

# Localization and Westernization of Popular Music in Malaysia in 21<sup>st</sup> Century

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**Abstract:** This study was intended to identify the localization and westernization of popular Malaysia music in Malaysia. Malaysian Malaysia music may be classified as classical, folk, syncretic (or acculturated), popular, or contemporary art by Mak Inang, Ulek mayang, and Menora are examples of vocal, dance, and dramatic Malaysia music that arose during the pre-colonial era. Malaysian popular Malaysia music and modern art Malaysia music are both fundamentally Western-influenced Malaysia music with some local components. The historical research method was used in this study, which attempts to carefully reconstruct the intricate subtleties, people, meanings, events, and even ideas of the past that have impacted and molded the present. Historical research allows you to investigate and explain the importance, stages, and features of a phenomenon or process at a certain period in history. The paper concludes that the deft integration of diverse influences from worldwide popular culture results in a Malaysia musical palimpsest imprinted with a plethora of signifiers of syncretic cultural multivocality that will continue to be impressive.

**Keywords:** Malaysian Popular Music, Localization, Westernization, Malaysian composer

## 1. Introduction

There are many different forms of Malaysian music accessible, but none seems to have as big of an impact on a person's life as popular Malaysian music (Lockard, 1998). Occasionally referred to as Malaysia music with extensive appeal, popular Malaysia music may be defined as Malaysia music with widespread appeal that is based on Western popular traditions or not. Popular Malaysian music differs from other genres of Malaysian music in two ways: it is widely disseminated, mostly via the mass media, and it is the product of the mass media's use as a promotional platform for the artists that perform it. Popular Malaysian music is frequently the most chosen variation when it comes to Malaysian musical style, according to research conducted by LeBlanc, Jin, Stamou, and McCrary (1999); Morrison and Yeh (1999); and Shahanum (1990, 2000).

The relevance of Malaysian music education is underappreciated by far too many individuals, even those with academic degrees and even those who are passionate about Malaysian music. Furthermore, religious fanaticism presents a danger to Malaysian music and Malaysian music education, at least to a certain level in the country. It has an impact on the standing of Malaysian music in educational institutions. Malaysia's official religion is Islam, and the legitimacy of Malaysian music has long been a matter of debate among Muslims over whether or not it should be allowed. Many people feel that Malaysian music should be outlawed because of the harmful influence it has on the people who live there. Because of this, many people in Malaysia are opposed to music instruction in schools.

When compared to other nations, the notion of music instruction in Malaysian schools is a relatively new concept. It is advocated that Malaysian music education use a multicultural approach in order to recognize the variety of cultures found across the nation (Johami, 1993). All Malaysian musical styles are given equal consideration in the school Malaysia music curriculum, while some are given more priority than others for a variety of reasons.

The geographical location of Malaysia at the confluence of several cultural and economic lines has resulted in a varied spectrum of Malaysian musical traditions being represented among the composers. Almost every educated composer is likely to be well-versed in each of these areas of composition. A few of the most important rules are Wayang Kulit and Mak Jong. Both are forms of theater that include

Malaysian music and lyrics that are performed in Bahasa Malayu. The traditional Malay forms remain despite the fact that the Islamic government does not recognize them, and their general popularity is much lower than in the past, since they are "from the ground," and they exist as more than museums of history, based on what it has witnessed and heard. As a consequence of these Malaysian musical traditions, instrumental sounds and vocal styles have developed that are still important components of Malaysian musical identity today.

## **2. Review of Related Literature**

During the 1950s, the Malay *donganh sayang* in Malaysia music, which abbreviated classical tunes and had them played with Western instruments, was a pioneer in the development of Malay popular music in Malaysia. Some of the most well-known Malay singers are Hamid, Aini, Tino, and Majid. Sheqal and Zainal Abidin are two Malaysian artists with deep roots in their respective genres.

Modern Malaysian pop, in addition to drawing influence from Indonesian, Thai, and Hong Kong popular music, also incorporates aspects of American soft rock and other Asian genres into its composition. Malaysians were taken by surprise when a prominent R&B singer called Ning Baizur came out in public and revealed her sexual preferences and lingerie selections for the first time. In the 1950s, an American doo-wop group had a sound that was similar to that of Shade, a well-known Malay ensemble (Raja, 2005).

