

Mandoliong: An Organological Study of a Traditional Stringed Instrument in Wajo Regency, South Sulawesi

Abstract

Mandoliong is considered a traditional musical instrument found in the Bugis community, Wajo Regency South Sulawesi Indonesia. This art functions as entertainment and is performed at wedding receptions, celebrations, traditional and government activities. Mandoliong can be reviewed based on its musical organology. Discussing organology can provide information about the form, way of playing, and the life cultural of the mandalion in people's lives. Mandoliong has a distinctive musical instrument shape and is now very rare. Even a successor to the Mandoliong maker is very difficult to find. This raises curiosity about how to make Mandoliong for the younger generation. In the music paradigm, the science that studies the structure and function of instruments is one element of the part of music called organology. This research aims to understand the construction parts and aspects of Mandoliong music. The methods used to collect data were observation, interviews and document study. As a result, the Mandoliong is known to have originated from China where it was acculturated with other models of musical instruments. In general, the shape of a Mandoliong is divided into three parts, namely the head (ulu), body (watang), and keys (tus). The materials and tools used in making the Mandoliong musical instrument are materials that are easily available every day in the people of Wajo Regency. In terms of performance, the Mandoliong musical instrument is performed in ensemble form. The scale produced by the plucked Mandoliong musical instrument is a chromatic scale.

Keywords: Organology, Traditional Music, Bugis Culture, Mandoliong Instrument, Instrument Construction, Cultural Preservation, Chromatic Scale.

INTRODUCTION

Art and beauty perpetually captivate human interest, remaining integral to daily life. Humans are inextricably linked to art, deeply intertwined with structured and organized concepts rich in symbols, meanings, and artistic spaces. This conceptual framework, transmitted through symbols, serves as a crucial medium for human communication and knowledge construction about

the world (Narawati et al., 2021a). In the contemporary era of globalization, cultural exploitation has become prevalent (Peng, 2023). There is a noticeable deficiency in the knowledge, experience, and technology necessary for this nation to effectively explore its cultural resources (Peng, 2023).

Indonesia has experienced significant transformations in its cultural growth and development. The nation's vast

cultural diversity represents an immeasurable wealth. However, this diversity and richness have not been effectively utilized or managed. Consequently, foreign cultural elements infiltrate, leading to acculturation within the nation's culture. This process occurs when a cultural group encounters foreign cultural elements, gradually incorporating and adapting them into their own culture (Koentjaraningrat, 1996).

Moreover, contemporary youth tend to favor music that diverges from their traditional regional sounds. They show a marked preference for popular music, often listening to it incessantly. Their interest lies predominantly in various genres of popular music, typically featuring Western musical instruments (Pamungkas, 2022).

Mandoliong strings exhibit clear coupling to each other through their attachment to the vibrating bridge, revealing correlations in their motions and influencing their sound in the bugis community, one which is found in the Wajo (Tufté et al., 2019). This art serves as entertainment advice that is often staged in wedding receptions, celebrations, traditional ceremonies and government activities. This *Mandoliong* music is played in the form of an ensemble. In its presentation, *Mandoliong* musical instruments have collaborated with *lute*, *flute*, violin, and drum instruments. In addition to being collaborated with traditional instruments, *Mandoliong* at this time is also commonly collaborated with modern instruments such as

keyboards, basses, and guitars. *Mandoliong* is a double-stringed instrument. Made of wooden bars shaped like boxes. There are many *keys* and *frets* on top of the beam, and it spans 4 to 6 strings. *Mandoliong* is currently very rare and not widely owned by other regions. Even the successor to the maker of *Mandoliong* is very difficult to find. This has led to new curiosity, especially knowing how to make *Mandoliong* for the younger generation. In the musical paradigm, making instruments is one element of the part of music called organology.

