

COSMOLOGY AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF SPACE IN THREE SAMA-BAJAU RITUALS

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Abstract

This paper examines how Sama-Bajau belief systems create space in ritual. In ritual, space ceases to be mere space but becomes an extraordinary site replete with meaning. This construction of a special place reflects, in its arrangement of markers, a social hierarchy comprising of, among others, ritual custodians, ritual celebrators or specialists, participant-audiences, and initiates. The arrangement of people, offerings and implements, as well as natural and man-made markers in ritual space may be construed as tangible artifacts of social relations that serve to link the visible and invisible worlds. In Sama-Bajau ritual, space takes shape as tangible and intangible cultural properties are made to relate to each other. On one hand, tangible properties such as roofed structures, temporary railings, and textile banners serve to mark off, in a physical sense, the sacred from the profane or the mundane. They may also announce the impending retreat of the quotidian giving way to the decidedly special, the spiritual or the divine. On the other hand, intangible properties such as music and dance create sonic and kinetic motifs that break silence and stillness of mundane space and time. As sound travels from its ritual source, the expanse of travelled space through human auditory senses, is felt and cognitively realized. As dance bursts forth from pre-determined points in space, it creates direction or trajectories as well as linear or curvilinear motifs across vertical, horizontal and sagittal planes, thus linking what in silence and stillness used to be unlinked elements in the landscape. This paper seeks to uncover the elements and contours of this rarefied space in ritual, and to see how these aspects of ritual space may help us achieve a better understanding of Sama-Bajau culture and identity.

Keywords: Sama-Bajau ritual, sacred space, igal dance, kulintangan music, cosmology

Introduction: Creating a Special Space in Ritual

This study continues this researcher's interrogation of how sacred space is created or transformed from mundane or profane space. In an earlier study, this researcher focused on how tangible cultural properties facilitate in the creation of sacred space (Santamaria, 2017a). For this particular study, focus will be given on how the playing

of *kulintangan* ensemble and the performance of ritual *igal* dances create, respectively, soundscapes and kinetic-scapes that invoke specific qualities of sacred space. Three rituals of the Sama-Bajau in Tawi-Tawi, Philippines are examined: a) the *Pag-igal Djin* of Sitangkai Island, b) the *Pagkanduli* of the Sama Sitangkai done in Sikulan Island, and c) the *Pagjamu Boheh Deya* of Tabawan Island.

Past studies on the *Pag-igal Djin* ritual have been done by Pugh-Kitingan, Hanafi Hussin and John Baptist (2005); John Baptist and Regis (2012); and Hanafi Hussin (2012). The *Pagkanduli* ritual has been examined by Hanafi Hussin and Santamaria (2008a, 2008b). The *Pagjamu Boheh Deya* ritual has been studied by Santamaria (2017b). One of the earliest studies of ritual space among the Sama-Bajau is that of Bottignolo (1995). A work on soundscape in Sama-Bajau performance has been published by Abels (2012). The idea of kinetic-scape is rather new and will be introduced in this paper.

'Intangibles' and Ritual: Sonic and Kinetic-scapes

Sama-Bajau rituals possess intangible properties that significantly alter the environment in which they are held. Specifically, rituals alter the sonic-scape and kinetic-scape of sites. Sonic- or soundscapes may be defined as the total auditory quality of a certain environment (see Samuels, Meintjes, Ochoa, & Porcello, 2010). Scholars trace the term "soundscape" to Raymond Murray Schaeffer (1977/1994) who refers to it as "a total appreciation of the acoustic environment" (p. 4). Abels (2012) notes that the "...sensation of moving through space sensorily, which includes the aural sense, is central to the Sama Dilaut sense of cultural identity, and it is reflected in the thick soundscapes that the ear encounters..." (p. 101). In Sama-Bajau rituals, a sonic-scape may include natural phenomena such as the sound of waves lapping against the shore, of wind rustling through palm trees, ambient noises of wild or domesticated animals; and more importantly, man-made sounds such as chanting, utterances and the playing of *kulintangan* ensemble instruments that mark the special occasion. Indeed, based on the *titik* or specific piece being played, those familiar with Sama-Bajau repertoires could immediately tell if sacred or non-sacred events are being held just by listening to the music being played from a distance. Kinetic-scapes may be defined as the total visual quality of a certain environment as determined by movement. Movement as 'seen' should also relate to the idea movement 'as felt' by ritual specialists or performers. Indeed, any ritual site or venue possesses two oppositional qualities of either being 'static', referring to tangible properties like markers, prepared grounds, monuments and edifices or being 'kinetic', referring to ritual acts, processions and dances. This idea of "two completely different world [*sic*] that cohabit the same...space" has been observed by Mehrotra (2004, p. 25) in his study of Bombay's historic areas. It is from this oppositional quality of the 'kinetic' and 'static' spaces that a 'kinetic-scape' can be conceptualized. A kinetic-scape may

likewise include natural phenomena such as the graceful swaying of coconut fronds, the dramatic breaking of sea waves, the bobbing of driftwood on water, or the flutter of wings of a passing sea eagle or frigate bird; the wind-propelled movement of artifacts such as the octopus-shaped *sambulayang* and triangular *panji* flags; and more importantly, the highly differentiated movement motifs of various *igal* dances offered during the event.

