

Trisutji Kamal's *Loro Jonggrang*: A Cross-Cultural Dissonance

Marusya Nainggolan¹, Melani Budianta^{2*}, Nyak Ina Raseuki¹ and Harsawibawa²

¹Jakarta Institute of the Arts, Jakarta Pusat 10330, INDONESIA

²Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Indonesia, UI Depok 16424, INDONESIA

*Corresponding author: melani.budianta@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Trisutji Kamal, whose career spanned over five decades, was one of the oldest and longest-performing Indonesian female classical composers. Her music is tinged with a unique character, stemming from the way she inserted Javanese nuances into the Western framework of her art. To discuss this musical style, the authors analysed one of her most well-known compositions in the form of an opera, called Loro Jonggrang. The article examines how the two different musical traditions from the West and Java intersect in her music and her cultural subjectivity. The authors argue that what emerges in her music is a sense of dissonance through the use of pseudo pentatonic, two chords, drone, accents, and beats, connecting Trisutji's music with her cultural background and life history. The authors contend that the dissonant turn and glissando effect of her music comes from the tension between Western musical forms and Javanese intuition. The article contributes to the rare scholarship about female composers in Southeast Asia.

Keywords: Indonesian classical music, female composer, *Loro Jonggrang* opera, Trisutji Kamal

INTRODUCTION

In the world of classical music in Indonesia, the name of K.R.A. Koos Trisutji Kamal, popularly known as Trisutji, born on 28 November 1936, is known as one of the earliest Indonesian female pianists and composers, whose career spanned five decades (1951–2021) (Kismiyati and Haryono 2008). Like those of Amir Pasaribu and Mochtar Embut, her works have served as the main repertoire of classical music education in Indonesia, and are often performed in musical concerts in Indonesia and Asia (Simanjuntak, Simatupang, and Ganap 2019). In Asia, she ranks with other Asian composers, such as Geon-Yong Lee, Chinary Ung, and Chou Wen-Chung. While the Asian composers mentioned above have been subjects of musical scholarship (Kim 2009; Kays 2000; Berg 2012), studies of Trisutji's music still leave a lot of room to explore. Tobing (2017) and Notosudirdjo (2011) have discussed how her music was used in Indonesian music education. Rasmussen (2005) has mentioned her among composers of Islamic music, but the authors of this article believe that her musical style goes beyond these realms. Previous scholarship like Setiadi and Suhadi (2020) only discusses a number of her musical pieces. The meeting of the West and the East in one of Trisutji's compositions has been discussed by Tamio (2007), yet a more holistic approach still needs to be developed to see Trisutji Kamal's musical style, especially in her experimentation with the opera.

This article was inspired by the dissonant sounds that make Trisutji's music complex, unique, and thus demanding to play on the piano. There is a discord between the Western classical music tradition and the elements coming from the Javanese gamelan music in Trisutji's works. Such a dissonant discord is highly audible in the *Loro Jonggrang* opera, a monumental work of Trisutji, which was first performed in Rome, Italy in 1957. In our interviews with Trisutji on 16 June 2020, she expressed her affinity with the figure of Loro

Jonggrang, the tragic heroine of this opera. Throughout her life, the opera was performed four times, the latest being in 2011 in Jakarta. In this article, *Loro Jonggrang* will be used to highlight Trisutji Kamal's musical style.

This article uses music theory to discuss the musical elements in Trisutji's music, by examining how her music absorbs as well as complicates the functional harmony of classical music, the chromatic element of the Romantic, and the various meetings of Western and Eastern music of the 20th century. Analysis on her music will be done from the music of *Loro Jonggrang*, while her biography are gathered both from secondary sources and from interviews. The article argues that Trisutji's music blends the various elements in her unique way by combining Western musical structure with the Javanese *rasa*, which according to Benamou (2010, 40–42) is an elusive term as it covers many nuances, such as atmosphere, sensation, feeling, anxiety, and inner thoughts.

The paper will start by explaining the structure of *Loro Jonggrang* as compared to that of the Western opera followed by a discussion of the main characteristics that make up her unique way of juxtaposing the Javanese pentatonic nuances with the Western diatonic music, producing a combined effect of nontonal turns and *glissando*. The paper will end by positioning Trisutji in relation to other composers who have blended Western and Asian music in their own ways, reflecting on her creative contribution to the development of 20th century classical music.

