

Gaya X

An Ethnomusicological Look at Lagu Inkulturasi

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In this chapter, I consider the inculturative songs (*lagu inkulturasi*) of the Roman Catholic Church in Indonesia. Although attempts at what would now be called musical inculturation began as early as the 1920s in Indonesia, for the past fifty years Catholic *lagu inkulturasi* have been created and promoted primarily through the efforts of the Pusat Musik Liturgi (Center for liturgical music, PML) in Yogyakarta, Java.¹ PML was founded in 1971 by the Jesuit priest Karl-Edmund Prier SJ as a response to the program for liturgical reform resulting from the Vatican II conference of 1962–65.² PML sought specifically to address the call for “adapting the Liturgy to the culture and traditions of peoples.”³ Incorporating into the liturgy elements of local language, music, ritual, and other traditional elements is called in Indonesian Catholic circles *inkulturasi*. In Indonesia, with over a thousand ethnolinguistic groups and subgroups, *inkulturasi* is a Herculean task.⁴

I must explain at the outset that I write as an ethnomusicologist, not a theologian. I call into question neither the spiritual benefits of *lagu inkulturasi* for Catholic worshippers nor the societal benefits of the Church’s work in Indonesia. I am concerned here only with the impact of the inculturative program on the traditional music that it intends to harmonize with the liturgy of the Church.⁵

In explaining *inkulturasi*, PML begins with a statement from the High Council of Indonesian Bishops: “The aim of inculturation/indigenization [*pemribumian*] of the liturgy is the expression/celebration of the liturgy of the Church in a protocol [*tatacara*] that is wholly in keeping with the cultural tastes of the worshippers.” PML (i.e., Rm. Prier) continues: “Or, to put it more simply: the aim of inculturation is to ensure that worshippers are deeply affected by the music, prayers, symbols, decorations, ritual—since these are all immediately understandable, they are all ‘good’ according to the standards of evaluation that obtain in the local culture.”⁶

PML has been abundantly productive since its founding. Creating the repertoire of *lagu inkulturasi* has been one of its principal missions, but not the only one: it publishes books and a journal focusing both on Western music (history and theory) and on the theory and practice of *lagu inkulturasi* in Indonesia; it has published some fifty-five collections of the songs in cipher notation; it also publishes notated collections of Indonesian regional folk songs (*lagu daerah*) as well as cassettes, CDs, and DVDs of *lagu inkulturasi*, *lagu daerah*, and Western religious music; and it offers classes in music history and literature and training in performance (particularly for organists and choral directors).⁷ Furthermore, it publishes one of the most widely used hymnbooks for Catholic worship, *Madah Bakti* (first issued in 1980 and revised and expanded in 2000).

Rm. Prier states that between 1977 and 2021, 1,657 *lagu inkulturasi* have been created in the PML program.⁸ In *Madah Bakti 2000*, I count 396, which amounts to 53 percent of the 747 music items in that national hymnal. Nearly all of the 1,657 have been published in the smaller volumes issued for particular ethnic groups or geographical regions.

From 1977 until 2015, the crucial mechanism for the production of *lagu inkulturasi* was a string of fifty-seven *lokakarya komposisi musik liturgi* (workshops in composing liturgical music), conducted by PML in locations all across Indonesia, from Nias and Mentawai to Papua. The principal—and almost always the only—leaders of these workshops were Rm. Prier and his constant collaborator, the composer, arranger, and choral director Paul Widyawan.⁹

The first five *lokakarya*, from 1977 to 1979, followed an early model that PML came to consider too “centralistic”: four of the five were held in Yogyakarta, with mostly Javanese participants. One was held elsewhere (in Flores, 1979), but, with this exception, the early workshops were only minimally concerned with the wide range of regional music that would become the focus of PML’s work. (Rm. Prier later disparaged the early model as “bringing composers to Yogya to study music—and then forget the music of their own regions!”). In 1984, however, after a break of some years to promote the first *Madah Bakti*, PML initiated a new model in the belief that “the music of the Indonesian Church must develop from the ‘grass roots,’”—or, in another phrasing, “Church music must be constructed from the bottom, not the top; in the remote areas [*pelosok-pelosok*] where traditional music lives.” In the fifty-two *lokakarya* from 1984 to 2015, only four were held on Java and only two of those in Yogyakarta. The essence of the new model was an initial pattern of analytical engagement with local musical traditions, leading to new compositions incorporating features identified in that analysis.¹⁰

Each workshop invited participants from one or more of the ethnic groups in the region where the workshops were held. The participants in the first grass-roots *lokakarya* (Buntok, Central Kalimantan, June 1984) were primarily “farmers who knew traditional songs and dances but did not know notes.” In the *lokakarya* held in Mataloko, Flores, in April 1997, six farmers, sixteen schoolteachers, one

catechist, three office workers (*pegawai*), and three priests took part; two (one of the priests and one of the teachers) were already prominent composers of church music in Flores. According to Rm. Prier, writing in retrospect, a *lokakarya* needed three kinds of participants: local experts (*pakar*) in the musical traditions and culture of the region, catechists to monitor the religious content of the texts, and music teachers who understood the technical aspects of music and notation.¹¹

The task of the participants was to create, under the leaders' guidance, *lagu inkulturasi* in the style (*gaya*) of the traditional music of their ethnic group or groups. (The crucial notion of *gaya* will come up frequently in this chapter.) Although these new *lagu* could be modelled on traditional melodies, they must be new creations, not simply *kontrafaktur* (traditional melodies given Catholic texts); they must have artistic qualities (*nilai seni*); and they must be singable by ordinary members of the congregation (*umat*). They should not remind worshippers either of secular (*profan*) melodies in their culture, such as those used for courtship, or melodies associated with practices contrary to Christian religion, such as animal sacrifice to call spirits, heal the sick, or appease the ancestors. ("Inkulturasi must be selective in the elements that are inculturated.") In short, the new liturgical *lagu* should be high (*tinggi*), exalted and noble (*luhur*), and pure (*suci*), because through them (just as through the standard, uninculturated liturgy) worshippers would meet God (*berjumpa dengan Tuhan*).¹²

