

# The Basic of Learning *PIUL* Sunda

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**Abstract**—*Piul* is a musical instrument original from Europe with the origin of the name Violin. During the Dutch colonial era, this musical instrument was known by the Sundanese people by the word *piul* because the Dutch called it viol, which then sounded to the word *piul*. In its development, *piul* entered Sundanese musical music, resulting in acculturation of two cultures, in other words, Violin was played by Sundanese people with expressions of style and ornamentation of Sundanese music. This article describes about *piul* learning techniques and how to play *piul*. The purpose of writing this article is to find out the process of learning the *piul* with simple steps by looking at examples of the basic techniques of playing the *piul* which include, fingering techniques, swallowing techniques, holding *piul* techniques, how to hold a bow, friction techniques to Sundanese style ornamentation techniques. Thus the true play *piul* is an imitation of the fiddle technique applied to violins so as to create a new and existing sound color used by the community in serving Sundanese traditional ceremonies and other traditional Sundanese music performances.

**Keywords**—learning to play *piul*, acculturation, traditional Sundanese music

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. *Piul* Tuning System

In the world of musical exploration, there are so many changes that have been created from the innovative thinking of the artists themselves, so that a lot of music has new musical forms and musical instruments that are produced from external cultural influences, resulting in acculturation. In Sundanese culture, especially in Bandung, many artists have their own characteristics in playing the *Piul* (Biolin) musical instrument. *Piul* originally came from the word Violino (small viola) in Italian [1], in the Dutch colonial era the word violino was better known by the Sundanese people as *piul* because at that time the Dutch called the word violino with the word viol which was heard by the Sundanese people, namely *piul*. so that the word *piul* is better known by the Sundanese people.

*Piul* playing technique is something valuable for the development of traditional music that needs to be preserved, because the technique played is influenced by western culture so that acculturation is created which makes the unique value of *piul* playing. The game of *piul* with the techniques played by some artists needs to be studied further so that it can be

recorded and can provide learning material for artists who are interested in the technique of playing the game.

In practical terms, the system of scales in western music and karawitan has differences. In the scale system in western music it has been standardized in an agreed manner and standardized the frequency, so that there is a universal agreement that the standard tone A has a frequency of 440 Hz as described by J.C Deagen that [2]:

*“A=440 Hz as the standar universal pitch for orchestras and bands”*

Absolute which will apply throughout the world [3]. However, this is not the case with the musical system, in musicals there is no fixed frequency attachment in terms of tone so that the frequency of the basic tones of the gamelan can be very different from one another so that the term absolute tone in musicals with western music has a different meaning [4].

In tuning or *nyurupkeun piul* in Sundanese musicals there are differences, based on interviews with informant Yoyon Darsono, the *nyurupkeun piul* system is equated with gamelan or other accompanying instruments such as kacapi kawih, kacapi tembang and so on, then seen from the *tugu* tone or *da* tone (1) *salendro* is equated with the second string or if in the western violin tuning system the tone A = 1, then the *galimer* tone or *ti* tone (4) *salendro* is equated with the third string if in the western violin tuning system D = 4 *salendro*, after these two strings are finished equated then the *na* tone (3) equated with the first string if on a western violin, namely the tone E = 3, and the last one is the lowest tone, which is the 4 string which is equated to the *mi* tone (2) *salendro* if the tone is G = 2. Yoyon's system of learning is based on the method of applying the *Mang Adang* tuning [5], who plays the *piul* with this tuning. According to Yoyon's confession, there are two ways in which *Mang Adang* uses the tuning system, but what Yoyon uses in playing the *piul* applies the first method. The following table 1 is an explanation of the names of the *salendro* tunes in detail (table 1):

TABLE I. AN ANCIENT TERM *SURUPAN* IN SUNDANESE MUSICAL.

