup>72</sup> according to Islamic morality codes. Sweeney defines nafsu as the passions, as well as in terms of Islamic dictates, which he states, look askance at the empathising audiences of traditional Malay performance.<sup>73</sup> The idea of angin as nafsu, as being part of a person's inner desires, can be linked with Laderman's theory of angin as a personality force and Ghulam-Sarwar's "obsessions".

Western contemporary theatre methodologies have been concerned with what the actor does, and what his resources are. Krishen Jit, whose work makes vital and as yet previously unmade connections between contemporary Western theories of theatrical performance and Malay theatrical traditions, states that "one of the pleasures of traditional [Malay] theatre is the state of angin." He describes this state of angin as the state of being within the performer in which there is no gap between thought and action. This state of being is also achieved by the spectator of traditional theatre.<sup>74</sup> According to Jit, the state of angin can be linked to the concept of "flow", which describes a state of consciousness in an actor where "thought and action become one."<sup>75</sup>

The concept of "flow" has been discussed by contemporary Western theatre directors and theorists such as Peter Brook,<sup>76</sup> and Grotowski.<sup>77</sup>

To traditional theatre practitioners and healers, angin is differentiated according to a number of types. This is documented by Ghulam-Sarwar<sup>78</sup> and Laderman.<sup>79</sup> As Laderman points out, angin extends beyond professional temperament to the basic personality.<sup>80</sup> There are different personality types, where angin is the agent or force for such metaphors and symbols which occur in the Malay spiritual world, and where these metaphors are "archetypes of the Self".<sup>81</sup> Ghulam-Sarwar states that the differentiation of angin into differing types, is derived either from indigenous Malay mythology or traditional theatre genres.<sup>82</sup> But according to him, there is not enough evidence to state with any degree of confidence, whether these angin types "were in fact "historical" figures elevated to the ranks of mythic beings, archetypes, or yet again, mere "thought forms."<sup>83</sup> Laderman simply states that some of these personality types are derived from the archetypical heroes of the traditional theatrical repertoire.<sup>84</sup> Ghulam-Sarwar points out the mythological figure of Dewa Muda as being the most complex and multi-layered symbol in the cosmology of Mak Yong.<sup>85</sup>

The concept of semangat, which has previously been discussed,

has been dealt with in detail by Ghulam-Sarwar.<sup>86</sup> His definition refers to the operations of semangat as the Malay concept of the soul. Ghulam-Sarwar mentions its operations in Mak Yong, in particular, Mak Yong's spiritual performances.

The concept of the original teacher has been discussed by Winstedt who documented some interesting spiritual elements and myths which refer to the concept of the original teacher and other spirits,<sup>87</sup> which are invoked in theatrical performances such as Mak Yong.<sup>88</sup> Endicott also refers to the concept of guru or guru mula which means original teacher,<sup>89</sup> and notes that becoming a bomoh involves payment by the student to the original guru.<sup>90</sup> Ghulam-Sarwar discusses the Mak Yong sembah guru ceremony, specially undertaken to salute the teacher, a ritual which every graduand must undergo in order to acknowledge both the living and the prototypical teacher.<sup>91</sup> Ghulam-Sarwar also states that all Kelantanese theatre forms involve opening ceremony rituals which invoke the original teacher.<sup>92</sup> According to Banks' findings on shamanism in Kedah, guru occurs as an angin. To him, there are different trance types in accordance to angin types, and angin guru refers to learned trance or "interior energy that is activated in trance with the help of spells."<sup>93</sup> This is differentiated from angin moyang which means ancestral trance. Even the rebab, according to Ghulam-Sarwar, is regarded as the "symbol of the ultimate teacher: guru yang usul, guru yang

mula,"<sup>94</sup> and while this point must be clarified,<sup>95</sup> the rebab is certainly a multi-layered symbol in Mak Yong.

The other potent and recurring symbol is that of the ancestral heritage, conceptualised either as nenek moyang or angin moyang. Nenek moyang is a predominant specialisation of semangat among South Thai Mak Yong performers.<sup>96</sup> Cuisinier mentions ancestor-cults in relation to the naming of the two main character roles in Mak Yong theatre, the Mak Yong and the Pak Yong, as moyang and poyang.<sup>97</sup> Ghulam-Sarwar questions this assumption with much justification.<sup>98</sup> However, in view of the practice among South Thai Mak Yong practitioners of invoking and appeasing their ancestors with the performance of Mak Yong, the connection of Mak Yong with ancestor rituals needs to be investigated further. Endicott discusses ancestors in the context of the shaman's familiar spirit, and what is inherited down through a series of magicians.<sup>99</sup> Banks' account of the concept of ancestors occurs as an angin which brings the shaman protection and efficacy during healing rituals,<sup>100</sup> and as a type of Mak Yong exorcism called main ma'yong tok nenek whose "overtly stated purpose" is to "germinate a relationship with the spirits initiated and maintained in the past", particularly if the spirits were found to be ancestors who performed Mak Yong.<sup>101</sup>