That's a lot of work for a melody to do, but *lagu* here means the combination of melody and text, and in fact PML emphasized that the text had primacy, and the melody must "serve" it (*melodi harus mengabdikan pada syair*). The text should be chosen first, and then the melody made to fit it. The sources of texts would ideally be biblical or liturgical, but PML recognized that biblical language could be stiff (*kaku*) and prosaic (*kurang puitis*), so rephrasing a text in more colloquial language, with optional reference to daily life, was permitted. A rule stated in workshop documents but not in the printed books, yet evident in all of the published collections of *lagu inkulturasi*, was that the language itself should be Indonesian, not the regional language of the *lokakarya*'s participants. (An exception was made for the language of Indonesia's largest ethnic group: the hymnbook *Kidung Adi*, published in 1983, just before the pivotal year of 1984, is in Javanese.)¹³

In fitting the melody to the text, there were rules to be observed. Melodic phrases should be coterminous with lines of text, and each line of text should have roughly the same number of syllables (seven or eight; not more than ten). Each section of the melody should have the same number of measures. The neutral vowel (schwa) should not fall on a strong beat; the vowel [i] (as in English *we*) should not fall on a high pitch. The most important words (God, love, peace) should fall on main beats. The character of the melody should suit the words; for example, the phrase *Kami cinta Kau* (we love You) should not be set to a descending melody, with the Deity arriving on the low tone. The solution for that particular problem would be to keep the descending melody but reverse the pronouns: *Kau cinta kami*.¹⁴

The participants were not expected to create new melodies out of thin air. Workshops began with demonstrations of local traditional music and dance performed by the workshop participants themselves or by local performers. (If no live demonstrations could be arranged, audiovisual documentation made beforehand was presented.) The first days of a workshop were devoted to analyzing the performances and asking performers about the meanings and functions of their songs and dances. Participants were led by Rm. Prier and Paul Widyawan to identify the scale or scales used, characteristic melodic and rhythmic motifs, and the format of performance (solo answered by chorus; solo picked up by a small group before the chorus comes in; alternating short and long choral refrains; recitative; melodic strophes; etc.). Traditional instrumental accompaniment, if present, was also analyzed.

The second part of each workshop was devoted to composition by the participants. First they were shown how to manipulate (*mengolah*) melodic motifs by means of augmentation, diminution, inversion, rhythmic displacement, sequences, ornamentation, and *fantasi* (i.e., elaboration).¹⁵ Similar manipulations of rhythmic motifs were demonstrated. Then the participants were sorted into small groups of two to five members and assigned the task of composing melodies to suit specific liturgical functions (opening of the service, the sections of the Mass, songs to be sung during Communion, and so forth). First they had to choose or create a text, according to the guidelines given above; then the usual practice was to choose as a model one of the melodies analyzed earlier in the *lokakarya* and manipulate its motifs until they had a new melody that suited the chosen text. One rule the leaders laid down was that the new melody must not begin in the same way as the model.¹⁶ Another possibility was to work directly with motifs that had been identified as typical of the music in question, without using a particular melody as a model. The new compositions produced by the small groups were reviewed by the workshop leaders and the other groups, and revisions were suggested. A *lagu* was considered finished when it had been accepted by the entire group. The one-line melodies were the goal of every *lokakarya*, and once they were completed, the participants went home and the PML team went back to Yogyakarta.

In due course, the one-line melodies would be published in *buku umat*, booklets for use by worshippers in church services. The pinnacle of acceptance for a *lagu* from a *lokakarya* was to be included in *Madah Bakti 2000*. Rm. Prier wrote that only “the very best” (*yang paling bagus*) of the *lokakarya* products were chosen for the national hymnal. In *Madah Bakti 2000*, *lagu lokakarya* are characterized in what I call the “*gaya X*” attribution: a headnote under the title, indicating that the *lagu* is in the *gaya* (style, musical idiom) of a particular ethnic group or region of Indonesia (or both): *gaya Sunda*, *gaya Nias*, *gaya Irian-Meybrat*, *gaya Flores-Ngada*, *gaya Jawa*, *gaya Batak Toba*, and so forth.¹⁷

Do the melodies accurately represent the *gaya* of the groups they are intended to reach? Since all or most of the participants in a *lokakarya* came from the source

culture(s) and the melodies produced were all finally approved by the participants as a group, we must assume that the scales and motifs did not seem outlandish to the culture bearers; otherwise, they would presumably have objected.¹⁸ My informal survey of the one-line melodies confirms that they tend to correspond to the scale analyses arrived at in the first part of a *lokakarya* and summarized in various PML publications.¹⁹

However, some features of *gaya* are disregarded in the PML melodies. Tuning, for all of the notations of *lagu inkulturasi*, presumes the Western diatonic tuning, which is enforced by keyboard accompaniment when it is available.²⁰ PML is also willing to override traditional compositional forms. *Lokakarya* participants were instructed to keep all lines the same length, and a symmetrical question-and-answer format was recommended, along with a melodic climax (*puncak*) supporting the essence (*hal pokok*) of the lyric.²¹ Yoshiko Okazaki reports that in *lokakarya* in Pematang Siantar, North Sumatra, in the 1980s, the PML leaders suggested that Toba Batak melodic motifs be arranged in “Western simple song-forms” (her term) such as A, AB, AAB, ABA, ABC, or AABA. In contrast, she writes, “traditional folk songs consist of repetition of melodic formulas with or without small variations,” as, for example: AAA’BAA’BCDC’DC’DEE’. She concludes:

[PMLs] composed hymns thus are something like Toba Batak ingredients marinated in Western principles. Some typical Batak elements are inevitably overlooked or changed. For example, an extended repetition of a single melodic phrase was criticized for being ‘too monotonous, just repeating the same notes’ and was altered in spite of the fact that repetition within a narrow two- or three-pitch range is quite natural in a Batak song.

