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Corresponding author:  
*Rachel Mediana Untung*  
mediana.untung@uksw.edu

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## “Fattened by Friendship” of the Papuan Sawi Tribe: Creative Process and Analysis

Sepnath Yambres Leunupun<sup>1</sup>, Rachel Mediana Untung<sup>2\*</sup>, Poedji Soesila<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Music Study Program, Faculty of Language and Arts, Satya Wacana Christian University, Salatiga

### ABSTRACT

“Fattened with Friendship” is the title for the creation of a musical work in the story of Tarop Tim (Child of Peace) of the Sawi Tribe. The creation of this musical work is an effort to contribute to the treasury of Indonesian musical compositions that elevate the cultural values of the Sawi tribe of Papua. The method of music composition creativity applies practice-led research in four creative stages, namely preparation, incubation, illumination and verification. The creation of this new composition elevates the culture of the Papuan Sawi tribe innovatively in melody, rhythm, and other musical elements. The instruments used are string quartet (violin 1-2, alto violin and violoncello), piano, synth, percussion and local Papuan instruments (tifa and pikon). The creation of this musical work aims to be enjoyed by the wider community, especially the younger generation, and to inspire young composers to raise the archipelago’s musical idioms as the foundation of the main creative ideas.

Keywords: free form; Tarop Tim; Sawi Tribe

### ABSTRAK

**“Fattened with Friendship” Suku Sawi Papua: Proses Kreatif dan Analisis.**

“Fattened with Friendship” merupakan judul dari penciptaan karya musik yang mengangkat kisah Tarop Tim (Anak Damai) dari Suku Sawi. Penciptaan karya musik ini merupakan upaya untuk memberikan kontribusi terhadap khazanah komposisi musik Indonesia yang mengangkat nilai-nilai budaya suku Sawi Papua. Metode penciptaan komposisi musik ini menggunakan metode penelitian yang berbasis praktik dengan empat tahapan kreatif, yaitu persiapan, inkubasi, iluminasi, dan verifikasi. Penciptaan komposisi baru ini mengangkat budaya suku Sawi Papua secara inovatif dalam melodi, ritme, dan elemen musik lainnya. Instrumen yang digunakan adalah string quartet (biola 1-2, biola alto, dan biola cello), piano, synth, perkusi, dan alat musik lokal Papua (tifa dan pikon). Penciptaan karya musik ini bertujuan agar dapat dinikmati oleh masyarakat luas, khususnya generasi muda, dan menginspirasi komposer muda untuk mengangkat idiom-idiom musik nusantara sebagai landasan ide kreatif utama.

Kata kunci: bentuk bebas; Tarop Tim; Suku Sawi



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## 1. Introduction

The creation of new compositions as part of an independent musical process for young composers needs to be encouraged or actualized as part of their contribution in the space of creativity and efforts to preserve the wealth of customs and culture as a heritage (Barendregt, 2002). This is because music is both inclusive and exclusive, uniting differences while affirming communal identity. Exploring the richness of cultural arts, articulated and energized in the practice of creation will give music new meaning (Harrison, 2011). The requirement to create a new composition certainly requires material objects or ideas that serve as motifs that can be musicalized as a work. The object or idea can come from anywhere, for example: personal experiences, historical stories, social conditions, natural conditions, folklore, folk dances, cultural wealth, local wisdom, the uniqueness of traditional art or anything that can be used as a material subject and idea of creation. Of course, the musical motifs are also adapted and adopted from these subjects. Some prominent composers such as Bella Bartok and Franz Liszt often adopted Hungarian traditional music idioms as ideas for their compositions.

Starting from the cultural wealth that is used as the subject material for creation, the Nusantara archipelago has a very rich and diverse cultural wealth and uniqueness of traditional arts. Quite a number of composers, both from Indonesia and abroad, have adopted them into their compositional ideas. Some prominent composers have done so, including Colin McPhee with "Balinese Ceremonial Music"; Michael Asmara with "Gending Dolanan"; Philip Carlsen with "Gambangan"; Aris Daryono with "Distanced"; Gareth Farr with "About Chara Gamelan"; and Ananda Sukarlan with his worldwide works such as "Rapsodia Nusantara".

Departing from compositions composed by previous composers and researchers, the author was inspired to raise the idea of creation from the perspective of traditional music and folklore from the first author's birthplace, Papua. The author raises the idea and musical idiom in question by lifting the story of "Tarop Tim" (Son of Peace). The story comes from the legend of the Sawi tribe in Asmat Regency Papua. In addition to structurally describing this work, the author also describes the process of creating the composition.

