

# Sustainability Strategies Among Balinese Heritage Ensembles

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## **Abstract**

*Heritage ensembles typically conjure up images of antique heirloom instruments accumulating cultural capital while being passed down through generations. While that is the case for many historically significant gamelan orchestras on the island of Bali in Indonesia, the age of instruments is not a qualifier for the heritage designation of two prominent gamelan gong gede ensembles in the island's central district of Gianyar. Here in the lower highlands of Gianyar are the communities of Jasan and Sebatu. The significance of the pair in the discourse on heritage orchestras lies in their partnership to maintain one of the largest and most significant repertoires on the island. The communities of Jasan and Sebatu each have their own respective gong gede acquired only in the late 1980s. Indeed their bronze gongs and metallophones are new compared to the royal court heritage ensembles found in Pemecutan in the municipality of Denpasar or the status of Batur's ensemble built upon more than a century of service to a state temple. But what they lack in historical heritage and musical instrument artefacts, they more than compensate through sustaining the largest repertoire, a crucial resource component in heritage management. In this essay, I explore discourses on music and sustainability and assess the strategies these communities utilize in maintaining ritual music ensembles. I first examine the background to heritage management through a discussion of Jeff Todd Titon's four-tiered approach to sustainability in music. Then I provide ethnographies of individuals involved in a community partnership that draws on multiple resources, including musical notation, Bali's lucrative handicraft industry, and the sanctity of religious ritual to shore up heritage ensembles. Throughout I argue that while heritage may often constitute a top-down designation, it is also a label worn by insider stewards of tradition who consciously sustain music traditions from periphery positions.*

**Keywords** *Stewardship, ritual music, gamelan gong gede, notation, sustainability.*

## **Background**

Maintaining tradition and preserving culture increasingly require sustainability models in order to ensure survival when faced with larger hegemonic forces. With modernization and globalization, increasing amounts of pressure are applied to purveyors of Indonesian heritage ensembles to transform without compromising cultural and musical integrity. For example, Central Javanese court ensembles, Balinese *gong gede* orchestras, or Sundanese *wayang kulit* performance traditions all

have a cultural presence, yet exist on the periphery of mainstream culture within the Indonesian nation state. These traditions experience artistic innovation but too often survive only as sheltered remnants of elitist culture from the past. These ensembles may accompany coveted court dances or instil a sense of nostalgia in palace pride but have little relevance to modern 21st century contexts unless innovations are made with sustainability in mind. It is therefore extremely critical to conduct an examination to ascertain if any models of cultural sustainability are currently being implemented by community groups, government agencies or non-profit organizations.

Drawing briefly on a parallel from the biological sciences, the threat of extinction of an animal species is cause for immediate action. In the arts and humanities, recent studies have made similar claims and observations concerning the threat of extinction of endangered languages (Minett and Wang 2008), marginalized cultures (Jones 2007), and heritage ensembles (Titon 2009). Malaysian heritage ensembles such as Nobat (Iskandar 2011) and Maggagong Gong Ensembles (Pugh-Kitingan and Hussin 2005) exist precariously on the margins of mainstream popular Malaysian culture and fall into this category of cultural heritage grappling with issues of sustainability. Indeed many organizations and institutions of religion, government and community strive to maintain these ensembles, often expending large quantities of time and resources to make them relevant to younger generations.

However, most of these efforts are built upon a model of preservation and conservation rather than sustainability. These models tend to preserve music traditions as stagnant, unchangeable forms of cultural expression through entrenched dogma or inflexible administrative guidelines. In contrast, new models of sustainability and cultural maintenance have yet to be fully examined for their application to this critical grouping of Malaysian and Indonesian performing arts, cultural knowledge, and threatened intangible history.

Heritage ensembles may be defined as an inherited collection of instruments or specific repertoire from the past that constitutes the legacy of a community, region or nation. Heritage ensembles and repertoire are often passed down from generation to generation and may be part of larger, context-based customs or belief systems for a particular social formation (court musicians/clan members/etc.) or regional or national identity. Some of the challenges heritage ensembles face include lost and forgotten repertoire, disinterest among youth, and marginalization from a lack of sufficient finance. Given sufficient platforms for interaction and exchange, key stakeholders from a range of struggling heritage ensembles may derive meaning and learn from each other's experiences to develop strategies towards preservation, innovation and sustainability. Unless new strategies are adapted for heritage ensembles, there exists the predilection towards younger generations significantly diminishing interest or even losing their cultural and musical identity. Heritage ensembles are dependent upon a network of individuals such as teachers, mentors, scholars or religious figures as well as researchers. These key stakeholders are stewards who need to be recognized and integrated into agendas for cultural preservation and maintenance.