And yet she also remarks that “Toba Bataks themselves prefer songs composed in Western elements. . . . Arranging indigenous Toba Batak materials using principles initially foreign to the culture in some ways corresponds to contemporary Toba Batak aesthetics. Contemporary Toba Batak people in general prefer songs with more varieties and contrast.”²² Her comments point to one of the paradoxes of *inkulturasi* that I will discuss at the end of the chapter: that Indonesians are moving away from precisely the traditional music that the Church wants to blend into the liturgy.

In addition to the *buku umat* resulting from a *lokakarya*, PML selected some of the one-line *lagu* from the *lokakarya* to be published in choral arrangements. Again, the arrangements have headnotes identifying the *gaya* of the melody and the *lokakarya* where the *lagu* was created; often they also indicate the *lagu dasar*, the melodic model it was based on. While the booklets for the *umat* were aimed at residents of specific regions or members of specific ethnic groups, the choral arrangements were more widely distributed, as PML encouraged church choirs to sing *lagu inkulturasi* from regions or ethnic groups other than their own. The *lokakarya* participants had no input in these choral arrangements; they were

made single-handedly by Paul Widyawan. I argue that the arrangements deviate sharply from the traditions they claim, by the label *gaya X*, to represent.

Typically, the choral arrangements are for mixed choruses in four voices: soprano, alto, tenor, bass. As such, they are a radical departure from most of the musical traditions of Indonesia, in which group singing is normally monophonic (in unison or octaves, with no intentional harmony) or heterophonic (with several people singing together in loose approximations of a single melody, not striving for unison/octaves or tight rhythmic coordination, and again without intentional harmony). A few cultures have indigenous harmony, adding a second (and possibly a third) voice in parallel or mixed intervals with the main melody.²³ But in a striking statement, made during a *lokakarya* in Flores (where indigenous harmony is frequent), Paul Widyawan flatly dismissed this practice: "In traditional music [presumably he meant in Flores] there is a special feature where the music divides into parts [*bercabang*]. This seems to be an arrangement, but it is not an arrangement."²⁴ He reserves the term "arrangement" for what *he* does.

When the source tradition has a monophonic melody with a seven-tone scale, setting it into a four-voice arrangement wraps the melody in triadic, tonic-dominant-subdominant harmony. PML evidently regards this as unproblematic, routinely applying tonal harmony to heptatonic melodies. However, when a tradition uses only pentatonic scales, PML recognizes that tonal harmony will introduce tones foreign to the tradition. Rm. Prier has formulated instructions on how to avoid this:

In pentatonic arrangements, polyphony should be prioritized. In finding [i.e., composing] the second voice (and third and so on), *imitation* of the main voice is what is hoped for, and the ideal is *canon*. . . . In pentatonic arrangements, manipulation of motives is very important. Moving a motif from one pitch level to another is a technique much used in polyphonic music, and it is the basis of imitative technique; it is the same in pentatonic music.²⁵

Here we risk bogging down in terminology. *Polyphony* in its broadest sense refers to any plurilinear musical texture, that is, one with two or more simultaneous lines differing in some melodic or rhythmic respect.²⁶ The texture of many of the PML arrangements of heptatonic melodies—where each voice has its own melody, but the simultaneities (chords) are governed by the rules of tonal harmony, and all voices move together in much the same rhythm (not unlike Protestant hymns and chorales in the West)—may be more precisely termed *homorhythm*.²⁷

Rm. Prier does not mean polyphony in the sense of homorhythm, or any of the other indigenous forms of plurilinearity in Indonesia. He means *counterpoint*, simultaneous and distinctive melodies contrasting in pitch and rhythm, and what he recommends for pentatonic arrangements is the specific type known as *imitative counterpoint* and its subtype *canonic imitation*. In these highly linear textures, characteristic of European art music of the Renaissance and Baroque eras, identical

or similar melodic figures shift from one voice to another (usually with overlapping) and often from one pitch level to another. The conventions governing harmony in simultaneous intervals can be more relaxed in counterpoint than they are in homorhythm—that is why Rm. Prier recommends imitation, since there are not enough tones in a five-tone scale to allow conventional harmony. Any form of counterpoint is extremely rare in Indonesia—I know of only two examples—but imitative counterpoint and canonic imitation are, to my knowledge, quite unknown there.²⁸

Rm. Prier has further guidelines (in the same article) for the arrangement of pentatonic melodies: avoid simultaneous thirds, V–I cadences, and other features suggesting tonal harmony; substitute fourths, fifths, and octaves for thirds; avoid simultaneous seconds on strong beats (but they add spice on weak beats).

The PML strategies have produced a consistent approach to arranging the one-line melodies of the *lagu lokakarya* and creating new compositions in *gaya X*. But we should not ignore how far the PML productions have traveled from the traditions they inculturate. They introduce harmony (whether triadic or quartal/quintal) where none exists traditionally, and they reject indigenous harmonic practices where they do exist. They further introduce the practice of imitative counterpoint, again with no traditional equivalent, and apply it to pentatonic melodies across the board. The various local practices of Indonesian music are thus homogenized into two generic classes: heptatonic homorhythm and pentatonic counterpoint. The melodic and rhythmic motifs manipulated in the *lokakarya* process presumably help to localize melodies for those who recognize the idioms, but the differences are, to my mind, overwhelmed by the sameness.