THE STRUCTURE OF *LORO JONGGRANG*

Similar to the Italian *opera seria*, the most influential form of opera in Europe in the 17th century, *Loro Jonggrang* derives its narrative from myth, legends, and folk tales. While many Western operas are composed of Western legends and histories, *Loro Jonggrang* was composed of one of the well-known folk tales about a Javanese princess, named Loro Jonggrang who was wooed by Raden Bandung Bondowoso who had earlier killed her father in a battle. The princess's way of refusing the marriage proposal was to ask the prince to grant an extraordinary wish that was beyond human capability to fulfil. She demanded that the prince builds for her a temple in one night, to be completed before the rooster crow at dawn. To her dismay, the prince was helped by genies and other supernatural beings throughout the night to complete the task. The princess then asked her maids to make noises of rice grinding activities (which are usually done every dawn) in order to trick the roosters to crow. The roosters did crow, but the princess's trick was discovered by the prince, who then in explosive anger cursed and turned the princess into a stone statue, placed in his newly built temple. This is the famous legend surrounding the Hindu temple of Prambanan, near Yogyakarta in Central Java. A beautiful stone statue of a princess in the temple was believed to be the cursed Princess Loro Jonggrang. In the opera that Trisutji created, she maintained the main narrative of the legend, with two main characters, Raden Bandung and Loro Jonggrang. In addition, there is a minor character, which is Loro Jonggrang's maidservant, who plays an important role as Loro Jonggrang confidante, and also as somebody who reports what is happening to Loro Jonggrang.

Like *opera seria*, *Loro Jonggrang* deals with a narrative of heroism and love. It is a story about a power struggle which mounts in tension and ends in tragedy as the female and male protagonists with different personalities and motives clash in a conflict. There is romance as the couple is actually attracted to one another, but there is also deceit and revenge (Daryatun 2008, 36). The *libretto* for this opera was developed from Trisutji's own lyrical poem, written by Chairul Bachri in 1956 (interview with Trisutji Kamal, 16 June 2020).

Different from Western opera, which usually consists of three to four acts, *Loro Jonggrang* comprises only one episode divided into two parts. Unlike Western opera, *Loro Jonggrang* does not have an overture or intermezzo, which usually serves as an introduction to the audience. Trisutji's opera opens directly with the first act, thus making it resemble a modern theatre. In place of an overture, the first act starts with 39 bars which build a mystical aura due to the sound of a gong, an instrument which is considered to have magical elements (Spiller 2004, 6). There is no choir accompaniment here like in Western opera. *Loro Jonggrang* is the first Indonesian opera based on an Indonesian legend delivered in Western musical structure, with a combination of Western and Javanese instruments. The legend is rarely performed other than in the traditional ethnic format. Unlike *opera seria*, which usually presents a full orchestra, the 1957 performance of *Loro Jonggrang* in Rome—then it was named *Una Note (One Night)*—was accompanied only by a small ensemble. The second performance in 1969 in Taman Ismail Marzuki Jakarta Art Centre the opera, entitled *Loro Jonggrang*, was choreographed by Farida Utoyo, a well-known Indonesian dancer. The third performance, with the same title at the Grand Ballroom Hilton Hotel in 1991 was done with an extended ensemble, adding the violin, cello, and flute. The last 2011 performance was held in the British International School, Jakarta, with chamber music. The four performances used the same *libretto* and the duration remained 45 minutes. What is most distinctive in

Loro Jonggrang is the combination of Western and Javanese traditional musical instruments. Here Asian sounds and instruments (gong and *kendang*, a Javanese drum) are made to collide with Western musical structure and instruments. The singers' vocal styles mix the Western techniques of *bel canto* singing and the traditional style using embellishment of turns and *glissando* discussed.

TRISUTJI'S MUSICAL STYLE

Trisutji's unique musical style, which combines Western and Asian traditional music, comprises the use of two chords, pseudo pentatonic elements, drone effects, and percussive nuances. These characteristics are strongly present in *Loro Jonggrang*.

The Use of Two Chords

In *Loro Jonggrang*, Trisutji transgresses the standard concept of Western harmony by limiting the available tones to merely two chords. From the range of pentatonic tones E–G–B–C–E, Trisutji opens the opera with only E and B, which is then expanded into E–B–E. The last E is the repetition of the first in a higher position so that the sound comes in the form of a chord, played at the same time horizontally with the interval of a fifth and fourth (from E to B, and from B to E).

This chord of three notes is played in length with a static movement, which goes against the Western concept of harmony. Western theory of harmony (Hindemith 1968) prescribes three-tone chords consisting of different tones in a certain interval, such as C–E–G in the large major third interval (from C to E) and small minor third (from E to G). This three-tone chord can be modified by doubling one root, C, to create four-tone chords: C–E–G–C.