## **Models of Sustainability: a four-tiered approach**

Discourse on music sustainability also involves applying research results towards serving source communities. Such applied research includes theorizing a role for music to resolve conflict and contribute to peacemaking as well as considering community building as a principal goal of applied ethnomusicology. Elizabeth Mackinlay collaborates with Aboriginal Australian women who use video to represent themselves towards moving beyond hegemonic relationships with their colonial past (Mackinlay 2010). Activist approaches to music and sustainability are captured in stories about musical instruments and various expressions in telling interviews in a research project entitled *Sustainable Futures for Music Cultures* (Schippers 2010).

Titon (2009) outlines four-tiers of engagement in his theoretical essay on cultural heritage management and Music and Sustainability. He suggests that, “Music cultures behave as ecosystems” and that if a diversity of musical systems, such as heritage ensembles, is to be maintained we need to recognize the dynamics of mobility and interconnectedness that bring about hybridity and change.

In Titon’s first tier, ‘Diversity’ implies that given the competition in the musical marketplace, the greater degree of diversity of sonic structures, the greater the chances are for the survival of a multiplicity of heritage ensembles. ‘Limits to Growth’, the second tier means there are natural limits to the consumption, participation and innovation within a given music culture ecosystem. The growth of globalized forms of the popular music industry have been shown to show no limits to market expansion which has a dominating effect on ritual and heritage ensembles.

The third tier in this research project is ‘Interconnectivity’. Quantifying and exploring social and cultural networks that directly or indirectly influence heritage ensembles will assist in devising local strategies towards not only preservation, but dynamic sustainability. Dynamic sustainability leads to the fourth tier, which is ‘Stewardship’. Musical stewardship involves, “...a responsibility to care for musicians, musical institutions, musical resources – the global musiculture” (Titon 2009:121). Stewardship involves identifying living master musicians as intangible cultural heritage. But this must involve nurturing the social networks where master musicians become partners in seeing young musicians become active agents in the formulation of ‘new culture-bearers’.

The prevalence of research on heritage ensembles indicates that the assignment of a label such as ‘Intangible Cultural Heritage’ is more problematic than a means to finding solutions to a dwindling diversity of traditional musics. At the heart of tensions between the binary of ‘continuity and change’ are, “Attitudes to heritage [...] shown through the struggle between “old” and “new” (Djumaev 2005: 165). Javanese court orchestras, for example, have likely existed in Central Javanese court culture since the 13th century. Yet despite this continuity of presence, these heritage ensembles see few innovations as protected implements of elitist culture. Signalling prayer times, announcing empirical dignitaries and inspiring royal soldiers on the battlefield are archaic examples with little relevance to modern 21st century contexts unless ‘reinventions’ are inscribed in the ‘tradition’ (Hobsbawm 1983). Many communities on the island of Bali maintain, but have yet to outline, an on-going model of sustainability towards their individual heritage ensembles.

Sustainability of heritage ensembles relates to an extensive body of literature on homogenization and globalization. Globalization theories that echo sentiments of cultural imperialism posit that globalization pushes cultural influences on primitive peoples, stripping them of their identity and homogenising culture (Robertson 1992; Harrison 1999 in McIntosh, 2010, p.2).

Yet counter arguments suggest that global forces such as diatonic music enable participants to become active agents in either assimilating or rejecting global forms. For example, Emma Baulch's work (2007) on death metal and punk music scenes depicts them perched on the periphery of traditional Balinese society. However, punk participants enjoy a vantage point that favours reaching out towards the global. I see globalization in the context of heritage ensembles as an adaptation process by which popular musical forms move into, and dominate soundscapes and subsequently marginalize or replace local forms. In terms of heritage management, it is less a matter of losing and recovering, and more an issue of cultural production:

Heritage is not lost and found, stolen and reclaimed. It is a mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past. Heritage not only gives buildings, precincts, and ways of life that are no longer viable for one reason or another a second life as exhibits of themselves; it also produces something new. If a colonial past, a past of missionaries and forced acculturation, threatened to produce 'de-culturation,' the heritage industry does not so much reverse that process, even though its discourse of reclamation and preservation makes such claims. Rather, the heritage industry is a new mode of cultural production and it produces something new. There is no turning back. If heritage as we know it from the industry were sustainable, it would not require protection. The process of protection, of 'adding value,' speaks in and to the present, even if it does so in terms of the past (Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 1995: 370).