In PML's published recordings, *lagu inkulturasi* are performed by Paul Widyan's choir Vocalista Sonora, almost always with some sort of instrumental accompaniment (whereas in traditional practice much group singing is unaccompanied).²⁹ In some cases, the accompaniment uses local instruments characteristic of the song's source culture. These accompaniments assert a song's *gaya* identity—more effectively, I believe, than do the melodies themselves—but few churches can make the assertion in services, since the traditional instruments are readily available only in their home regions. Churches elsewhere must make do with substitutes, or just with an organ or guitar. For them, *gaya* identity is asserted primarily by the song's "*gaya X*" headnote, while the music remains for the most part generic.³⁰ Other songs in the Vocalista Sonora albums are accompanied not by local instruments but by imitations of them—a random drum (or rhythm track) instead of the precise one; a melodica (if I'm not mistaken) instead of a Karo oboe—or just by organ. Rm. Prier advises that certain instruments (drum, bamboo flute, gong) may accompany *lagu* even if they are not used in the source tradition. Another versatile instrument he proposes is *angklung*, the tuned rattles played in sets, which are associated mainly with West Java. For a region that is "poor in melody instruments" (his example is Aru), *angklung* accompaniment

could be used. “Although *angklung* come from West Java,” he writes, “they don’t have to be played as in Bandung. It is up to the inspiration of the person making the accompaniment to add nuances of art to the song.”³¹

By the time a *lagu* has appeared in a *buku kor* and on a recording, with an Indonesian text, a generic arrangement, and, often, an unplaceable accompaniment, the attribution to *gaya X* comes to seem less an identification than a slogan. However, as I said at the start, I am not questioning the value of PML’s providing worshippers with liturgical music that proclaims its link to them. Many in the congregation, I am sure, are thrilled to sing, or hear the choir sing, a song said to be in their own *gaya*.³² What I question is the substance of that claim.

PML states unequivocally that it is not its responsibility to preserve traditional music. (That is the job of the culture bearers [*pemilik budaya*] and government culture officials, PML says.) Rather, PML maintains that *lagu inkulturasi* improve upon tradition. They “add nuances of art,” as in the quotation about *angklung* above; similarly, the manipulation and variation of the initial motif in a *lagu gaya* Karo “add artistic value to this short *lagu*.” Traditional music as it stands is unsatisfactory: “Traditional songs in their original form (for one voice only and untuned and defective instruments) of course cannot compete [*memang kalah bagusnya*] with the music we hear today,” but “a dusty [*berdebu*] traditional song can become interesting [*menarik*] in the form of a *lagu inkulturasi*.” The traditional songs of Kalimantan are usually short (*pendek-pendek saja*) and monophonic, but the 1985 *lokakarya* in East Kalimantan produced “good songs [*lagu-lagu yang bagus*] with developed melody, substantial lyrics, and interesting arrangements.”³³ And, for a final example from Rm. Prier, echoing Paul Widyawan’s dismissal of indigenous harmony: “Unlike the traditional practice of adding a second and third vocal line, Bapak Paul’s effort is to make arrangements that are non-traditional [!], for the sake of variation and to keep the traditional music from becoming monotonous.”³⁴

The basic tenet in PML’s program is that *lagu inkulturasi* transform traditional materials into new, liturgically effective music. One PML writer calls this process “purification” (*pemurnian*). In a startling 1993 formulation, Rm. Prier compared the analytical dissection and decontextualization of traditional music in the *lokakarya* and its reconstitution in the liturgy to Christ’s death and resurrection: “Local culture [including music] must be ready to die in order to live again [in liturgy].” He later toned this down, saying (in 1999) only that both the “old culture” (i.e., local tradition) and the “new culture” (the Western traditions of the Church) are transformed in *inkulturasi*, resulting in a new creation (*kreasi baru*).³⁵

The theology of *inkulturasi* has been carefully thought out. However, PML is caught in a sociological bind, for, as it points out repeatedly, Indonesians are abandoning their traditional music in favor of modern, Westernized forms. What people like now is secular popular music and, among Christian worshippers, the popular music on devotional themes called *pop rohani* (spiritual pop)

and the upbeat, enthusiastic music of the Charismatic movement (*lagu karismatik*, musically very similar to *pop rohani*).³⁶ These popular forms are, in PML's view, too shallow in their theology and trivial in their music for *inkulturasi*, whereas in tradition, "we encounter the culture of the past, created by our ancestors and present in our genes."³⁷ The identity of a people is tied to its traditions, and if they lose their traditions, their identity is lost.³⁸ But, PML emphasizes, *inkulturasi* must focus on living tradition (*tradisi yang hidup*): "Inculturative music is rooted in traditional culture that is still alive. . . . There are places where traditional music has already disappeared. It is not the responsibility of the Church to preserve culture that is already dead. . . . The Church's target is people who are alive in the present era, to help young people in the future to understand the Good News in the cultural context they are familiar with."³⁹

Here we see one of the paradoxes facing PML. If traditional music and culture are dying out, *inkulturasi* risks linking the liturgy to moribund symbols. If, on the other hand, what the younger generations know and prefer—the "cultural context they are familiar with"—is the popular culture that PML rejects, what can *inkulturasi* inculturate with?