Sonic-scapes may be characterized according to sonic quality, texture and direction of music pieces that are mainly heard in a ritual site. These parameters largely depend on instrumentation and type of performance or ritual venue. Sonic quality may be characterized as either wind instrument-based, string instrument based or percussion instrument-based. Sama-Bajau ritual music pieces are basically percussion instrument-based, comprising of metallophones (the *kulintangan*: a graduated set of bossed or knobbed kettle gongs, and a set of several large hanging gongs called the *agung*, *pulakan* and *bua*) and a membraphone (a drum called the *tambul* which was most probably adopted from the Spanish martial drum). Sonic texture refers to whether a musical piece is composed mainly of a melody, a percussive drone, or a combination of a melody and a percussive drone or several percussive drones. A drone is a rhythmic pattern (which may or may not contain a particular tone or melody) that is more or less repeated throughout the piece. Sama-Bajau *titik* are comprised mostly by melody played on the *kulintangan* accompanied by several drones played on the *tambul* drum, the hanging gongs or *ostinati/solembat* at the highest pitched knobbed gong in the *kulintangan* set, and/or the rim(s) of one or two hanging gongs. Sonic direction can either be contained, as in sound confined to an enclosed space; unidirectional when sound emanates from one source or opening; or multidirectional when unhindered by enclosure. Sonic direction in Sama-Bajau rituals are mostly multi-directional. At times when multiple *kulintangan* ensembles play simultaneously while travelling across space as observed in the Regatta Lepa Festival, a complex multi-directional and richly-textured sonic-scape of sounds that fade in and fade out, reminiscent of the ebbing and flowing of the tides, is produced.

Since sonic-scape in Sama-Bajau rituals are mostly percussive in terms of quality; comprised of a combination of melody and several drones in terms of texture; and, almost always multidirectional, other ways of differentiating sonic-scapes must be devised. An alternate typology of sonic-scapes may be based upon the variables of melodic contour, accent, and tempo. Melodic contour may be defined as the degree of change in terms of rising and falling from low to high notes. Therefore, it may be gentle like a *legato*, middle-range like a highly ornamented *arpeggio*, and sharp or steep like a one-octave jump. Accent or accentuation refers to the degree of strength that a note or rhythmic pattern is played. As such it may be soft, mild or strong. Tempo may be understood as referring to the speed a piece is played. As such, tempo may be slow, moderate or fast.

Kinetic-scapes may be characterized according to kinetic or movement pattern, texture, and shape, all of which are imbued by meaning in particular ritual or performance contexts. These parameters depend on the individualized movements of ritual performers or dancers as well as the movement of ritual performers or participants across a defined space or plane. Kinetic pattern across a horizontal plane may take the form of a dot, a linear, and a circular or curvilinear pattern. Sama-Bajau dances often, but not all the time, take on the kinetic patterns of circular or curvilinear forms. These patterns are in marked contrast to the decidedly linear patterns of the Japanese Noh theatre or the dot pattern that may be observed in the Sufi tradition of the so-called 'twirling dervishes' as well as 'television or video game-dancing,' which are often confined to one spot or frame. Kinetic texture is observed in movements at the vertical plane. As such, kinetic texture may be flat, gently undulating, or punctuated. Movement in the Noh theatre is decidedly smooth or flat. Ballet, most especially in male variations, is mostly punctuated by leaps and petit allegro jumps. Depending on the accompanying music, the Sama-Bajau exhibits a full range of kinetic texture from smooth or flat to highly-punctuated. Kinetic shape refers to the overall pattern taken by ritual performers or participants in a particular venue. Such patterns often hew closely to the shapes of given venues. Major kinetic shape types are, among others, fan-shaped as seen in amphitheaters; circular, oblong or elongated spherical shapes as seen in circuses and other types of theaters-in-the-round; and, square or rectangular shapes as seen in black box theaters.