Locating past forms in the present as Kirschenblatt-Gimblett outlines above implies contending with dominant expressive forms. From ecology these dominant forms are 'invasives', meaning non-indigenous or non-native species that adversely affect the habitats and bioregions they invade (Leasman-Tanner 2001). The ecology of music implies a broad spectrum of applications from mimetic relationships between humanly organized sound to the sounds of nature, as well as the analogy to the socio-economic sphere (Keogh 2013:7). Musical invasives are a part of the ecology trope, but I do not see them as problematic because interdisciplinary loan words and terminological concepts like invasives accurately describe the dynamics of dominant musical systems overtaking, and in many cases, causing the extinction of a musical system all together (Hood 2012). Invasives often cohabit with native varieties for many years, and eventually the stronger aggressive design of an invasive becomes omnipresent as its population increases and becomes dense while it adapts to its new surroundings. For example, Balinese heritage ensembles have been surrounded by and have co-existed with popular 'invasive' music forms for decades. Nonetheless few can argue against the fact that popular culture has expanded dramatically since the post-Suharto media industry, and currently infiltrates fragile and marginalized soundscapes.

## Stewardship and Heritage Maintenance

In Gianyar District's lower highlands are the communities of Sebatu and Jasan (see Figure 1, Map of Bali). Both have been partners for generations in supporting each other's festivals and temple ceremonies that involve the performance of one of Bali's largest religious repertoires on the island.

I first contacted the village head of Jasan in 2002, while conducting research for my doctoral dissertation on regional variants of *gamelan gong gede*, Bali's largest ritual orchestra consisting of vertically and horizontally suspended knobbed bronze gongs, drums and percussion (Hood 2010). The village head or *kepala dusun* Jasan at that time was senior musician and community leader I Nyoman Meranggi (see Figure 2).



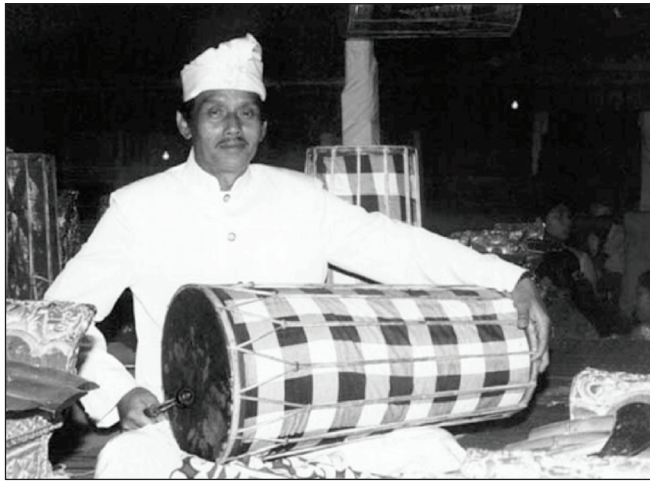
**Figure 1** Map of Bali's districts and regencies including the lower highland communities of Jasan and Sebatu. Sourced from [http://www.baliguide.com/bali\\_map.html](http://www.baliguide.com/bali_map.html)

For decades, Meranggi has held central positions in his community's governance playing a role as steward, not only in the realm of local and regional politics, but as a mentor of the performing arts. For example, in 2011 he hosted Vice Governor Drs. Puspayoga and a team of politicians who attended Jasan's mass funeral ceremonies officiated in part by Tampak Siring senior priest, Ida Pedanda Putra Tegeh.<sup>1</sup> His leadership has always been based upon representing the voices of his community through an egalitarian approach, rather than dictating from the top down on matters of management policy. This distinction is important because of how his *seka gong* or 'music club' is managed and maintained. Each *seka* organizational sub-group structure employs guidelines and bylaws called *awig-awig*.

In one of my first interviews with Meranggi back in 2002, he had just finished overseeing the construction of a massive open-air pavilion for his community's village temple and *awig-awig* played an important role. The structure was designed as a multi-purpose venue and featured a raised stage and seating for more than 1200 audience



members. If *awig-awig* were not endorsed and implemented by managing directors under Meranggi's supervision, corruption and embezzlement would have seen monies siphoned off into the pockets of immoral members of the community. Because of Meranggi's stewardship of the arts, particularly religious ensembles like the *gong gede*, buildings can be built and festivals can be funded through a relatively fair and democratic process.