Mandoliong can be reviewed based on the organology of music. Discussing organology can provide information about the form, how to play, the position of a musical ensemble, and the context of *mandalio* in people's lives. The first is that the music follows the sign of the movement, and the second is the sound of music that continues to play throughout the day (Santosa et al., 2022). Organology essentially studies knowledge about musical instruments, both in terms of form, sound, how to play, context in human life and the position of the instrument in an ensemble, and how the history and development of the instrument (Hendarto, 1998).

Organology and musical elements of *Mandoliong* in this study can help provide information to the community about traditional *Mandoliong* musical instruments, especially to the people of Wajo Regency. Because in the era of globalization like today, information about traditional musical instruments is very limited and even almost non-existent compared to modern musical

instruments. A deeper understanding of the background, form, way of playing, and its position in life that reflects the life of the Wajo people reveals how deep the meaning of cultural heritage. This is related to the protection of intangible cultural heritage, which includes traditions, practices, expressions, knowledge, and skills passed from generation to generation in certain communities, which became a convention from UNESCO in 2003. Maintaining and conveying the practice of this organology serves as an example of high moral standards that encourage societal harmony in addition to creating strong bonds between people, nature, and artistic phenomena. We can ensure the continuity and preservation of the organology embedded in the artistic practice of *Mandoliong* as an essential component of the rich and distinctive cultural heritage by deepening our understanding of values, enriching our cultural experience and conveying the messages of local wisdom revealed when discussing *the Mandoliong* organology to future generations. This is in line with the 2003 UNESCO convention for commitment to the preservation of intangible culture, which is often threatened by globalization, changing times, and other factors, so that oral expressions, traditional skills, and so on can be maintained. received approval from the sources.

METHODOLOGY

This research, used qualitative techniques are combined with

analytical descriptive methods (Bulmer, 2023; Syriac & Utami, 2020). The research was conducted in Wajo Regency, South Sulawesi, precisely in Watallipue Village, Lapongkoda Village, and Sompe Village. To ensure the results are in accordance with real conditions in the field, data is collected between 2010 – 2012 from Wajo regency. Data is collected through observation, interviews, and recording (Heriyanto, 2018). The data The critical stage is carried out by sorting through data sources to test whether the data is related or not (Parameswara, 2024). Information and interview was obtained from *Mandoliong* musician who participated on the stage is Mrs. Kurdia, *Mandoliong* makers, community leaders, and cultural icons. This has received approval from the sources. Completing data related to the object of research using data sources with data collection methods based on literature studies, observations, interviews, and documentation (Nurwahidah & Saputra, 2023). The three steps that researchers take when analyzing data are as follows: data reduction is used to narrow the scope of investigation and eliminate unimportant details; the presentation of data follows the reduction of data, compiling the results into documents for presentation; and conclusions are made to add new insights in research (Paul & Arup, 2018; Selvin & Stuart, 2017).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Development of Mandoliong Musical Instruments

The Mandoliong musical instrument in Wajo Regency is not a native musical instrument from Wajo Regency. *Mandoliong* is a musical instrument adopted from China. According to Rahim Abu in an interview conducted on May 10, 2012 explained that this *Mandoliong* musical instrument he first heard and saw around 1950. *Mandoliong* was first heard by Rahim Abu in downtown Sengkang which was a trading place. At that time *Mandoliong* was played by a Tiong Hoa girl. Initially, *Mandoliong* was only played by the people of Tiong Hoa (China). By 1950, the Tiong Hoa (Chinese) community had existed in Wajo Regency. They generally control the trade in Wajo Regency. The Chinese arrived in several countries in the archipelago including in South Sulawesi due to two factors. The arrival of the Chinese in several countries in the archipelago was driven by two main factors. The first is because the Chinese were also known as a nation that likes to trade (Amalia et al., 2015; Basiran et al., 2023; Ismail Suardi Wekke Rusdan, 2017). Second, there is the insistence of the domestic political system that is raging, especially in the 17th century, when there was a shift in power in China (Bahrum, 2003). China is known as a nation that does Commerce. Another habit is a country with a controversial political system carried out by China, particularly during China's transition of power in the 17th century. Chinese people who have traveled to several countries of the archipelago. This practice has

been carried out massively by Chinese people such as some European countries, including Portugal, Spain, England, and the Netherlands.

