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Osing Kids and the banners of Blambangan

Ethnolinguistic identity and the regional past as ambient themes in an East Javanese town

BERNARD ARPS

Abstract

On the basis of the theoretical notions of discursive ambience and ambient discourse, this article examines the recent history of language and ethnicity in Banyuwangi in the far east of Java. Over the last three decades (with roots going back to the 1920s and earlier) a redefinition of the language and culture of the “autochthonous” inhabitants of Banyuwangi has been occurring. Their status and constitution have been changing from a variety of Javanese into an autonomous language and ethnicity, called, after the name given to the language or dialect, Osing. At the same time, an idyllic and heroic picture of the regional past is being constructed and maintained. Prominent among the factors and agencies involved in these two ongoing processes is popular media culture. The regency of Banyuwangi and especially its capital (also named Banyuwangi) are being cast – albeit sporadically and incidentally and sometimes controversially – as an Osing region. At the centre of this historical process, people publicly render themselves – also sporadically and temporarily – Banyuwanginese by listening to and especially by singing, in karaoke-style, a genre of pop music with Osing lyrics and musical characteristics perceived as local.

Keywords

Language, space, and place; discursive ambience, ambient discourse, linguistic landscape, audioscape; popular music; thematics, mediation; regionalism, ethnolinguistic identity, local history, patriotism; Banyuwangi.

The ways in which language and place are mutually related features prominently in a number of recent linguistic-anthropological studies.¹ In her

¹ This article is based on fieldwork funded by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) in the framework of the PIONIER programme Verbal Art in the Audio-Visual Media of Indonesia, 1996–2001, and the Indonesian Mediations project funded by the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), 2001–2005. I wrote the first version of the first half while a Fellow-in-Residence at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIAS), 2001/2002.

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ethnography of language activism on the French island of Corsica, Jaffe (1999) relates the perception of otherness of speakers of Corsican to Corsica being an island. Urban (2001) theorizes how culture moves through the world under the aspect of what he terms metaculture (culture that is about other aspects of culture). Diaspora and displacement stand central in Eisenlohr's ethnography of Mauritians of Indian descent and their languages (Eisenlohr 2006). Modan's study of a neighbourhood in Washington DC is concerned with ways of speaking about the place and the creation and maintenance of a community that feels local there (Modan 2007), while Hoffman's ethnography of Berber-speaking women in rural Morocco addresses similar issues (Hoffman 2008).

The most focused scholarly project on the relationships between language and place, however, does not stem from linguistic anthropology, but derives its inspiration from a variety of sociolinguistic approaches. This project is concerned with the "linguistic landscape". As defined in the concluding, programmatic chapter of a recent collection of articles (Shohamy and Gorter 2009), the notion of linguistic landscape "refers to texts situated and displayed in a changing public space, which is being redefined and reshaped" (Shohamy and Waksman 2009: 314). Most studies in this field examine code choice on public signage in relation to local or ethnolinguistic identity and national language policy, but there are ambitions to broaden the scope from "words and images displayed in public spaces" (Shohamy and Gorter 2009: 1) to include also sounds (2009: 2) or "everything in the public space, even people" (2009: 8).

If, however, one is interested in language that is present with a certain permanency in a community or institution, and therefore in a place, and in the ways in which that language is attended to by the people in the community, institution, or place, the core concept in linguistic landscape studies has a number of weaknesses. An absolutely crucial insight is often missing from the work conducted under this rubric (unlike the linguistic-anthropological studies just mentioned, which do give principled attention to it): the theoretical concept of mediation. The fact that not all language exists as oral discourse conducted face-to-face by co-present interlocutors greatly complicates the language-place relationship. At the same time it helps to shed light on the complex constitution of this relationship. Media, after all, are technologies that both bridge and create distance between people in time or place or both. While the kinds of language examined in linguistic landscape studies, such as street signs, public notices, graffiti, and posters, are obviously mediated, they tend to be conceived in linguistic landscape studies as communications addressed here and now to passers-by, like spoken monologues. Of course they are, but additional spatio-temporal properties which unmediated speech lacks, come with their being mediated. These properties are important for understanding the management, social impact, and brevity or longevity of these kinds of public discourse.

I propose a somewhat different conceptualization of the relation between language and place, which I think is better able to account for its peculiar

nature. I term this *discursive ambience*. I have chosen these words carefully. Ambience is both ‘surroundings’ and ‘circulation’; the notion encompasses two vantage points which it is important to combine. A discursive ambience can belong to a place, a time, a person, an institution, or a community. Central in the formation of a discursive ambience is *ambient discourse* – again, ambient both in the sense that it is part of people’s surroundings and in the sense that it goes round from place to place or within a place, among people (most of whom are ambient themselves too).

When a “linguistic landscape” is conceptualized as the discursive ambience of a place, it also soon becomes clear that the current *de facto* restriction of the object of linguistic landscape studies to written, visual language is indeed unwarranted. Lingual and other sounds play an especially important role in creating the ambience of a place. Likewise, the import and intent that underlies ambient language can be shared by non-lingual symbols. Even if one’s primary interest is in language, the analysis should therefore attend to other kinds of publicly presented symbols as well. Furthermore, the discursive ambience of a place can be extremely complex but it is nonetheless patterned, in the sense that ambient discourse contains tendencies both quantitative and qualitative. Some of these tendencies are *thematic* (compare Arps 1999). Ambient discourse and other ambient symbols thematize certain concerns, and certain themes recur in different forms, in different locations, or at different times. The discursive ambience of a place is formed most strongly by what I will call *ambient themes*.

The thematic ambience of a place, then, is complex and in perpetual motion. Many themes can be ambient, some are short-lived, others perennially present. In this article I focus on Banyuwangi, the easternmost regency of Java, and in particular the regency capital which is also named Banyuwangi. I examine two related streams in the discourse that is ambient in that place, both of which thematize what can be called an enduring concern: Banyuwangi’s local identity.

Sounding native in Banyuwangi

In 1983, when I started research on language and performance in Banyuwangi, it was still common for speakers of the local language to identify themselves and their speech as Javanese (*Jawa*). Two and a half decades later this categorization has become unusual, at least in public. The people are called Banyuwanginese or Osing, the latter from the most usual name for their language variety. Regional and cultural autonomy are highlighted, particularly in contrast to what is now identified as *Jawa*, a language and culture felt to have their proper domain further west on the island – even though immigrants from there, and their descendants, have made up a considerable proportion of Banyuwangi’s population for over a century. It has become fashionable in Banyuwangi to use the Osing language and to present oneself as Osing, irrespective of ancestry. However, this is so only in certain ways and certain contexts – the ways and contexts that I examine in this article.

An important factor underlying the language's change in status is that since the early 1980s a genre of pop music with Osing lyrics and with musical characteristics regarded as local, or rather "regional" (*daerah*), has become tremendously popular throughout Banyuwangi on cassettes, video CDs, and radio, and in karaoke performance. Album and song titles like "I'm an Osing Kid", names of music programmes like "The Style of Osing Kids", and promotional slogans such as "The Osing Kids' Radio" reveal that an audience for a musical genre and local radio stations is being cultivated. But concurrent developments make Osingness more than a marketing ploy. The Osing language has been taught in a growing number of primary schools since 1996/97 and since 2003 forms part of the local content (*muatan lokal*) at lower-level secondary schools as well, the only university in Banyuwangi has established an Osing culture research centre, in 2001 the public library maintained by the regional government began to collect literature on Osing culture, and so on.

It should be clear that a particular thematic ambience has been taking shape in Banyuwangi. Media play an important role in this process. My focus is on discourse, in the sense of use of language and in this case even of a language. Using Osing is a way of asserting the regional distinctiveness of Banyuwangi, but not the only one. I first survey the other ways in which this is achieved. The idea of Osingness is relatively new, having emerged only in the early twentieth century. I look at this Osingness next, to outline the main ways it is represented publicly in contemporary Banyuwangi. I then proceed to a discussion of "the Osing Kid", the *Laré Using*, a generic figure that epitomizes selected features of Osingness. Here, audiovisual media and pop music turn out to play a crucial role. The latter half of the article is devoted to this music and especially to one of its prominent themes, regional patriotism.

Emblems of regional culture in Banyuwangi: a short survey

Stadion Diponegoro, the headquarters of the football (soccer) clubs united in the Banyuwangi Football Association (Persatuan Sepak Bola Banyuwangi, or Persewangi), was refurbished in 2002. The regency government of Banyuwangi took this opportunity to suggest giving the stadium a new name. In accordance with a practice common throughout the Indonesian Republic, it used to be called after the Indonesian national hero Prince Dipanegara who fought the Dutch in the Java War (1825–1830). But the Java War took place in Central Java and the western parts of East Java. Banyuwangi lies hundreds of kilometres further east and was hardly affected by it. The stadium's new name was to be Stadion Jogopati, also after a leader who fought the Dutch. But Jagapati engaged them in Bayu, twenty kilometres from present-day Banyuwangi town, in 1771. The suggested name change sparked protest. "Where heroic values are concerned, Diponegoro is much better", a football club chairman who chose to remain anonymous was reported saying, though he did concede that "the name of Jogopati has a more familiar ring in Banyuwangi society" (peb 2002). Jagapati's heroic spirit in opposing the colonizers would inspire the

football players, the regent (*bupati*) of Banyuwangi explained his government's initiative, and as a result of the name change "the regional values [*nilai kedaerahan*] of Banyuwangi would become better known".

Jagapati was one of the last champions of the kingdom of Blambangan against the Dutch.² The kingdom was crushed in the course of a long and devastating campaign by the East India Company in the early 1770s. Yet the name of Blambangan has continued to resound.