Another paradox is that *inkulturasi* is meant to bring Catholic liturgy closer to "the culture and traditions of peoples" (to quote again from inculturation's founding document), but the language of *lagu inkulturasi* is Indonesian, not any of the local languages (other than Javanese).⁴⁰ The reason for this—never, to my mind, adequately acknowledged—is apparently strategic: the Church aspires to national scope. To tailor *lagu inkulturasi* to each of the source languages would fragment the *umat*. The same logic justifies the simplification of the music to common, generic idioms. To include the difficult or unusual features of some musics, such as nonstandard tunings, or the meters of five in Kalimantan and seven in Flores, or shifting meters, or the frequent simultaneous seconds of eastern Flores, or the long-held drones of Toraja, would be challenging to worshippers (and choirs) from other parts of the country.⁴¹

A third paradox, the one most distressing to an ethnomusicologist (at least to this one), is that *lagu inkulturasi* weaken the authority of traditional music in a community by "improving" it, particularly in the choral arrangements, but not only there. In 2002, a discussion was held at PML and summarized in *Warta Musik* on the question of whether Javanese gamelan music in church should be played in the classical style.⁴² One speaker observed that the gamelan compositions (*gendhing*) created for use in church were different from gamelan music outside the church, and many of the classically trained musicians who were the keepers of the gamelan tradition found it difficult to play *gendhing inkulturasi*. To this, Rm. Prier replied that to play church *gendhing*, the skills of a classical musician were not needed, and the editor of the article agreed that simple accompaniment was preferable, since complicated—that is, classical—playing would disturb the concentration of the worshippers.

A second article in the same issue of *Warta Musik* is titled “Does Studying Gamelan = Getting Sleepy?” The author answers yes, if gamelan is played in the refined (*alus*) style, because that style is unsuited to the spirit of youth. If it’s played in the loud style, they won’t nod off. He recommends that gamelan performance be adjusted to the tastes of young people (*selera anak muda*).⁴³ (This logic—dispensing with the highly refined classical style of Javanese gamelan in favor of something more lively and exciting—is not far from the proposals, vehemently rejected by Rm. Prier, to use *pop rohani* and *lagu karismatic* in the liturgy.)

Similarly, PML’s multipart choral arrangements “improve” on traditions of monophonic singing or indigenous harmonies. The choral arrangements claim to be in *gaya X*, but whatever indigenous elements there may be in the one-line *umat* versions are submerged in the harmonic and contrapuntal wash of the arrangements. Thus the dignity and coherence of the traditional idioms, developed over centuries to suit the needs, aesthetics, and social dynamics of local communities, are erased in favor of the theory and aesthetics of *inkulturasi*.

Rm. Prier reports that participants in PML *lokakarya* told him, after hearing songs they have worked on sung by a choir, that “I never thought our traditional music was so beautiful!”⁴⁴ I heard the same thing from a singer in a Kalimantan church in the 1990s. Rm. Prier offers this as evidence that PML is doing something right; I take it as evidence it is doing something wrong. Traditional music is indeed being abandoned in many parts of Indonesia, just as PML says. The reasons are societal and perhaps universal, and they cannot be blamed on PML. But what PML offers instead is pseudo-traditional music corresponding to none of the traditional musics of Indonesia, *gaya X*-es corresponding to no actual *gaya*. Theologically this is apparently acceptable—tradition dies to be reborn as liturgy—but culturally it is destructive. People accept with pride the Church’s denatured simulacra of their traditions, even as the traditions themselves disappear.

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Other researchers have written incisively on the *lagu inkulturasi* program of the PML. Each has a particular focus, different from the others’ and different from mine, but similar questions about the relation of PML’s work to traditional music arise for all. Readers wanting further discussion of these issues should consult the dissertations of Thomas Manhart and Yoshiko Okazaki and Marzanna Poplawska’s book *Performing Faith*, all cited in these notes, and also Emilie Rook’s dissertation, cited in her chapter in this volume.

In this chapter, all translations from Indonesian (except in quotations from the authors just named) are my own.

NOTES

1. The earliest experiments are touched on briefly in a blog article by Karl-Edmund Prier SJ: “Inkulturasikan Musik Liturgi Mas[a] Kini,” posted September 12, 2021 (<https://pml-yk.blogspot.com/2021/09/inkulturasikan-musik-liturgi-mas-kini-1.html>). Unsystematic inculturative work in the period 1957–70, before the establishment of PML, is described in more detail in Rm. Prier, *Perjalanan Musik Gereja Katolik Indonesia tahun 1957–2007* (PML A-79; Yogyakarta: PML, 2008), 7–16.

2. Romo (Father; abbreviated Rm.) Prier was born in Weinheim, Germany, in 1937. He studied music and philosophy in Germany before coming to Indonesia as a Jesuit missionary in 1964. He lived in Java until his death in 2024. For his biography, see Rianti M. Pasaribu, *Mengembangkan Musik Liturgi Khas Indonesia: Perjalanan Hidup dan Karya-karya Karl-Edmund Prier* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2015).

3. This phrase is the title of part 3, section D, of the constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, promulgated by Pope Paul VI on December 4, 1963. (The official English translation is available online at www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html.) Passages fundamental to the PML’s program are found in articles 37–40 and 119–20.

4. In the 2000 census, the Indonesian government’s Central Bureau of Statistics assigned codes to 1,072 ethnic and sub-ethnic groups; see Leo Suryadinata, Evi Nurvidya Arifin, and Aris Ananta, *Indonesia’s Population: Ethnicity and Religion in a Changing Political Landscape* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2003), 10.

5. Since this is a chapter about music, I should clarify that *harmonize* is my word for this effort, not one of the metaphors used by the Church. And I should also clarify that in the context of this chapter, “the Church,” capitalized, refers specifically to the Roman Catholic Church in Indonesia.

6. Both quotations in this paragraph are translated from Prier, *Inkulturasikan Musik Liturgi I* (PML A-84, rev. ed., Yogyakarta: PML, 2014), 13, but the first is actually drawn by Prier from a 1984 document issued by the Majelis Agung Waligereja Indonesia, the High Council of Indonesian Bishops (since renamed the Konferensi Waligereja Indonesia).