TUGU (T)	LOLORAN (L)	PANELU (P)	GALIMER (G)	SINGGUL (S)
DA (1)	MI (2)	NA (3)	TI (4)	LA (5)

The research method used in this research is descriptive analytic with a qualitative paradigm. The accumulated theoretical foundation is then implemented at the core stage. The core stages consist of observation, interview, documentation and analysis. The results of data collection by observation, interviews and documentation were processed to answer the two research questions. The analysis of the piul game technique was specifically carried out to answer the first question, namely "How is Yoyon's piul playing technique on the *kawung* fruit violin kacapi". The second stage is data processing which consists of coding or reducing the data of parts of the work in a compositoric way, presenting the data from each section, then comparing the data between scores and visual records. The data that will be analyzed will be selected, then analyzed on the data so that it can be linked to the research question, namely What is the compositional form of the work of *Kawung* violin *kawung* fruit played by YoYon. Finally, the research data that has been analyzed are compiled.

**II. TECHNIQUE PLAYING PIUL**

Based on the technique of playing the *piul*, it consists of two ways to be able to play it, the first is the *piul* bowing technique and how to hold it in Sundanese style, in connection with the friction technique that will produce the characteristic *piul*. Then the second is how to do Sundanese fingerings which have different intervals, especially in playing the salendro tunes in connection with the appearance of ornamentation in this fingering technique. The rest of that, the technique of playing the Sundanese *piul* includes the distinctive style of a *piul* player so that there is a difference between a *piul* player and a violinist.

**A. Piul Bowing Technique**

The bowing technique in playing the Sundanese *piul* has a slight difference, where the way to hold the slide is more indented through the pad, this is related to the player's comfort in playing the *piul*, according to Yoyon's confession that holding the bow like this is because the *piul* players do not learn how to hold the slider correctly in western music theory, they only saw earlier artists playing the *piul* in such a way, so that in practice the *piul* player held the bow based on what he saw and learned from the *piul* player who taught it. For example, in a technique like this, Yoyon learned to hold the *piul* and bow from his father, Yooyon's father taught with such practices that it became a habit to play the *pul* in this way, then Yoyon appreciated seeing the Mang Adang performance at the Auditorium of the SMKI Bandung, at that time Yoyon saw his playing style and the style of holding his *piul* and it turned out that Mang Adang also used the same way of holding the bow as taught by his father. So it can be concluded that the *piul* players have a different characteristic in holding the ball in that they hold the slider more protruding through the pad.

There are 5 types of bowing, including:

- 1) *Cacagan*: namely the technique of rubbing the by producing several intermittent tones at one stroke, the position continues to stick to the wire.
- 2) *Embat/golosor*: namely the one-way technique of pushing or pulling the friction in slow motion to produce long and uninterrupted sound friction in one or more notes. With weak pressure and long friction.
- 3) *Kerecek*: that is, rubbing by vibrating the quickly and repeatedly, to produce a tremolo sound. With weak pressure and short friction.
- 4) *Ligar*: hat is, rubbing two wires together without your finger touching the wire. With weak pressure and long friction.
- 5) *Renghapan*: namely the friction technique by adjusting the melodic moan that is delivered by the sekar, namely one friction or one friction that is performed in the los [6].

**B. Piul 's Fingering Technique**

The *piul* fingerings differ from the violin fingers because the theoretical concept of *titi laras* has different intervals. In practice, *piul* can play the tunings of Sundanese musicals, for example, such as salendro, pelog / degung, madenda, mataraman and so on. Based on the research system in the musical concept.

Apart from the tuning system used in the *piul*, some artists who play the *piul* also do not change the tuning that is on the *piul*, the tuning used is the same as the conventional tuning system on the Western violin. The following is an example of the *laras pelog / degung* fingering in Sundanese musicals which refers to the Western musical scale system. Below (table 2, figure 1-4) is a parable of the layout of the fingers on a *piul* board with standard violin (G-D-A-E) [7] analysis. The base or dye notes used are Da = C, Da = G, Da = D, Da = A, and Da = E.

TABLE II. INFORMATION

	: The green colored symbol indicates that it was pressed with the index finger.
	: The symbol colored light blue indicates that it was pressed with the middle finger.
	: The yellow colored symbol indicates that it was pressed with the ring finger.
	: Those that have no symbols and only letters indicate an open string.