The identification of Banyuwangi with the former realm of Blambangan is not a recent phenomenon, and it extends to its inhabitants and their culture. Discussing the population of Banyuwangi in 1846, almost 75 years after the fall of Blambangan, Epp called the autochthonous inhabitants "Javanen", of course, but alternatively "Blambangers". He also recognized Madurese, Balinese, Mandarese, Chinese, Arabs or Moors, and Europeans, though the 25,520 Javanese or Blambangers still made up 91 per cent of the population (Epp 1849: 247–249, 254). Stöhr, who visited in 1858, writes about "die jetzige Provinz Banjuwangi, die heute noch bei den Javanen Blambangan heisst" (Stöhr 1874: 39). In the late 1870s, the famous linguist Van der Tuuk was the first scholar to register the peculiarities in the vocabulary of the language spoken by the autochthonous Javanese, which he called "the dialect of Banyuwangi" as well as "Balambangansch Javaansch".³ Two short pieces in the Central Javanese periodical *Bramartani* of 1879 and 1880 stressed the difference between the vocabulary and pronunciation of the languages of Banyuwangi and Surakarta (the standard dialect of Javanese), but the first piece nonetheless stated that 'in the town of Banyuwangi the people are Javanese and their vocabulary is also Javanese, but old-fashioned' ("ing nagari Banyuwangi punika tiyangipun bangsa Jawi, pitembunganipun inggih Jawi, nanging cara kina"; Dwijawara 1879).⁴ Writing in 1915, the regent of Banyuwangi, Natadiningrat (in office 1912–1919), who came from Malang, called the locals "Banyuwanginese" (*tiyang Banyuwangi*) and "Blambanganese" (*tiyang Blambangan*). They were Javanese (*tiyang Jawi*), but differed from East and Central Javanese in language (pronunciation and vocabulary) as well as customs. Natadiningrat pointed out in particular that they followed a number of customs that were antiquated (*kina*) elsewhere (Winarsih 1995: 263–265). Scholte, in 1927, still wrote about "Blambangers".

Today that is done in a figurative sense only, but Blambangan is often invoked as Banyuwangi's glorious past, like in the case of Jagapati. Jagapati is not a sanctioned national hero of the Republic of Indonesia. The fact that his name was nonetheless put forward for Banyuwangi's refurbished football stadium, to replace Dipanegara who is one, is a small but revealing element in

² He is also referred to as "the pseudo Wilis" in Dutch sources, after an earlier Blambangan warrior who inspired him (Lekkerkerker 1923: 1056–1060; Sri Margana 2007: 119–150).

³ "Balambangansch Javaansch" in Pigeaud 1968: 113, about Cod. Or. 3270, and "de[n] tongval van Banjoewangi" in Van der Tuuk 1878: 134. Van der Tuuk used *tongval* (literally 'fall of the tongue') in the sense of dialect, a term he also used.

⁴ I thank Merle Ricklefs for supplying me with this reference.

a range of cultural moves that has animated easternmost Java in recent years. In a word, as the regent's reference to "regional values" already indicated, the choice was a manifestation of regionalism. One symptom of this regionalism is the naming and occasionally renaming of public buildings and facilities after characters or places from Banyuwangi's historical or legendary past. The football stadium was supposed to join a long list of predecessors. Banyuwangi's sports park and swimming pool (Gelanggang Olah Raga or GOR) is called Tawang Alun after a late-seventeenth-century ruler of Blambangan, whose reign is said to have been a period of flowering (Lekkerkerker 1923: 1040-1042; Sri Margana 2007: 26-29). There is also a radio station called Tawang Alun. The open-air Arts and Culture Arena (Gesibu = Gelanggang Seni Budaya) is called Blambangan, as is the People's Entertainment Park (Taman Hiburan Rakyat, THR) inaugurated in August 1979. The name of the special radio of the regency government (RKPD, Radio Khusus Pemerintah Daerah) is "The Voice of Blambangan" (Suara Blambangan). The little park created in the early 1980s in what used to be the town square (*alun-alun*) is named Taman Sri Tanjung, after a protagonist in a legend that explains the origin of the place name Banyuwangi (see Arps 1992b and no. 3 in the Appendix below). In early 1979, the name Sri Tanjung was carried by a street in the town centre, a coconut grove, a secondary school, and a local sports trophy (Sakim 1979). There is a "Radio Sri Tanjung" as well, and the regional government named two ships it acquired in 2001 and 2002 for the Java-Bali ferry connection "Princess Sri Tanjung" (Putri Sri Tanjung) I and II. Many more examples could be cited.

Regional identity is visualized in public space as well, leading to further thematization of ethnolinguistic and historical identity in the ambience of Banyuwangi. Polychrome cement statues of characters from local legendary history (see Figures 1 and 2) and of *gandrung* dancers (Figures 3 and 4) have been erected throughout the town and at intersections in the countryside since at least the mid-1990s. The *gandrung* dance – an Osing genre embraced as the Banyuwangi performing art par excellence since the early twentieth century – has lent its name to Kopi Gandrung, Gandrung Pos, and Gandrung Kafé, a coffee brand, magazine, and cafeteria, respectively. In the national media, Banyuwangi has carried the nickname "the town of *gandrung*" (*kota gandrung*) throughout the 1990s and in December 2002 the *gandrung* dancer was chosen as the official *maskot* of the regency (Arps 2006; Novi Anoeграjekti 2007). A temporally recurrent mark of regional identity is the official anniversary of the foundation of Banyuwangi. After many seminars and debates it was officially proclaimed in 1995 that Banyuwangi came into being on 18 December 1771. This is the date of a battle at Bayu between Blambangan and East India Company troops in which the latter were temporarily defeated (Lekkerkerker 1923: 1058-1059; Sri Margana 2007: 119-150). That 18 December 1771 is neither the foundation date of the town of Banyuwangi nor of the regency (Arps 1992b: 116; Sri Margana 2007: 164-168), pales into insignificance compared to the heroism that the date actually chosen can be made to represent. The anniversary is celebrated among other things with the event known popularly

as *karnaval*, a street parade through town with floats displaying performing arts and local products for each of the regency's districts (*kecamatan*). The "traditional" Banyuwanginese wedding attire has been changed and standardized (Bandi et al. 1995/1996). The *gajah uling* batik pattern, promoted as typically Banyuwangi by the Banyuwangi Department of Industries from



Figures 1 and 2. Statues of Minak Jingga, a legendary ruler of Blambangan who rebelled against "western" Javanese domination, stand at intersections. (Banyuwangi, August 2002).



Figures 3 and 4. Other intersections have statues of *gandrung* dancers. (Banyuwangi, August 2002 and September 2003).

1981 (Batik Blambangan 1983), by 1986 had become favourite material for shirts and waistcloths worn on official occasions. A range of *jajan*, that is snacks and sweets, and *rujak*, spicy salads, are touted as typically Banyuwanginese food. One could go on.

Places and facilities named or renamed and dotted with historical and ethnic icons, a territory's birth determined and regularly celebrated, clothing for formal occasions refashioned and redefined, culinary specialties advertised and sold in shops and roadside foodstalls: it is clear that components of Banyuwangi's public life are being recast. The terms in which they are recast are *regional*, first and foremost. They are linked to Banyuwangi, the regency and its capital, or to Blambangan, Banyuwangi's illustrious predecessor that is thought to have extended over the same geographical area (see Figure 5).⁵



Figure 5. Sign, sponsored by a bank, across the main road giving access to Banyuwangi from the north. *Banyuwangi Bumi Blambangan* means 'Banyuwangi, the land of Blambangan'. (Watudodol, September 2003).

Osing Javanese, the Osing language, and Osing Kids

Van der Tuuk in the 1870s, Dwijawara in 1879, Natadiningrat in 1915, and others later pointed out that the main language spoken in the region differed from other Javanese dialects, but they did regard it as a variety of Javanese and did not give it a separate name apart from Blambangan or Banyuwangi Javanese. The same applied to its speakers. In sources from the 1920s onwards, however, another name makes its appearance: "the Balambangers or Oesingers, as the indigenous population of Banyuwangi [...] is called" (De Stoppelaar 1926). The Osingers were named after one of the lexical items peculiar to their dialect, namely *using* 'no, not'.⁶

⁵ Although Blambangan is identified with present-day Banyuwangi, the kingdom at times covered almost the entire eastern salient of Java.

⁶ I use the spelling *Osing* in English because it best approximates the pronunciation [osin], though phonemically the word is *using* (compare *usingan* [usinjan]). It is likely that the

There are indications that the people designated Osingers in this manner were not unreservedly pleased with their new name. Scholte explained in 1927 that it was coined by immigrants and claimed that they called themselves “real [or authentic] Javanese” (Scholte 1927: 146). Thirty years later Prijanggana reiterated that the name was given by immigrants from Central and East Java who arrived in Banyuwangi since approximately 1910.⁷ He added that “the Banyuwangi people preferred to be called eastern people (*orang Wetanan*) [...], and the newcomers were called by the name of western people (*orang Kulonan*), meaning that they came from the west” (Prijanggana 1957: 32). “Westerners” (*wong kulon(an)*) and “western Javanese” (*Jawa kulon(an)*) remain common designation of immigrants from elsewhere in Java to this day. As late as 1974 the author of an Osing-language column in a Javanese magazine wrote that “outsiders call Banyuwangi people Osingers [*wong Osing*]. But if you want to be considered polite, you mustn’t call the people there Osingers. Because for the community there such a designation is a disparaging nickname [*juluk ngenyek*]” (Paman Goplang 1974).

Nonetheless in subsequent decades “the Osing language” and “the Osing people” became common as the names of the language variety and its speakers.⁸ In the 1990s phrases like “the Osing ethnic group” (*étnis Osing*) and “Osing culture” (*budaya Osing*) were increasingly used, by Osingers and immigrants alike. What is more, Osing culture and language began to receive a privileged status in Banyuwangi. It is clearly not “western” Javanese, or Madurese, or Balinese that was selected by cultural activists and the regency’s authorities as Banyuwangi’s “regional” culture, let alone Chinese, Mandar, Madurese, or Arab. It is Osing culture. As a consequence, people living in Banyuwangi, if they want to be Banyuwangi people, if they want to *belong* there, have to be Osing in some way or other. As long as the regionalism of Banyuwangi is tied to glorious Blambangan or to visual and culinary icons, it can be nondescript in terms of language and thus by default Indonesian, but when Banyuwangi’s regionalism is tied to things Osing, its hallmark is a particular language. At the same time, however, the number of people in Banyuwangi who have learned or are learning to speak Osing from birth is about 500,000 to 750,000, only a third to a half of the regency’s inhabitants.

designation Osing (*Using*) is short for “using Javanese” (*Jawa using*) – indeed De Stoppelaar 1927 writes “Oesing-Javanen” and “het Oesing-Javaansch” (p. 7) – which must be seen as contrastive with “*gaq* Javanese” or “*ora* Javanese”. So the dialects would be distinguished by labelling them with a frequently used, distinctive synonym, in this case a negative particle (equivalent to *gaq* in East Javanese, *ora* in Central Javanese). Though I have not actually come across the designations “*gaq* Javanese” and “*ora* Javanese”, the contrast between “talk using *using*” (*omong usingan*) and “talk using *gaq*” (*omong gaq-gaqan*) is common.