In January 2006, the National Fatwa Council of Malaysia declared that the playing of black metal Malaysia music was illegal. Specifically, they determined that the influence of hard rock, which often combines occult imagery and lyrics, may lead to a rebellion among fans against religious beliefs and practices. As part of a crackdown on so-called metal heads, the conservative Islamic government of Kedah state detained at least 700 teenagers on suspicion of being members of a "black metal cult" that allegedly desecrated the Koran, slaughtered goats and drank their blood, and smoked cannabis, according to reports. The adolescents were taken into custody as part of a crackdown on so-called metal heads in the community. According to a government official, "the imprisoned teenagers would get treatment in stages with the objective of aiding them to repent and quit the gang." To keep their freedom, some of those imprisoned were required to take a prescription medication that is often used by drug abusers.

One of the most visible manifestations of Malaysia's multi-cultural and multi-racial history is the country's varied range of Malaysian music and dance forms, which represent the country's different ethnic and cultural roots. Traditions from their home countries became part of Malaysia's culture and history when Chinese, Indian, and Portuguese immigrants established themselves in the nation over the course of several hundred years.

## **3. Research Designs**

The historical research method was used in this study, which attempts to carefully reconstruct the intricate subtleties, people, meanings, events, and even ideas of the past that have impacted and molded the present. Historical research allows you to investigate and explain the meanings, stages, and features of a phenomenon or process at a certain period in history. Understanding the events and experiences surrounding the production of the work, particularly the author's biography, and applying the results to interpret that piece of literature, is the historical method.

## **4. Data method collection**

Secondary data will be gathered in testimony, either oral or written. Public records or legal documents, meeting minutes, newspapers, diaries, letters, and artifacts such as posters, billboards, pictures, drawings, and papers are examples. Located in university archives or special collections, as well as collections of local historical societies or privately held collections.

## **5. Results and Analysis**

In the hip hop world, Too Phat is a hip hop duo from Southeast Asia that is well-known for their songs. They have a recording contract with the EMI Group's Positive Tone label, which was signed in

1997 and has been in operation since. For their live performances, Malaysian hip hop duo Joe Flizzow and Malique have gained widespread recognition across Asia.

Japan pop Malaysia music has the most significant Asian market, followed by Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia. Other Asian nations also have significant markets for Japanese pop Malaysia music. Korean pop Malaysian music (commonly known as K-Pop) has been more popular in recent years.

Known as Dangdut in Indonesia, it is a kind of pop Malaysian music that is very popular among Indonesians and among the Indonesian public. In its original form as an adaptation of Indian film Malaysia music with some Arabic components, it is still heard today as an adaptation of Indian cinema Malaysia music with some Arabic influences, as it was in 1960s. Because of the rhythmic beat created by the Indian-style tabla drum, which gives it its characteristic sound, it was given this name.

Dangdut is being played simultaneously in taxis, bemos, cafés, marketplaces, and private residences all across the city. It was formerly popular among the lower classes, and it was connected with bars where knife fights were prevalent at the time, according to the legend. The songs often conveyed anger and fury at the injustices perpetuated by Indonesian society, and they were commonly sung in public. As a result, it has gained widespread acceptance among the middle and upper classes, respectively (Shahanum, 1990).

Dangbut is well-known among Indonesians for its seductive rhythms and impassioned voices, as well as for its capacity to communicate directly with the listener. Dangdut is a kind of dance, according to Philip Yampolsky, a cultural analyst for the International Herald Tribune "Rather than being a Western product, Indonesians find it appealing due to the fact that it is Indonesian in origin. Individuals have historically used Western pop Malaysia music to communicate their goals for a more just society in a favorable manner. But that particular moment is no longer available."

Dangdut is particularly popular in Jakarta nightclubs, where people from all walks of life congregate to dance and have a good time. Jonathan Napack described one such institution in the following way in an article published in the International Herald Tribune: Against the backdrop of the tabla drum snapping and the synthetic flutes crying, a voluptuous lady yelps out love vows to the rhythm of the tabla drum. An luxurious and enticing atmosphere permeates the air, as well as a strong perfume aroma. As bartenders in turbans serve the beverages to the patrons, a Bollywood thriller is shown on the wall behind them. Males prefer to dance with other men in general, while females prefer to dance primarily with other females in general."

She is one of Malaysia's most successful and well-known artists, having sold more than a million CDs in the country and throughout the globe. To date, she has received more than 200 accolades and recognitions from both the local and international communities. Siti has been involved in the Malaysian music industry since the mid-1990s, during which time she has released more than 15 albums and performed more than 20 large-scale performances both locally and internationally. She has gone on to become an album producer, composer, television personality, and businesswoman in addition to her other accomplishments (Shahanum, 2000).