Bank's commentary on the ancestors is particularly interesting

because it appears at the outset to have much in common with the ritual healing performances led by Che Ning, herself a South Thai practitioner. Banks later refined his definition of angin moyang to refer to hereditary spiritual energy,<sup>102</sup> a "power derived from heredity, marshalled by the study of spells and lore", possession of which enables the bomoh's efficacy as a healer.<sup>103</sup> To Laderman, ancestral spirits are said to possess the shaman. But she qualifies that these spirits are ancestral:

"...only in the sense that everything, physical or spiritual, inherited by humanity is ancestral. They are forces within the human body.... that the shaman mobilises to help maintain and regain health."<sup>104</sup>

Stepping out of the ritual realm and into the sociological realm, Clive Kessler's article is an analysis of the sociopolitical nature of the basic imagery in Main Peteri.<sup>105</sup> This model is used in the present thesis to demonstrate the sociological implications of status reversal in the transformation of an ordinary villager into a king in the Lagu Menghadap Rebab. Kessler observes that there is a connection between the operative metaphors utilised in Main Peteri and the socio-political context of Kelantanese society, referring to popular Kelantanese political understanding.<sup>106</sup> In the argument of the present hypothesis, this model is extended to include the metaphoric usage of notions of kingship in Lagu



Menghadap Rebab.

The three principles established in Kessler's study involve an affirmation of I. M. Lewis's social stress theory where Lewis argues that possession is an "oblique strategy"<sup>107</sup> and a "covert mechanism of mobilisation and manipulation for those denied the power to act directly."<sup>108</sup> Kessler's research into Main Peteri found Kelantanese women to be the most likely persons to use possession as a means of healing in terms of their socially-defined subservient status to men.<sup>109</sup> This has implications in the performance of Mak Yong where the kingly roles are usually, though not always, played by women.

Kessler also points out the way in which the bomoh manipulates the psyche of the patient through the metaphoric language he utilises. For example, the patient is cryptically described as a palace or realm, as well as in terms of the more predominant metaphor of sovereignty. In this, Kessler suggests a "basic parallelism, a metaphorical identification, of the body personal and the body political," where the human body is a predominant symbol in Malay cosmology.<sup>110</sup>

General theories relevant to this thesis:

Other general theories pertaining to aspects of performance and ethnomusicological theories guided and influenced the research and the writing of this thesis.

Geertz's essay on "thick" description provided a strong basis for the kind of analysis carried out on the micro cultural artifact that is the Lagu Menghadap Rebab in the present thesis.<sup>111</sup> To him, culture is public and the acts of societies and cultures are signs of their imaginative universe. Any analysis of culture, for Geertz, involves "guessing at meanings, assessing the guesses, and drawing explanatory conclusions from the better guesses." Ethnographic description thus is interpretive and "what it is interpretive of is the flow of social discourse; and the interpreting involved consists in trying to rescue the "said" of such discourse from its perishing occasions and fix it in perusable terms." In other words, "[s]mall facts speak to large issues," and "[s]ociety's forms are culture's substance." And to this end, Geertz strove "to try to keep the analysis of symbolic forms as closely tied as [he] could to concrete social events and occasions, the public world of common life."

The present thesis also utilises Turner's theory of

liminality.<sup>112</sup> Turner uses the term "liminality" to describe the transitional state of performance. Events such as traditional rituals and rites of passage are separated temporally, physically, symbolically and socially from daily behaviour. The purpose of such an event is to transform momentarily or permanently, the reality of the subject. For example, the physical and mental condition of a subject of the Main Peteri ritual will change. He or she will be healed as an outcome of the performance.

Turner further describes how in liminality, subjects in transition are outside the jurisdiction of society. Often the social world is turned upside down in the liminality of performance to affect such permanent or momentary change in the ultimate status of the subject. Thus, performance, as a transitional, and temporarily transformative event, plays with familiar elements in the social structure so as to defamiliarise them. The Lagu Menghadap Rebab performance event for example, upturns normal social order by exalting an ordinary subject in the agrarian Malay social world to kingship. At the conclusion of a Mak Yong performance, the subject who had been temporarily transformed socially returns to his or her original status, most likely enjoying a restoration of physical or psychological well-being.