⁷ The influx of Madurese and Javanese began after 1870 and indeed peaked in the early twentieth century (Kumar 1979: 192).

⁸ “The Osing language” is *bahasa Osing* in Indonesian, and *basa* or *cara* or *omong Using* in Javanese and Osing. “Osing people” is *orang Osing* in Indonesian, *wong Using* in Javanese and Osing. It appears that party-political rivalry enacted through the performing arts in the 1950s and early 1960s played an important role in popularizing these designations. The history of this development calls for further research.

Osingness is represented in many ways. One of these ways has emerged as focal. It is the figure of the *Laré Using* 'Osing Kid', which, since the early 1990s, has developed into a popular and in certain respects concrete emblem of Osingness, one that can be taken up by people irrespective of their ethnic backgrounds.⁹

Alongside the references and allusions to Blambangan reviewed earlier, the "Osing" adjective, most typically though not exclusively in the phrase "Osing Kid(s)", has begun to pop up in certain realms of public life. Several of these have to do with tourism, relaxation, travel, and transportation. In 1997 an "Osing Tourism Village" (Désa Wisata Using) was opened in Kemiren, a mountainside village not far from town. In 2004 efforts were made to promote a form of morning exercises labelled "Osing Kid gymnastics" (*senam Laré Using*) performed to Banyuwangi pop music. By May 2005 this was referred to in a newspaper report as "the obligatory gymnastics of the people of Banyuwangi"



Figure 6. Signboard of a crafts and souvenir shop on the main shopping street. (Banyuwangi, August 2002).

("senam wajib masyarakat Banyuwangi itu"; azi 2005). There is a Banyuwangi crafts and souvenir shop on Banyuwangi's main shopping street called *Larus*, from *Laré Using* (see Figure 6). In February 2001 a nightly open-air food-fair meant to specialize in Banyuwangi food and called the "Osing Kids Tent Cafés" (Cafe Tenda Lare Using) was inaugurated in the town centre. The first metered taxi company to operate in Banyuwangi, since August 2001, is called Taksi Using Transport or TUT (Figures 7-9).¹⁰

Given, however, that Osing refers prototypically to a way of speaking, it is more common that the Osingness is related to language use and – because in this case, too, the Osingness is public – its mediation. In December 2000, for instance, a group of young cultural workers calling

⁹ The individuals and agencies that instigated this development were Banyuwangi cultural activists, regulators, and institutions, including since about 1996 the regency government. Alongside "Osing Kids" one also often hears the phrase *laré Banyuwangi* 'Banyuwangi kids', and sometimes, though rarely in reference to contemporary circumstances, *laré Blambangan* 'Blambangan kids'. These designations are special as well, in that they contain the Osing word *laré* 'child, youth' which marks the phrases as Osing. But *laré Using* is extraordinary – also in comparison with phrases like *aré Surabaya* 'Surabaya kid' and *anak Betawi* 'Betawi kid' used elsewhere in Indonesia – because of its lingual and ethnic and not basically geographical meaning. As indicated above, "Osinger" (*orang Osing, wong Using*) is the prevalent ethnonym. It does not have the same connotation of a public lifestyle as do the phrases with *laré*.

¹⁰ The name of the taxi company is not entirely gratuitous. Firstly, urban and regional public transport in Banyuwangi have long been dominated by speakers of Osing; this name confirms a well-known pattern. Secondly, of course, it represents the ethnicity regarded as typical of the company's region of activity, Banyuwangi.



Figures 7 and 8. Taxis and their drivers in Banyuwangi. They are proud of their “western” Javanese c.q. Arabic descent. (Banyuwangi, July and August 2002).



Figure 9. The badge on a taxi driver's uniform. (Banyuwangi, August 2002).

themselves *Kelompok Peduli Using* or ‘Group Concerned about Osing’ [sic] published an anthology of Osing-language poetry (Hasnan and Armaya 2000), parts of which were also serialized on the regional pages of the Indonesian newspaper *Jawa Pos*. In this booklet “the first Osing-language magazine” (“*majalah basa Using kawitan*”) is announced. “If you profess to be an Osinger, you must read it ...” (“*Kadhung ngaku wong Using, rika kudu maca ...*”) (2000: [48]). Titled *Seblang* after an annual trance dance ritual held in two villages not far from the capital (Wessing 1999), this magazine first appeared in December 2002. The seventh issue was published in January 2008. And, as already indicated, Osingness features prominently in the realm of pop music and its radio broadcasting. “Osing Kids”

is a favourite component of names of music groups (and has been since at least the early 1980s). The 1990s witnessed the album and song titles “Osing Kids” and “I’m an Osing Kid”, radio shows like “Osing Songs”, “The Style of Osing Kids”, “Osing Kids’ Tunes”, and “Authentic Osing Kids’ Music”, as

well as the slogan “The Osing Kids’ Radio”.¹¹

How to be an Osing Kid

It is only from about 1990 that the figure of *Laré Using* has begun to crystallize. Going by the namings just sketched, a range of means may help to make someone into an Osing Kid: listening to and presumably enjoying certain pop music albums and radio programmes, even a particular station, doing one’s morning exercises to the same kind of music, taking taxis from a particular company, buying handicrafts in a particular shop, going out for dinner in a particular open-air food court, making a trip to a display of Osing houses and performing arts. This is assuming that the Osingness attributed to these sites is not solely to do with the ethnicity of their creators, owners, or managers, and that the Osing Kid is not a phantasmal image like the kingdom of Blambangan or the *gandrung* (as construed by the majority of people in the region, who have never attended one of the rough all-night performances in which she stands central, let alone participated in one). The music- and radio-related titles, names, labels, and slogan strongly suggest that it is neither. The Osing Tourism Village is not as different in nature from the other Osing things as it might seem. It is true that it was set up to display Osing houses and performing arts to tourists both domestic and foreign (see, for instance, Endang Nurhayati 1997). But the houses are ignored and the performances are attended mostly

by people from Kemiren – which is predominantly Osing-speaking – and from elsewhere in the Banyuwangi region. The Osing Tourism Village, then, is not only the Osing village for tourists that it was meant to become, but also a village for Osing tourists.

Being an Osing Kid appears to be a lifestyle and particularly a way of consuming commodities and practices drenched in Osing language and culture and through it, in Banyuwangineseness. Furthermore, being an Osing Kid is a way of taking part in public life.



Figure 10. A banner inscribed in Osing in the Chinese quarter of Banyuwangi. (Banyuwangi, February 2001).

¹¹ “Osing Kids” = Laré Osing and “I’m an Osing Kid” = Isun Laré Using. Among the radio shows “Osing Songs” = Tembang Using (a programme of the SWIT FM station, based in Muncar), “The Style of Osing Kids” = Gayané Laré Using (Radio GBS in the village of Tembakon near Banyuwangi town), “Osing Kids’ Tunes” = Gendhing Laré Using (RKPD Suara Blambangan), and “Authentic Osing Kids’ Music” = Musik Laré Using Asli (again Radio GBS). The promotional phrase “The Osing Kids’ Radio” = Radhiyoné laré Using belongs to Radio Sri Tanjung in Rogojampi.

There is some Osingness in the visible discourse that one meets in Banyuwangi. While the Osing language is not traditionally written, the main intersections of Banyuwangi town are adorned with banners, and some of these, from time to time, are in Osing. Thus some – but very few – streets of Banyuwangi are made into Osing public space by means of banners inscribed in Osing, such as advertisements for certain cultural events and notices such as “this street belongs to the public; do not act egotistically” (“Dalan iki duwèné wong akèh / Aja nganggo karepé dèwèk”, on a banner put up by the regency government in a few parts of town, including the Chinese quarter, in 2001. It probably hinted at driving habits. See figure 10.) One also comes across a few slogans painted on walls. This remains uncommon, since all over Indonesia, the townscape is primarily an *Indonesian* public space. It is thus not much of a surprise that a banner expressing “Good wishes and hopes of success in connection with the opening of the Osing Kids Tent Cafés” in February 2001 used Indonesian (“Selamat & sukses akan dibukanya Cafe Tenda Lare Using”; see Figure 11).



Figure 11. An Indonesian-language banner announcing the opening of the Osing Kids Tent Cafés. (Banyuwangi, February 2001).

But like elsewhere in Indonesia, in Banyuwangi public life and the space in which it is lived are created by sound as much as they are created visually. A range of audio and audiovisual media serve as sources and conduits of public sound. Like a thematic ambience generally, the audioscape is of course forever in flux, but does have recurrent elements. It has two main components in Banyuwangi. First comes Islam, especially of course the call to prayer from the ubiquitous mosques and prayer houses. The second is the pop music genre called *kendhang kempul*. With an instrumentation derived partly from traditional music, it has lyrics in the Osing language, and is predominantly

about themes that are relevant in Banyuwangi. (More about this below.)