Space in Sama-Bajau Rituals

One of the first scholars to examine the idea of sacred space among the Sama-Bajau is Bruno Bottignolo (1995). He based his explanation on space in the Badjao house (Figure 1) and the *lepa* (Figure 2). The Badjao house and the *lepa* can be divided into four quadrants base on a so-called 'social axis' (x axis) and a 'religious axis' (y axis). Bottignolo explains the functional differentiation of the social axis in the Badjao house as follows:

...The first axis--which can be called the "social axis" --- goes from the back of the hut facing away from the village to the front of the hut facing the center of the village. The main entrance is located at the front wall to the left of the social axis. The back entrance at the opposite wall is also to the left of the social axis. The food is cooked at the front of the hut. The place for defecation is at the back. (p. 67)

...The space to the left of the social axis, where the doors are found, is described as "the side of the feet," and the wall on that side is called "the wall of the feet". The space to the right of the social axis is describe as "the side of

the head” and its wall becomes the “wall off the head”. Head-to-feet describes the “religious axis”. As indicated by the language used, the axis is visualized as a human body, lying on the floor, with the head near the wall of the head and the feet in the direction of the wall of the feet. (p. 68)

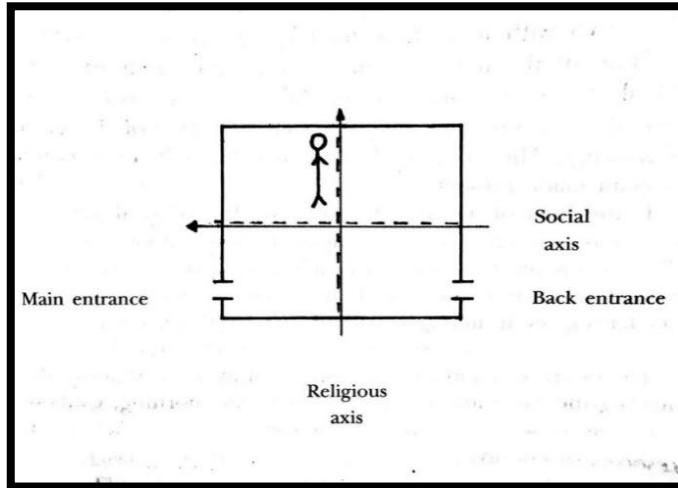


Figure 1: The religious and the social axes in a Badjao dwelling
(Source: Bottignolo [1995, p. 68].)

This differentiation in space likewise applies to the *lepa*, which is the floating house of the Sama di Laut (aka Badjao or Bajau Laut). The wall of the head is also called “the wall of the Umboh”. (See Figure 2). This area of the Sama di Laut dwelling signifies the space of sacred activity, as opposed to the wall of the feet, which in turn signifies the area of profane activity (Bottignolo, pp. 70-71).

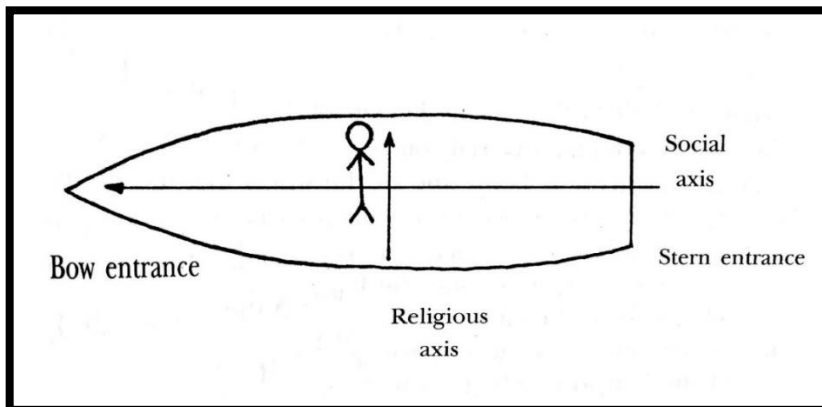


Figure 2: The religious and social axes in a Badjao Lepa or houseboat
(Source: Bottignolo [1995, p. 69].)

It appears that Sama-Bajau also observe these rules of orientation, in terms of the religious axis and the social axis, in ritual sites. For instance, in the *Pag-igal Djin* ritual of Sitangkai Island, the ritual site is the *pantan* or raised platform above shallows of the sea (see Figure 3). This researcher observed the said ritual during field research conducted on 24 October 2007 with the assistance of Hadji Musa Malabong and Hamka Malabong. The direction that the *Kalamat* (aka *Wali Djin* or *Nakoda Djin*, the head spirit-bearer) takes when performing utterances addressed to the *Umboh* or ancestors is towards the wall of the *Umboh* of his house which is marked by the *langkapan* or ritual implements composed of *baul* (wooden chest) and *hainan* (an ornately carved and painted bar where clothes and other personal effects of ancestors are stored or hung). The ritual *igal* dances in the *Pag-igal Djin* are performed in a circular or oblong area, defined by seated onlookers and ritual participants located towards the center of the *pantan*, slightly skewed to the left or the southern direction. It should be noted that people avoid passing behind the *langkapan* or the *Kalamat* when he is officiating the ritual. The avoidance of disturbing the area of the wall of the *Umboh* has also been noted by Bottignolo (1995, p. 72).