In *Loro Jonggrang* this different tonic system can be seen in bars 1–9. This introduction is performed in progression from tonic and dominant. The tonic uses only E–B which later expands into three tones by doubling the basic root E (E–B–E). The dominant chord consists of B–F# which expands into three tones through similar doubling (B–F#–B). (Figure 1)

Andante Molto Sostenuto A tempo Trisutji Kamal

The musical score consists of four staves. The top staff is for Gong, with a 12/8 time signature and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It features a melodic line with a fermata over the first measure and a 5-measure rest. The second staff is for Piano (Pno.), with a treble and bass clef. It shows a series of chords, starting with a *pp* dynamic. The third staff is for Violoncello (Vc.), with a bass clef. It features a melodic line with a fermata over the first measure and a *pizz.* marking. The bottom staff is for another Gong, with a 12/8 time signature and a key signature of one sharp. It features a melodic line with a fermata over the first measure and a 9-measure rest.

Figure 1 The use of two chords (I–V), bars 1–9.

Lento Espressivo

Figure 2 The use of two chords (I–VII), bars 105–107.

Andante Molto Sostenuto

Figure 3 Pseudo pentatonic, bars 6–10.

The two chords pattern at the beginning of *Loro Jonggrang* is developed throughout the opera in harmonic progression. In bars 105–107, for instance, the two chords progress from I to VII (Figure 2). A similar progression can be seen in bars 203–205, where the chords change from I to VII.

Pseudo Pentatonic Tones

Aside from experimenting with chords and harmony, Trisutji's music also borrows the pentatonic system of five notes with different usage, by limiting its range. She collides the borrowings from the "imperfect" pentatonic system with the chromatic tones of the Western diatonic system, creating a series of notes which evokes Javanese nuance in Western form. An example of the resulting combination is B–C#–D–F#–E#–D–B–G–F#–E# (B–C#–D–F# is a four-notes series from the main note D, which is made to clash with E#–D–B–G–F#–E# from the mixed diatonic and chromatic). The formed chord has consonant and dissonant intervals, like the stacked combination of the following notes: D–F#G#–D, C–D–F#–A#, E–F#–Bb–C. This mixing of the pentatonic borrowings with the chromatic and diatonic is called pseudo pentatonic.

The pseudo pentatonic sound can be seen in bars 6–10 of the opera, which is made up of the B–C–E–D#–C–A–F–E–B–A#–G–B–C–D# notes. When the combination of pentatonic like sound of B–D#–E–F#–A#–B notes are made to clash with C, G and A# (from the diatonic system), it creates a different sound (pseudo pentatonic) (Figure 3). The pentatonic and pseudo pentatonic scales are scattered in various parts of the opera. This pattern is repeated using different scales such as bars 157–158, bars 159–160, and respectively in bars 467, 468, and 469 (Figures 4 and 5). Trisutji's music uses this style to create an atmosphere of tension and discord, such as shown in the vocal sung by Princess Loro Jonggrang in her distress. In bar 40, the note C# intrudes the series of four-notes (E–F#–G–B) resulting in a dissonant combination of F#–G–B–C#–E–F# (E–F#–G–B). Another section of bars 105–11 also evokes a sense of tension, the mixture of sadness and disappointment sung by Loro Jonggrang. The bars similarly use the E–F#–G–A–B–C–C#–D–D#–E combination (Figure 6).

Andante Molto Sostenuto

Figure 4 Pseudo pentatonic, bars 157–160.

Calma

Figure 5 Pseudo pentatonic, bars 467–469.

Lento Espressivo

Figure 6 The use of two chords (I–VII), bars 105–107.

We can see in figure 1–6 how Trisutji builds musical atmosphere and character in contrast and conflict by clashing different sets of notes. The notes borrowed from the pentatonic scales are juxtaposed with diatonic and chromatic systems, resulting in a new combination of notes that are not bound by one system of scales.

The Use of Nontonal Timbre (Drone)

Besides the use of pseudo pentatonic notes in different variations to create the main motif and chord, Trisutji manipulates the timbre of various Western instruments (violin, cello, vibraphone, piano, glockenspiel, timpani) and Eastern ones, which is the nontonal gong.

Trisutji adopts different sounds by creating dissonant nuances through echoes and vibration. In bars 1–6, for example, the echo and vibration are created by the sound of the gong and cello. The nontonal metallic sound of the gong is put in tension with the tonal vibration of the wooden stringed cello and piano (Figure 1).

In bars 1–5 the flute plays note E, while glockenspiel, a metal percussion plays both B and E as seen from bar 3. Another metal percussion, glockenspiel plays the note E three times in bar 5. The Western percussion made of leather, wood, and metal, timpani also play the note E in a long tone with the *tremolo* technique, by hitting it with a mallet in both hands continuously and repetitively to create a drone effect.

Trisutji creates the percussive effect from a repetitive series of notes with a different register and technique. The string instruments play a series of notes (D–C#–D–F#–D–C#–A) in *pizzicato*, mixed with the staccato sound of the piano (bars 72–84). The overall percussive combination of the string instruments and the piano creates the drone effect in an intense and extended volume, alternating with long, short, sharp notes.