The famous cultural ideology of the Sawi tribe is *odakem-minism* or "betrayal", which is establishing a friendly relationship, fattening up to be slaughtered and eating the meat together is a form of betrayal of the highest level. The Sawi people are known as cannibals and head-hunters (Kamur, 2019). For the Sawi people, betrayal is not just a way of life, but an ideal of life that is pledged, cultivated and perfected for generations. This ideology or philosophy is a challenge for missionaries to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The understanding of the Sawi tribe's ideology of betrayal is comparable to the figure of Judas in the Bible. Judas as a disciple of Jesus Christ who committed treason was considered a hero of the community (Richardson, 1976:4), while Jesus who was betrayed by Judas was considered a loser.

The encounter between the gospel and the culture of the Sawi tribe sometimes creates tension. In fact, there is not a little rejection due to the lack of understanding of the preacher of the gospel towards the culture of a particular community (Setiawan, 2020). The basic concept contained in the background above is a supporting factor for the author to be able to represent the concept of betrayal in Yae's story into a free form composition using pentatonic scales as a capital. This composition presents violin, piano and percussion instruments combined with local Papuan instruments, namely tifa and pikon.

Several other musical instruments and sound sources such as rain sticks, sound frogs, plastic bags and synthesizers are used to enliven the natural atmosphere (soundscape). Based on the overall exposure above, this study was conducted to (1) describe the process of creating a work entitled "Fattened with Friendship"; (2) conduct a structural analysis of the composition work "Fattened with Friendship". their home region or birthplace.

## 2. Literature Review

The author also refers to young composers and researchers who work with subject matter and ideas from their home region or birthplace.

Mario Abraham Warouw (Warouw, 2021) composed a concerto for violin and orchestra entitled “Mambesak”. The piece features musical ideas that adopt musical as a indigenous Papuan tribes, in Asmat district. Elements, culture and local wisdom of Papua into the 20th century music style.

Septina Rosalina Layan (2021) made a study on the meaning of the text and musical aspects in the *Nama Eb* chant (lamentation) in the death ritual of the Yaghai tribe in Mappi, Papua. This research emphasizes the role of vocals in chanting as a symbolic cue (metaphor) that can play a role in evoking aesthetic emotions.

Markus Rumbino (2012) composed “Orchestral Music Composition Tanah Papua” with an acculturation model of Western music with Papuan musical idioms derived from the uniqueness and diversity of music and dances in Papua into an orchestral work combined with Papuan dances.

Melinia Triane (2022) created a program music composition in an ensemble format that raised the material object and idea of its creation from the perspective of ethnic music of Dayak Ngaju, Central Kalimantan, which combines the aesthetics of traditional Dayak Ngaju music and traditional musical instruments with Western musical instruments.

## 3. Methods

This study was conducted to describe (1) the process of work creation and (2) repertoire analysis. The research method was conducted by applying practice-led research (Candy, 2018). In line with practice-led research, to achieve the study objectives above, the following stages were carried out.

### 3.1. Creation Process

This study was conducted to explain the four-step theory of the creative process (Hargreaves, 1997) which includes; (1) preparation; (2) incubation; (3) illumination; (4) verification. In the first step, the composer prepares by looking for supporting information for the musical work to be composed. Second, the processing process is to identify the information in the preparation stage that matches the composition to be composed. Third, personal contemplation is done to get musical ideas. Fourth, realizing musical ideas in a composition that describes the story of Tarop Tim (Son of Peace). To obtain comprehensive information about the story of Tarop Tim and the philosophical foundation of the Sawi tribe's culture, interviews were conducted with Pastor Bastian Nanlohy, M.Si (Interview with Pastor Bastian Nanlohy, M.Si via WhatsApp, 2022) who conducts Christian missions in the Sawi tribe and Septina Layaan, a Papuan cultural activist from Merauke. All of the above creation processes were based on personal interest in the story and being able to express musically the story of the Sawi tribe. The musical elements were created imaginatively based on secondary data, namely the movie *Child Peace*, audio recordings of Papuan music, videos of Sawi tribal dances and the book “*Child Peace of the Sawi Tribe*” by Don Richardson (1976). Primary data was obtained through participatory study by attending Papuan cultural activities with Papuan students in Salatiga city.

### 3.2. Repertoire Analysis

Repertoire analysis is conducted to contribute to the artistic world and focus the artist's practice towards the desired outcome (Bruce, 2023). Repertoire analysis is conducted textually in a musicological approach, i.e. conducting structural analysis on musical elements based on the full score of the music composition titled “*Fattened with Friendship*.” The musical analysis was conducted by breaking down or cutting

down the details part by part (Karl-Edmund Prier, 2015) of the composition, starting from the largest unit to the smallest unit.