Kendhang kempul is heard in live performances and especially on cassettes, VCDs, and the radio. The songs are in the public domain also in another way: since the mid-1990s they are extremely popular for karaoke. Beginning in 1995 or 1996 almost all radio stations in the Banyuwangi region – six stations up to 1999, several more since – have broadcast their daily Banyuwangi music programmes in phone-in karaoke fashion at least once a week. Karaoke *kendhang kempul* is also sung and heard in song contests, at celebrations, from karaoke machines in homes, even from public-address systems at markets and bus stations. Singing *kendhang kempul* is a popular pastime among secondary schoolchildren. I have spoken with several people to whose minds one of the major marks of being a *Laré Using* is being able to sing *kendhang kempul* and to know the songs.¹² Some stations have fan clubs for their *kendhang kempul* shows, whose membership is largely middle-class and from all over town and beyond (Arps 2003). By no means all their members are originally from Banyuwangi or even fluent speakers of Osing. They do all, however, sing *kendhang kempul*. The genre of *kendhang kempul* allows them to sound native.¹³

The audioscape in Banyuwangi, then, is Osing in part. *Kendhang kempul* enables people to participate actively and publicly in Banyuwangi's Osingness, whatever their ethnic and lingual backgrounds may be. Listening to, watching, and especially singing *kendhang kempul* can be something intimately Banyuwanginese, a deeply local emotional experience. It can also be a public act of asserting one's Osingness and, coupled to this, Banyuwangineseness. It is this motive which lies behind the publication, officially on 18 December 2000 – the anniversary of Banyuwangi's foundation –, of the *kendhang kempul* album bearing the double title 'The Banners of Blambangan / Banyuwangi's Birthday' (Umbul Umbul Belambangan / Dino Dadine Banyuwangi). Besides several professionals, the album featured two amateur singers. One was the regent (*bupati*) Samsul Hadi (in office, 2001–2005), a formerly Jakarta-based businessman who is a native of Banyuwangi, indeed an Osing speaker, and, as he has publicly stated, an Osing Kid: "As an 'Osing kid' and also as the Regent of Banyuwangi, I am truly pleased [...] with the birth of this collection of Osing poetry [...]" ("Minangka 'lare Using' lan uga minangka Bupati Banyuwangi, isun milu seneng temenan [...] ambi lahire buku kumpulan puisi Using [...] iki [...]"). From the Regent's foreword in Hasnan and Armaya 2000: iii). It is he who sings the album's title-song 'The banners of Blambangan' ("Umbul Umbul Belambangan"; no. 3 in the Appendix). This martially sounding piece in praise of easternmost Java became a hit. The regent sang it at many a festive occasion since (see for instance bay 2001 and vin 2001). The other amateur singer on the album was the then vice regent, Banyuwangi's second in command. The Osing song he sings on the album, 'The River Lo' ("Kali

¹² This is related to the normative idea that the Banyuwangi youth should prefer Banyuwangi pop over "western" pop, which I have heard being thematized in an amateur radio play by secondary school pupils in 1999 (Arps 2004).

¹³ Where karaoke's role in ethnicity formation is concerned, Banyuwangi is not an unique case. See for other Asian examples Wong 1994; Lum 1996; several chapters in Mitsui and Hosukawa 1998; Yang 2002: 198–199; Gunn 2006.

Elo", a classic), proclaims that

Osing kids	Laré-laré Using
Tenaciously	Bontang-banting
Exert themselves	Tandang gawé
To develop their native land	Mbangun tanah klairané

This singer was not born in Banyuwangi, is ethnolinguistically Madurese, and does not speak Osing. His performance on the album (and many other *kendhang kempul* songs he has sung as karaoke) allowed him to assert his Banyuwangineseness nonetheless.¹⁴

The Osing Kid and the Osing language

The Osing dimensions of Banyuwangi's ambience remain sporadic in comparison with its Indonesianness, which is pervasive. But it is really quite remarkable that the Osing language plays any role at all in the range of means for making oneself or others into *laré Using*, given the relentless promotion of Indonesian by all conceivable means short of outright prohibition of "regional" languages. Yet it is language restricted in many ways. One is, temporarily, a *Laré Using* not necessarily by *speaking* the Osing language. It suffices to contribute to the main kind of discourse that makes Banyuwangi's ambience Banyuwanginese, namely by listening to Osing lyrics and singing them, in the shape of *kendhang kempul*.

The Osing Kid illustrates an ethnolinguistic development taking place in Banyuwangi. This development, though epitomized in the Osing Kid figure, is not encompassed by it. Besides being many other things, the karaoke singing of Osing songs, this popular practice that emerged in Banyuwangi in the 1990s, is a way of partaking of and contributing to the Osingness of Banyuwangi's soundscape, the Osingness of its discursive ambience, and thereby the Osingness of Banyuwangi. It is an act, and necessarily a short-lived one, of publicly representing a Banyuwangi-bound aspect of a personal identity.

A discursive ambience, sensed and shaped through circulation of people, artefacts, and sounds, is an atmosphere – and therefore difficult to quantify. While quantification is certainly not impossible, I will refrain from it, and instead focus on some of the qualitative properties and historical dimensions of Banyuwangi's thematic ambience. In doing this I will also attempt to answer a number of obvious further questions. What themes does an Osing Kid actually listen to and voice? And on what actual grounds are an Osing Kid's songs felt and thought to be typical for Banyuwangi?

"Yellow Paddy-Field Lettuce": the origins of songs

Few song titles are able to provoke as much unease in Indonesia as "Génjér-Génjér".

¹⁴ After retiring from office, he took up residency in Banyuwangi and became a commentator on cultural affairs in the regional media and at seminars.

The name itself is innocent enough: *génjér* or “yellow paddy-field lettuce” is nothing but a common weed used as cattle fodder and in some areas as a vegetable for human consumption.¹⁵ The song’s lyrics would hardly seem to be controversial either. A vignette that pictures yellow paddy-field lettuce being harvested by a woman, sold in the market, bought by another woman, cooked, and eaten with rice and meat would appear to be rather harmless, and the same can be said of the dance that goes with the song, which depicts people doing these things.

This semblance of innocuousness is so far removed from reality, however, that for almost four decades most Indonesians will never have heard “Génjér-Génjér” being played live, even if, were they to have heard it, they might well have experienced an eerie familiarity with its tune. The popularity of “Génjér-Génjér” – for popular it once was, and hugely so – came to a violent end in 1965/66, during the killings of alleged communists following the coup attempt in Jakarta on 30 September 1965. Prior to that “Génjér-Génjér” had developed into a signature tune of the Indonesian Communist Party. Mohamad Arief, who created the song in 1953 and the dance three years later, was a composer and music teacher in Banyuwangi, an official of the local branch of Lekra (*Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat*; the Institute of People’s Culture affiliated with the Communist Party), and also a member of the Banyuwangi regional parliament (Priadi 1965; Soeratman 1965). He was killed in the aftermath of the coup.

The text of the first stanza runs:

Génjér-génjér ring kedhokan pating kelélér	Lettuce in the paddy-field lying all around
Maké thulik teka-teka muputi génjér	Mother arrives and starts collecting it at once
Ulih sakténong mungkur sédhot sing tuluh-tuluh	Having gotten a basketful she promptly leaves without looking back
Génjér-génjér saiki digawa mulih ¹⁶	Now she carries the lettuce home

The opening couplet in particular is often interpreted, *ex post facto* and out of textual context (following a mode of exegesis that is common in a Javanese environment¹⁷) as a prophesy or threat – one that came true at Lubang Buaya near Halim air base, Jakarta, during the night of 30 September to 1 October 1965. These words are taken as a description of the generals’ corpses after their murder by communist youth and air force personnel. The use of *muputi* in the second line, which in *Osing* simply means ‘pick up from the ground’ but which in other varieties of Javanese suggests ‘put an end to’, also plays a role in this interpretation; under this reading the second line means something like ‘Mother arrives and at once puts an end to the *génjér*’.

¹⁵ Heyne 1927: 139–140, where the Dutch “folk name” is *gele sawahsla*, hence my English translation.

¹⁶ Source: Hasan Ali [Sentot] 1993: 57, with modernized spelling.

¹⁷ See Arps 1992a, Chapters 17–19.

During the torturing and killing of the generals, “Génjér-Génjér” is supposed to have been danced and sung.¹⁸ This idea is part of the official accounts of the killings. The Seven Heroes Monument (Monumen Tujuh Pahlawan) at Lubang Buaya was commissioned by Suharto as early as 1966 (Schreiner 2002:197). On the relief that adorns its base a number of women and men are shown dancing while in the background other men are being beaten in various ways and one is lowered or thrown head-first into a hole in the ground. Right in the middle of the relief, between two dancing women, grows a plant with big oval leaves (see the photos in Leclerc 1997, especially on p. 300). They are, of course, *génjér* leaves.

“Génjér-Génjér” was not only monumentalized in frozen motion and silently. The movie that Sen and Hill call, because between the mid-1980s and 1997 it was shown on television annually around 30 September, “almost without doubt, the single most-watched Indonesian film” (Sen and Hill 2000: 148) has an extended depiction of the killings at Lubang Buaya. In the part of *Penumpasan Pengkhianatan G 30 S PKI* where the generals have been abducted from their homes and in the night are being tortured at the conspirators’ base, there is a shot of about fifteen seconds where “Génjér-Génjér” is sung and danced. Later in this scene, the song and dance recur more briefly and less distinctly. The atmosphere is wild, reminding the viewer of an orgy with lots of darkness and blood. The orgy-like atmosphere is in fact set up through the images and sounds of men and women dancing and singing “Génjér-Génjér” while smiling and ostensibly enjoying themselves. The tune of the first line of “Génjér-Génjér”, played on a keyboard, serves as a sinister melodic theme in the film’s soundtrack from that moment onwards.¹⁹ This, of course, is how the sense of *déjà entendu* to which I alluded above was created and renewed from year to year. It is how the memory of the original context of “Génjér-Génjér” – or more precisely, its final context – was created and kept alive.

“Génjér-Génjér” has since been associated with the murder of the generals. For almost four decades after 1965/66, it was hardly mentionable, let alone discussable, while singing or dancing it was out of the question. I heard the song only once or twice, never in full but as a hastily recited first line or at most a stanza whispered in such a way that no neighbours or passers-by could identify the singer.

That was in Indonesia.

I did hear a full live performance of “Génjér-Génjér” once. But that was in Leiden. The song was performed (without dance) by a group of Surinam-Javanese musicians from the Dutch province of Groningen, who played music for a frame-drum ensemble (*terbangan*) during the opening reception of a scholarly conference in August 2000. I assume that the song was brought to Surinam in the 1950s or 1960s by a teacher or on a gramophone record (several recordings were produced in Indonesia in the early 1960s) and became part

¹⁸ Anderson refers to “The Dance of the Fragrant Flowers” (1987: 111), a dance I have not been able to identify.

¹⁹ Thanks to Katinka van Heeren for lending me her VCDs of *Penumpasan Pengkhianatan G 30 S PKI*.

of the *terbangan* repertoire there, whence it was brought to the Netherlands. In this Surinam-Javanese environment “Génjér-Génjér” obviously was not given the interpretations it received in Indonesia after 1965. It is difficult to imagine a similar group playing this song there, now or even in the 1950s and 1960s. *Terbangan* is associated with Islam and thus in stark contrast with communism.