In the middle of the opera, bars 138–139 produce a similar drone effect through a *tremolo*, a technique which is used repeatedly throughout the opera.

The manipulation of Western instruments to adopt the percussive sound of the gamelan is accompanied by the nontonal, static drone of the gong. The mixture evokes a mystical and gripping atmosphere in the opening of *Loro Jonggrang*. It is a characteristic of Javanese gamelan music to start with a calm, mystical atmosphere played in mid-tempo with a simple rhythm. This kind of atmosphere is created by the nontonal drone of the gong in *Loro Jonggrang*, in particular in bars 1–6, although tonal Western instruments, glockenspiel, small vibraphone, timpani, violin, flute, and piano are played at the same time.

The force of Javanese music through its drone is significant in the logic of Trisutji's musical style. She also creates the drone effect through other instruments with various timbres by creating three-note chords in a different dynamic. In bars 1–6, for instance, the drone effect of the gong is made to clash with the piano sound in three-note chords played by the left hand and right hand, creating a long sound manipulated by the pedal and enhanced by the long and static, echoing sound of the violin and cello. In this way, Trisutji's music maintains the drone effect by manipulating the Western instruments. An example of the drone effect can be found in bars 118–119. This effect is created by the *tremolo* sound of Western instruments (violin, cello, and piano) (Figure 7).

Beats and Accent

Accentuation in up and down beats is one element in Trisutji's musical style as shown in *Loro Jonggrang*. The musical structure is created out of a rhythmic pattern which repeats in every four or eight beats (Alves 2001, 30). In Javanese gamelan music accent is done in two beats according to the instruments used. The second beat is done with more pressure than the first beat. The accent in this series of up and down beats is continuously repeated in the cycle of four and eight beats. In contrast, in Western music, the pressure falls on the first beat. In the four-beat-gamelan stylised music, for example, the accent of the gamelan would appear before the first beat and in the fourth beat, while in Western music it falls on the first and third.

angoscioso e molto crescendo

piu cresc e poco accel

Figure 7 Drone, bars 118–122.

Trisutji makes use of accentuation by creating cycles that are not as regular as those in gamelan music. Her rhythmic style is more flexible in four and eight beats or the combination of both in accordance to the use of various time signatures (4/4, 3/4, 2/4, 4/8, 6/8, 9/8), each with different beats and pressure. This shows how Trisutji adjusts different accents to create various moods, such as tension, conflict, and contrast according to what is happening to the characters in the opera. In the first four bars (bar 1–4), we can see that the accent is placed on the first and fourth beat (Figure 1).

This accentuation is played through Western instruments (piano, violin, cello, timpani) and the Javanese gong. In bars 5–21, the accent is played in the form of a musical dialogue between the Western instruments and the gong. There are light accentuation between the first, second, third, and fourth beats which alternate with heavy beats. In bars 249–275 Trisutji uses various time signatures alternately, i.e., 9/8 (6 bars), 3/4 (one bar), 9/8 (5 bars), 6/8 (1 bar), 9/8 (4 bars), 3/4 (3 bars), 9/8 (2 bars), 12/8 (1 bar), 9/8 (10 bars). The use of various time signatures shows how Trisutji manipulates the percussive effect to create different volumes in beats and accents, as each time signature has its own dynamic. Through this fast changing dynamic of accents, she creates a different mood of conflict, tension, and contrast.

A similar pattern of accentuation can be found in bars 142–143 sung by Princess Loro Jonggrang (soprano) (Figure 8) and also in bars 279–281 sung by Loro Jonggrang (soprano) and Raden Bandung (tenor) (Figure 9). The accent occurs in the last beat of 143 and 281.

Western Music with Javanese Intuition

Trisutji's music is built in two realms. One is the Western musical tradition which imitates the pentatonic scale, resulting in the pseudo pentatonic sound. The second realm is the intuitive dimension, which is based solely on one nontonal instrument, yet creating a strong Javanese *rasa* to the music. This Javanese nuance does not come from a complete set of gamelans, but imagined through the adoption of the Javanese sounds made through Western instruments such as the violin, cello, piano, flute, oboe, glockenspiel, vibraphone and timpani—accompanied by the gong. The variation of sound in different timbres is unique, as each instrument has its own character. In a gamelan set, the gong is considered to be an instrument that evokes a satisfying, relaxing sound as compared to the bonang, which brings up more noisy and vibrant tones (Benamou 2010, 178).

Although her music is coloured by a Javanese soul, Trisutji's music still adheres to the Western musical theory, using the perfect fifth interval with five steps from E to B and pure perfect fourth, four steps climbing from B to E. Perfect fourth and fifth intervals were often used in the harmonic progression of the 19th century Western music and were usually combined with third or three-step intervals or octave or eight-step intervals. The parallel combination of fourth and fifth, third, octaves like this was used by Bartok (Hindemith 1968, 4–7).