**Figure 2** I Nyoman Meranggi, village head of Jasan and mentor and steward of the performing arts in Jasan, Gianyar

*Seka gong gede* Jasan is the antithesis of many Balinese *sanggar* or private studio-based orchestras who organize themselves as revenue-generating businesses. Any Balinese gamelan group is made up of leaders and supporters who have varying degrees of skill and expertise. Monetary resource management and support are inevitably part of the structural organization of a given group. But it is interesting to note, one of the enduring aspects of the *seka* structure first documented in the 1930s is that non-specialists make up the majority of music group membership (McPhee 1966).

### ***Gong gede*: Financial Resources**

Reaping revenue from the handicraft industry, Jasan and Sebatu reinvest funds into village coffers to manage religious assets that include *gong gede* orchestras. Just over ten kilometres to the north of the bustling Ubud tourist village, Jasan community is one of the key financial benefactors in the Tegalalang sub-district's lucrative wooden handicraft industry. Enjoying relative geographic isolation from the sprawling hotel developments that dominate prime real estate in neighbouring lowland Ubud, Jasan is perched between steep, mountainous terrain and deep volcanic ravines carved by ancient lava flows (see Figure 1). Although agriculture plays a key economic role in the region, Jasan integrates both rice growing and manufacturing in its lucrative cottage industry. Tens of wholesale handicraft shops line both sides of the busy two-lane road

that runs through the area.<sup>2</sup> Handicraft store fronts cover up back room sweat shops occupied by young adults and children who churn out carved, painted and packaged winged green frogs, cat statues with elongated necks and coloured glass decorations. Despite the hardships endured and perhaps the compromise of educational opportunities for many young workers in the industry, Tegalalang and neighbouring communities generate revenue that trickles into communal building projects, temple maintenance, and eventually the coffers of its ritual music organizations called *seka gong*.

As with most communities, Jasan maintains three principal temples of worship called Kahyangan Tiga. However, in this region of Northern Gianyar, social organization to maintain these temples relies less on a tiered caste system stemming from upper class warrior descendants called *ksatria* or powerfully influential priestly caste households called Brahmin. Instead the more than 430 heads of household that make the *banjar* community ward are responsible for maintaining a devout religious temple schedule of festivities, anniversaries, and semi-annual purifications. Elected officials lead the *banjar* administration that manages sub-group representatives including leaders for music and dance clubs called *seka*. Each *seka* organizational sub-group structure employs guidelines and bylaws (*awig-awig*). Important to the discussion here is that these *awig-awig* outline music preservation and protection methods that ally with heritage strategies. The *awig-awig* guidelines dictate dispersal of funds, membership guidelines, and even penalties for misconduct. While rigid in their tone, these rules and guidelines are interpreted and flexible enough to respond to changing generational tastes and trends.

### **Debunking the rote learning myth with musical manuscripts**

Both Sebatu and Jasan communities have an honorary relationship of service called *ngaturang ayah* to the state temple located in the crater of mount Batur (see Kintamani on Map). Located about ten kilometres to the north, this relationship of ritual service and the geographic proximity has seen Jasan and Sebatu help Batur village with preparing ritual offerings for ceremony, donating essential raw materials, and more significantly, exchanging music and dance knowledge. It is difficult to pinpoint just when this *ngaturang ayah* relationship began, but one of the results of exchange crucial to the sustainability of heritage ensembles under discussion here is a shared palm-leaf manuscript called *grantang*.

Etched on the dried *lontar* leaves of this manuscript are the principal musical tones of tens of music compositions. *Gamelan gong gede* compositions are lengthy musical works. The use of music notation as a preservation method debunks the long held belief among academics. Notation use stands in contrast to the stereotype that all Balinese gamelan are based upon oral tradition and rote learning. Sebatu and Jasan musicians use written notation to remember these long and extended melodies called *gending*. During my research trips to the neighbouring community of Batur, however, I had no indications from my informants that they still maintained the use of *grantang* music notations to remember their repertoire. Given the number of common compositions, or the same pieces performed between Jasan, Sebatu and Batur, it is likely written notation was used by all of them at some point in their common histories.