## 4. Results

The following discussion focuses on two things: first, the process of creating the work, and second, the analysis of the repertoire.

### 4.1. Creation Process

"Fattened With Friendship" in the Story of Tarop Tim (Child of Peace) of the Sawi Tribe of Papua" was inspired by the first author's love for the local wisdom of the first author's place of origin. In addition, the presence of this composition will add to the treasury of musical compositions that reflect the culture of the Sawi tribe.

Referring to the purpose of describing the creative process, this work was made by performing several stages of the creative process as follows:

#### 4.1.1. Preparation

The author makes preparations by searching and collecting data and supporting information for the music to be composed. The sources of information are distinguished in two ways, namely musically and non-musically to support the composition. Musical sources of information are the sound elements of the Sawi tribe's singing instruments and environmental sounds (soundscape). Non-musical information was obtained from references about the traditions and customs of the Sawi tribe conducted by Don Richardson, a Christian missionary among the Sawi tribe. Data sources were obtained from literature and digital media such as YouTube and recordings.

##### a. Literature Study

This stage is the earliest stage when the composer seeks information about 'Fattened With Friendship' by conducting a literature study of the book "Children of Peace: The Ethics of Betrayal Revered and Made a Way of Life" by Don Richardson as the main source. Through this stage the composer explores information about the Sawi tribe, custom, social life, environment, songs, dances and local instruments that indicate the identity and personality of the Sawi tribe (Hadaci Sidik and Ferry Herdianto, 2022). According to I Wayan Rai (2022:6) local arts have a great opportunity to develop as an ethnic identity.

##### b. Introduction to Local Instruments

There are several local instruments used in the preparation of this work, as follows:

##### 1) Tifa

Tifa is a musical instrument that is played by beating. Tifa from Papua has different shapes, sizes and motifs.



Figure 1: Tifa (Source left photo: hanyaberbagi.com, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024) (source right photo: Soemargono, 1994)

## 2) Pikon

Pikon is a musical instrument that comes from the word *pikonane*, which in the Balem language means 'sound'. This instrument has an oval shape and is made from a piece of bamboo with a very small size. In the center of this instrument there is a rope that is attached tightly to the center of the pikon which functions to vibrate.



Figure 2: Pikon (Source: <https://musicaparaver.org>, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024)

The way to play the pikon is almost similar to the Genggong (Jew's harp), which utilizes the oral cavity as a resonator. The pikon is placed right between the upper and lower jaws. The way to play it is to vibrate.



Figure 3: The Icon in Play (Source: <https://musicaparaver.org/instruments/5382>, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024)

### c. Environmental Sound (Soundscape)

The sounds of the musical instruments used are inspired by the sounds of the surrounding environment or soundscape (Nakagawa, 2000) from nature and the social environment. De Fretes (2016) reveals that nature has distinctive musical sounds and rhythms and humans are creatures who always learn from the nature of their environment such as harmony, symmetrical balance, a sense of community to unification. The ambience of nature includes the sound of Haragu and other animals, the hiss of the wind and the sound of the waves in the river, the swaying trees, the sound of crickets and other animals. While the atmosphere that occurs during social activities such as gardening, hunting, ritual activities and others.

Environmental sounds are obtained by observing the natural atmosphere and environment obtained from the source's story, YouTube digital media, and also recordings obtained from the source.

#### 4.1.2. Incubation

In the incubation stage all the information obtained is absorbed, digested and imagined in the mind. Musical and literary aspects are done by comparing historical stories and adjusted to the ongoing context so that the message of this work can be understood by the public. The composing steps start



from forming and arranging motifs, melodies, phrases, episodes and others so that they become a form of musical work but are not yet organized.

#### 4.1.3. Illumination

At this stage, the writer finds a formula to organize the work by dividing the work into five major parts by imagining what instruments to use and the leitmotif, but needs to be consulted with senior composers.

The author mapped the story into episodes and plots according to the storyline. After mapping the work, he then imagined the atmosphere for each episode. The imagined atmosphere is then composed into a notated sound.



The author then composes harmonies and adds ideas from the previous composer Richard Strauss from his work "Also Sprach Zarathustra" to add a mysterious and alert impression.

After composing the introduction part in a few beats (unfinished) the writer then continued by reading the story about Yae and imagining the figure of a Yae as a dashing leader, to find a leitmotif that describes the figure of Yae as a mighty leader.



Next, find a leitmotif to describe Kautap as a sincere and loving wife.



The author then imagines Yae rowing her boat on the calm banks of the Kronkel river in the following melody.