Figure 8 shows musical notation for two vocal parts. The top part is for Loro Jonggrang (Soprano) in 4/4 time, starting at bar 140. The lyrics are: "ku ha ri de mi ha ri ku ra sa kan ku ra sa kan". The bottom part is for Raden Bandung (Tenor) in 4/4 time, starting at bar 144. The lyrics are: "ke le ma han ku yang men ce la a sa a" and "tas a ku ke dae rah da ri di de kat ha ti". Dynamic markings include *ff*, *dim.*, and *molto*. There are also triplets and accents indicated by arrows.

Figure 8 Rhythm/accent, beats, bars 140–146.

Figure 9 shows musical notation for two vocal parts. The top part is for Loro Jonggrang (Soprano) in 9/8 time, starting at bar 279. The lyrics are: "le bih be sar yang le bih be sar le bih da ri pin ta ku.". The bottom part is for Raden Bandung (Tenor) in 9/8 time. Dynamic markings include *cresc. molto*, *f*, *tenuto riten.*, and *ff*. There are accents and slurs indicated.

Figure 9 Rhythm/accent, beats, bars 279–281.

In bars 104–111 Trisutji uses the violin and piano to play two notes in third, fourth, fifth intervals, while she uses the cello and left-hand piano playing to create a unison and octave sound. In bars 249–262 she uses chords of third, fourth and fifth, sixth and octave intervals clashing with parallel or combined jumps played by marimba, violin, and the piano. The violin often plays two notes simultaneously in scale degree such as third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and octave intervals, evoking a tense drone effect.

The meeting of Western tones and timbre with the nontonal drone shows Trisutji's negotiation in finding a middle way through her music. The negotiation is done to represent the Javanese dimension that cannot be expressed by five tonal traditional instruments such as the *saron* (metallophone) and *rebab*, a Javanese two-string bowed lute but using Western instruments with a definite pitch like the violin, cello, piano, vibraphone, and glockenspiel.

The cello is the most used Western instrument in *Loro Jonggrang*, which comprises 321 bars. Here the cello adopts the sound of a traditional instrument called rebab with a smaller wooden body resonator played vertically like the cello. The two instruments have different sound qualities. The cello is made of Western grown wood, while the rebab is made from the wood of Indonesian teakwood trees. The sound is also produced in different ways. The cello has a big body with four strings and a wide register from low, middle to high sound. The rebab, with two or sometimes three strings, has a narrow register sound and in Javanese gamelan, it is an instrument that creates a mixture of moods, such as sadness, calmness, and softness.

The Javanese dimension found in Trisutji's music and in traditional Javanese music is called *rasa*. *Rasa* is a way to express emotion or to feel emotion, a foundation for communication, in choosing the right words to say, using a euphemism, and filtering insights. According to Poerwadarminta, *rasa* deals with both the spiritual and the physical aspects (Benamou 2010, 43). The physical includes emotion, way of thinking, desires, feelings such as sadness, anger, happiness, and character such as boldness, patience, and gentleness. The inner sensitivity or intuition is called the true *rasa*, which Javanese people believe to have nurtured in their culture. Benamou contrasts the rational and secular orientation of the West and the spiritual orientation through the nurturing of true *rasa* in Javanese culture. Trisutji's Javanese aristocratic background, the great-granddaughter of King Paku Buwono X from the Solo Palace brought up in Jakarta, the capital city of Indonesia, with a Western musical education explains the combination of Western thinking and Javanese *rasa* manifested in her music. In other words, as seen in *Loro Jonggrang*, Trisutji expresses Javanese *rasa* which is more intuitive. In Trisutji's music *rasa* is expressed through the use of pseudo pentatonic, accent and beats, dynamic and tempo as explained earlier.

The Dissonant Nuance: Turn and Glissando

The clashing and colliding of the West and the East in Trisutji's music creates the overall effect of an extended series of turns and *glissando* in augmentation and diminution through chromatic sounds. The tense feeling is developed through a system of modulation through various scales, although the core of her music retains a dominant contrast.

In other words, the static mode is collided with a fast-moving up and down-modulation. The static mode meets the playful contrast by step and by leap through intervals. At the beginning of the opera, the sound moves from a series of pentatonic notes, which is later developed with stage V chords using B–F♯–B in a length. The move from the static mode to the dynamic mode creates chromatic turns and *glissando* balanced by the dominant chords (V), which serve as the basic foundation of the harmony and melody of *Loro Jonggrang*.