In summary, Turner draws the link between social drama and the

roots of theatre, where "social drama" is described as the dramas, excitements and conflicts of everyday life which mirrors closely the performative state of being as well as the meanings of, theatrical expressions. His theory of liminality is part of his argument that "every type of cultural performance ... is explanation and explication of life itself."<sup>113</sup> Works of art express and fulfil "unconscious purposes and goals."<sup>114</sup> "Once "expressed," however, as works of art, readers, viewers, and hearers can reflect upon them since they are trustworthy messages from our species' depths, humanized life disclosing itself, so to speak."<sup>115</sup> This link between the rituals of life and theatre is thus a foundation for some of the premises of the present thesis.

Sweeney's investigation into the nature of the Malay oral tradition through his exposition of the Malay story-teller, the Tarik Selampit, is a revealing study of the composition of Malay dramatic text in Mak Yong. Sweeney argues that "the Malay tradition of reinterpretation"<sup>116</sup> should result in "a celebration of multiformity"<sup>117</sup> as he studies oral creativity. This reinterpetive function of Malay composition can be extended to include the fact that the musical piece Lagu Menghadap Rebab for example exists in a panoply of variants, as individually created by its performers. This theory supports the present ethnomusicological study of Lagu Menghadap Rebab which analyses three stylistically different

sample versions of the piece. In the present thesis, the notion of the reinterpetive function of the Pak Yong's performance, and generally speaking, that of all Mak Yong musicians, can be read as a fulfilment of the singer's or musician's angin, through his or her individual artistic expression. This acknowledges the variability and idiosyncratic nature of traditional Malay performance.

In addition, Sweeney's theory of the reinterpetive and idiosyncratic nature of Malay oral composition provides another perspective to that generated by the more formalistic work of Ghulam-Sarwar. Ghulam-Sarwar carefully reconstructs and records the most comprehensive and correct version of the "Dewa Muda."<sup>118</sup> This perspective enables us to view the less structurally-defined portion of Lagu Menghadap Rebab as a deliberate compositional strategy to effect the expression of individuality as angin.

Sweeney also provides a reading of the utilisation of the power of music and words in Kelantan oral performance, or Tarik Selampit.<sup>119</sup> In this work, he states that the tale sung by the professional story teller or Tok Selampit is more than just an elaboration of plot, as it deliberately elicits an emotional response of longing and sadness from the audience through words and music, from which they will eventually be released.<sup>120</sup> While this is a particular performative

strategy at specific points of the dramatic narrative of Mak Yong, this direct elicitation of emotional response results in Mak Yong's distinctive vocal aesthetic which is very much evident in Lagu Menghadap Rebab.<sup>121</sup>

Other theories relevant to this thesis are Levi-Strauss's structural approach to myth analysis<sup>122</sup> where he defines myth "as consisting of all its versions; or to put it otherwise, a myth remains the same as long as it is felt as such."<sup>123</sup>

In his thesis on Ur-Drama or Proto-drama,<sup>124</sup> E. T. Kirby found evidence for the origins of theatre in shamanistic ritual. Similarly too, Mak Yong, as an aesthetical event to satisfy entertainment purposes, be it at village fair or urban proscenium stage, represents one end of a continuum between ritual and theatre, with the other end stretching back into its most probable shamanistic past. The more ritually oriented contemporary performances of Mak Yong which are combined with Main Peteri rituals, are examples of Mak Yong's link with this ritualistic source.

Roseman's study of Temiar music and medicine reveals how the

"...power of healing performances emerges from the shared assumptions guiding Temiar musical composition, performance, and affect, on the one hand, an indigenous cosmology, dynamics of illness and health, and the

composition of the person, on the other."<sup>125</sup>

In her work, the ceremonial performance of a Temiar healing ritual was analysed in order to reveal how Temiar symbols and meanings, found in "the intersubjective world of ritual action and social interaction,"<sup>126</sup> take, as she quotes Geertz: "... public form in the animated symbols of ritual and social action."<sup>127</sup> Her methodology provided a perspective with which to understand how Malay dynamic structures of self as embodied by core values such as angin and semangat, are active and central musical ingredients within the performance of Mak Yong.