7. Fifty-five is my unofficial count of *collections* so far. Most of the collections are published in two configurations: as *buku umat*, containing one-line melodies for the congregation to sing, and as *buku kor*, which present a selection of those melodies in choral arrangements for mixed chorus. The biggest collections (*Madah Bakti* [1980], *Madah Bakti 2000*, and the Javanese-language hymnbook *Kidung Adi* [1983]) require multiple volumes to contain all the mixed-chorus arrangements, more volumes of alternate arrangements for single-sex choirs, and still more volumes of *buku iringan* with written-out keyboard accompaniments, plus one-part gamelan accompaniments (*balungan*) for *Kidung Adi*. In all, PML has published nearly 150 books of *lagu inkulturasi*. In addition, there are eighteen collections of secular *lagu daerah*, published only in choral arrangements.

8. Prier, “Inkulturasikan Musik Liturgi Mas[a] Kini.”

9. Born in Yogyakarta, Java, Paul Widyawan (1945–2019) studied music in Java and later in Augsburg, Germany. In 1964 he formed the Paduan Suara (chorus) Vocalista Sonora, which is heard, under his direction, on nearly all of PML’s recordings of *lagu inkulturasi* and *lagu daerah*. His fifty-year collaboration with Rm. Prier grew out of conversations beginning in 1967 (Prier, *Perjalanan*, 17). The march of *lokakarya* paused in 2015, with the illness of Paul Widyawan and Rm. Prier’s advancing age, and it has so far not resumed.

10. The early *lokakarya* are described in Prier, *Perjalanan*, 33–37, and a list of all the *lokakarya* through 2007 is found at the end of that book. “Centralistic” and the “grass roots” sentence (which uses the English phrase) are from *Perjalanan*, 41. The sentences about bringing composers to Yogya and building Church music from the bottom up are from Prier, “Menemukan Spiritualitas Pelayanan

dalam Bermusik,” *Warta Musik* [29], no. 6 (2004): 177–78. That article also contains a vivid description of the first grassroots *lokakarya*.

11. The farmers in Buntok are from Prier, “Menemukan Spiritualitas Pelayanan,” 177. The Mataloko attendees are in “Hasil Lokakarya Komposisi Musik Liturgi III, tanggal 17 s/d 25 April 1997 di Mataloko, Flores” (unpublished workshop document), 10. Rm. Prier’s statement is in *Perjalanan*, 46.

12. New creations: Prier, *Inkulturasikan Musik Liturgi III* (PML A-86; Yogyakarta: PML, 2019), 16. Kontrafaktur: Prier, “Inkulturasikan Musik Liturgi Mas[a] Kini.” Artistic, singable, *tinggi, luhur, suci, berjumpa*: Prier, *Inkulturasikan Musik Liturgi II* (PML A-82; Yogyakarta: PML, 2014), 9. Not secular or incompatible with Catholicism: Prier, *Inkulturasikan Nyanyian Liturgi*, 3. The sentence about selectivity is quoted from Prier, *Inkulturasikan Musik Liturgi II*, 60.

13. *Mengabdi pada syair*: Prier, “Kriteria Penilaian Nyanyian,” *Warta Musik* [29], no. 1 (2004): 19; also Prier, “Lagu Anak yang Bercacat,” *Warta Musik* [28], no. 2 (2003): 49; also the blunt statement, “For liturgical music, the text is more important than the music,” in Prier, *Inkulturasikan Musik Liturgi II*, 8. Choose text first: “Hasil Lokakarya Komposisi Musik Liturgi, 26 Nop.–2 Des. 1990, di Mataloko, Flores” (unpublished workshop document), 29; also “Hasil Lokakarya Komposisi Musik Liturgi Gaya Rote-Ndao-Nagekeo, 15–22 Juni 2003 di Mataloko, Flores” (unpublished workshop document), 19. The June 2003 *lokakarya*, p. 19, is also the source of the statement that Biblical texts are *kaku* and may be revised to refer to daily life. Texts to be in Indonesian: “Himpunan Materi Lokakarya Komposisi Musik Liturgi . . . 20–27 Oktober 1996 di Rumah Retret Efata, Ruteng, Flores” (unpublished workshop document), 10, and other workshop documents.

14. Lines of text to match melodic phrases (*penggalan syair sinkron dengan penggalan lagu*): Prier, “Kriteria Penilaian Nyanyian,” 19. Number of syllables: “Hasil Lokakarya Mataloko 1997,” 24. Vowel placement: “Hasil Lokakarya Mataloko 2003,” 19. Important words on strong beats: Wahyudi, “Inkulturasikan Musik Liturgi Gaya Lio,” *Warta Musik* [42] (2017): 154. *Kami cinta Kau*: “Hasil Lokakarya Mataloko 2003,” 20.

15. Techniques for manipulating motifs are presented in three of the workshop books I have seen: “Hasil Lokakarya Komposisi Musik Liturgi 1–7 April 2000 di Kemah Tabor, Mataloko, Flores,” 21; “Himpunan Materi Ruteng 1996,” 21–22; and “Lokakarya Komposisi Musik Liturgi 27 Oktober–2 November 1998, Detusoko,” 28 (this is the only one that mentions *fantasi*). But these techniques were surely taught in all the *lokakarya*. A demonstration of the derivation and use of motifs is found in Prier, *Inkulturasikan Musik Liturgi IV* (PML A-93; Yogyakarta: PML, 2021), 39–49, in reference to *lokakarya* compositions in the *gaya* of the Karo people of North Sumatra.