Image of parable of the piul strings ⇒

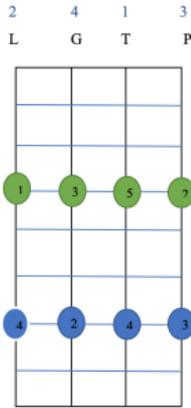


Fig. 1. Image of parable of the piul strings.

How to fingering the salendro.

The following is the Pelog / Degung tuning of the playing piul:

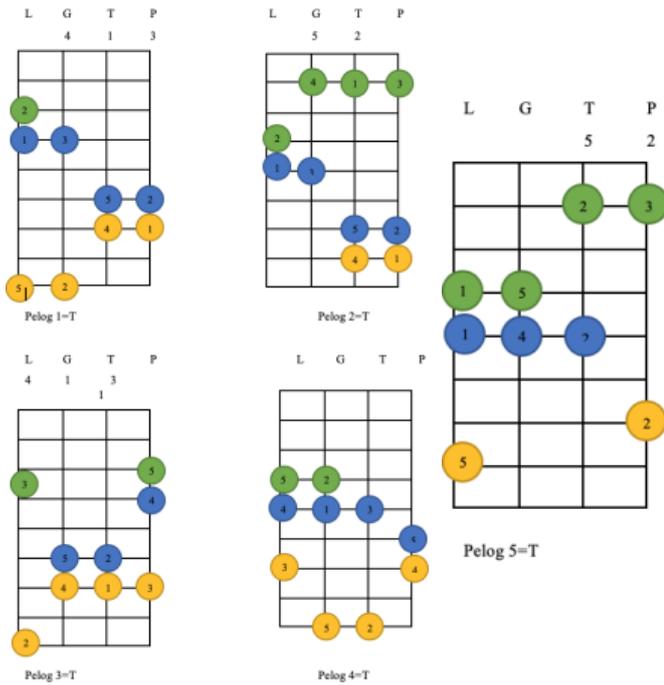


Fig. 2. The Pelog / Degung tuning of the playing piul.

Here is Madenda's fingering on the playing piul:

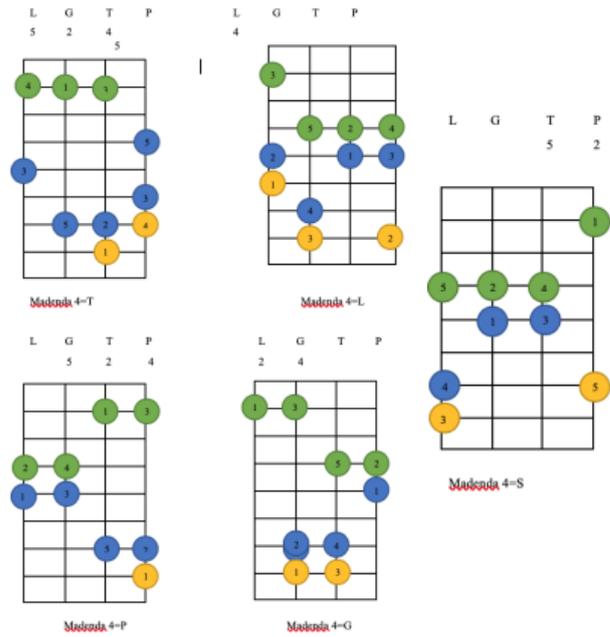


Fig. 3. Madenda's fingering on the playing piul.

Following is a pelog barrel fingering with a conventional analysis system:

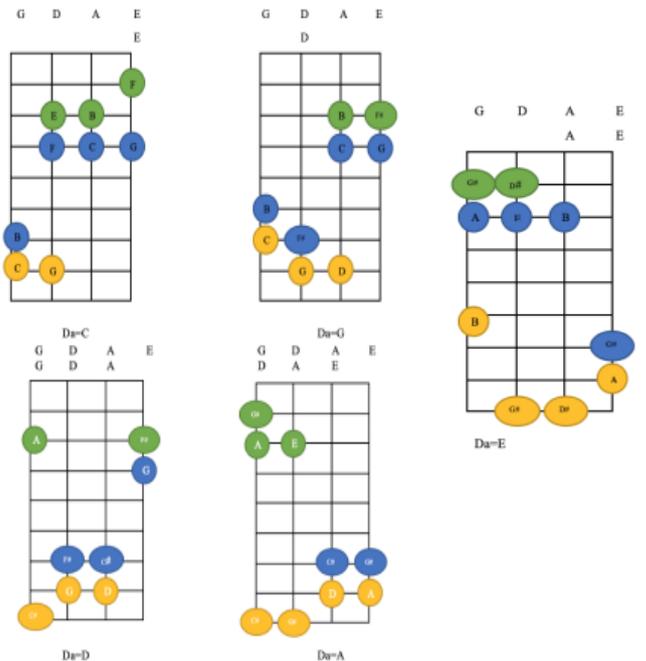


Fig. 4. A pelog barrel fingering with a conventional analysis system

### III. PIUL PLAYING STYLE

#### A. Piul 's Style of Character

Influences that come from outside cultures are of course not all good nor all bad, but how do we respond to these matters wisely, not accepting raw anything that affects our culture that comes from outside our culture. Whatever cultural results have been passed down by ancestors around the world, of course, it is adjusted to the respective cultural conditions that previously existed. In the context of music, for example, musical instruments that are created are of course adjusted to the customs that apply to the community. People, especially in the Sundanese area, usually present musical performances in the *lesehan* style, do not stand up and also do not sit on chairs. In contrast to the habits of Western society who are accustomed to performing music by standing or sitting on chairs. This also has an impact on the style of playing the piul which is performed in a *lesehan* style. The playing of the violin was created in Western society and is performed in a sitting or standing manner, so as to minimize any discomfort felt by the players during the show. However, the practice of playing piul will be different from the style of Western violin in which the piul is performed in a cross-legged style as is customary or has become a certain ethic for the arts in Sundanese musicals. There will be a little discomfort to the violin player, especially if the performance refers to the playing of the piul, for example when playing the violin cross-legged, the violin player playing the single string (high-pitched string) will find it difficult to produce the optimal tone, because when the bow is pulled down the hand and the bow will meet the knee, perhaps some of the players moving the body part that supports the violin will move away from the previous position. However, this is not the case with the play of the piul, especially for artists who are used to a more traditional style of the piul . In the style of carrying the piul, it will affect the position of the fingers including the ornamentation technique, then this will also affect how to store and hold the piul which is indirectly related to the comfort of playing the piul as described above. Thus, although the style is performed by sitting cross-legged, it does not affect or hinder the quality of bowing or fingering (see figure 5).



(picture: anjar collection)

Fig. 5. Sitting cross-legged.

#### B. How to Put and Hold the Bow

In the tradition of how to place a Western violin, a violin player must obey the rules for how to play the violin, including by placing the violin while it is being played, must use the correct rules according to agreed ethics. The violin is placed on the upper left shoulder, then the violin is clamped by the jaw. Thus, the body of the violin is located between the shoulders and jaw, this position is of course applied based on the comfort of the violin player in playing the fingers and ornamentation while playing the violin [8].

Practically in playing the piul, the method of placing the piul is slightly different, namely the piul player places the base of the body of the piul on the left chest parallel to the left hand. This is related to the habit of carrying the piul in a cross-legged manner. If the base of the torso is placed on the left chest, the left wrist which holds the neck of the piul so that occasionally the players in the piul with their left hand rest on their left thigh, thus the player of the piul will reduce the fatigue in the left arm when playing the rest of the piul , with a position like this piul players will find it easier to do fingerings and create ornamentation with Sundanese nudges.

In the procedure for holding the piul, the piul players usually call this technique of holding the piul as *diranggem* (grasped), which is the palm parallel to the neck of the piul which functions as a support for the piul itself. In contrast to the position applied in the Western style violin technique where the palm of the hand is perpendicular to the neck of the violin [9]. Meanwhile, the one that functions to support the violin is the shoulder which is then clamped with the jaw (the body of the violin is located the shoulder and jaw) while the left hand focuses with the fingers.

The following is a picture of the practical differences between the Sundanese style of holding the piul and the Western style violin (see figure 6):



Fig. 6. holding the way in the holding in the conventional way.