## Conclusion

The link between the music of Mak Yong and angin has not previously been made. The result is that the review of previous literature is somewhat bulky as a vast amount of information has had to be digested. In the process, I have had to be selective in the topics reviewed. However, I have attempted to remain faithful to the issues, which are, to provide a general background to understanding the music of Mak Yong as documented by previous writers, and likewise for angin.

## NOTES

1. Ghulam-Sarwar Yousof, Panggung Semar (Petaling Jaya: Tempo Publishing, 1992), p. 17.
2. Ghulam-Sarwar, "The Dewa Muda Story: Its Significance in Mak Yong and Main Puteri Performances--Spiritual and Non Spiritual," paper presented at the Mak Yong Seminar, University Science Malaysia, Penang, 8-11 Sept 1995, p. 1.
3. Ghulam-Sarwar, "The Kelantan Mak Yong Dance Theatre: A Study of Performance Structure," Diss. Univ. of Hawaii 1976, pp. 37-62.
4. See Appendix B for a list of performances witnessed and recorded during the course of researching the present thesis.
5. Main Peteri is the traditional Malay shamanistic trance-healing ceremony presided over by the ritual specialist or shaman, called the bomoh. The present thesis utilises Carol Laderman's use of the spelling "peteri", which can mean "pateri", i.e. to solder or weld together, as well as "puteri" which means princess. Of the two, Laderman favours the former because it is based on the definition specified to her by her informants who were principal bomohs in Trengganu. For further explanation see Laderman, "Main Peteri (Malay Shamanism)", Federation Museums Journal, (NS 31, 1991), p. 20. Ghulam-Sarwar uses the spelling "puteri" derived from popular Kelantanese knowledge of the myth of a Kelantanese princess, Puteri Sa'adong endowed with sacred powers. For his full explanation, see "Main Puteri: A Form of Malay Psychotherapy", paper presented at the Sutra Forum, Kuala Lumpur, 29-30 July 1995, p. 3-4.
6. In February of 1993, I followed a contact to a village festival which featured among its various entertainments, an alleged Mak Yong-Manora performance. Manora is the traditional ritual theatre genre of Southern Thai Buddhists. It is performed in Kelantan, Kedah and the South Thai provinces. I had never previously come across the advertised combination of Mak Yong-Manora. The leader of this particular troupe, Mak Yong Che Penawa and her grandfather, Haji Mak Pungok, proved to be descendants of Mak Yong practitioners. Due to decreasing popular support of traditional Mak Yong, the two-night show at the festival consisted of a rustic song and dance sequence, which was followed by a performance of a story in the style of the bangsawan, which they called sandiwara. Haji Mak Pungok was a Mak Yong performer in the traditional style, and was willing to organise a more traditional show for a fee. Che Penawa herself admitted that she could not perform Mak Yong in the "old way", referring to the traditional



performance which utilised special Mak Yong songs, dances and stories. However, the overall impression of the event left one with a reminder of a time when Mak Yong troupes would travel from village fair to village fair with their pots and pans and children in tow, on both sides of the Malay border, living at the location of the stage itself, performing Mak Yong as well as bangsawan, with the social dance, Joget or Ronggeng.

7. There exists a continuum between the ritual and aesthetic types of performance, placing the South Thai style towards the ritual pole and the more aesthetic form of Mak Yong as remembered by the old Kelantan court performers towards the other.
8. The musical ensemble is described in greater detail in Chapter three.
9. Patricia Matusky defines lagu as musical piece. For further explanation, see Malaysian Shadow Play and Music: Continuity of an Oral Tradition (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford Univ. Press, 1993), p. 28.
10. Kamus Lengkap, eds. Drs Awang Sudjai Hairul and Yusoff Khan (Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Zaman, 1990).
11. Ghulam-Sarwar, Panggun Semar, p. 1.
12. In the Malay world view, the east is the source of new life. Traditional performers honour the archetypal and ultimate teacher as the source of all performance skill, artistry and efficacy, who is said to reside in the east. See Chapter two for a further discussion on the rebab as a symbol of the archetypal and ultimate teacher.
13. In Main Peteri, the arousal of a patient's angin and its expression institutes healing. For further information, see Ghulam-Sarwar, Panggun Semar, p. 23. Angin is discussed further in Chapter two.
14. This as yet unpublished theory of angin was first suggested to me by Dr Krishen Jit, in a personal interview on 31 January 1994.
15. The Minduk and the Tok Peteri are the two ritual specialists, or bomoh, involved in the curative process of Main Peteri. The Minduk is usually the rebab-player as well, and he guides the shaman, or Tok Peteri, through singing and through the playing of the rebab.