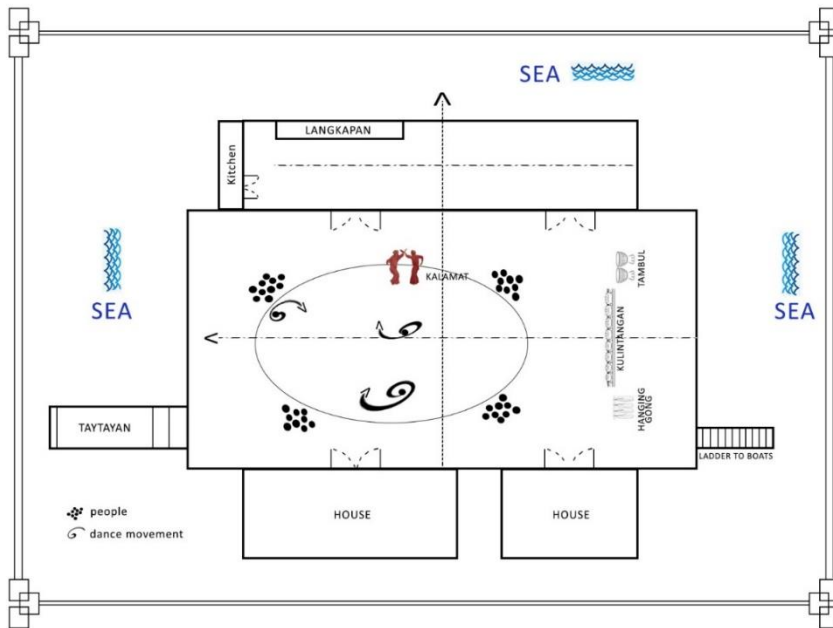


Figure 3: Space and axes orientation in the *Pag-igal Djin* site in Sitangkai Island
(Illustration: Minnelli Quejado)

In the *Pagkanduli* of the Sama Sitangkai done in Sikulan Island, two sites constitute the foci of ritual activities (see Figure 4 and Figure 5). This researcher

observed the said ritual during field research conducted with Hanafi Hussin on 5 March 2008, with two field researchers, i.e. Hadji Musa Malabong and Hamka Malabong as well as Tricia Okada, videographer. The direction towards which the *Kalamat* orients himself when addressing *Tuan Laut* and *Dayang Mangilai*, two important protector spirits of the Sama Dilaut, is towards the *Dangkan* tree (*ficus* species) of *Tuan Laut* and the *Dangkan* tree of *Mangilai* (see Hanafi Hussin & Santamaria, 2008a, 2008b). The two trees take the place of the wall of the *Umboh*. Treated like sacred foci of the ritual, both trees are festooned with yellow and green offertory banners and small *panji* flags. The performance space fronting the *Dangkan* of *Tuan Laut* is a circle defined by the seated onlookers and ritual participants. The performance space of the *Dangkan* of *Dayang Mangilai* is a natural white sand area near the Celebes Sea shore area of Sikulan Island. It is circularly fringed by a *pandan* (*Pandanus* species) grove. Since both spaces are basically ‘theaters-in-the-round’, the movements of the ritual participants likewise trace circular patterns across the horizontal plane. It should also be noted that the entrances and exits to both sites correspond to the wall of the feet, the area of the mundane or profane.