Additional fingers are used, it is admittedly more comfortable using the brushing method. In addition, there are a lot of ornamentations that will be obtained optimally if the method used is the braiding method. The *piul* ornamentation system is different from the violin ornamentation in Western musical concepts. Like the ornamentation of the *keleter* on the, it doesn't take too much energy if it is done by holding it by brushing. In the Western violin fingering system, the ornamentation that produces sound like that of the *keleter* ornamentation is the same as the vibrato technique. This

vibrato ornament is done by moving the hand back and forth parallel to the fingering board, but the fingers still press the desired tone, creating a wavy erratic tone. This hand movement is more possible if done by holding the palms perpendicular to the neck of the violin. In addition, for instruments with a type that does not have pitch barriers or fretless, it will have a difference in the level of difficulty that the players will get, visually it can be seen on the board and guitar fingers that use a divider or fret, the deeper the distance between the fret columns is getting smaller. Therefore is used horizontally, the farther the distance between the wrist and the body, the hands are more prone to fatigue. However, if you do this, the distance between the wrists and the body is relatively closer, so that the base of the arm can be supported by the body. Thus the risk of experiencing fatigue on the hands will be minimized.

In essence, in the above discussion, the game of by holding it is based on at least two things, namely first regarding comfort in terms of fingerings which will be related to the difference in intervals from the tunings in Sundanese musicals and minimizing wrist fatigue when playing, then the second is in terms of ornamentation by means of the players who find it easier to produce the desired ornamentation in accordance with the artist's interpretation of playing Sundanese-style nudges. Actually this way of holding the fiddle is the same as the way of holding the fiddle, but so far there has been no in-depth study to find out how it is related between how to hold the fiddle and how to hold the piul.

#### IV. ORNAMENTATION ON THE PIUL

Ornamentation of the piul is a very important element where the ornamentation of the playing piul greatly influences the artist's sense of musicality in identifying the sound characteristics of a type of music that has cultural values [10]. This is what distinguishes it from the musical taste of other music.

In the ornamentation played by Yoyon Darsono in the Buah Kawung song has a characteristic that is very visible from the way Yoyon's own creativity in creating its ornamentation, sounds closer to the ornamentation styles absorbed from the fiddle game, maybe because the piul is a stringing tool like a fiddle so the piul is more tend to use the ornamentation style used by the fiddle. As explained by Yoyon in the interview on 4 July 2018 as follows:

Da ari *piul* mah saleresna tacan aya istilah nu panjeg siga nu digaduhan ku istilah-istilah *senggol* dina rebab, ngan karna *piul* sami-sami alat gesek janten seniman teh nyebat ornamen na sok ku nu aya dina gaya rebab we. Salian ti istilah eta *piul* oge sok nganggo senngol nu aya di suling atawa tarompet, contona siga pa Yoyon ngangge *senggol kolear* dina lagu buah Kawung teh.

In fact, piul doesn't have a fixed term like the ornamentation terms in the fiddle, it's just that piul is both a stringing tool so that the artist calls the ornament what is in the term fiddle. In addition to these terms, Piul also likes to use the ornaments that are on the flute or tarompet, for

example, like Mr. Yoyon who uses collar ornaments in the Kawung fruit song.

Basically piul ornamentation that arises from the creativity of the artist will sound better if the piul player understands the ornamentation that exists in Sundanese, for example a piul player who previously played the flute instrument or played the fiddle instrument, he will be more fluent in playing Sundanese characteristic ornamentation. Here are some of the techniques used in the playing in imitation of fiddle instruments:

- Besot namely using the golosor dragging technique and the resulting technique by sliding the finger from bottom to top or vice versa (*legato*). This technique is carried out provided that the distance from the root tone to the target tone is at least 3 tones.
- Leot yaitu technique by producing a curved tone (*legato*). With strong pressure and long friction.
- Leak namely the technique of shifting the little finger from top to bottom or vice versa, then the ending of the main tone is thrown down one note apart so that it sounds like *ngahieng* (Endang Rukman Mulyadi's term). With gentle pressure and long friction.
- Gedag Gancang namely the *tengkepan* technique performed by the little finger which vibrates on the ring finger to produce a fast sound wave tone. Or the *tengkepan* technique performed by the ring finger or middle finger by pressing outward and inward rapidly to produce a fast sound wave tone.
- Gedag Lambat that is, the *tengkepan* technique performed by the ring finger or middle finger by pressing it outwards and into a slow and constant tempo. By using gentle pressure and long friction. This technique is usually used at the end of each song sentence.
- Kosod/Yayay Gancang namely the *tengkepan* technique by rubbing the little finger in a way to be lifted up quickly like forming a fast tempo sound wave. With weak pressure and long friction.
- Kosod/Yayay Lambat namely the *tengkepan* technique by rubbing / sliding the index finger, middle finger, or ring finger slowly as if forming a constant sound wave.
- Keleter that is, two fingers that are pressed together, then the finger that is under the main note vibrating at a fast tempo.
- Berele namely the movement of the finger under the main tone that vibrates at a distance of one note and a fast tempo (term *Caca Sopandi*).
- Torolok that is, two fingers, middle finger and ring finger that are pressed together then intersect each other in turn. The ending of the *torolok* note ends on the middle or ring finger.

- Gerentes that is, using four fingers that are tangled together and alternately. This technique contains several other techniques, such as gedag, leot, and keleter. Gerentes are commonly used on the sorog / madenda barrel.
- Lelol that is, using three / four fingers, usually the index finger on the wire, the middle finger and the ring finger making contact in turn. This technique is usually used on salendro tunings where the distance between the notes is more tenuous than the other tunings. This technique, if the barrel is called sorog / madenda, is called gerentes.
- Malih warni namely the process of displacement of the barrel or inclusion. In this process of moving the finger system becomes shifted, for example, the tengkepan 1 (da) of the salendro barrel which is held by the ring finger, changes to the madenda 4 = T barrel with the position of the ring finger that previously pressed 1 (da) on the salendro barrel to be pressed by middle finger.
- Bintih namely the tengkepan technique on the main tone which is then given the suffix by the little finger (gibasan).
- Jawil namely the tengkepan shift movement carried out by two fingers, namely the ring finger and middle finger, with the technique of connecting in one swipe.
- Galeong Maling that is, the tengkepan position of the finger that is used is not in the tone position, but is considered correct because the tengkepan can become a link / moan in the next melody.
- Getet namely the tengkepan technique of the middle finger coupled with the help of the index finger such as a pecking motion, rubbing it by chopping short movements back and forth to produce choked sounds, the getet technique remains attached to the wire and this technique is a unity of tengkepan and friction which must be the same beat.
- Kedet namely the tengkepan and friction technique by producing one short tone, in the kedet technique if after the desired tone is swiped, the is immediately lifted in other words, the technique of trapping one swipe of one tone.
- Gicel yaitu fast leotan tengkepan technique which returns to its original tone. This technique involves shifting your ring, middle, or index finger rapidly to the note below it.
- Pacok namely the tengkepan technique that produces a short note with the help of a note above or a tone below it with a movement such as pecking the index finger or ring finger on the wire
- Gebes namely the tengkepan technique which is like throwing away (piceun). Usually this technique is used after the leot technique
- Keueum/Gateng namely the tengkepan technique on one note with the position of the finger continuing to press the wire and assisted by the golosor friction technique to produce a long tone.
- Kejat namely the tengkepan technique for moving tones with stakato movements (jumping / moving the index and middle fingers) quickly.
- Kolear which is a technique that combines three notes alternately between the index finger, middle finger and ring finger. However, occasionally the little finger is also used in this technique depending on where the tone is mashed with its base tone.

## V. CONCLUSION

In principle, the piul and fiddle instruments are the two strings of stringed instruments, but when analyzed they are unique in the game of piul, namely in terms of attitude, finger, how to hold the bow, how to hold the piul to ornamentation which has advantages in speed. creating ornamentation. Then also the piul musical instrument experiences acculturation or a mixture of two cultures which creates new musical instruments that are interesting to appreciate. With its development, the piul instrument began to exist in its use in traditional music formats especially in West Java. Technically, several ornamentation techniques that are imitated from the rebab are very influential in identifying the typical piul playing style that is more towards ornamentation of Sundanese culture.

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