16. Krishen Jit linked contemporary Western theatre theories of performance flow with the traditional Malay performing arts in searching for a more universal understanding of the function of angin in Malay society. Some of this is articulated in "The Malaysian Shadow Puppet Play as Performed by Dollah Baju Merah," paper presented at the SEAMOE-Pacific Association of Archeology and Fine Arts Seminar, 7-22 December, Kuala Lumpur: Universiti Malaya. Angin as performance flow is discussed in the review of previous literature and in Chapter two.
17. In healing performances of Mak Yong, the patient, who may or may not be a Mak Yong practitioner, plays the Pak Yong character, and is guided in the role by a skilled Pak Yong actress who sits beside the patient.
18. For detailed descriptions of the two most typical formal structures of Mak Yong music, see Patricia Matusky, "Music of the Mak Yong Theater: A Fusion of Southeast Asian Malay and Middle Eastern Islamic Elements," in To the Four Corners: A Festschrift in Honor of Rose Brandel, Ed. Ellen C. Leichtman, Michigan: Harmonie Park Press, 1994, and "The Gonggan as Determinant of Form in Mak Yong Music," paper presented at Seminar Mak Yong, 8-11 September, 1995, Penang: University Science Malaysia.
19. Alan P. Merriam, The Anthropology of Music, Northwestern University Press, 1964.
20. See review of previous literature on Mak Yong in the present thesis for the references to writers who have compiled repertoire lists of the music of Mak Yong.
21. In the late 1960s, Professor William P. Malm, a visiting American ethnomusicologist, sponsored and recorded eleven Mak Yong plays performed by old court musicians and performers. The performers subsequently performed at the International Conference on Traditional Dance and Drama, held at University Malaya, Kuala Lumpur in 1969, which drew ecstatic response from the public as this was the first time Malaysians saw Mak Yong outside Kelantan. Ghulam-Sarwar's timely research into the theatre conventions of Mak Yong which followed soon after, focussed attention on the newly-formed Mak Yong group called Kumpulan Seri Temenggung led by Khatijah Awang, one of Ghulam-Sarwar's chief informants. She was then, a young and beautiful singer who learnt Mak Yong from the old court performers who performed at the conference. She was encouraged to do so partly as a consequence of the interest and enthusiasm generated at the conference over the possibility of revitalising Mak Yong. However, after this initial phase of excitement, attention and sponsorship for Mak Yong subsided again.

22. Pak Harun Deraman, son of a musician in the Temenggong courts and whose mother, nicknamed Mak Yong Bidah Anak Ular, was a famous Mak Yong performer in her time. In his time, Pak Harun was a musician for troupes that travelled from village to village, performing Mak Yong, Manora and Bangsawan. He now works as a musician employed at the Petronas Cultural Centre in Kuala Lumpur.
23. My other teachers included Paksu Seman Besar from Teluk Renjuna and Pak Hamzah Awang, the award-winning traditional puppeteer.
24. The Malay language was only officially recognised as one of the key minority languages of South Thailand a few years ago. Previous to this, the Malay language and its Malay-speaking population living principally in the Southern Thai states of Yala, Pattani, Narathiwat and Setun were largely left out of the orbit of the Thai cultural and economic policies. This change of policy is certainly a good thing but sadly not enough to alter years of neglect which compound the naturally occurring decline of the strong traditional ritual practice among the Malays. By contrast, in Malaysia, the "revival" of Mak Yong has, albeit inadequately, attempted, if nothing else to document this very fine art over the last quarter century, beginning with Mubin Sheppard's research among the old Mak Yong performers of the 1950s and 1960s.
25. Mak Yong-Main Peteri is one of the types of Mak Yong performances. For further explanation, see Ghulam-Sarwar, "The Kelantan Mak Yong Dance Theatre: A Study of Performance Structure", Diss. Univ. of Hawaii 1976, p. 135.
26. Manora is the South Thai Buddhist ritual theatre form, practised in South Thailand, and the states of Kedah and Kelantan. The Manora character is half-man, half-bird. The Kelantan style of Manora performance interweaves ancient Thai-Buddhist rituals with elements of Mak Yong performance, such as repertoire and music.
27. Wayang Kulit Siam is the traditional Malay shadow puppet play practised in Kelantan.
28. Tarik Selampit is a genre of professional oral story-telling in Kelantan performed by a performer called the Tok Selampit who accompanies himself on the rebab. His vocal style includes singing, chanting and declamation.
29. Silat is the traditional Malay martial art.
30. As practitioners of Mak Yong dwindle away, whenever performances of Mak Yong are required, the remaining few rely on each other. During the course of my field work it was quite