In addition, musicians I spoke with from the Sebatu community have distinct memories of giving music lessons to their neighbours from Sulahan, the historic heritage ensemble featured in the 1930s photographs found in Colin McPhee's monograph *Music in Bali* (1966).<sup>3</sup> In those lessons, Sulahan musicians came to Sebatu to relearn compositions they had forgotten over the years. Recollection of these pieces was done both through hands on teaching and music notation consultation, a clear indication that written resources have been a key component in heritage ensemble repertoire sustainability.

I have not encountered other gamelan ensembles in Bali who utilize music notation as a sustainability strategy in their heritage management. But given the fact that their are more than 50 musicians in a full-size *gong gede* orchestra, the question still arises as to how all of these musicians could read from a single lontar palm-leaf manuscript in performance? When I put this question to Meranggi, Jasan's *gong gede* group leader, he replied with humor and revealed an informative pedagogic technique towards repertoire maintenance.

Meranggi explained that notation was not used during live performance. Instead it is only those musicians who are responsible for memorizing the extended melodic lines of musical compositions that read and rehearse with the *grantang* notations. Senior artist, Made Yasa, a musician from Sebatu, related to me how individual rehearsal translates into group performance. In the practice of *grantang* rehearsal, Yasa rehearses melodies in his mind during evenings leading up to a performance. Lying awake in the evenings, Yasa reads the principal notes while visualizing his lead instrument, a long row of bronze kettlegongs called *terompong*. Played with two padded mallets that strike the raised boss of each kettlegong, Yasa would imagine his own rendition while his hands would mimic movements on the instrument. Sometime he would wave a pair of mallets in the air. But more often he would use a bamboo instrument called *tingklik*, a small, portable xylophone-like percussion instrument. Because the burden of orchestral leadership falls upon a *terompong* player, it is his responsibility to cue melodic direction and master musical structural components of a composition. One false signal or misinterpreted phrase could have a negative 'ripple effect' for other musicians who rely on his leadership. In fact, the term *nutug* meaning literally 'to follow', describes how musicians playing single-octave metallophones called *gangsa jongkok* perform their parts. *Gangsa jongkok* musicians play a steady stream of principal tones in regular rhythm. If a musician is unsure of these principal tones, he may listen carefully to the more elaborate *terompong* part to remember his part.

### **Allocation and integration among melodic leaders**

Maintaining the largest *gong gede* heritage repertoire is not a task that falls on any one individual. Rather, Jasan and Sebatu musicians have employed allocation and integration as key preservation and sustainability methods. Most ritual ensembles in Bali have one or two melodic leaders who play the *terompong* and by default, carry on the tradition of their village repertoire. In my survey conducted in 2002 to 2004, I found that most Balinese gamelan groups knew between 5-8 of the long, extended instrumental compositions called *gending*. Few groups could claim more than ten large



works to their repertoire and most relied upon the memory of a single *terompong* player to recall pieces. The Balinese calendar dictates ritual performance of this repertoire and as many as six months or more may pass between ritual performance. Observing that groups rely on a single melodic leader and large gaps of time separate performances and its understandable how groups may forget compositions over time.

Jasan and Sabtu on the other hand, allocate duties and integrate generations as preservation and sustainability approaches to heritage management. Allocating the responsibility of melodic leadership on the *terompong* to one or two musicians is inadequate and risky in maintaining the more than 40 compositions in their repertoire. With over 522 heads of family and more than 100 musicians at their disposal, senior leaders have allocated the learning of large extended compositions to multiple melodic leaders. Over the course of a typical three-day temple ceremony, Jasan and Sabtu are able to perform 10 to 12 large instrumental compositions per evening. By rotating *terompong* players, Jasan and Sabtu actively engage religious obligation through contributing ‘sonic offerings’ (*upakara munyi-munyan*) to temple ceremonies. For example, I witnessed the fourth full moon (*pujurnama kapat*) ceremony from October 20-22nd, 2002 at Jasan’s village temple (*pura desa*). Each *terompong* player seated in front of the orchestra was able to lead at least two or three large compositions. I met musicians such as Made Pondal, Wayan Kotak, Wayan Jingga and Putu Saraya among others who took on the responsibility of melodic leadership. Jasan musicians had made every attempt that night to evenly distribute their repertoire across as many musicians as possible so that no one *gending* was left out during ritual performance. I found the significance of this preservation technique, non-elitist in the sense that musical leadership falls upon many rather than a ‘star system’ or a ‘only for professionals’ positioning. Virtually everyone in the community can have a fair go so long as they can manage the job of *terompong* melodic leadership.