The word China has also been found in the mythology of the Bugis people known as La Galigo. China is described in La Galigo as a country that is very far away and can only be reached through shipping lanes with a long travel time. The arrival of the Chinese in several countries in the archipelago had various major influences on society. Various forms of culture and art in Wajo Regency have blended into the community. One of them is in the field of art, *Mandoliong* musical instrument games can be accepted and developed in Wajo Regency.

Mandoliong is the word from the people of Wajo Regency to refer to musical instruments adopted from the Chinese. Even though in general people know it as a mandolin musical instrument which means a double-stringed instrument (more than 1) According to Mrs. Kurdia in an interview conducted on March 26, 2012 explained that *the Mandoliong* instrument is indeed a term for the Bugis community towards *the Mandoliong* instrument since childhood, even from her grandmother herself has been familiar with the name *Mandoliong* musical instrument. From this information, people's habits of seeing, dancing, and mentioning this musical instrument so that people are familiar with the name *Mandoliong*. *Mandoliong* musical instruments can be accepted and developed in Wajo regency because in essence art and

social society are very related (Sudira, 2010).

Social interaction relationships involve social processes that make up the dynamic elements of society, namely behavioral processes associated with social structure, social structures that contain norms, roles, values that govern human behavior. In this case, humans who are in society within their scope have unique group forms, continue existing customs, develop institutions, create values to society and carry out art activities (Sudira, 2010).

Various festivals and performing arts performances in various regions ranging from local events to national events participated in by Wajo Regency involve *Mandoliong* musical instruments in traditional music ensemble compositions. According to Andi Aribi in an interview conducted on May 4, 2012 explained that *Mandoliong* is performed in the form of a musical ensemble. The first time *Mandoliong* was merged in a *pa'violin* music ensemble. *Mandoliong staging* was done around 1970. At that time there were 2 musical ensemble groups, namely the group fostered by Baso Tawakkal and the group fostered by Petta Bau Singke'. The performance was carried out in celebration events, entertainment in *Sao Raja*, and added by Rahim Abu that *Mandoliong* performances are also often performed in night markets. Until now, *Mandoliong musical instruments* are still often performed in various musical ensembles. Such as traditional ensembles, *pa'violins*, and collaborative music (a musical

ensemble consisting of traditional musical instruments combined with *non-traditional* musical instruments).

Apart from performance, the development of *Mandoliong musical instruments* has also undergone various changes in form. The change in the shape of *the Mandoliong* was done because it wanted to provide innovations to the *Mandoliong* instrument. According to Mr. Rahim Abu in an interview conducted on May 10, 2012 explained that, *the Mandoliong instrument* was changed with the aim of providing comfort to players. Changes in *Mandoliong* musical instruments occur in the *ulu* (in Bugis language) which means head. The purpose of this change in the *Mandoliong* musical instrument is done in the *pa'setelang* (in Bugis language) which means string player. The string player on *the Mandoliong* musical instrument was originally only in the form of iron formed by punching holes in the string player using a drill. In addition, a string player is a tubular musical instrument with a head shape like a box. *Mandoliong* underwent a change in shape by replacing the tubular string player replaced with a guitar string player. The purpose of changing the string player is intended with the aim that when playing the strings used do not change. In addition to the head, changes also occur in the *watang* (in Bugis language) *Mandoliong* which means body. The changed part of the body is in the resonance hole, precisely below the strings. The shape of *the Mandoliong watang* change expressed by Mr. Rahim is in the *Mandoliong resonance hole*. Near the

resonance hole and under the stretch of strings are installed *aluminum plates*. The installation of this aluminum plate aims to prevent *the Mandoliongwatang* from being damaged due to erosion by *pa'gettiMandoliong* (in Bugis language), which is the *Mandoliong* picker when played.