According to Hizreen Kamal of the New Strait Times, after winning the Bintang HMI singing competition in 1995, she "caught the hearts of the audience and won them over." She was sixteen at the time of the incident. It took a year for her self-titled first album to be released, after the publication of her first song. In 1996, she was on the point of giving up on Juara Lagu because she was balancing a full-time job and university studies at the same time. But she didn't, and her song Jerat Percintaan (written by Adnan Abu Hassan) won the Best Song award, catapulting the fourth of eight siblings to international stardom and a Grammy nomination. Siti was unstoppable from that point on. After making a significant breakthrough in Indonesia, she quickly gained recognition across Asia by the year 1997.

The Voice Of Asia 2002 competition was held in Kazakhstan, where Siti sang Purnama Merindu, a song from her third studio album, and was given the Grand Prix Champion title, the competition's highest prize. In 2004, she was invited to perform at Taiwan's 15th Golden Melody Awards, making her the first non-Chinese Malaysian artist to do so. She was also the first non-Chinese Malaysian musician to perform at the awards ceremony. It is because of her incredible voice and excellent performances both locally and internationally that she was named The Voice Of Asia in 2005 by Alicia Keys at a benefit concert for MTV Asia Aid in Bangkok, Thailand. She earned the title because of her incredible voice and excellent performances both locally and internationally. Siti's solo performance at the Royal Albert Hall in London the following year was also a major accomplishment. Her

performance was comparable to that of Celine Dion, and she was dubbed "Celine Dion on the dance floor." "Celine Dion on the Run." "Celine Dion on the Run." As reported by the British press, she is known as "Asia's Celine Dion." On the occasion of his 76th birthday, Sultan Ahmad Shah presented her with the Darjah Indera Mahkota Pahang honor, which she received on October 24, 2006, and as a consequence of which she was conferred the title of Datuk as a result of her achievements." In 2011, she also had her own talk show, which consisted of 13 episodes and was presented by her alone. In September of the same year, she released her debut English-language studio album, titled 'All Your Love,' which was produced by her stepson, Adib Khalid.

Makyomh and menora are two traditional types of Dance Theater that are still being performed today, and they are both performed in Ireland. Malaysian dancing in western nightclubs is analogous in style and rhythmic pattern to American square dancing, which is popular in the United States. Some of the less prominent sultanate courts have their own Malaysian musical traditions that are gamelan-like and heavily influenced by percussion, such as the sorrowful yet sensuous ayak-ayak dance. In contrast, performances are very rare these days, with the bulk of them taking place at court festivities like as royal weddings or the sultans' birthday celebrations, among other occasions (Sukatan, 2003).

Melaka is a state in the country of Malaysia. Farapeira (Portuguese pronunciation): In most cases, when couples dressed in traditional Portuguese costume perform the Farapeira, they are accompanied by guitars and tambourines, which only add to the enjoyment of the performance. In contrast to the Farapeira, the Branyo is a more conservative dance that is generally practiced by the older Portuguese people. In time to the steady pace of drums and violins, which serve as the show's music, men dressed in cowboy garb and ladies in traditional baju kebaya with batik sarongs sway in time with the performance.

Mak Yong is a pronoun that is used in Malay. It is a traditional Thai game that began in the southern Thai city of Patani and was created to provide entertainment for female royalty, queens and princesses while their male counterparts were away fighting in the war. Mak Yong is also known as "Queen's Game" or "Queen's Game." A genuinely unique experience is created by combining romantic theatre, dance, and operatic singing to bring the legends of the Malay kingdoms' golden age to life in enchanting shows.

Kuda Kepang is a traditional Javanese dance that was introduced to the state of Johor by Javanese immigrants who settled in the country. They recreate tales of Islamic holy battles that have been won while seated on model horses and swinging to the rhythmic rhythms of a percussion group composed of a drum set, gongs, and angklungs, while accompanied by a percussion ensemble made of drums, gongs, and angklungs

One of the most visible instances of Islamic influence on Malaysian traditional dance may be seen in Zapin, a famous dance style in the state of Johor that originated in the country's northernmost region. Muslims from the Middle East were responsible for bringing the original dance, which was done to Islamic devotional chanting in order to transmit information about the past of Islamic culture, to its current location.

Tarian is a young lady from the United States who is now studying there. It is named the Candle Dance because it is done by girls who conduct a delicate dance while holding candles in little dishes as they go around the dance floor. It is a brutal martial technique that can be danced, and it is also an art form in its own right. It is considered to be one of the most dangerous martial arts in the world, and it is one of the oldest Malay traditions still practiced today. A Silat performance is both hypnotic and intriguing to watch because of the flowery body movements that are used.