This turn and *glissando* can be seen in bars 1–6, which abruptly shift in bars 7–38, mixing the melody from the pseudo pentatonic and diatonic/chromatic sounds accompanied by a progression of widening chords (Figure 1). The chord progression starts tonic and dominant chords, expanding to supertonic chords, mediant chords, sub dominant chords, leading tone chords (Figure 2, bars 105–107). The harmonic progression moves from one to another, mixing the diatonic, chromatic, and three and four notes to produce a push and pressure effect that builds a sense of dissonance and tension.

According to Hindemith (1968, 30), traditional harmony can use non-chord notes according to the given rules. Some categories mentioned by Hindemith are first, changing tones or the addition of notes in chords with certain intervals such as minor or major seventh with upwards or downwards movement; second, passing tone or non-chords sounds which function as mediation from one sound to another sound due to the distance of the leap; third, suspension or the delay of sound movement so that the note is sounded after the chord movement is made in different pressures or beats from soft to strong. The suspension creates a dissonant sound; anticipation, a non-chord note which belongs to the next chord, thus preceding the chord progression. This non-chord use is common in the Western theory of harmony. Trisutji, however, uses her own ways. For

instance, she uses a passing tone which is mixed directly with a changing tone, putting major interval in between which clash with the changing tone. This is uncommon in Western traditional harmony, which usually finishes one category to its resolution before moving to another category (Hindemith 1968, 39–41). For Trisutji sounds can be manipulated without strictly adhering to the Western rule of traditional harmony in order to create the dissonant atmosphere full of turns and *glissando*, which characterise her musical *oeuvre* (Nainggolan et al. 2021).

Trisutji's turn and *glissando* musical character reflects her negotiation with the Western musical tradition. While following Western musical structure and theory, Trisutji expresses her Javanese *rasa* by creating tension in various ways.

THE ROMANTIC AND 20TH CENTURY MUSIC EXPLORATION

Trisutji's music shows the influence of Romantic musical style, which transcends the structure of classical music. She does this by inserting the Javanese gamelan nuances. The first phase of Trisutji's music career, when *Loro Jonggrang* was composed (1957), was heavily influenced by the Romantic music of Chopin (1810–1849). In the Romantic period, the musical style was expressed through subjectivity and expression of emotion, and freedom in form (Apel 1979, 738). The Romantic influence can be seen in Trisutji's early compositions like *Nocturne* (1952) and *Gending*. The Romantic nuance appears now and then throughout her long career as a composer as shown in her last published anthology called *Tembang Puitik*, a collection of songs from 1954, 1957, 1966 1973, 1980, 1987, 1999, and 2000 for vocal and piano published in 2020 (Nainggolan et al. 2021).

The Romantic aspect can also be seen in *Loro Jonggrang* through the use of chromatic sounds combined with pseudo pentatonic to create a dissonance, and the use of the gong. The structural transgression against the classical form can be seen in the structure of the opera, which skipped the overture as discussed earlier. *Loro Jonggrang* uses pentatonic and chromatic to create romantic arias.

The harmony in Trisutji's music cannot be separated from the harmonic progression and modulation used in the previous era of classical music, such as the functional harmony of the classical era and then the chromatic addition which heightens the sense of dissonance of the Romantic era. The mixed nuances are then elaborated through pseudo pentatonic elements, by creating three or four-note scales, clashed by chromatic tones through the use of by leap and by step intervals. The turn goes upward, downward, and horizontally and the *glissando* moves through pushing and pressing effects.

One can also detect the impressionistic nuance in Trisutji's musical harmony. The use of third, fourth, fifth, sixth, second, and sevenths are often heard. The interval is done by stacking two or three-note in progression, played at once, or by combining a certain set of notes, two, three, or four notes through broken chords. These intervals are also made to clash with the scales of three or four notes combined with the chromatic and diatonic (Figure 7).

Although the influence of the previous era, especially the Romantic period is strong in Trisutji's music, it is obvious that it is a product of the 20th century. In one interview, Trisutji mentioned a number of 20th century composers, such as Debussy, Bartok, and also Stravinsky as her source of inspiration. The characteristics of 20th century music are the exploration of harmony, instrumentation, dynamic, and tempo using a freer and more flexible time signature. Some influential 20th century composers like Schoenberg, Hindemith, Bartok, Debussy, Stravinsky, and Ravel create their own unique musical style. Schoenberg developed the twelve notes series, whereas Hindemith formed the foundation of the traditional 20th century harmony. Bartok developed harmony in the parallel progression of chords and octaves, while Debussy invented a full-scale system or whole tone scale. Stravinsky is known for his use of both string and metal instruments like the trumpet and trombone in an orchestra with a percussive accentuation. Influenced by the French impressionist painting, Ravel invented a colour sound harmony.