Currently, the performance form of *Mandoliong* musical instruments has also changed in *Mandoliong* players. The change that occurs is the position of *the Mandoliong* player when playing *Mandoliong*. At first, *Mandoliong* was played by flooring with a *massulekk* sitting position (in Bugis language) which means sitting cross-legged. Then *Mandoliong* is placed on the right foot by way of *iriwa* (in Bugis language) which means on the lap. The position of placing *the Mandoliong* must also be controlled on the body of the *Mandoliong*. Especially in the lower resonance hole. The position of the *Mandoliong* must be precise so that the sound coming out of the lower resonance hole can come out. It is currently **changing** for reasons of playing aesthetics and ethics to change the position of playing *Mandoliong* **musical instruments**. The ethics in question is the position of the player when playing in an ensemble (collaborative music). According to Kurdia, who is a player of *the Mandoliong* musical instrument in an interview conducted on April 29, 2012, explained that there are two positions to play *the Mandoliong* instrument, namely by **sitting cross-legged and by sitting on a chair on his lap**.



Figure 1. *Sitting on a chair*

When he plays in a collaborative music ensemble, he sits using a media chair. Because it feels strange if on stage someone is flooring, someone is standing. And if you want to play *Mandoliong*, the position of *Mandoliong* should be on your lap. Playing *the Mandoliong* musical instrument by sitting on a chair also needs to use *babbang* (in Bugis language) which means belt. The end of the *babbang* is attached to the *ulu* around the waist and the other end is attached to the *Mandoliongwatang*. The belt */babbang* on the *Mandoliong* serves to hold the *Mandoliong* from shifting when holding and playing *the Mandoliong*.

Currently in Wajo Regency **several music groups use** *Mandoliong* musical instruments in their musical compositions. Such as the group of TigaSekawan, Sipakario-Rio, Teko '82, Arjuna, Tomaradeka, BataraWajo, and Cadas. This music group is often performed at government events, celebrations, and cultural arts events in Wajo Regency. The entry of foreign cultures has a considerable

influence on local cultures that must be recognized.

With the influence of foreign cultures, *Mandoliong musical instruments* have experienced many developments such as the physical form of *Mandoliong* and the composition of music played. In the form of *Mandoliong* performances, currently using electronic devices in the form of loudspeakers (*microphones*). There are two ways to install a *microphone* on the *Mandoliong*. If *Mandoliong* is played with a cross-legged sitting position / floor, the *microphone* is installed above the *Mandoliong* resonance hole at the top and if *Mandoliong* is played sitting in a chair position, the *microphone* is installed between the knees near the lower *Mandoliong* resonance hole. In addition to the presence of speakers / *microphones*, the entry of radio, television, and internet technology has an influence on the songs and musical compositions presented. However, the influx of outside cultural influences from the other side is also a threat to local culture. Foreign culture and entertainment can cause acculturation to the local culture which can lead to the loss of the local culture itself. More people choose modern culture than *Mandoliong* itself. The younger generation tends to choose modern arts such as bands and electronics rather than *Mandoliong* musical instruments will have a negative impact on its preservation and will gradually disappear.

Mandoliong Instrument Parts Manufacturing and Assembly Process

Mandoliong is a musical instrument that has a unique shape. It looks like a long block resembling a manual typewriter. The shape of this *Mandoliong* beam resembles a trapezoid. Broadly speaking, the shape of *Mandoliong* is divided into three parts, namely the head (*ulu*), body (*watang*), and keys (*tus*). The materials and tools used in making *Mandoliong* musical instruments are materials and tools that are easily available daily in the community in Wajo Regency. The process of making *Mandoliong* musical instruments must select the appropriate materials because it greatly affects the quality of *Mandoliong* musical instruments and the instruments used to make *Mandoliong musical instruments* in the form of selected instruments to facilitate the process of making *Mandoliong* musical instruments. The materials used in making *Mandoliong instruments* are jackfruit wood / *vanasa* (in Bugis language), cenrana wood, iron aluminum plate, plate, board, beam, string holder, tin, string / string, nails, couplers, wire, rubber stands, buttons, tin, and glue. There are several tools used in the process of making *Mandoliong* musical instruments. It consists of electronic tools and manual tools. Electronic devices provide convenience in the process of making *Mandoliong*. As for the tools used in making *Mandoliong* saws, hammers, kattams, screwdrivers, misers, chisels, drills, chisels, sandpaper, and pliers locks.