common to find the different groups consisting of almost similar members, but led by different troupe-leaders. In Malaysia, it was observed that practitioners of Mak Yong tended to group according to personalities and family. Hence, in the performances I witnessed, Sri Temenggung Group with its long history of government-sponsored type performances involved as its core group, members of the family of Khatijah Awang and her husband in Kota Bharu. Kelantanese musicians employed as musicians by Kuala Lumpur City Hall (Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur), have tended to utilise performers within their larger family grouping in Kelantan. The remaining practitioners were those who belonged to the troupe led by a prominent bomoh, the deceased Paksu Seman Besar of Teluk Renjuna, who specialised in Mak Yong, Main Peteri and Silat, two Manora groups led by two distinctive Manora personalities, Pak Chao Nim or Pak Cani, and Pak Eh Chum Muda, a group of Southern Thai Malay immigrants into the country led by the legendary Che Ning, and other groups more normally associated with Main Peteri.

31. Practitioners of Mak Yong living in Trengganu are mostly immigrants from Kelantan, or, as in the case of Che Ning and her family, South Thailand.
32. See Appendix B of list of performances viewed and recorded by the writer.
33. From 17th to 22nd June 1994, Dr Ghulam-Sarwar from the University Science Malaysia in Penang sponsored a total of six nights of Mak Yong and Manora performances by three leading troupes in Kelantan. He also went on to co-sponsor, together with Kuala Lumpur's Sutra Dance Theatre Company, a leading privately-run dance company led by Ramli Ibrahim, and myself, a ritual performance of Mak Yong Semah Angin.
34. As testimony to Che Ning's fame, I encountered her reputation prior to meeting her, as mentioned independently by three separate contacts from South Thailand. All referred to her as the greatest Mak Yong actress alive. In Malaysia, due to her status as a recent immigrant, Che Ning remained unknown except for the recognition given her as an outcome of performances initially sponsored by Sutra Dance Company led by Ramli Ibrahim, and later by Dr. Ghulam-Sarwar Yousof. Her lack of status in the Kelantanese hierarchy of performers led to the withdrawal of an invitation to participate in an important two-night Mak Yong performance in Kuala Lumpur on 29-30 April 1994, sponsored by Kuala Lumpur City Hall.
35. Ghulam-Sarwar, "The Kelantan Mak Yong Dance-Theatre."
36. Ghulam-Sarwar, "The Dewa Muda Story."

37. Ghulam-Sarwar, "The Kelantan Mak Yong Dance Theatre."
38. William P. Malm, "Music in Kelantan: Some of its Cultural Implications," in "Studies in Malaysian Oral and Musical Traditions," Papers on South and Southeast Asia, Vol. 8, Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan, 1974), pp. 1-46.
39. Matusky, "Music of the Mak Yong Theater," and "The Gonggan as Determinant of Form in Mak Yong Music."
40. See Ghulam-Sarwar, "The Kelantan Mak Yong Dance-Theatre," pp. 117-28 for his list of songs.
41. Matusky, Malaysian Shadow Play and Music.
42. Eleven Mak Yong plays were recorded by Professor William P. Malm from the University of Michigan on video. The purpose of these recordings was to make an archival record of Mak Yong as performed by the remaining old court practitioners from before World War II. They represent the oldest, albeit, "reconstructed" sound and visual form of Mak Yong. Professor Malm's discussion of Mak Yong in his article, "Music in Kelantan" is based on these recordings. Dr Ghulam-Sarwar also utilised these recordings in his analysis of the dramatic repertoire for his doctoral thesis. These tapes are housed at the University of Michigan. Unofficial hearsay has it that a complete set of copies was sent by Professor Malm to Tan Sri Mubin Sheppard sometime before the latter passed away in 1995. It is hoped that these copies will become public property.
43. The two Mak Yong pieces analysed by Dr Matusky and documented in her writings were based on an audio recording of Mak Yong music sponsored by Dr Ghulam-Sarwar in Kota Bharu, Kelantan, in 1975.
44. Ghulam-Sarwar, "The Kelantan Mak Yong Dance Theatre", pp. 166-72.
45. Ghulam-Sarwar, Panggung Semar, p. 3.
46. Ghulam-Sarwar, "The Dewa Muda Story", p. 13.
47. See Matusky, "Musical Instruments and Musicians of the Malay Shadow Puppet Theater," Journal of the American Musical Instrument Society, 8 (1982), pp. 50-6.
48. See Ghulam-Sarwar for his list of songs in "The Kelantan Mak Yong Dance-Theatre", pp. 117-28, and William P. Malm, "Music in Kelantan", pp. 19-21, for his categories of the musical repertoire of Mak Yong. See also Mubin Sheppard, "A Recording of the Ma'yong: The Dance Drama of Kelantan," Federation



Museums Journal, Vol XII (NS) (1967), pp. 55-104, and "The Text and Sung Portion of "DEWA MUDA" and a Further Note on Ma'yong Stories," Federation Museums Journal, Vol XIV (NS) (1969), pp. 37-75.