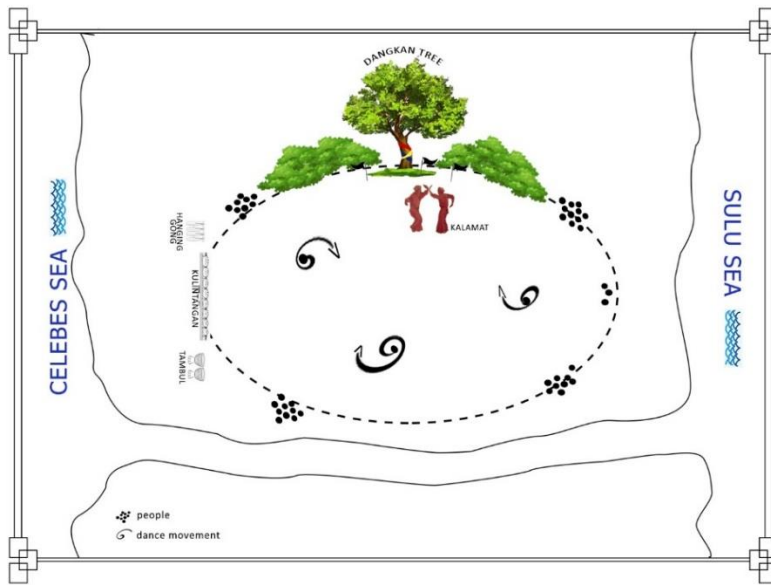


Figure 4: Space and orientation in the site of the *Dangkan* tree of *Tuan Laut* in the *Pagkanduli* ritual
(Illustration: Minnelli Quejado)

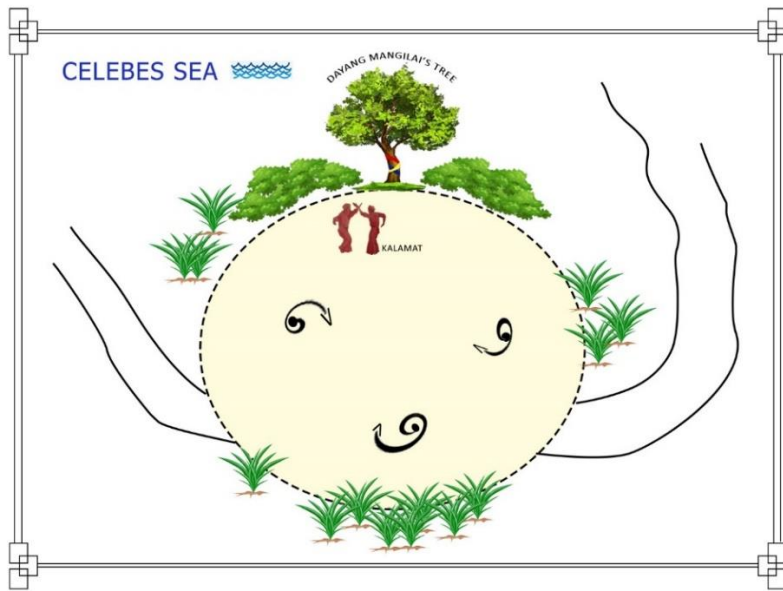


Figure 5: Space and orientation in the site of the tree of *Dayang Mangilai* in the *Pagkanduli* ritual
(Illustration: Minnelli Quejado)

In the *Pagjamu Boheh Deya* of Tabawan Island, there are two focal points of the ritual site: the *panggung* or roofed area containing the *langkapan* and the *kulintangan* ensembles; and the *boheh deya* or the sacred well (see Santamaria 2017a, 2017b). This researcher observed the said ritual during field research conducted from 22 to 25 April 2013 with the assistance of Ms. Calsum Telso and her family in Tabawan Island. The *panggung* contains a rectangular dance floor framed by the *langkapan*, the *kulintangan* ensemble and mats for audiences or onlookers who also sometimes perform as ritual participants (see Figure 6). Within the *panggung*, the area of the *langkapan* serves as the wall of the *Umboh*. Male patriarchs of the Mamangkuh clan, the family that ‘owns the ritual’, seat themselves in front and to the sides of the *langkapan*. The rectangular shape of the floor plan contrasts with the circular movements executed by the dancers within the horizontal plane. Going towards the well from the *panggung*, dancers trace an invisible lane-like projection as they negotiate one point in space to another. Upon reaching the well, ritual performers/dancers take a circular counter-clockwise turn around the well, which is basically a circle framed by a square and further flanked by two white-cloth draped bamboo structures called *lansay*. These complex contrasts of shapes in the ritual site can only be discerned during actual ritual performance.