Figure 2. *Mandoliong Ulu Framme*

In the *ulu Mandoliongis* a block that looks like a semicircle. In this section there are 5 string players installed in an upright position. This wire player is a place to install one end of the string stretch. This string player serves to adjust the high and low tone of the *Mandoliong* string. The head is semicircular with a width of 8 cm in length, 8 cm (the very edge is curved with a radius of 8cm), and 4 cm high. There are 5 standing wire players with a length of 4 cm and a diameter of 5 mm. The installation of the wire guide consists of two stacks, the first arrangement consists of three wire players installed at a distance of 4 cm from the boundary between the *Mandoliong* and *ulu Mandoliong* characters and the second arrangement consists of two string players installed at a distance of 6 cm from the boundary between the *Mandoliong* and *ulu Mandoliong* characters. The wire player installation is installed by alternating intervals.

Wooden blocks measuring 8 cm long, 10 cm wide, and 4 cm high are formed using chisels and

hammers. The second part is the *watang Mandoliong* frame made of wooden blocks measuring 56 cm long, 1 cm wide and 4 cm high. The end of the *Watang Mandoliong* frame has a length of 12 cm, a width of 3 cm, and a height of 4 cm. The process of making the frame of the *Mandoliong watang* using sawing tools, and kattams. The shape of the *Mandoliong watang* frame is as shown below:



Figure 4. *Mandoliong Watang Frame*

After the frame section *Ulu* and frame *Watang Mandoliong* has been completed then continued with the process of merging between frames *Ulu* and *Watang Mandoliong*. Frame merging *Ulu* and *Watang Mandoliong* carried out using nails and glue. The type of glue used is wood glue. With the merging result as shown below:



Figure 3. *Mandoliong* Frame

The next process is to make the *Mandoliong* frame cover board. Making *watangMandoliong* cover is done by binding boards measuring 100 cm long, 15 cm wide and 1 cm high. This board is thinly attached. *Watang* board thickness *Keres Mandoliong* and punch holes in the board to make lower and upper resonance holes *Mandoliong*. Part *Ulu Mandoliong* dotted for the sign where to install the wire player *Mandoliong*. The shape of the board that has been attached, has a thickness of 3 mm, fitted with *keres*, and given a point for where to install the *Mandoliong* player as shown below:



Figure 5. *Mandoliong* Box Board
(Soundboard)

Cover board *WatangMandoliong* mounted on frame section *Mandoliong*. Its installation is carried out by first attaching glue to the frame and board *Mandoliong*. After that combine the frame and boards. By using nails that measure 1 cm. After the box *Mandoliong* has been formed, it's time to install the parts *Ulu* and *WatangMandoliong*. The parts start from the string player that was previously the part *Ulu*

Mandoliong the point assigned to the mark where to install the string player has been punched using a drill.

Then install a string/string stand on the left end of the *Mandoliong*. The string stand is installed in advance perforating the *Mandoliong* *watang* with a drill. After that, install a string stand made of iron plate that has been punched using couplers and screwdrivers.

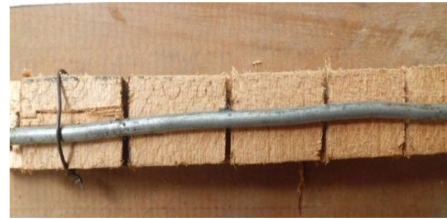


Figure 6. *Tus Mandoliong* Stand

The third is the *Mandoliong* string support. Installing string supports is done by making nails in each of which both ends are pointed. Then the string support is glued and glued. Once the *watang* and *ulu Mandoliong* sections are installed, it's time to move to the *tusMandoliong* section. The first to install the wire on the pair of *keres* *mnadali*ng. The wire installation process is carried out using small wires, nails, hammers, couplers, screwdrivers and pliers.