The other aspect I found intriguing was their integrative, rather than exclusive approach to a musicians’ age. Seventy year olds sat along side 17 year olds, albeit with differing degrees of musicianship and energy. But the very fact that an ensemble is made up of a broad cross section of the community in terms of age makes for a rich and fertile repository of experiences, on the part of senior musicians, and a raw energy strength and desire of learning absorption on the part of younger musicians. As Jeff Todd Titon observes, “Musical stewardship involves a responsibility to care for musicians, musical institutions, musical resources” (2009: 121). In between the age dichotomy are middle age musicians, the stewards that motivate maintenance in this heritage ensemble organization.

### ***Wali* tradition and the sanctity of sacred contexts and local legends**

*Gong gede*’s sacred performance context is another key insulator against change and is a part of the heritage management system for Jasan and Sabtu. Its context concerns the realm of the sacred in Hindu-Balinese temple ceremonies. Essential to highlight in the discussion here is that performing *gong gede* music is not only an instrumental accompaniment to prayer ritual, but a ‘sonic offering’. Dance also falls into this category or *upakara* or ‘offering’. *Tari wali* or ‘sacred dances’ take several

forms and have ritualistic functions that are wholly integrated into ritual preparation and ceremonial execution.

One example of this is the performance of dance in order to sanctify *tirtha* or holy water, one of the key ingredients in Balinese religious practice. Dancing while holding holy water vessels is often performed in such ritual choreographies as the female ritual dance called *rejang* or the warrior male dance called *baris gede*. Priests depend upon performers to enact this aspect of ritual. Performers and community members need priests to officiate with stylized vocal incantations and specific prayers. Together they perform ritual, not simply as a reenactment of an idealized pre-modern Balinese past, but as, "[...] a mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past" (Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 1995: 370). Here heritage is put on display, not for the visual consumption of an audience exterior to community boundaries, as is the case in many staged Balinese ritual productions with allegiances to the tourist industry. Rather heritage is consciously displayed for audiences internal to the values and beliefs in Jasan and Sebatu's immediate social collective.

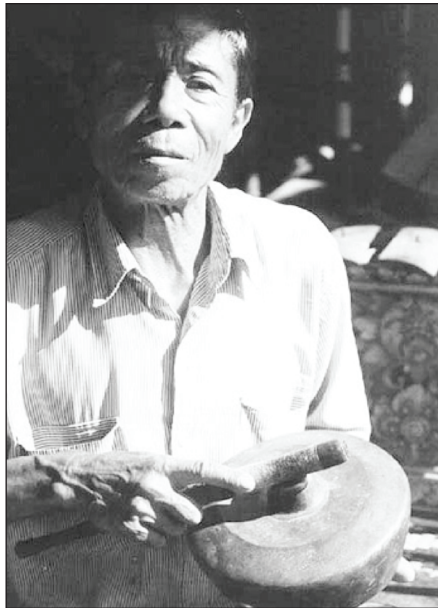
The sanctity of sacred contexts is complemented by the sanctity of local legends. It is not uncommon to encounter the retelling of oral narratives or 'local legends' as a preservation method employed in the heritage management system of gamelan *gong gede*. One such narrative was conveyed to me by senior musician Made Yasa in an interview in 2002 at his home in Sebatu. The local legend surrounds the origins of a musical instrument called *ponggang*, a pair of small bronze kettlegongs with a colotomic function within the metric structure of gamelan musical compositions.

The legend says that a long time ago, the two *ponggang* kettlegongs were found floating in a nearby stream in the forested area surrounding the village. The usually calm waters of the stream were bubbling violently as if a small erupting underwater volcano was submerged under the two small gongs. Sebatu ancestors were terrified at the sight of this and immediately called for Kala Jengking, a Sebatu villager known for his deep spiritual knowledge of sorcery and black magic.<sup>4</sup> The man they called Kala Jengking prepared a long bamboo pole and recited several incantations and mantras before descending into the ravine. Standing at the edge of the bubbling stream, he requested permission from the protective spirits and used the bamboo pole to fish out the two bronze kettlegongs floating on the turbulent water. He honoured the musical instruments as sacred implements by placing both upon his head and then immediately he started walking to the protective realm of Sebatu's sacred temple grounds.