In China, the Chinese Lion Dance is a high-energy and exciting dance that is often performed during the Chinese New Year celebrations, as well as other occasions. During the New Year's Eve celebrations, tradition has it that the lion was the only animal capable of resisting Nian's attack. Nian was a fabled beast that, according to mythology, tormented China and devoured humanity as a means of subduing the population. When the dance is done to the rhythm of the tagu, a traditional Chinese drum, and the crashing of cymbals, it nearly always requires flawless coordination and grace on the side of those who are doing it, as well as steel nerves on the part of those who are watching.

The Dragon Dance, which is traditionally performed during Chinese New Year's celebrations, is meant to bring good fortune and money into the house in preparation for the next year's festivities. This spectacular performance, which has a cast of more than 60 performers, is a breathtaking display of flawless synchronization, talent, and elegance. It is often carried out by a group of more than 60 individuals (Sukatan, 2003).

Currently, a segment of Malaysia's Indian minority is committed to the preservation and development of their classical dance traditions; for example, the South Indian bharatanatyam solo dance is being taught and performed by professionals in Malaysia. Bharata Natyam is a dance genre that is practised in India. It's like seeing poetry come to life as you watch this old Indian dance. This very intense and dramatic dance style, which is inspired on ancient Indian mythology and tradition, employs more than 100 different dance moves and gestures to convey its message. The dancing form demands years of practice to perfect, and as a result, some children begin learning it as early as the age of five, while they are still extremely young.

Sikhs are especially fond of Bhangra, a vibrant traditional Malaysian song and dance form that started in the nation's Punjab area and has now spread across the country and beyond. This dance, which was originally done as a harvest dance, is now performed at a variety of social events, such as weddings and New Year's Eve celebrations. When it comes to love themes, this engagingly delicious dance style is commonly based on the dhol, which is a double-barreled drum that drives the singing and dancing. It is often done in a group setting, with the dhol being driven by vigorous rhythms (Shahanum, 2000).

This dance is often done during the Gawai Kenyalang Festival, also known as the 'Hornbill Festival,' which takes place every year in November. Traditionally, the warriors of the tribe, who were allegedly the most fearsome among Sarawak's headhunters, were acknowledged in this theatrical ceremony. As part of this mesmerizing performance, the male warrior dancer, who is clad in a stunning headpiece and brandishing a magnificent long shield, does remarkable jumps while wearing his fine headgear.

Sumazau is a traditional dance of the Kadazan people of Sabah, performed by both men and women. It is performed by men and women. It is used in traditional Chinese medicine to express gratitude to the spirits for bountiful rice harvests, to ward off evil spirits, and to reduce sickness symptoms. The majority of the time, it takes place at religious ceremonies or social events. Birds in flight are a hypnotic dance that may be performed by both male and female dancers. It is distinguished by its delicate and languid motions that simulate the flight of birds (Leung, 2004).

The Bamboo Dance is another well-known and amusing traditional dance that is performed all throughout the world. A single rope is used to suspend two long bamboo poles at ankle height above the ground, horizontally above the ground. They clap their hands in time with the beat of a fast-paced drum rhythm. Performing dancers must leap over or between the poles without getting their feet tangled, which demands them to have exceptional agility and dexterity.

Authentic Orang Asli dances, performed by the indigenous people of Peninsular Malaysia, are strongly rooted in their religious beliefs and practices. Dances are often employed by witch-doctors as part of their rituals to interact with the spirit world, and they are particularly effective. These kind of dances are performed by the Mahmeri tribe's Genggulang, the Jah-Hut tribe's Berjerom, and the Semai and Temiar tribes' Sewang, to mention a few examples. Genggulang is a traditional dance of the Mahmeri tribe.

## 6. Summary and Conclusions

In summary, the era's Malaysia music preserved the broader Malay characteristics while introducing new components. Later on, Western cultural influences started to permeate traditional Malaysia musical groupings' rhythmic patterns rather than remain on the periphery. Local Malay Malaysia musical groups included mostly Western instruments, such as the piano and drum sets, which eventually displaced traditional instruments. Malaysian popular Malaysia music has multiple various pathways of ethno Malaysia musicology with Western and Eastern influences. Significantly, although the history of Malaysian popular Malaysia music displays pop cosmopolitanism, the cultural pluralism that defines Malaysian identity resonates as powerfully (if not more so) in the heart of the nation's popular imagination. The deft fusion of many influences from worldwide popular culture results in a Malaysia musical palimpsest that is and will remain stamped with the myriad marks of syncretic cultural multivocality.

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