Then a couple *Keres Mandoliong* mounted on cover board *tus* *mnadali*ng. The wire installation process is carried out using nails, hammers and couplers. The second wire installation is done by installing a spring *Mandoliong* on the wire



Music example 4

However, in the people of Wajo regency, especially the performers of *Elong-kelong Ma'Biola* do not recognize the elements of music that have been universal. In the performance of *Elong-kelong ma'biola* six symbols are important in understanding the elements of music, namely *sadda'*, *ampa'*, *laongeng*, *benra*, *kobbi*, and *alessingeng* (AJ, 2010). They only rely on emotional impulses and try to play music in a way with emotional accompaniment.

The melody of the *song tapalla'-palla'* above is the melody of the song performed by vocals. If the melody of the above song is transferred to the *Mandoliong* instrument, the note value in the melody of the *tapalla'-palla'* song is partially changed to the 1/16 note. With variations in the rhythm of the passage as in the following *tappalla-palla* song melody:



Music example 5

However, in the people of Wajo regency, especially the performers of *Elong-kelong Ma'Biola* do not recognize the elements of music that have been universal. They only rely on emotional impulses and try to play music in *ngiangang* with emotional accompaniment. In the performance of *Elong-kelong ma'biola* six word symbols are important in understanding the elements of music, namely *sadda'*, *ampa'*, *laongeng*,

benra, *kobbi*, and *alessingeng*. In addition to musical elements, performers also have an atmosphere division in playing or performing songs. The atmosphere was divided into *embat* parts, namely, *elong pa'buka* (opening song), *elong mapase'-pase'/marilaleng* song that touches the heart), *elong merentente/ macakka/ mappacanddario-rio* (cheerful song), and *elong paccapureng* (ending song).

CONCLUSION

The challenges currently facing *Mandoliong* include the decline in interest and efforts made for its preservation, which are related to the UNESCO convention in 2023. The potential for innovation and fusion with modern music genres to attract young audiences, especially *Mandoliong*, which is combined with modern musical instruments. This is what the public or young people like in the current era. The local community is involved in the preservation and promotion of *Mandoliong* music, which is intensified through the activities of the tourism department and the cultural department.

The *Mandoliong* instrument, adopted by the people of Wajo Regency from China, has been embraced and developed into a traditional art form in the region. The organology of the *Mandoliong* involves various tools and materials. The tools used in its construction include saws, *kattams* (a type of woodworking tool), hammers, screwdrivers, drills, plier locks, files, and sandpaper. The materials required for making the

Mandoliong comprise wood, strings, iron plates, springs, nails, wire, couplers, buttons, tin, string players, wood glue, and rubber holders. The primary raw materials used are jackfruit wood and cenrana wood. Structurally, the *Mandoliong* is divided into three main parts: *ulu Mandoliong* (the head), *watang Mandoliong* (the neck), and *tus Mandoliong* (the body). In performance contexts, the *Mandoliong* is typically played as part of an ensemble. The instrument is played by plucking, with the *Mandoliong* positioned on the lap while sitting. It falls under the category of chordophone musical instruments. Players usually sit in one of two positions: *massulekka* (cross-legged) or *makkadera* (sitting on a chair). When plucked, the *Mandoliong* produces a chromatic scale. Among the Bugis community, there are specific traditional rules governing the performance of the *Mandoliong*, adhering to universal musical elements.

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GLOSARRY

ElongKelong : Sing

Ma'biola : playing *Mandoliong*

Ko'bi : pick

Allesingeng : accelerated

Ampa' : four

Kattams : instrument Smooth

Sadda : make a Sound

Laongeng : to Leave

UluMandoliong: KepalaMandoliong

WatangMandoliong: BadanMandoliong

UNDER PEER REVIEW