A large crowd of villagers had gathered to watch Kala Jengking. Walking up the slopes of the ravine toward the temple grounds, the crowd witnessed him *maya-maya* or disappear and reappear as if he was a short-circuiting light bulb in the dark. After passing through the protective walls and inner sanctum of Sebatu's village temple, his body no longer flashed on and off and the stream waters were once again calm (Yasa 2002: pers. comm.).

Yasa contextualized the telling of such a local legend. He informed me village ancestors believed the two kettlegongs were destined for Sebatu village and this was the way the higher powers delivered it. He related to me that sometimes villagers neglect their duties in providing incense and flower offerings to the gamelan housed within the temple compound. Offerings both placate malicious spirits and honour

benevolent ones who watch over the gamelan orchestra. Occasionally during the new and full moon when the temple grounds are empty, people will here the unmistakable two-tone melody of the *ponggang* instruments coming from the temple, even though no rehearsal is being held. This is particularly mysterious because only one of the two kettlegongs remains; the other was damaged and has long since been melted down.



**Figure 3** Sebatsu's senior musician, Made Yasa, holding the surviving kettlegong belonging to the original *ponggang* pair featured in the community's local legend.

## Conclusions

The critical link between performing arts and Hindu-Balinese ritual enactment goes beyond simply remembering the past and trying to reinstate it in Jasan and Sebatsu's meaningful present. Rather, the functionality of music as sonic offering in the ritual preparation of holy water, for example, comes to the fore in their particular heritage management system. The four-tiered approach Titon (2009) ascribes to music and sustainability models seems to be already part of Jasan and Sebatsu's alliance. The 'Diversity' tier is almost self-evident given that gamelan *gong gede* orchestras only account for a minute number (less than 50 island-wide) among the thousands of varieties of traditional and modern gamelan. That said, for future research it will be necessary to evaluate to what degree that diversity can be maintained. The 'Limits to Growth' tier is managed in the case of Jasan and Sebatsu by disallowing dominant forms from replacing their repertoire in sacred contexts. In my view this is one of the most significant proactive attempts at making *gong gede* sustainable.

Reinvesting resources back into musics is also a large part of creating sustainable models for heritage ensembles. Because both communities pour financial resources back into their temple ceremonies, there are enough funds to support their traditional

heritage ensemble (*gong gede*) and more popular forms of gamelan (*gong kebyar*, *balaganjur*, etc.). Jasan and Sebatu's 'Interconnectivity' has been essential in the maintenance of gamelan *gong gede*. It seems likely that if *awig-awig* guidelines were not in place, firmly cementing its repertoire into the foundation of *wali* tradition, *gong gede* music may have been abandoned long ago. And finally 'Stewardship' falls upon the shoulders of individual leaders such as Meranggi and Yasa. Both these men are pivotal individuals who serve as conduits for bridging inter-generational tendencies that fluctuate between dramatic change and steadfast traditionalism. As a steward, Meranggi has his political savvy to ameliorate local and regional politics. He has also devised strategies to rotate melodic leaders on the *terompong* instrument and ensured a cross section of younger and older musicians interact in ritual performance. Yasa ensures 'local legends' are conveyed to reinforce local values, deep respect, and even mystical reverence for their *gamelan gong gede* heritage ensembles.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> <http://www.balipost.co.id/mediadetail.php?module=detailberita&kid=2&id=56654> accessed July 18th 2014.
- <sup>2</sup> In 2010, there were as many as 167 shops located along this strip (Esperanza 2010).
- <sup>3</sup> McPhee did find musical notation towards the end of his stay in Bali and he reproduced some of this notation in illustration #120 as part of his thorough preliminary analysis of gamelan *gong gede* music compositions (McPhee 1966: 422). More than 80 years after McPhee's encounter with musical notation usage, it is remarkable to still find a group who has carried on the practice, demonstrating a continuity of presence as outlined by Jeff Todd Titon (2009) in his model of music and sustainability.
- <sup>4</sup> Kala Jengking is the name of a demon whose head hangs from his torso and his feet dangle from his upper extremities, essentially a mythical creature cut in half and reassembled up side down. With regards to symbolism in human character, the name evokes 'mean character' and reprimand, rebuke or scolding' where Kala Jengking's image may be associated with disciplinary measures and retribution (Kamus Bali-Indonesia 1978: 250).

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