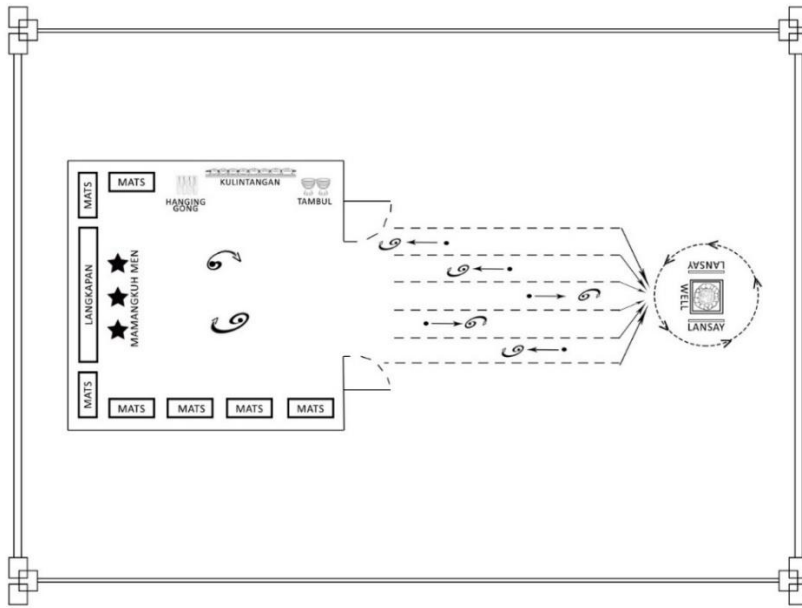


Figure 6: The loom-like shape of the kinetic-scape of the Pagjamu Bohe' Deya in Tabawan Island
(Illustration: Minnelli Quejado)

In the next section, it will be shown how the shape of ritual sites are further articulated and/or elaborated by sonic and kinetic qualities.

Sonic and Kinetic-scapes: An Application in Three Sama-Bajau Rituals

Sama-Bajau rituals are given a rarified and energetic quality through the sonic-scape and kinetic-scape that they produce. In the *Pag-igal Djin* and *Pagkanduli* rituals, the sonic-scape changes according to the particular *titik* or music piece being played (see Table 1). *Titik Limbayan* produces a gentle melodic contour with soft accents and a rather slow tempo. The even and slow rhythmic pattern of the hanging gongs help to produce a relatively lulling sonic-scape like that of a drizzle accompanied by a gentle breeze. In contrast, *Titik Tabawan* produces a sharp melodic contour with strong accents played on the *kulintangan* instrument while maintaining a very rapid tempo. The sonic-scape can be characterized like that of a race or an incoming tide: strong, rapid and accelerating. *Titik Djin Lella* renders middle-range or moderate melodic contour with strong accents. The tempo is more moderate than fast. The sonic-scape is like that of a passing rain cloud, a remnant of a tropical storm, punctuated by the droning of distant thunder. *Titik Lelang* has a jumpy and sharp melodic contour coupled with very strong or heavy accents of the hanging gongs. The tempo is also quite fast. This piece produces a sonic-scape like that of a storm surge with violent

breaking of waves. In the *Pagjamu Boheh Deya* ritual, *Titik Lenggang*, which is supposed to be the equivalent of *Titik Tabawan* and the widely distributed *Titik Tungkil*, produces a sharp melodic contour with very strong accents on the hanging gongs (see Table 2). Furthermore, it is characterized by supplementary ostinato played on the rims of two hanging gongs. The sonic-scape is frenetic like that of a troubled sea, churned by a typhoon accompanied by unexpected hail. Visually, the word *lenggang* conjures the image of boat tilting or pitching over the waves. Sonically, *Titik Lenggang* is *Titik Tabawan* on steroids.

Table 1: Summary of Sonic-scape in the *Pag-Igal Djin* and *Pagkanduli* Rituals

<i>Titik</i> (Music)	Melodic Contour	Accent	Tempo
<i>Titik Limbayan</i>	Gentle	Soft	Slow
<i>Titik Tabawan</i>	Sharp	Rather strong	Fast
<i>Titik Djin Lella</i>	Middle range	Strong	Moderate
<i>Titik Lelang</i>	Sharp	Very strong, heavy	Fast

Table 2: Summary of Sonic-scape in the *Pagjamu Bohe' Deya*

<i>Titik</i> (Music)	Melodic Contour	Accent	Tempo
<i>Titik Lenggang</i>	Sharp	Very strong	Fast

In terms of the kinetic-scape, the *Pag-igal Djin* and *Pagkanduli* rituals likewise vary according to the performance of a particular *igal* dance which corresponds with the *titik* of the same name. As kinetic shape is predetermined by the performance venue, all the dances in the *Pag-igal Djin* ritual form 'circles within a rectangle' (see Table 3). In almost all of the dances, with the exception of *Igal Lelang*, performers create circular or curvilinear patterns across the horizontal plane. As movement emulate those of the *silat*, performers of *Igal Lelang*, that is the *Kalamat himself* and a protégée or an aide, sometimes execute forward or backward movements that evince an attacking or defensive motion. Kinetic texture, therefore, as played out in the vertical plane determines much of the differentiation in the kinetic-scape. *Igal Limbayan* produces a bouncy texture as produced by the *kidjut* or vertical shrugging of the dancer's shoulders. The visual effect is like that of a calm sea with gently undulating waves or ripples. *Igal Tabawan* produces a punctuated texture that is done via a rapid series of *kidjut*. The visual effect is like that of a choppy sea during windy conditions. *Igal Djin Lella* also produces a punctuated texture with verticality being created via legwork and stamping of the feet. The visual effect is that of a sea of toppling waves during a weak storm. *Igal Lelang* produces a highly punctuated texture with exaggerated verticality via legwork, stamping and sudden jumps. The visual effect is that of a sea during a tempest, combining features such as those of huge toppling waves, whirlpools and tsunami-like storm surges.