Next, I searched for a melody to describe Yae's encounter with Kauwan, who is Yae's enemy, but I hit a dead end and had to stop for some time. The writer consulted some senior musicians to find a solution and unfreeze the idea. The process of composing this composition was carried out again but did not continue on the part of the story 'Yae and Kauwan's meeting' but on the part of the story of Yae's wife Kautap who was mourning.



The crying melody is then harmonized and played by the piano.



The writer then imagines the part of the episode where Yae and Kauwan meet. In the contemplation, a melody emerged to express Yae's joyful and burning heart for Kauwan's offer of diplomacy.



There are also some parts that are arranged randomly and then put together in accordance with the storyline in the work 'Fattened with Friendship' into a complete but unfinished work.

#### 4.1.4. Verification

At this stage, every idea must be tested in reality. The composer writes all the musical ideas into the Sibelius music notator application. The work that has been written down is heard repeatedly and a minor evaluation of the work is made. The minor evaluation in question is an evaluation of melody, harmony, rhythm and even modulation. At this stage of the work completion process, creative and critical thinking is required. Improvement after improvement is made to achieve good results is the final stage in this process. Finally, this work becomes a complete piece of music. The work is organized into five movements, namely:

##### a. Yae The Chief

Yae is portrayed as a powerful chieftain and a great father. The leitmotifs are arranged more melodically and emphatically to tell the character of Yae played by violin I.



The harmonies and rhythms were made more staccato to emphasize the character.



#### b. Kautap the Exemplary Wife

Kautap is a very painstaking, sincere wife who loves her family very much. Represented by the piano instrument with a very soft and flowing melody



#### c. Meeting

This section uses a rondo format with an A-B-A-C-A-D structure to tell the story of Yae's activities at the river, which leads to an unexpected and suspenseful encounter.

#### d. The Beginning of Betrayal

The accidental meeting between Yae and Kauwan is the beginning of a betrayal. Melodically arranged to create a cheerful impression with melodic jumps. This joyful melody uses fugue technique with polyphonic style to tell the joyful news that is delivered repeatedly to all his people and also adjusted to the number of his diplomatic visits. This section is played by string quartet.





#### e. Dark Clouds

Describes the grief of a wife when she hears the heartbreaking news. A cry of deep sorrow that demands justice and retribution. Structured A-B-A, the main melody is played by the piano and harmonized by the string quartet to add a deeper sense of sadness and combined with the sound of human cries to illustrate her great sadness.

The musical score for 'Dark Clouds' is presented in two systems. The first system consists of four staves (treble and bass clefs for piano and string quartet). The piano part is marked *pp* (pianissimo) and the string quartet part is marked *f* (forte). The tempo is indicated as *Lento* with a quarter note equal to 58 beats per minute. The second system continues the composition with similar instrumentation and dynamics.

This work combines several styles (free form, rondo, fugue, and 20th century music) that are combined in the process of composing the work. The use of pentatonic scales as a modal is combined with diatonic scales and also a combination of consonant and dissonant harmonies arranged according to creative interpretation.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1. Structural Analysis

The composition "Fattened with Friendship" is one of three movements from the composition Tarop Tim (Child of Peace). This composition is a free form music composition that tells the story of the child of peace from the legendary story of the Sawi tribe into a musical work. This composition has a

leitmotif that refers to the character in musicalizing the story. But it does not rule out the possibility of melodic interpretation for the depiction of the story and atmosphere.

5.2. Fattened with Friendship

Yae is one of the victims of the cultural practice of *odakem-minism* as told by Don Richardson, who was a Christian missionary doing evangelistic work in the midst of the Sawi tribe.

Table 1: Composition Structure

Bar	Description
1-15	Introduction
16-49	Theme A (D minor tonality)
50-84	Theme B (G major tonality)
85-106	Transition (D minor tonality)
107-234	Theme C (F major tonality)
235-305	Theme D (F major tonality)
306-307	Transition
308-341	Theme E (F# minor tonality)
342-348	Coda

5.3. Introduction

In the introduction, the synth pad instrument plays a minor chord that is sustained (extended) while violin I-II, alto violin and piano play a diminished-seventh chord with block-chord technique. The pikon instruments, bird sounds, water and wind sounds are sounded together to create a natural atmosphere and environment (soundscape). Tifa is used to give a strong mystical impression.

Digemukkan dengan Persahabatan  
Lento  
Sepnath Yambres Leunupun  
(suarara Pikon, suara burung, bunyi air dan angin)

The harmonies are arranged using minor and diminished-seventh chords with dynamics that move from pianissimo to piano to create a calm atmosphere. Meanwhile, subito forte and subito piano appear to add tension and a sense of alertness. In this section the author tries to describe the natural atmosphere in the middle of the wilderness when dawn is about to break on the eastern horizon, a sign that a new day is about to begin.