Meanwhile in Indonesia, too, the situation was changing. Around the time when I heard the *terbangan* group from Groningen perform it, a debate was going on in the Indonesian media about the origins of “Génjér-Génjér”. A prominent public figure – the Solonese shadow puppeteer Ki Manteb Soedharsono – made an attempt to rehabilitate the song, convicted as he was that it had been created by a different composer whose politics were impeccable. Its authorship meant, so Ki Manteb reasoned, that it was not a communist song and could be performed freely.

Though there has been some controversy around the identity of its creator, everyone agrees that “Génjér-Génjér” was composed in Banyuwangi. Of course this is why I drew attention to it. “Génjér-Génjér” belongs to a genre that lies at the roots of *kendhang kempul* or “drums ‘n’ gongs”.

I have suggested that *kendhang kempul* is a major vehicle for the performance of Osing ethnicity and Banyuwangineseness. However, for at least two reasons it is not an unproblematic vehicle for this. *Kendhang kempul* is pop music and *ipso facto* western-inspired as well as consciously hybrid in its make-up. Considering that it is deliberately aligned with a non-Banyuwanginese (and even non-Indonesian) expressive genre, namely pop music, and in view of the constant borrowing of features from elsewhere that is a design feature of that expressive genre (as pop relentlessly renews itself stylistically), *kendhang kempul* would seem to be an odd choice for the performance of Osingness. Second, *kendhang kempul* is historically related to “Génjér-Génjér” and other communist-associated songs of the 1950s and 1960s, such that it can rightly be called a direct descendant of them. To make things more complicated still, some of the most celebrated *kendhang kempul* composers today were already active in that period, and in fact they too were affiliated with Lekra. Owing to its particular local roots and genealogy and the political antecedents of some of its creators, *kendhang kempul* is ideologically suspect. Yet in spite of its cultural connotations this genre of pop music is an acceptable and feasible or even effective (to the authorities as well as to society at large) way of performing Osingness.

The story of “Génjér-Génjér”, then, is of great significance locally, but it also encapsulates a general problem that emerges not only in Banyuwangi, even though my discussion is limited to its manifestation here. I indicated that “Génjér-Génjér” was or could be played, discussed, or mentioned, and was or could *not* be played, discussed, or mentioned, in different historical periods with different discursive ambiances. The variable acceptance of this song over time and space is to do with what it is understood to signify, and this understanding of the song is related to its origins. More precisely, it is related to the perception of its origins, and this perception is variable.

The pop music of Banyuwangi: *kendhang kempul* or “drums ‘n’ gongs”

The unmentionability, undiscussability, and unplayability of “Génjér-Génjér” in Indonesia for over three and a half decades – with a few revealing exceptions – was due to its perceived origins. In Banyuwangi today an entire genre of music is, by contrast, highly mentionable, highly discussable, highly playable, and also highly singable. *Kendhang kempul* is all those things for the same reason that “Génjér-Génjér” is not: because of its perceived origins. *Kendhang kempul* is not just associated with the region of Banyuwangi. In fact it is considered *originally* Banyuwanginese. In the genre itself and the critical discourse surrounding it a great deal of stress is put on authenticity, on origins. Yet this happens in a highly hybrid genre (a fusion, a mix), and ultimately one which is historically and ideologically Euro-American in origin.

Let me briefly illustrate this by pointing out a few features that function as what can be called markers of origin. In the first place, the lyrics of *kendhang kempul* are in Osing: their vocabulary, pronunciation (to an extent), and grammar. Furthermore, although this is pop music with the concomitant formats (duration of songs, instrumental solos, refrains, etcetera), instrumentation (electric guitars and keyboards), and singing (solo female as well as male–female duets), as the name of the genre suggests it contains “indigenous” instruments as well, in this case in the rhythm section: two *kendhang* (hand-beaten drums) and two *kempul* (iron gong-shaped kettles), and often also a triangle, all of which are conceived here as Banyuwangi instruments. Finally there are the common other designations of the genre in everyday discourse besides *kendhang kempul*, to wit *lagu daerah* ‘regional songs’ and *lagu* or *gendhing Banyuwangi* ‘Banyuwangi songs’. The latter labels do not denote a range of musical genres, as one might expect because indeed there is such a range in Banyuwangi. They refer specifically to *kendhang kempul*: it is the Banyuwangi music *par excellence*.

These examples illustrate that the genre is represented as Banyuwanginese. But as I implied, emphasis is put on the idea that the genre is “originally” or “authentically” Banyuwanginese or, sometimes, Osing. For instance, a radio programme devoted to *kendhang kempul* is called “Authentic/Original Osing Kids’ Music” (*Mularosas = Musik Laré Using Asli*). The lyrics of *kendhang kempul* songs also contain references to the original or authentic Banyuwangineseness of songs. For instance, “Amit-Amit” (‘Excuse Us’; no. 4 in the Appendix), contains the lines:

Gendhingan iki gendhing asli	This song is an original
Banyuwangi	Banyuwangi song
Belambangan tanah Jawa pucuk wétan	Blambangan, the eastern tip of the
	Javanese land

Such statements are heard throughout the *kendhang kempul* repertoire.²⁰

²⁰ There are also many “self-references” in song texts in which it is only the Banyuwangineseness that is mentioned, as in beginning of stanza 6 of “Umbul Umbul Belambangan” (no. 3 in the Appendix).

Patriotism

Kendhang kempul is highly mentionable, discussable, and playable in Banyuwangi not only because in its origins it is bound to the region of Banyuwangi but also because it associates itself – in its music and its lyrics – with patriotism.

On the whole what is thematized in *kendhang kempul* lyrics is interpersonal relations of various kinds and from various perspectives between potential, actual or former sexual partners (always, in the songs, male and female). They are about “love”. The following should present a rough impression of the frequency of themes on recent albums. During a visit to Banyuwangi in July and August 2002 I bought the new albums I could find that had been issued during the preceding 16 months, since my last visit. I found fifteen new audio cassettes containing 152 different songs. Of these songs, 110 (72 per cent) are about “love” in some form or other. The runner-up is “patriotism”. On the new albums I found in 2002, this is the category thematized in eight songs (5 per cent) – also in varied ways, I must stress. These numbers point to the thematic tendencies in the songs in circulation, but of course they have little to do with the relative prominence of themes as they are heard and sung in Banyuwangi’s discursive ambience. Quantitatively patriotism is a very distant runner-up in terms of numbers of songs. However, in terms of frequency of air-play, karaoke singing, and popularity over a longer period of the relatively few songs in question, patriotism is highly significant in the genre.

This is striking also because in the traditional Osing song-and-dance genre which has been one source of influence on *kendhang kempul* lyrics and instrumentation, that is the genre called *gandrung*, notions such as fatherland and ethnicity and the like are not thematized at all. This is so in spite of the fact that the Osing people are marginalized in the region in several ways.²¹ Also, if one looks at older written genres of Javanese discourse, one will not easily find genres in them that highlight such sentiments. It is likely that the theme of patriotism in *kendhang kempul* lyrics is based primarily on an Indonesian model, that of *lagu perjuangan* or ‘songs of the struggle’,²² a genre which has its counterparts in Malaysia and Singapore as well (Van Dijk 2003), and which may well have received most of its inspiration from Dutch or British and, later, Japanese nationalism.

The patriotism one meets in *kendhang kempul* lyrics tends to be of a fairly primordial, *Blut und Boden*-like kind. The “fatherland” is above all Banyuwangi, which, in line with a common identification discussed above, is often referred to by the historical name of Blambangan. It is the birthplace,

²¹ A few somewhat cryptic texts in the song repertoire of *gandrung* and the trance ritual *seblang* are cast as “songs which could cause the zest for unity and struggle [against the Dutch] to flame and blaze” (*gendhing-gendhing kang bisa agawe kobar lan makantar-kantaring semangat persatuan lan perjuangan*), composed after the fall of Blambangan in the 1770s (Sri Adi Oetomo 1983: 45); see also, among others, Hasnan 1991: 90–94 and Hasan Ali 1991: 31. I cannot go into this mode of interpretation here. As pointed out by Novi and Bisri (2007: 26–27), these readings are common in circles of Banyuwangi intellectuals but not universally shared and not undisputed. In my view they point to an *ex post facto* urge to interpret even traditional songs in a patriotic mode.

²² The kinds of music of ‘songs of the struggle’ are stylistically very different from *kendhang kempul*, however; and the Indonesian category has many more songs.

the place of origin, of the characters thematized in the lyrics, often first-person narrators as in no. 1 in the Appendix, “Tanah Kelahiran” (‘Native Land’):

Embuh pirang taun	I don’t know how many years
Lawas sing sun sambang	It has been since I visited
Umah karang pedesan	My home and village
Papan k’lahiran	The place where I was born
Seru kangenisun	Great is my longing
Nong kanca memengan	For my [former] playmates
Enget magih g’ridhoan	I recall when we teased one another
Sak dalan-dalan	Wherever we walked
Saikine isun urip nong kadohan	But now I live far away
Ngembani kewajiban nong	Performing my duty towards
Ibu Pertiwi	the Motherland
Njaluk pujinrika Emak-Bapak	I ask for your prayers, Mother and Father,
ring kana	yonder
Ga-muga tabahena kula	May I be able to cope with my wandering
ngumbara	
Embuh taun kapan	Who knows in what year
Embuh dina paran	Who knows on what day
Sun ketemu angenan	I shall meet what I am longing for

I remember how surprised I was when I first heard the next verse line, the last, which says not “Indonesia”, “The Motherland”, or “The Archipelago”, the climax I thought the text had been working towards, but

Oh Blambangan	Oh Blambangan
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In no. 2 “I’m an Osing Kid” (“Isun Lare Using”), the “Osing kid” is represented in stanzas 2 and 3 as a resilient and heroic personage who has fought or resisted the United East India Company in the 1760 and 1770s, the Dutch later, and the Japanese in 1942–1945, and who was finally able to achieve Independence:

Jemlegur meriyem Kompeni	The Company’s cannon thundered
Alas Bayu karang-abang	Bayu Forest was burnt to the ground ²³
Lo Pangpang mberanang	Pangpang Bay was bright red
Selebrang dudu kembang	Shining not from blossoms ²⁴
Getih kutah kembang-kembang	Undulating blood that was spilled

²³ The Fall of Bayu in December 1771 was in effect the last stand of Blambangan against the VOC.