Trisutji's music is part of the continuous innovation of serious music in the 20th century. Her music enriches the vocabulary of 20th century classical music in Asia by experimenting with various timbre from Western and Indonesian instruments with percussive characteristics. The percussive character is enhanced by the drone sound coming from the Javanese gamelan music, in particular the gong. The way Trisutji adopts the sound of traditional music by using Western instruments, for instance, the sound of the rebab played by the cello gives a contemporary nuance to her music.

Experimentation with Western music, blending it with Eastern traditional elements have been done by several Asian composers. Chou Wen-Chung uses chords based on Chinese philosophy (Lai 1997). *Gong* is the mode in Chinese melody, five notes form the Chinese pentatonic system comprising the twelve notes used in the same interval, which is pure fifth (*li*). Chou's use of chords shows the acculturation of Asian culture to

the system of Western musical harmony. Chou develops musical sounds based on Chinese principle related to status, philosophy, and integrity. He fuses the philosophy with Western music by using the interval, but still adhering to Chinese music as the dominant mode (Lai 1997).

Another composer who blends the East and the West is Chinary Ung. Born in Cambodia in 1942, Ung got his music education in the United States (US). Ung, who later settled in the US, composed music which blends Asian elements into the Western music system (Kays 2000, 117–118). In one of his essay, Ung (2019) was concerned that Asian composers educated in Western classical music might forego their own tradition and cultural identity. Therefore, he proposed the paths for Asian composers to make use of their rich cultural backgrounds to produce their unique “creative fingerprints.” The purpose is “not a matter of extending the reach of Western classical music, but rather seeking out something new that has not been heard before” (Ung 2015, 9). Ung gave examples of how he created musical projects based on inspiration from the Khek-Mon traditional music, where “each level represents a separate piece of music” with different social functions like the layered figures of Cambodian tapestry. Inserting this style, which is identified as heterophony (Kays 2000) into Western musical composition, Ung has contributed a new musical experience.

Trisutji’s music, however, unlike Chou and Ung, does not create “something new that has not been heard before” like what Ung envisioned, or a using Asian philosophy as its dominant mode like Chou. Still, Trisutji’s music does carry her own characteristics. Instead of merging one system and another to create a new one (the third way), Trisutji stays with the Western musical framework, teasing it intuitively with the Javanese *rasa*. In this way, she collides the rationality of Western music, from which perspective she produced her compositions, with what Benamou considered as the immaterial elements of *rasa* (Benamou 2010, 48). The way Trisutji captures the unmeasurable *rasa* is by mixing the pseudo pentatonic sound with Western music as described earlier to create the turn and *glissando* effect. The collision creates a disjuncture or a sense of discord, which is seen here as dissonance. The concept of dissonance is based on the Western concept of classical harmony, as the Javanese nuance in Trisutji’s music is transported into Western form.

Unlike Chou and Ung who created their projects consciously, conceptually, and in a calculated way, with the intentional fusion of East and West which characterises the musical experimentation of 20th century music, Trisutji’s approach is more organic. While Trisutji was educated formally in Western classical music, she internalised the Javanese *rasa* through cultural exposure and her upbringing as an offspring of the Javanese sultanate. The two cultural systems opened up different realms of expression and experience which coexist in tension: between rationality and *rasa*, and between dynamic mobility and training of control and composure. In our reading, the dissonance in her music is a reflection of the way she manages the cross-cultural contradiction in her personal experience and life history as outlined afterwards.

TRISUTJI AND JAVANESE CULTURE

The process of artistic creation cannot be separated from the life experience of the creator. Haworth and Colton (2015) suggest that ideas come from individual experience, and artistic creation is the result of an exploration of the body and soul of the artist. Trisutji’s music is a result of a cross-cultural intersection of Western education and Javanese sensibility, although the last aspect is not always accessible at the conscious level. We derived our interpretation from reading her life history (Tamio 2007; Setiadi and Suhadi 2020) and from the insights we obtained from the interviews.

From the authors’ interviews with Trisutji, the mother figure as a strong cultural figure was identified (interview, 29 February 2020). Although her parents moved from central Java, where she was born, to Binjai in North Sumatra and then later to Jakarta, Trisutji was always in touch with her Javanese roots through what she learned from her mother. Her mother, B.R.A. Nedima Koosmarqyah, was the granddaughter of the Paku Buwono X, the Sultan of the Solo Palace. Trisutji’s mother taught her the norms and codes of conduct of a Javanese woman in daily life. In Binjai, her mother even founded a little Javanese workshop, where she taught Javanese dances, gamelan music, and Javanese language to her daughter and her daughter’s friends. She also taught them how to use the Javanese traditional sarong and kebaya and set up their hair in a proper bun for Javanese rituals (interview, 29 February 2020).