#### 5.4. Theme A

In this section, the author brings out the main character in this story, Yae.



The main melody in D minor tonality is played by violin I using the diatonic scale.

Second violin, alto violin, violoncello and piano play the accompaniment pattern with staccato and marcato techniques. Using natural minor on the D minor natural scale (D-E-F-G-A-Bb- C-D) to tell the character of Yae as a leader.

This section uses a contrapuntal technique on violin II and alto violin that imitates the main melody on violin I, while the violoncello and piano continue to play the accompaniment pattern. Floor-drums are added to give the impression of being bold and dashing and ends with a Picardy's third, also known as Picardy cadence.

## 5.5. Theme B

Theme B as a description of the character Kautap. The melody is in G anhemitonic pentatonic tonality (G-A-B-D-E-G) which adopts traditional Papuan musical idioms.



The main melody is played by the piano, imitated by violin I while violin II, alto violin and violoncello are arranged in the G diatonic scale. The left hand on the piano plays the accompaniment imitating the tifa rhythm and the right hand plays the pentatonic anhemitonic scale.



Regarding the use of the pentatonic scale in this work, Dr. J. Kunst claims that there are two, three and five tones in traditional Papuan music (Kunst, 2014). Anhemitonic pentatonic is a pentatonic scale that does not have half-barrel intervals while hemitonic pentatonic is a pentatonic scale that has half-barrel intervals (Warouw, 2021).

## 5.6. Theme C

The structure of this theme adopts a rondo or quasi rondo form. Unlike the ordinary rondo form (A-B-A-C-A-D-A etc.), the author modifies the musical structure, namely A-B-A-C-A-D. Each repetition of the theme A includes additional variations to the theme of the song.



## 5.7. Theme D

A musical score for the song 'The Rose Tree'. The score is written for four staves: Treble Clef (Right Hand), Bass Clef (Left Hand), and two additional staves (likely for a second voice or instrument). The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The melody is primarily in the treble clef, featuring a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The bass clef provides a simple harmonic accompaniment. The two additional staves are mostly empty, with some notes appearing in the final measures. The score is presented in a standard musical notation format with a blue header and a blue footer.

**Prestissimo** **Lento ad Lib**

36 297 298 299 300 301 302 303 304 305 306

*tr*

*(laughing) (laughing)*

*(laughing) (laughing)*

*(breath)*

*(laughing) (laughing)* *mati ko* *mati ko* *mati ko*

*(laughing) (laughing)* *mati ko* *mati ko* *mati ko*

*(laughing) (laughing)* *mati* *mati ko* *mati ko*



The tifa beats are adopted from the tifa beats commonly played in Aren (a beheading ceremony), while violin I describes Yae's hopeless condition with her gasping for breath.

## 5.8. Theme E

This section has only one theme of deep sadness, which is done with repetition for development and variety.

08 **E** Lento ♩ = 58 310 311 312 313 314 315 31

(aaaaaa kasihan,,, Yaeeeeeeeeee,,sio sayang oo ) Bapa ee,, sapa yang tega bikin ko begini e,,sio,

*pp* *f* *pp* *f* *pp* *f*

**E** Lento ♩ = 58 *pp* *f*

The main theme is played by violin I and piano in F sharp minor with a lento tempo to convey a mournful impression. This theme also uses the *Nama Eb* (Lamentations) technique (Layan, 2021) sung by a human voice.



## 6. Conclusions

The description of the creation process is based on four creative steps including: preparation, processing, enlightenment and verification. The four processes of creating this work show that the new composition was done systematically.

The structural analysis of “Fattened by Friendship” is divided into five major sections, namely, (1) ‘Yae the Chief’ in D minor tonality. (2) ‘Kautap the Exemplary Wife’ in G anhemitonic pentatonic tonality. (3) ‘The Meeting’ in the relative minor tonality of F hemitonic pentatonic. (4) ‘The Beginning of Betrayal’ in F pentatonic tonality. (5) ‘Dark Clouds/Cry’ in F# minor tonality.

The work “Fused with Friendship” is musically based on the culture of the Sawi tribe, Papua. The instruments used are string quartet (violin 1-2, alto violin and violoncello), piano, drum-floor and local Papuan instruments (tifa and pikon).

To play this work requires a deeper interpretation of the peculiarities of Papuan ethnic music, especially from the Sawi region, Papua.

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### Interview

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