16. Prier, *Inkulturasikan Musik Liturgi IV*, 40.

17. “*Yang paling bagus*” is from Prier, “Madah Bakti—Edisi 2000 Terbit Akhir Oktober,” *Warta Musik* 25, no. 6 (2000): 185. In *Madah Bakti 2000*, along with the headnote, there is a statement at the bottom of the musical notation identifying the *lokakarya* in which the *lagu* was created. The original *Madah Bakti* (1980) was published before the “grassroots” *lokakarya* began (1984), so none of the *lagu* from those workshops appear in it, but some from the 1977–79 *lokakarya* do. These also have the “*gaya X*” headnote but not the attribution to a specific *lokakarya*. Three hundred *lagu lokakarya* were included (with “*gaya X*” headnotes but not *lokakarya* sources) in the *Madah Bakti Suplemen* (1992), which was devoted wholly to *lagu inkulturasikan*, and 181 of those were later selected for integration, along with 79 newer ones, into *Madah Bakti 2000*. In the 2000 volume, all the *lagu* from *lokakarya* (including those from 1977–79) show both kinds of identification. *Lagu* from *lokakarya* since 2000 have not yet been collected in a national-level hymnal.

18. On the other hand, Thomas Manhart, who observed a *lokakarya* in Nias in 2002, points out that the participants were all chosen by the Nias church authorities who hosted the *lokakarya*: “Only people are invited for the *Lokakarya* who are affiliated, . . . mostly in a highly engaged and active way, to the church. Thus, should any conflict arise between culture [i.e., actual cultural practice, including musical practice, in Nias] and the requirements of the church, participants are unlikely to challenge the opinion of the priest, who leads the discussion” (Thomas M. Manhart, “A Song for Lowalangi: The Interculturation of Catholic Mission and Nias Traditional Arts with Special Respect to Music” [Ph.D. diss., Southeast Asia Studies Programme, National University of Singapore, 2004]), 108).

19. Such as Prier, *Perjalanan*, the four volumes of his *Inkulturasi Musik Liturgi*, and the workshop documents.

20. Rm. Prier has written articles to explain how to accompany the pentatonic melodies that predominate in *lagu inkulturasi*, and PML has published several books of his keyboard accompaniments to the PML melodies. He stresses the importance, when accompanying a pentatonic *lagu*, of avoiding tones not present in the *lagu* (see, for example, Prier, “Mengiringi Lagu Batak Toba dengan Organ.” *Warta Musik* 25, no. 5 [2000], 139–41). But there is no discussion of how vocal tuning might differ from the keyboard’s equal temperament—because, it goes without saying, it should not.

21. Lines of same length: “Hasil Lokakarya Mataloko 1990,” 30. Q & A, *puncak, hal pokok*: Prier, “Kriteria Penilaian Nyanyian,” 19.

22. Simple vs. traditional song-forms: Yoshiko Okazaki, “Music, Identity and Religious Change among the Toba Batak People of North Sumatra” (Ph.D. diss., University of California at Los Angeles, 1994), 222; the melody diagrammed is *Andung ni Boru Sasada*, transcribed on page 284. Marinade: Okazaki, “Liturgical Music among the Toba Batak People of North Sumatra: The Creation of a New Tradition,” *Crossroads* 12, no. 2 (1998), 64. Toba preferences: Okazaki, “Music, Identity,” 222–23.

23. Examples of indigenous harmony can be heard in various recordings in Smithsonian Folkways’ *Music of Indonesia* series: volume 8 (Flores: all selections), volume 9 (Flores: Ngada, Nage-Keo), volume 13 (Kalimantan: Kayan Mendalam and Kenyah tracks).

24. “*Dalam lagu tradisional ada kekhasan yang disebut musik bercabang. Bentuk ini nampaknya seperti aransemen, tetapi bukan aransemen.*” “Hasil Lokakarya Mataloko 1997,” 14.

25. Prier, “Aransemen untuk Lagu Pentatonis,” *Warta Musik* 24, no. 6 (1999): 172–73.

26. By that definition, heterophony is a form of polyphony; so is the drone polyphony heard in Toraja and in some parts of Flores, where a melody moves above or around a sustained pitch in another voice; and so also is the transient overlap that occurs when two soloists, or a soloist and chorus, superimpose the beginning of one phrase on the end of another, as happens in Nias and West Sumatra. For a clear catalogue of types of polyphony, see Simha Arom et al., “Typologie des techniques polyphoniques,” in Jean-Jacques Nattiez, ed., *Musiques: Une encyclopédie pour le XXIe siècle, tome 5: L’Unité de la musique* (Paris: Actes Sud / Cité de la Musique, 2007), 1088–1109. For examples of drone polyphony: Dana Rappoport’s CD *Indonésie, Toraja: funérailles et fêtes de fécondité* (Chant du Monde CNR 2741004). For overlapping, two examples in the Smithsonian series: Nias *hoho* (volume 4) and the opening of Minangkabau *selawat dulang* (volume 12).

27. The indigenous harmony that Paul Widjawan dismissed is also homorhythmic, but the pitches are not controlled by tonal harmony, as they are in Western hymnody or PML arrangements of heptatonic melodies.

28. In the Smithsonian series: *raego’* of the Uma in Sulawesi (volume 18) and *wera* of the Manggarai in Flores (volume 9).

29. The impression of sameness I just referred to is increased by Vocalista Sonora’s extensive use of vibrato and bel canto vocal technique, neither of which occurs in Indonesian traditional singing.

30. In his keyboard accompaniments for *lagu inkulturasi*, Rm. Prier can sometimes incorporate musical allusions to the source tradition, as in the ostinato figures in the accompaniments to the Batak Toba Ordinarium. These ostinati resemble the four-gong *ogung* pattern that pervades the music of the Toba *gondang sabangunan* ensemble. (*Ordinarium Batak Toba: Buku Iringan Organ*, PML 200-I.)