²⁴ The battle of Lo Pangpang (or Ulu Pampang) in 1767 was between the VOC and the Balinese viceroys of Blambangan. The Balinese were eradicated. There was more fighting there between the Blambanganese and the VOC in 1768 (Lekkerkerker 1923: 1049–1050, 1052; Sri Margana 2007: 45–52). I am not sure what *selébrang* means. It may be an archaic word quoted from a verse connected with the *seblang* ritual, where it might signify something like ‘shining’, in connection with red blossoms. Compare the text quoted in Hasan Ali 1991: 31.

Mbah buyut mati perang
Gantine sepirang-pirang

My grandparents and great-grandparents fell
Many others took their place

Isun lare using
Tau gilig tau gepeng
Dijajah ambi Landa
Disiksa serdhadhu Jepang
Taping magih bisa ngelawan
Lan menang ngerebut kemerdekaan

I'm an Osing kid
I've been rolled up, I've been flattened
Colonized by the Dutch
Tortured by Japanese soldiers
But I was still able to resist
And prevailed and seized independence

Stanza 18, the last bit of text of no. 3, "Umbul Umbul Belambangan" ('Banners of Blambangan') links Blambangan in an unspecified way with Nusantara, 'the Archipelago', that is Indonesia:

Ngadega jejeg
Ngadega jejeg
Umbul-umbul Belambangan
Ngadega jejeg
Adil lan makmur
Nusantara

Stand upright
Stand upright
Banners of Blambangan
Stand upright
Just and prosperous
The Archipelago

Just before that (in stanza 17), significantly, is mentioned the legendary king of Blambangan who rebelled against "western Javanese" domination, Minak Jingga:

Pamuké satriya Minak Jingga
Magih murub ning dhadha

The rage of Minak Jingga the warrior
Still burns in my chest

The patriotism is Banyuwanginese. As stanza 18 of "Umbul Umbul Belambangan" showed, to the extent that Banyuwangi patriotism is regarded as part of Indonesian patriotism it is also Indonesian. The question is of course to what extent it is so. Sometimes this is left entirely open, as in last line of no. 2 "Isun Lare Using":

Taping magih bisa ngelawan
Lan menang ngerebut kemerdekaan

But I was still able to resist
And prevailed and seized independence

In other cases Banyuwangi merges into Indonesia, as in stanza 3 of "Kutho Lare Osing" ('The town of Osing Kids') (no. 5):

Ja rika lali sejarahé bengen asalé
Para pahlawan wis berjuwang
mati-matian
Ayo terusaken cita-citané bangsa

You mustn't forget its history, its origins
The heroes did engage in a life-and-death
struggle
Come, let's carry on the nation's ideals

And if, to move towards an answer, I may now broaden the scope again – patriotism is after all not the main thematic category in *kendhang kempul* lyrics – we can turn to the question of the significance of the adoption and adaptation of features from other genres into *kendhang kempul*. I suspect that the phenomenon of adoption and adaptation – borrowing, imitation,

inspiration, appropriation, or whatever we choose to call it – necessarily has a symbolic dimension, by which I mean that it triggers at least an elementary representation. It represents, put in the most general terms, a transfer of a degree of control over that which is adopted and adapted which does not occur automatically or naturally and which therefore is an attempt to neutralize a contrast (as when “A has x, B lacks x” becomes “A has x, B has x”) or to maintain a contrast but shift the balance in it (as when it becomes “A lacks x, B has x”).

Where the stylistic models of *kendhang kempul* are concerned, there is no single binary contrast but a range of them. To begin with, two wests are involved. Firstly the west called barat, the occident, “the West”, Europe–America–Australia, which is the source of the pop music format, instrumentation, and the diatonic scale of *kendhang kempul*, the source of the very category of patriotism, the main source of the historical scholarship on which some lyrics are based. On the other hand Banyuwangi patriotism, as represented in *kendhang kempul* lyrics, was often directed precisely against the Dutch, for a long time the main representatives of the west. Moreover, the contrast between *gendhing barat* ‘western songs’ and the like, and *gendhing Banyuwangi* ‘Banyuwangi songs’ is a common theme of discussion.

Secondly, the cultural location of *kendhang kempul* contrasts with the west called *kulon*, short for *Jawa kulon*, that is Java west of Banyuwangi. This is the source of some songs (tunes, lyrics – sometimes “Osingized”, which is often easy because Javanese and Osing are structurally and lexically close) and also for instance of the story of Minak Jingga, subverted in local storytelling, drama, public imagery, and *kendhang kempul* lyrics (there is for instance a song in which he is praised, titled “Pahlawan Blambangan”, ‘The Hero of Blambangan’). Meanwhile, as discussed earlier, a strong multi-centred campaign is going on, to which *kendhang kempul* is related and for which it is sometimes invoked, to have the autonomy of Osing language and culture from Javanese language and culture recognized – a kind of cultural separatism.

These two wests, sources of inspiration for and objects of contrast in symbolic forms that play a role in Banyuwangi regionalism, are actually labels for languages and cultures. (Even in case of *barat*, though people are aware that there are more languages, “western culture” is very often thematized monolithically).

If we want to conceive the differences, the sources of inspiration, and the objects of contrast in spatial or directional terms, the centre and the north come into it as well. The centre (*pusat*) is Jakarta, the state capital. It is a major source of pop music trends and also of the patriotism. It is less clear, however, whether the adoption of Indonesian materials here is actually subversive, expressive of not just a contrast but also a tension, and if so, how. On one side the Indonesian state has for a long time engaged in relentless promotion of the national language – while this music genre fills a not inconsiderable part of public and private space, broadcasting time, leisure time, and ritual time of people in Banyuwangi. However, the government attitude towards and

treatment of “regional languages” is changing now.

On the other hand, the patriotism of certain *kendhang kempul* lyrics is represented as contained within patriotism towards the nation-state; it is a local variety of Indonesian patriotism. The advantage of representing patriotism with reference to history – as is done in the patriotic *kendhang kempul* songs – is that a unidimensional diachronic progression allows one to represent the Blambangan-VOC battles and the like as part of the process that leads to Indonesia and on to the present Banyuwangi as part of Indonesia. There are no contradictions in feeling allegiance to Banyuwangi, because Banyuwangi is part of Indonesia and, in terms of representation, *a pars pro toto* for Indonesia.

In this connection a remarkable theme surfaces occasionally, and that is that Banyuwangi music should reach the national stage, pervade Indonesia. See for instance stanza 6 of no. 3 “Umbul Umbul Belambangan”:

Suwarané gendhing Belambangan	The sound of Blambangan song
Nyerambahi Nusantara	Spreads throughout the Archipelago

And similarly in stanza 3 of no. 4 “Amit-Amit”, about “this song”:

Amit-amit kumandhangé	Excuse us, may it resound high
nyundhula langit	into the sky
Sumebara nyerambahi Nusantara	And spread throughout the Archipelago

And Ikke Nurjanah, the dangdut singer, had a national hit in 1997 with a *kendhang kempul* song, which was a major source of pride for many people in Banyuwangi. (The lyrics of her song were in Indonesian translation, however.) This seems to be an expression of a desire for recognition.

Another peculiarity of the representation applied in the patriotic *kendhang kempul* songs is the identification of Blambangan and Banyuwangi: they are represented as the same territorially – which is not entirely accurate, but close enough – and also culturally, because (another identification that has some, but by no means full justification) place/territory = culture.

However, if one were to look at the occurrence of patriotism synchronically, and take the category of patriotism broadly (involving loyalty, devotion, attachment, to something transferred from the ancestors, the ancients, etcetera), it turns out that the phenomenon of patriotism as it occurs somewhere or in a collection of people at any one time can include several different allegiances (allegiances to different “fathers” or even “fatherlands”), some of which not only contrast but, because they are mutually exclusive (involve either/or choices or variables, such as political choices or unchangeable ethnicity or history), should also be in tension and could lead to conflict. In the social circles I am concerned with here one might point to devotion to Banyuwangi, to a particular ethnolinguistic category (Osing versus immigrants, “western Java”, or Osing language/culture versus Javanese or Indonesian), a particular village (and people do attach to their villages or wards and compete with other villages or wards), a particular practice (“the teachings of the elders”,

for instance), the province of East Java, the state. Only three of these potential objects of patriotic sentiment occur as such in *kendhang kempul* songs, namely Banyuwangi/ Blambangan, the state, and local tradition. In fact this happens in a particular way which fuses all three into one.

Continuing directionally, the north is relevant as well. Mandarin pop music is actually a major source of tunes for Banyuwangi composers. And finally, it is possible to see the use of markers of origin such as the *kendhang* and *kempul* as adoptions too, this time across social rather than geographical cultural differences: a pop genre (an internationally established, modern kind of music, largely urban, linked to a powerful recording industry) takes and incorporates elements from a rural, “traditional” genre (or genres), and even names its genre after these elements – a very important deed of adoption that may be seen as an appropriation.

However, the last three contrasts – between contemporary Banyuwangi popular music and the centre, the north, and local tradition – that the incorporation of stylistic elements from these sources addresses, are rarely problematized and not usually cast as conflicts or tensions in *kendhang kempul* lyrics or the surrounding critical discourse. Mostly they are not even talked about. The Mandarin origin of *kendhang kempul* tunes, for instance, was discussed in 1985 (Banyak lagu Banyuwangi 1985) but then disappeared from the public consciousness, only to be thematized again in 2000 or 2001 with the appearance of an album titled *Ikawangi versi Mandarin* (Ikawangi, Ikatan Keluarga Banyuwangi or ‘The Banyuwangi Family League’, is the title of a series of popular albums). In 1985, under the New Order regime which discouraged public displays of Chineseness and even outlawed some, it was regarded as a problem, fifteen years onward, when Chineseness in Indonesia was becoming an allowable topic of public conversation again, it was noted with interest.