In Binjai, Trisutji’s father, Joelham Surjowidjojo, a medical doctor, served as the family doctor for the royal families of the Langkat Sultanate. Whenever there were foreign or local visitors, the Sultan would hold cultural performances, and on such occasions, Trisutji and her friends would perform the Javanese dances and play the gamelan and karawitan music (chanting Javanese songs with the accompaniment of the Javanese gamelan). At the same time in Binjai, Trisutji was exposed to a multicultural environment. At the night bazaars, she would see Chinese opera, Indian music, and also the Batak dances. The mixture of her Javanese upbringing

and multicultural exposure became a strong influence on Trisutji's process of growing up (interview, 29 February 2016; Tobing 2017).

Born and raised in an aristocratic milieu, which was at the same time Western-educated, Trisutji had a high cultural capital. With the family's social standing and economic stability, Trisutji got the best education. She received classical music training from a Western private piano tutor and was trained in various Western languages. Upon finishing high school, she was sent to the Amsterdam Conservatory, then to Santa Sisila Conservatory in Rome, and a short visit to Paris to further her classical music education (Kamal 2002).

Trisutji's music expresses the Javanese cultural element, although it is expressed through the form of Western classical music. In the *Loro Jonggrang* opera that she created when she was studying in Rome, there is one minor character that has an important role. The minor character is the maidservant. Trisutji's childhood and her family life in Indonesia cannot be separated from domestic helpers, who usually had an intimate bonding with the family, and served confidantes, and provided emotional support for the mistress (interview, 16 June 2020). It is through the support of such female figures that an upper-middle-class composer like Trisutji could fully focus on her career in music.

The *Loro Jonggrang* opera is crucial in understanding Trisutji's cultural habitus and her artistic taste. In a rare interview, Trisutji acknowledged that "the figure of Loro Jonggrang represents an important part of my psyche, especially my love life, my complex, hidden love" (interview, 16 June 2020). This acknowledgement is interesting as the opera shows a dynamic emotional shift, from love to hatred, honesty mixed with lies, patience turning into anger and intense conflict. It must be noted that *Loro Jonggrang* was written in the early period of her career when Trisutji was still 20 years old. Trisutji married twice, with three children from her first marriage. She stayed with her second husband, whose last name she retained (Kamal), even after his death. In Indonesia, Trisutji mostly stayed in Jakarta and then in Bali for several years before her death in Jakarta on 21 March 2021.

Trisutji's personal life remained hidden from the public, as she always maintained a composed, calm, and introverted personality. As a woman from the Javanese nobility, she always appeared in perfect attire and fine makeup, and a soft, polite manner. Whenever asked how she was, she always answered that everything was fine, with a gentle smile. In contrast, her thoughts and artistic work explore emotional turbulence, tension, and dissonance. The freedom of her mind and the trained composure of her body, the Western form and structure of her music, and the Javanese *rasa* fuelled her music. The turn and *glissando* styles are the way Trisutji negotiated the cross-cultural intersections of her life, which are both personal and cultural.

CONCLUSION

The logic of music and musical concepts behind Trisutji's music are based on the turn and *glissando* dissonance created by the percussive elements and the use of the gong, as expressed in the *Loro Jonggrang* opera. Here, the romantic spirit of rebellion and emotion is expressed in a tension of conflict and contrast, combined with all musical exploration that positions Trisutji as a 20th century composer with her own unique contribution. This musical style permeates Trisutji's musical in the span of five decades.

Trisutji's music shows her position in between the two systems of Western musical tradition and Javanese *rasa*. Her music carries the Javanese nuance in the framework of Western music—a 20th century product of contemporary music with classical and romantic inflection—the dissonance of the turn and *glissando* is the tension between the Javanese spirit in the body of Western music, a blending of diatonic, pentatonic, chromatic, and nontonal sounds.

Trisutji's music cannot be separated from her background as a Javanese female aristocrat from an intellectual milieu. Trisutji Kamal was born of a mixture of gifted natural musical talent, high cultural capital, the mind and soul of a creative genius, and a Javanese in her upbringing. She was in Europe in her early twenties, where she absorbed the romantic influence in her classical music education. While she expressed the waves of youthful emotion in the form of Western music, the spirit of Javanese culture is retained in the quiet drone of the gong. Her later works show intimation with Islamic spirituality and local folk cultures (Nainggolan et al. 2021). In all the different phases of her music, however, she retained the dissonance of turn and *glissando*, which also characterises the pentatonic music of the Indonesian archipelago, the Nusantara islands.

Like other Asian composers, Trisutji has contributed to the experimentation of blending the West and the East in a unique way. Exploring this turn and *glissando* musical style of a female Indonesian composer is a contribution to the gap in the scholarship about Asian female classical music composers, which is still to be further explored.

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