31. Random drum: tracks 9 and 18 on the CD *Madah Bakti 2000 (1)*, PML 1021. Melodica: same CD, track 2. “Rm. Prier suggests”: Prier, “Arena Dialog,” PML blog, July 27, 2021 (<https://pml-yk.blogspot.com/2021/07/arena-dialogpertanyaan-yang-belum.html>). Angklung: “Arena Dialog.” The two *gaya* Flores tracks on *Madah Bakti 2000 (1)*, tracks 1 and 13, have *angklung* accompaniment. There are no *angklung* in the traditional music of Flores.

32. Not always. Rm. Prier notes that in the first “grassroots” *lokakarya*, in Central Kalimantan, some participants were displeased that traditional melodies were transformed (*diolah*) to become new *lagu*. “This is no longer our music,” they said (Prier, *Inkulturasi Musik Liturgi I*, 79). Thomas Manhart reports the same reaction when a Niassan member of Vocalista Sonora played the group’s recording of

a Nias song for people back in Nias. “They appreciated the effort with a polite smile, yet declared their inability to recognize much of a Nias song; it is *bukan lagu Nias lagi*, ‘no Nias song anymore” (Manhart, “A Song for Lowalangi,” 111–12). See also the comments by the Florenese priest and composer Pr. Pit Wani, quoted in Marzanna Poplawska, *Performing Faith: Christian Music, Identity and Inculturation in Indonesia* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020), 184–85: “It [was] the arrangement [that] changed [that song]; no nuances, no idioms were preserved in it. . . . The name [i.e., the *gaya* attribution] [was] Nagekeo but in fact it was not at all. Even we, who are people from here, did not feel that. . . . [You] cannot [use] counterpoint, for them [indigenous people] it would be strange, for example.” In a footnote (185), Poplawska cites a person from Manggarai saying that Manggarai songs, when given multipart arrangements and organ accompaniment, “are not considered indigenous anymore.”

33. “Job of the culture bearers”: See Tim Redaksi (editorial team), “Inkultursasi di Lio,” *Warta Musik* 26, no. 2 (2001): 39. *Lagu gaya* Karo: Prier, “Lagu yang Tidak Bercacat,” *Warta Musik* [28], no. 3 (2003): 82–83. “Traditional songs in their original form”: Prier, album notes to the Vocalista Sonora CD *Ina Lou* (PML 1001), 1–2. (I thank Dieter Mack for bringing this statement to my attention.) “A dusty traditional song”: Prier, “Lagu Inkultursasi Mas[a] Kini.” “The traditional songs of Kalimantan”: Prier, *Inkultursasi Nyanyian Liturgi*, 3.

34. Prier, foreword to “Hasil Lokakarya Mataloko 1990,” 3. The exclamation point is my own insertion. Here is another statement from Rm. Prier, quoted by Marzanna Poplawska from an interview (*Performing Faith*, 52):

Why Bach could have had written arrangements for single-part German songs, why Pak Paul cannot make [arrangement] for single-part songs of Alor? I think it is not appropriate if we say that in Indonesia it has to be original—one part [only]. Songs of the Reformation, at the beginning, also had one part, but arrangements were made, Bach created choir [parts]. Why we would have to say that this is not allowed here? I think if there is a desire to sing with a choir, it is also natural that we try to make an arrangement . . . [while] preserving the uniqueness; and the sound that we hear is grasped, processed to become an arrangement.

The question I raise in this chapter is whether it is possible to “preserve the uniqueness” when making arrangements on the PML models.

35. *Pemurnian*: Wahyudi, “Inkultursasi Musik Liturgi Gaya Lio,” 154. Death and resurrection, 1993 version: “*kebudayaan setempat pun harus berani mati untuk dibangkitkan*” (Prier, *Inkultursasi Nyanyian Liturgi*, 4). Revised in 1999: Prier, *Inkultursasi Musik Liturgi* (PML A-66; Yogyakarta: PML, 1999), 7.

36. Prier, “Musik Gereja dalam Peralihan,” *Warta Musik* [28], no. 6 (2003): 173.

37. Prier, *Inkultursasi Musik Liturgi IV*, 5.

38. “However proud we may be that the thousands of islands of Indonesia are united by satellite broadcasting, nevertheless this new ‘culture’ will eventually erase all forms of traditional music, because they will be felt to be inferior in quality and behind the times. This means that, willingly or not, the Dayak, the people of Maluku and Irian, etc., will lose their identity” (Prier, *Inkultursasi Musik Liturgi I*, 19).

39. Prier, *Inkultursasi Musik Liturgi I*, 12.

40. The *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. See note 3.

41. It is instructive to compare PMLs procedures to those proposed by the Protestant missionary ethnomusicologists Vida Chenoweth and Darlene Bee for creating an “ethnic hymnody,” different for every music culture, without seeking a musical lingua franca to bring cultures together. Taking linguistic analysis as their model, they developed a rigorous method:

From the transcription of many songs the significance of musical components in various compositional styles is determined. Such components range from small units such as pitches, intervals, and nuances to the formal melodic and rhythmic plan of a composition. Determining these components parallels the phonemic analysis of a language. . . . By discovering the

rules of occurrence, co-occurrence, and progression of the musical elements, one can arrive at a description of the grammatical structure of any music system, and that description can be used as a basis for creative composition within the system. [Vida Chenoweth and Darlene Bee, "On Ethnic Music," *Practical Anthropology* 15, no. 5 (1968): 207–8]

In contrast, PML applies overarching standards of tuning, harmony, counterpoint, motivic variation, compositional structure, and aesthetics to the elements identified in its analyses of particular musics.

42. Tim Redaksi (editorial team), "Apakah gamelan harus klasik?" *Warta Musik* [28], no. 1 (2003): 5–6.

43. D. Danan Murdyantoro, "Belajar Gamelan=Bikin Ngantuk?," *Warta Musik* [28], no. 1 (2003): 11–12.

44. Prier, *Inkulturasi Musik Liturgi I*, 80.