Change in a discursive ambience: Banyuwangi, 1950s and 1960s

The extent, then, to which stylistic origins are relevant at all in the understanding of *kendhang kempul*, and if they are relevant, the manner in which they are, correlates with the discursive ambience, which encompasses thematization (the matters people talk and write about) and also interpretation and its changeable modes. Of course it varies in time and social space. When, as with *kendhang kempul*, there are several planes and sources of inspiration, when several kinds of adoption and adaptation are interwoven, or to put it more simply, when the hybridity is complex, some of these contrasts may be rendered into tensions (“A has x *but* B lacks x”, “A lacks x *but* B does have x”). Certain contrasts are foregrounded and problematized in the discursive ambience while, explicitly or by default, others are downplayed.

Bearing these abstract observations in mind I will try to show, very sketchily, how the origins of Banyuwangi popular music were perceived and evaluated in another discursive ambience in Banyuwangi – other, that is, than that of the mid-1990s to the present, which I have focused on. This also brings

us back to “Génjér-Génjér”.

The genealogy of *kendhang kempul* can be traced back to the 1950s and early 1960s, when, like today, there was a lot of artistic activity in Banyuwangi: composition of tunes and lyrics. However, the instrumentation was not that of pop. In this period the most prominent musical vehicle for Banyuwangi songs was *angklung*, a kind of *gamelan* music in which two bamboo xylophones play a prominent role.²⁵ It is also as an *angklung* piece that “Génjér-Génjér” was composed and known in Banyuwangi. During this period “Génjér-Génjér” was very acceptable, along with similar songs. It was original, indigenous popular music (not western rock), of a kind that was sanctioned by President Soekarno since 1959 (Sen and Hill 2000: 165–166). It was also grass-roots music, music of and originating from the people, as promoted by Lekra.

In the early 1970s, under the first regent of the New Order, the genre of Banyuwangi music was revived – in a radically different political context and without “Génjér-Génjér” but still with the same *angklung* instrumentation as before 1965. When around 1980 *kendhang kempul* was created in approximately its present form, that of pop music, this was a quite radical step. Though now it is understood as originally Banyuwanginese music, it was criticized initially precisely for not being authentic – *inter alia* because it was pop. It contained the same markers of Banyuwangi origin that it has now (the language variety, the indigenous instruments, etcetera), but initially these were not convincing enough to the critics.

The main reasons that *kendhang kempul* can have the lingually and ethnically emblematic status that it currently enjoys with the authorities and the public, are that this genre is represented and indeed treated as originally Osing (meaning that contrasts other than those I just mentioned are foregrounded), patriotic with regard to Banyuwangi, and patriotic with regard to Indonesia through Banyuwangi (as this region is inevitably or even naturally a part of Indonesia). The actual stylistic complexity of the genre notwithstanding, this representation is effective. People act it, take it seriously, it works in terms of the social circulation of discourse because particular dimensions of origins are foregrounded and others backgrounded. The songs themselves are designed to represent Osingness and patriotism and to underrepresent other matters.

Particular points of difference and contrast can become an issue. This also goes for sameness. As contrast may become tension, similarity may become equivalence, which can turn into a problem. The discursive ambience may bring some similarities into the limelight and, explicitly or by default, put other similarities in the background. *Kendhang kempul* is in Osing, for instance, and has a number of prominent composers that used to be linked to Lekra, and “Génjér-Génjér” (and other songs) is also in Osing and had a Lekra-affiliated composer. Since the latter is taboo, so the former is at the very least suspect.

²⁵ The Banyuwangi instrument and ensemble called *angklung* is thus not the same as the shaken instrument and ensemble known more widely under the same name.

Changing views of Banyuwangi

I have given attention to the variable interpretation of a song and the genre as a whole, as if the genre itself remains unchanged. But in fact it is quite dynamic. It should come as no surprise that the features that serve as markers of origin can be modified themselves, and thereby the songs as well, to neutralize such similarities and prevent them from becoming politically problematic. For “Génjér-Génjér” it is too late, but sometimes this is easier, as when we realize that the phrase “for the Motherland” (“kanggo Bu Pertiwi”) in a *kendhang kempul* song that has been very popular in recent years used to have another reading in the 1950s or 1960s when the song was first composed: “for the Revolution” (“kanggo Révolusi”). This used to be a communist party-associated song. Likewise the recent hit ‘Silken Shawl’ (“Sléndhang Sutra”) used to be ‘Red Shawl’ (“Sléndhang Abang”). But the provenance of these songs is not, at least for the moment, an issue.

Historical change in the thematic ambience of Banyuwangi is also manifested in its visual symbolic landscape and its toponyms. Some of the painted *gandrung* statues on display in downtown Banyuwangi are now in a state of neglect (compare, for instance, Figures 12 and 13).



Figures 12 and 13. A *gandrung* statue, bright gold in September 2003, dilapidated in January 2009. (Banyuwangi).

The Osing slogan ‘Banyuwangi springs up’ (“Banyuwangi jenggirat tangi”) coined by Samsul Hadi, the regent from 2001 to 2005 – a slogan inspired by the lyrics of, of course, the song ‘I’m an Osing Kid’ (“Isun Lare Using”; no. 3 in the Appendix) – was replaced by his successor Ratna Ani Lestari (elected 2005), who unlike Samsul Hadi does not have an Osing background, with ‘Banyuwangi is verdant green’ (“Banyuwangi ijo royo-royo”). This replacement can be still made out in the public space (compare Figures 14 and 15).

Some of the change in Banyuwangi’s publicly displayed language can no longer be perceived. In 2003, in small garden on a main road in Banyuwangi, named after the historical figure Mas Alit, a bamboo platform was erected with a windmill on top of it, as well as a banner. The platform was a *paglak* and the windmill a *kiling*. Both kinds of construction are



Figures 14 and 15. Successive slogans on an archway close to the Regent's residence. The slogan on the left was associated with Samsul Hadi (in office, 2001–2005), the one on the right with Ratna Ani Lestari (2005–present). The old lettering is still visible underneath the new text. (Banyuwangi, September 2003 and January 2009).

regarded as typical for Osing culture. The garden stood next to the entrance to the ward of Klembon and the banner read 'The people of Klembon are aware of the past' ("Wong Klembon Èngêt jaman Bèngghèn") (Figures 16 and 17). The banner probably referred not to the *paglak* and *kiling*, as both can still be seen in paddy fields in the Banyuwangi countryside, but to Mas Alit, the first regent of Banyuwangi (inaugurated in 1774).



Figures 16 and 17. A small garden on a main road in Banyuwangi, named after Mas Alit, the first regent of Banyuwangi (1774). The garden stood next to the entrance to the ward of Klembon. The banner on the platform reads 'The people of Klembon are aware of the past'. (Banyuwangi, September 2003).

The platform is now gone. But even if this particular public profession of historical awareness has vanished from sight, the regional past remains an ambient theme in Banyuwangi. I dare to predict that glorious Blambangan will continue to be commemorated and the Osing Kid is there to stay for some time to come. While the music industry is bound to remain a major supplier of a current of continuity, other popular factors are involved as well.

Banyuwangi's soccer stadium is still officially called Stadion Diponegoro; the regency government's 2002 initiative to have it renamed after a local hero failed. Official considerations based on the ideology of Indonesian nationalism prevailed over Banyuwangi patriotism. But the local team's supporters continue to be popularly referred to as Larosmania (Laros = Lare Osing, while mania is a common component of soccer fan club names in Indonesia). In the same vein, the soccer players themselves continue to be popularly referred to as 'the Blambangan troops' (Laskar Blambangan). And on the official front, Jagapati has meanwhile been proposed to the Indonesian government in Jakarta for the status of national hero. The stadium may in due course be renamed after all.

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Appendix

Selected *kendhang kempul* lyrics
from the patriotism category

1. “Tanah Kelahiran” (‘Native land’)

Lyrics by Andang Cy. Quoted from the sleeve of the audio cassette *Isun Lare Using*, track B.1. The version as sung on the recording is only slightly different.

[1:]

Embuh pirang taun
Lawas sing sun sambang
Umah karang pedesan
Papan k’lahiran

I don’t know how many years
It has been since I visited
My home and village
The place where I was born

[2:]

Seru kangenisun
Nong kanca memengan
Enget magih g’ridhoan
Sak dalan-dalan

Great is my longing
For my [former] playmates
I recall when we teased one another
Wherever we walked

[3:]

Saikine isun urip nong kadohan
Ngembani kewajiban nong Ibu Pertiwi
Njaluk pujinrika Emak-Bapak ring kana
Ga-muga tabahena kula ngumbara

But now I live far away
Performing my duty towards the Motherland
I ask for your prayers, Mother and Father, yonder
May I be able to cope with my wandering

[4:]

Embuh taun kapan
Embuh dina paran
Sun ketemu angenan
Oh Blambangan

Who knows in what year
Who knows on what day
I shall meet what I am longing for
Oh Blambangan

2. “Isun Lare Using” (‘I’m an Osing Kid’)

Lyrics by Andang Cy. Quoted from the sleeve of *Isun Lare Using*, track A.1. The version as sung on the recording is only slightly different.

[1:]

Isun lare using
Kadhung bumi gonjang-ganjing
Sing kuwatir gemelundhung
Sing wedi gemelindhing
Tau tiba ping kaping-kaping
Njenggirat tangi maning

I’m an Osing kid
When the earth shakes and trembles
I’m not worried about tumbling over
I’m not afraid of rolling away
I have fallen many a time
And sprung to my feet again

[2:]

Jemlegur meriyem Kompeni	The Company's cannon thundered
Alas Bayu karang-abang	Bayu Forest was burnt to the ground
Lo Pangpang mberanang	Pangpang Bay was bright red
Selebrang dudu kembang	Shining not from blossoms
Getih kutah kembang-kembang	Undulating blood that was spilled
Mbah buyut mati perang	My grandparents and great-grandparents fell
Gantine sepirang-pirang	Many others took their place

[3:]

Isun lare using	I'm an Osing kid
Tau gilig tau gepeng	I've been rolled up, I've been flattened
Dijajah ambi Landa	Colonized by the Dutch
Disiksa serdhadhu Jepang	Tortured by Japanese soldiers
Taping magih bisa ngelawan	But I was still able to resist
Lan menang ngerebut kemerdekaan	And prevailed and seized independence

3. "Umbul Umbul Belambangan" ('Banners of Blambangan')

Lyrics and music by BS. Noerdian and Andang Cy. The lyrics on the sleeve of Umbul Umbul Belambangan / Dino Dadine Banyuwangi, track A.1, contain many errors. The text below was transcribed from that recording. The division into lines and stanzas is mine, based on vocal and melodic phrasing.