49. Malm, "Music in Kelantan", p. 16.
50. Malm, "Music in Kelantan". p. 16.
51. The term gongan, i.e. gong-unit, refers to the punctuating function of the gongs which give shape to the musical piece. This function is described in Chapter three. See also Matusky, "Music of the Mak Yong Theater", pp. 35-9.
52. See Matusky, "Music of the Mak Yong Theater", pp. 37-8.
53. See Matusky, Malaysian Shadow Play and Music, pp. 40-50.
54. Malm, "Music in Kelantan," pp. 18-9.
55. Matusky, "Music of the Mak Yong Theater," p. 51.
56. Matusky, "Music of the Mak Yong Theater," p. 45-50.
57. Matusky, "Music of the Mak Yong Theater," p. 47.
58. Personal interview with Dr Matusky, February 1994.
59. Malm, "Music in Kelantan", p. 17.
60. Personal interview with Dr. Krishen Jit, 31 January, 1994.
61. Refer to Ghulam-Sarwar, "Main Puteri: A Form of Malay Psychotherapy", pp. 8-15, for this and subsequent quotes.
62. Laderman, "Main Peteri (Malay Shamanism)", and Taming the Wind of Desire: Psychology, Medicine and Aesthetics in Malay Shamanistic Performance (California: Univ. of California Press, 1993). In a personal interview, Dr Marina Roseman used the term "energiser" among other terms, to describe the angin phenomenon, 15 July 1995.
63. P. L. Amin Sweeney, The Ramayana and the Malay Shadow-Play (Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Univ. Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1972), p. 42.
64. Sweeney, Malay Word Music: A Celebration of Oral Creativity. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1994, p. 76.
65. David J. Banks, Trance and Dance in Malaya: The Hindu-Buddhist Complex in Northwest Malay Folk Religion, Special Studies Council on International Studies, Buffalo: SUNY, 1976.

66. In Laderman, "Main Peteri (Malay Shamanism)", p. 20.
67. Banks, pp. 30-1.
68. R. W. Firth, "Ritual and Drama in Malay Spirit Mediumship," in Comparative Studies in Society and History, 1967, pp. 190-207.
69. Firth, "Malay Spirit Mediumship," p. 194.
70. Clive S. Kessler, "Conflict and Sovereignty in Kelantanese Malay Spirit Seances," in Case Studies in Spirit Possession, eds. V. Crapanzo and V. Garrison (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1977), p. 309.
71. Banks, Malay Kinship, Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1983, p. 87.
72. For further explanation, see Banks, Malay Kinship, p. 86-7.
73. Sweeney, Malay Word Music, p.76.
74. Krishen Jit, "Malay Shadow Play as Performed by Dollah Baju Merah."
75. The concept of "flow" was first defined by Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly and J. MacAloon, "Flow: Studies of Enjoyment", University of Chicago, PHS grant Report, 1974. Renowned contemporary theatre practitioners and theorists such as Peter Brook and Jerzy Grotowski, as well as Victor Turner in his theories on "liminality" (see Victor Turner, From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play, New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1982), see flow as a vital state of being in performance and the striving to gain this state of being as a central aim of leading contemporary methodologies of theatre.
76. See Heilpern, The Conference of the Birds, p. 137.
77. See Mitter, S, Systems of Rehearsal: Stanislavsky, Brecht, Grotowski and Brook, (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 112.
78. Ghulam-Sarwar, "Main Puteri," p. 12-3.
79. Laderman, "Main Peteri," p. 21-6.
80. Laderman, "Main Peteri," p. 21.
81. Laderman, "Main Peteri," p. 5.
82. Ghulam-Sarwar, "Main Puteri", p. 7.
83. Ghulam-Sarwar, "Main Puteri", p. 10.