As the same music and dances are performed, the only differentiating feature of the kinetic-scape in the *Pagkanduli* ritual is in the kinetic shape, which is that of a circle within a circle for both the spaces of Tuan Laut and Dayang Mangilai (see Table 4).

Table 3: Summary of Kinetic-scape in the *Pag-Igal Djin* Ritual

Igal (Dance)	Kinetic Pattern	Kinetic Texture	Kinetic Shape
<i>Igal Limbayan</i>	Circular/Curvilinear	Undulating	Circle within a rectangle
<i>Igal Tabawan</i>	Circular/Curvilinear	Punctuated (via shoulders)	Circle within a rectangle
<i>Igal Djin Lella</i>	Circular/Curvilinear	Punctuated (via feet or legs)	Circle within a rectangle
<i>Igal Lelang</i>	Linear/Curvilinear	Highly Punctuated (via feet or legs)	Circle within a rectangle

Table 4: Summary of Kinetic-scape in the *Pagkanduli* Ritual

Igal (Dance)	Kinetic Pattern	Kinetic Texture	Kinetic Shape
<i>Igal Limbayan</i>	Circular/Curvilinear	Undulating	Circle within a circle
<i>Igal Tabawan</i>	Circular/Curvilinear	Punctuated	Circle within a circle
<i>Igal Djin Lella</i>	Circular/Curvilinear	Punctuated	Circle within a circle
<i>Igal Lelang</i>	Linear/Curvilinear	Highly punctuated	Circle within a circle

In the *Pagjamu Bohéh Deya*, the kinetic-scape is largely determined by the three different zones of the ritual site (see Table 5). Except for the transition area of the field that connects the *panggung* and the sacred well, the kinetic patterns produced by the dancers mainly consists circular or curvilinear trace on the horizontal plane. Within the transition area of the field, linear forward movements with some rotation in place may be observed. Overall kinetic texture is finely punctuated with verticality being achieved through well-executed *engke'* or tip-toeing of the feet and subtle changes in the dancers' center or gravity through the upward extension of the knees from an initial bent position simultaneously ornamented with the raising and lowering of the shoulders via the *kidjut* movement. Another meaning of *engke'* or *engke'-engke'* is the lifting of the feet as if traversing shallow waters. In terms of kinetic shape, within the *panggung* a circle (consisting of circles) within a rectangle may be observed. Within the transition area of the field, a forward-linear movement within lane may be observed during performance. In the vicinity of the well itself, a circle around a square object may be observed. Overall, movement shape takes on the visual imagery of a 'threaded yarn and partly finished cloth in a loom'.

Table 5: Summary of Kinetic-scape in the Pag-jamu Boheh Deya

Specific Site	Kinetic Pattern	Kinetic Texture	Kinetic Shape
<i>Panggung</i>	Circular/Curvilinear	Finely punctuated	Circle within a rectangle
Field	Linear	Finely punctuated	Linear within a lane
Well	Circular/Curvilinear	Finely punctuated	Circle around a square
Overall	Curvilinear/Linear	Finely punctuated	Threaded yarn and cloth in a loom

This aspect of seeing parallelism in the patterns and embellishments of textile and plastic arts with motifs in movement or dance is seen the work of Mohd. Anis Md. Nor (2003):

Arabesques and curvilinear designs woven on fabrics, painted on adornments and constructed in architectural monuments in the plastic arts of the maritime Malays in Southeast Asia are important for new studies in dance aesthetics. There lies the potential for in-depth studies in the dance cultures of maritime Malays. Islamic arabesques and Malay curvilinear designs in the visual art echo similar virtues of infinite form that seemingly continues and multiplies in space and time from a single point such as a dot in space. The infinity of God underlies the artistic parameters of Malay-Islamic art while the lines, angles, squares and hexagons, and foliages and twisting trunks are the means to quantify spatial horizons, vertical and horizontal spaces. (p. 179, underscoring mine).