- Instrumental intro (metricized, martial-sounding).
- 1 Male singer with metricized accompaniment:

Mbul-umbul Belambangan	Banners of Blambangan
Mixed chorus:	
Mbul-umbul Belambangan,	Banners of Blambangan, banners of
mbul-umbul Belambangan	Blambangan
Male singer:	
Umbul-umbul Belambangan	Banners of Blambangan
Mixed chorus:	
Eman	Dear
- Short instrumental interlude.
- 2 Mixed chorus (in two voices):

Hé, umbul-umbul	Hey, banners
Hé, Belambangan	Hey, Blambangan
Hé, umbul-umbul	Hey, banners
Hé, Belambangan	Hey, Blambangan
- 3 Mixed chorus repeats stanza 2.
- 4 Male singer:

Belambangan Belambangan	Blambangan, Blambangan
Tanah Jawa pucuk wétan	The eastern tip of the Javanese land
Sing arep bosen, sing arep bosen	I will not tire, I will not tire
Isun nyebut-nyebut	Of mentioning
Aranira, Belambangan, Belambangan	Your name, Blambangan, Blambangan

- 5 Male singer repeats stanza 4.
- 6 Female singer with unmetricized accompaniment (and sounds of wind and waves):
- | | |
|--|---|
| Membat mayun Paman | Trembling and vibrating, Uncle |
| Suwarané gendhing Belambangan | The sound of Blambangan song |
| Nyerambahi Nusantara | Spreads throughout the Archipelago |
| Banyuwangi | Banyuwangi |
| Kulon gunung wétan segara | Mountains to the west, ocean to the east |
| Elor lan kidul alas angker keliwat-liwat | Awe-inspiring jungle to the north and south |
| Belambangan, Belambangan | Blambangan, Blambangan |
- 7 Male chorus interjects (in two voices, without instrumental accompaniment):
- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Aja takon seneng susah hang disangga | Do not think about the pleasure and sorrow it has supported |
|--------------------------------------|---|
- 8 Female singer with unmetricized accompaniment (and sounds of wind and waves):
- | | |
|--|---|
| Tanah éndah, gemelar ring taman sari Nusantara | Beautiful land, lying in the garden that is the Archipelago |
|--|---|
- 9 Male chorus (in two voices):
- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Hé Belambangan | Hey, Blambangan |
| Hé Belambangan | Hey, Blambangan |
| Gemelar ring taman sari Nusantara | Lying in the garden that is the Archipelago |
- 10 Male chorus repeats stanza 9.
- 11 Two female singers and male singers in canon form with metricized accompaniment (and sounds of wind and waves):
- | | |
|--|---|
| Belambangan hé, seneng susahé wis aja takon | Blambangan hey, don't think about the pleasure and sorrow |
| Wis pirang-pirang jaman turun-temurun ya wis kelakon | Many successive periods have come and gone |
| Akéh prahara tapping langitira magih biru yara | Many storms but your sky is still blue, after all |
| Magih gedhé magih lampeg umbak umbul segaranira | Still vast and still rising are the waves in your ocean |
- 12 Two female singers and male singers in the same form:
- | | |
|---|---|
| Belambangan hé, | Blambangan hey, |
| gunung-gunungira magih perkasa | your mountains remain mighty |
| Sawah lan kebonanira wéra | Your wet and dry fields are extensive and |
| magih subur nguripi | remain fertile and life-giving |
| Aja kangélan, | No need to be troubled, |
| banyu mili magih gedhé sumberira | the water flows and your springs remain large |
| Rakyaté magih guyub ngukir lan mbangun sing mari-mari | The people continue jointly to carve out and build, without ever stopping |
- 13 Female singer:
- | | |
|--|--|
| Hé, Belambangan lir asata banyu segara | Hey, Blambangan even if the ocean were to dry up |
|--|--|

Other female singer:

Sing bisa asat asih setiya baktinisun My love, loyalty, and respect could not dry up

14 Male singer:

Hang sapa-sapa bain	If anyone at all
Arep nyacak ngerusak	Wants to try to destroy [you]
Sunbélani, sundhepani sunlabuhi	I will support you, embrace you, defend you

15 Female singers repeat stanza 13.

16 Male singer repeats stanza 14.

17 Male chorus:

Ganda arumé getih Sri Tanjung	The fragrance of Sri Tanjung's blood
Yong magih semembrung	Can still be smelled ²⁶
Pamuké satriya Minak Jingga	The rage of Minak Jingga the warrior
Magih murub ning dhadha	Still burns in my chest
Magih kandel kesakténané	Still strong are the magical powers
Tawang Alun lan Agung Wilis	of Tawang Alun and Wilis the Great ²⁷
Magih murub tékadé Sayu Wiwit	Sayu Wiwit's resolve is still burning ²⁸
Lan pahlawan petang puluh lima	And that of the heroes of '45 ²⁹

18 Mixed chorus:

Ngadega jejeg	Stand upright
Ngadega jejeg	Stand upright
Umbul-umbul Belambangan	Banners of Blambangan
Ngadega jejeg	Stand upright
Adil lan makmur	Just and prosperous
Nusantara	The Archipelago

– Short instrumental postlude.

4. "Amit-amit" ('Excuse Us')

Lyrics by Andang Cy. Transcribed from the cassette album 12 Lagu Blambangan: Ancur Lebur, track A.2.³⁰ The lyrics printed in the sleeve have a defective division into lines and stanzas.

²⁶ In the well-known legend, Sri Tanjung was stabbed by her jealous husband. The fact that her blood was fragrant demonstrated her innocence. Her blood mingled with water in a spring that now lies in the centre of Banyuwangi town. It is said to be still fragrant. *Banyuwangi* means 'fragrant water'. See Arps 1992b.

²⁷ As mentioned above, Tawang Alun ruled Blambangan in the late seventeenth century. Wilis the Great (*Wong Agung Wilis*) was a Blambangan prince who organized resistance against the VOC in the late 1760s. He was captured and banished but continued to inspire resistance (Lekkerkerker 1923: 1053; Sri Margana 2007: 79–118).

²⁸ Sayu Wiwit was a noblewoman who fought the VOC in Blambangan in the early 1770s (Pigeaud 1932: 256; Lekkerkerker 1923: 1058).

²⁹ The heroes of 1945 are the heroes of the Indonesian struggle for independence from the Netherlands, 1945–1949.

³⁰ The lyrics differ slightly in some places from those quoted in Hasan Ali [Sentot] 1993: Appendix p. 19. Moreover, there another composer is identified (the lyricist is the same).

- Instrumental intro (metricized).
- 1 Female singer with metricized accompaniment:

Amit-amit sedulur kang	Excuse us, friends who
padha nekani	have come to attend
Kita kabéh njaluk maqlume	We ask for understanding,
lahir batin	within and without
Gendhingan iki gendhing asli	This song is an original Banyuwangi song
Banyuwangi	
Belambangan tanah Jawa	Blambangan,
pucuk wétan	the eastern tip of the Javanese land
- Instrumental interlude.
- 2 Female singer continues:

Amit-amit kita njaluk ditiéni	Excuse us, we ask you to pay attention
Kadhung luput ageng alit sepurané	If we make an error, big or small, forgiveness
Njaluk tulung kekurangané apikena	Please help us by improving shortcomings
Wong kang nganggit kepinterané	The author's skill is still imperfect
durung sempurna	
- Instrumental interlude.
- 3 Female singer continues:

Amit-amit kumandhangé nyundhula	Excuse us, may it resound high
langit	into the sky
Sumebara nyerambahi Nusantara	And spread throughout the Archipelago
Ayo dulur padha guyuba nong budhaya	Come on friends, let's jointly work on culture
Urun-urun njunjung derajaté bangsa	Contribute to lifting the status of the nation

5. "Kutho Lare Osing" ('The town of Osing Kids')

Composed by Budiono. Transcribed from the recording Super elekton Vol. 1: gending-gending boso Osing, track A.2. The version as printed in the cassette sleeve has a different phrasing and some differences in wording.

- Instrumental intro (metricized).
- 1 Female singer with metricized accompaniment:

Laré-laré padha tangia	Kids, you all must wake up
Serngégéné ya wis suminar	The sun is already shining
Aja rika énak-énak anteng	You mustn't all lazily
Mung nyawangi embun wayah éruk	Gaze at the dew in the morning
- Short instrumental interlude.
- 2 Female singer continues:

Banyuwangi kutha laré Using	Banyuwangi, the town of Osing kids
Belambangan aran kawitané	Blambangan was its original name
Mula ayo padha didandani	Therefore let's all make it better
Makné maqmur anak lan putuné	So that our children and grandchildren prosper
- Longish instrumental interlude.
- 3 Female singer continues (the stanza marked as "Reff" = refrain on the cassette sleeve):

Ja rika lali sejarahé bengén asalé Para pahlawan wis berjuwang mati-matian Ayo terusaken cita-citané bangsa	You mustn't forget its history, its origins The heroes did engage in a life-and-death struggle Come, let's carry on the nation's ideals
--	--

- Very short instrumental interlude.

4 Female singer continues (same tune as stanza 3):

Pariwisata segarané asil buminé Ya tingkataken, mbakné makmur kabéh rakyaté Bisa Banyuwangi dadi kutha hang jaya	Tourism, the ocean, the produce of the earth Must be improved, so that all the people may prosper And Banyuwangi can be a strong town
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- Short instrumental interlude.

5 Female singer repeats stanza 2.

- Longish instrumental interlude.

6 Female singer repeats stanza 3.

- Very short instrumental interlude.

7 Female singer continues:

Pariwisata segarané asil buminé Ya tingkataken, mbakné makmur kabéh rakyaté Ayo terusaken cita-citané bangsa Bisa Banyuwangi dadi kutha hang jaya	Tourism, the ocean, the produce of the earth Must be improved, so that all the people may prosper Come, let's carry on the nation's ideals And Banyuwangi can be a strong town
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