84. Laderman, "Main Peteri," p. 21.
85. For a comprehensive analysis on the Dewa Muda metaphor, see Ghulam-Sarwar, "The Dewa Muda Story."
86. Ghulam-Sarwar, Panggung Semar, pp. 7-15.
87. Winstedt, R. O., Shaman, Saiva and Sufi: A Study of the Evolution of Malay Magic, (London, Constable and Co., 1925).
88. For an example of one such opening invocation, see Winstedt, pp. 8-9.
89. Endicott, K. M., An Analysis of Malay Magic, Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1970, p. 176.
90. Endicott, p. 14.
91. Ghulam-Sarwar, The Kelantan Mak Yong Dance Theatre, pp. 206-35.
92. See Ghulam-Sarwar, Panggung Semar, pp. 126-7 for a discussion on the original teacher of Wayang Kulit Siam, and pp. 174-5 on the original teacher of Manora.
93. Banks, Malay Kinship, p. 172.
94. Ghulam-Sarwar, "The Dewa Muda Story", p. 13.
95. See Chapter two on the rebab as the musical leader.
96. See Chapter two.
97. Jeanne Cuisinier, Danses Magiques de Kelantan, (Paris: Travaux et Memoires de l'Institut d'Etnologie de l'Univeriste de Paris, 1936), p. 84.
98. Ghulam-Sarwar, "The Kelantanese Mak Yong Dance-Theatre", pp. 22-3.
99. Endicott, pp. 17-8.
100. Banks, Trance and Dance in Malaya, p. 37.
101. Banks, Trance and Dance in Malaya, p. 34.
102. Banks, Malay Kinship, p. 195.
103. Banks, Malay Kinship, p. 172.
104. Laderman, "Main Peteri (Malay Shamanism)," p. 15.



105. Kessler, pp. 295-331.
106. Kessler, pp. 297-98.
107. I. M. Lewis, Ecstatic Religion: An Anthropological Study of Spirit Possession and Shamanism (Hamondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1971), p. 117.
108. Kessler, p. 312.
109. Kessler, pp. 303-6.
110. Kessler, p. 318-9.
111. This and the following quotes are taken from Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture", in The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays, USA: Basic Books, 1973, pp. 3-32.
112. Victor Turner, From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play, New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1982, pp. 20-59.
113. Turner, From Ritual to Theatre, p. 13.
114. Turner, From Ritual to Theatre, p. 15.
115. Turner, From Ritual to Theatre, p. 15.
116. Sweeney, Malay Word Music, p. 11.
117. Sweeney, Malay Word Music, p. 25.
118. Ghulam-Sarwar, "The Kelantan Mak Yong Dance Theatre," pp. 182-205.
119. Sweeney, Malay Word Music.
120. Menasib, translated by Sweeney to mean "lamenting fate", is a process in the singing of the dalang in a special performance for his students called the sembah guru ritual, which is "calculated to produce feelings of sadness, to encourage their release, to break down inhibitions and lead to trance". According to Sweeney, this process of menasib is a vital part of the performance of Tarik Selampit, as the Tok Selampit deliberately invokes a mood of sadness through the exposition of the victim-hero's travails. For further explanation, see Sweeney, Malay Word Music, p. 78.
121. Specific musical pieces are used in lamentation situations in a Mak Yong performance, such as Lagu Mengambul, Labu Jembar, Lagu Pandang Wangi, Lagu Gebiyah, Lagu Mengambul, Lagu Chagak

Manis and Lagu Gading Bertimang. See Ghulam-Sarwar, "The Kelantan Mak Yong Dance Theatre", pp. 125-6. In ritual performances of Mak Yong which are intended to express the angin Mak Yong of a frustrated individual, such situations are specifically manipulated and designed to give release to the patient's blocked angin.

122. Claude Levi-Strauss, "The Structural Study of Myth", in Structural Anthropology, New York: Basic Books, 1963.
123. Levy-Strauss, p. 213.
124. E.T. Kirby, Ur-Drama: The Origins of Theatre, (New York University Press, 1975).
125. Marina Roseman, Healing Sounds from the Malaysian Rainforest: Temiar Music and Medicine, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991, p. 184.
126. Roseman, Healing Sounds from the Malaysian Rainforest, p. 14.
127. Geertz, pp. 17-8.

PLATE 5

The principal character in a Mak Yong performance,  
Pulau Penyengat, Riau,  
August 1994.  
(Photograph by J.S. Fernando).

PLATE 6

The musicians in a Mak Yong performance,  
Pulau Penyengat, Riau,  
August 1994.  
(Photograph by J.S. Fernando).