Mohd. Anis Md. Nor (2003) explains this parallelism through his discussion of the arabesque in Islamic art. According to him, the conjunct arabesque (*Muttasil*) “resembles a continuum of abstract motifs, which are combined in an unlimited, never-ending succession” while the disjunct arabesque (*Munfasil*) “comprises combination of self-contained units” (p. 179). He observes that “most of the folk dance motifs of the maritime Malays are analogous to the self-contained units of the *Munfasil* arabesque. Each dance motif is interwoven with other dance motifs to produce a larger pattern, symmetrical and repetitive” (p. 179). Indeed, samples of the textile arts of the Sulu Archipelago mirror this aspect the conjunct and the disjunct arabesques.

Figure 7 shows a hand-woven textile embellished with *langkit* or *tiyahian* embroidery. The central panel of foliage-like patterns constitute the conjunct arabesque which connects self-contained circular motifs framed in the repetitive square spaces of the textiles checkered design. Most interestingly, the textile resembles the parts of the

movement patterns plotted by this author in Figure 6. The aesthetics of textile arts appear to reflect the kinaesthetics of the dance in the region. The alluring shapes of the disjunct and conjunct arabesques are also present in the bass reliefs, textiles and other plastic arts of Cambodia, Thailand, Laos and Burma. Dances in these countries likewise show curvilinear and circular floor patterns as well as the aesthetics of the curved fingers and hyper-extended elbows. A good example of this is seen in a bass relief found in Banteay Kdei Temple in Siem Reap Province (see Figure 8). In this bass relief we see circular foliage-like patterns that exquisitely frame the figures of dancers. Yet, this artistic cannot be called 'Malay' or 'Islamic'. One also cannot conclude with any amount of certainty that such forms were the result of influences of Cham culture, a Malay ethno-linguistic incursion into what is a mostly Mon-Khmer or Tai-Kadai area in Indochina. What this artifact points to is a 'conjunct' or a link, perhaps through cultural contact or shared origins, between the aesthetics of dance in maritime and continental Southeast Asian sub-regions. This observation undoubtedly provides a most exciting avenue for theory-building in performance for the greater region of Southeast Asia.

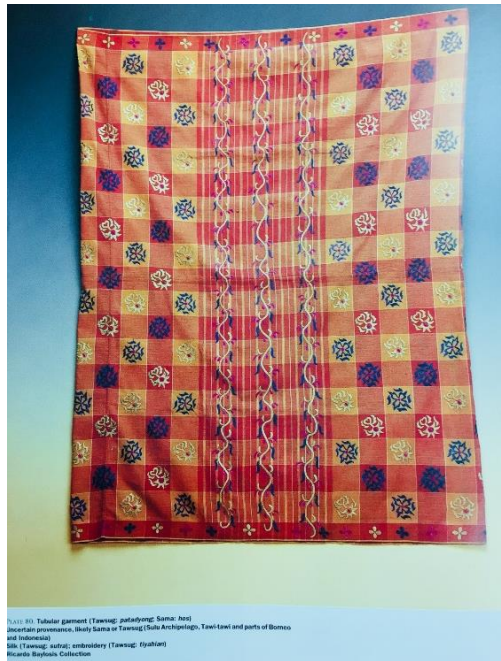


Figure 7: Curvilinear, linear, and checkered patterns seen in a piece of textile from Sulu
(Source: Pastor-Roces [1991, p. 120].)



Figure 8: Foliage-like curvilinear patterns combined with anthropomorphic bass-relief figures found in Banteay Kdei Temple in Siem Reap, Cambodia
(Source: MCM Santamaria, fieldwork in Siem Reap, 2000)

Conclusion

This paper has interrogated the idea of the creation of sacred space through the conceptual frames of the 'sonic-scape' and the 'kinetic-scape'. Apart from 'static' markers such as signage, monuments and edifices, sound and movement also set off ritual or sacred space from the mundane or the profane. Rituals as experienced events change in quality when space is transformed by various aspects of the sonic-scape and the kinetic-scape. The conceptual framing provided by the sonic-scape and kinetic-scape emphasize the fact that rituals as emplaced events go beyond static features. They are seen in kinetic terms, and heard in sonic terms. On hindsight, it may be noted that that both human movement and sound entail the passage of bodies or waves emanating from bodies through space and time. Future research may wish to examine how movement and sound are 'felt' or 'received' by the bodies of performers as well as members of the audience. This socio-cultural, socio-psychological, and socio-

physiological phenomenon of feeling or receiving movement and sound is not well-researched and may open new avenues for dance and performance studies.

As for the relationship of the aesthetics of visual arts and kinaesthetics, the body of research produced by scholars of dance in the region appears to be large enough to warrant cross-country comparisons. That arabesques, circular patterns and curvilinear pathways are found in both the plastic arts and the performance arts of the region imply that theory-building in Southeast Asian movement or dance is more than possible, and that the linking of the maritime and continental worlds of the region is not merely an 'imagined' or 'imaginary' undertaking. They are achievable.

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