

When the "Dampeang" is over, the "Luambek" is over  
Sound as a Determinant of Structure  
within a Competition of Inner Power based on Movement in West Sumatra

Paper and Video Session presented by:

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Not just self defense, nor dance, nor play, but a 'Play of Inner Power', the *Luambek* forms a category of its own within the rich movement arts traditions of the Minangkabau people. As I will show, the *Luambek* serves as a magnificent example of how sound provides an unexpected structural framework for a movement phenomenon. In this case, this framework is provided by the singing, called *Dampeang*, and intersecting choral sound elements, called *Sorak(an)*. Further non formal sound elements, like the foot stomping on the ground, called *lantak bumi*, contribute to the whole of the audible event.

The *Luambek* is based on the movement repertoire of the *silek* called art of self defense. The performance traditions of the *Luambek* are functionally distinguished mainly by two different ceremonial settings, which can be said to be demarked by their qualitative degree of social importance. These are the *Pauleh Rendah* and the socially more elaborated and weighted *Pauleh Tinggi* ceremony. Both of these social settings know a subdivision based on the time of their execution. These are the actual *Luambek*, which is executed during the daytime, and the *Randai Luambek*, which is executed during the evening and night time. As the *Randai Luambek* can be said to have had some influence on the development of the *Randai* dance theater traditions, this to my opinion is not fitting as far as the actual *Luambek* is taken into account.

Regarding the function of the *Dampeang* called singing, and sound as a transmitter of Inner Power, the role of the singer *tukang Dampeang* comes close, to put it picturesque, to that of an operator or electrician, who has thoroughly to take care of installing connections the right way.

But the singer and the complementary choir of teachers and spiritual masters not only are responsible for the fair balanced flow of Inner Power. They also direct the actions of the performers with clearly perceivable structural patterns. When the singing stops, the flow of energy stops, and the action comes to its end. Or, as the fighters in Nagari Sicincin said:

"*Dampeang habih, Luambek habih*" - When the *Dampeang* is over, the *Luambek* is over.

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## Glossary

<i>Pencak Silat</i>	- Southeast Asian Art of Self Defense
<i>Silek</i>	- Traditional West Sumatran <i>Pencak Silat</i>
<i>Luambek</i>	- A competition of Inner Power from Pariaman Area
<i>Randai Luambek</i>	- Dance-like evening/night counterpart to the <i>Luambek</i>
<i>Randai</i>	- Traditional Dance Theater of West Sumatra
<i>Dampeang / Dampiang</i>	- "Guidance" singing used to accompany the <i>Luambek</i>
<i>tukang Dampeang</i>	- a singer who is "Specialist in Guidance"
<i>Sorak(an)</i>	- Choir of male elders accompanying the <i>Luambek</i>
<i>lantak bumi</i>	- "Stomping the Earth", style of stepping in the <i>Luambek</i>
<i>Dendang</i>	- Genre of <i>Minangkabau</i> vocal music
<i>Pantun</i>	- Genre of recited or sung epics
<i>Gurindam</i>	- metre type of lyrics
<i>jantan</i>	- lit. "male". Here: Concept of Action Strategy
<i>batino</i>	- lit. "female". Here: Concept of Action Strategy
<i>pmainan batin</i>	- lit. "Play of Inner Power"
<i>babak</i>	- term for a round in a <i>Luambek</i> match
<i>janang</i>	- a member of the jury during a <i>Pauleh</i> ceremony
<i>Pauleh Tinggi</i>	- lit. "High/Big Pauleh", big mode of the ceremony
<i>Pauleh Rendah</i>	- lit. "Low/Small Pauleh", small mode of the ceremony
<i>Laga-Laga / Pauleh</i>	- the name of the building / arena / bamboo floor
<i>Minangkabau</i>	- Ethnic Group of West Sumatra
<i>Pariaman</i>	- Coastal District of West Sumatra

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[Slide: Structural Scheme of a *Luambek* Performance.]