

Cultural Hybridity in the Dutch East Indies: Paul Johan Seelig's *Piano Concerto* as a Reflection of Colonial Identity

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Abstract:

This study aims to examine the first movement of the *Piano Concerto in F-Sharp Minor* by Paul Johan Seelig, focusing on the relationship between Western classical music and the music of the Dutch East Indies during the 1910s–1930s through Édouard Glissant's concept of *rhizomatic identity*. The research employs a qualitative method with data collection techniques, including archival studies and literature reviews. Analysis was conducted using Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutic approach, encompassing the study of the work's background, structure, and appropriation in a broader context. The findings reveal that the first movement of the *Piano Concerto in F-Sharp Minor* reflects a hybrid cultural identity that integrates Western classical music idioms with local musical elements from the Dutch East Indies, such as the adaptation of the Lagoe Soenda melody into patterns resembling gamelan. This transformation reflects a respect for local culture rooted in Nusantara traditions while simultaneously reinterpreting it within the framework of Western classical music. The work not only represents artistic dynamics but also serves as a socio-cultural document illustrating power relations and intercultural dialogue in the colonial context. Seelig highlighted local themes to bridge cultural gaps, showcasing the potential of local music as a medium equal to Western musical traditions. The study's findings reveal that cultural identity in Seelig's work is not static but emerges as the dynamic interaction between two distinct traditions. This approach contrasts with other colonial composers, such as Claude Debussy, who tended to adopt aesthetic impressions without retaining local themes. This research contributes to expanding the understanding of socio-cultural relations through colonial music and underscores the significance of music as a medium that can represent social dynamics, identity, and power during the colonial era. Beyond its theoretical contributions, the study offers a new perspective on hybrid music and cultural appropriation. This approach is relevant for fostering awareness of the importance of intercultural dialogue in the arts while demonstrating how music can serve as a tool for bridging cultural differences and transcending colonial hierarchies.

Keywords: Colonial music, cultural identity, hybrid music, rhizomatic identity, Paul Johan Seelig, intercultural relations.

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji movement pertama Konserto Piano di F-Kres Minor karya Paul Johan Seelig, dengan fokus pada relasi antara musik klasik Barat dan musik Hindia Belanda pada tahun 1910–1930-an melalui konsep identitas rimpang Édouard Glissant. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data berupa studi arsip dan studi literatur. Analisis dilakukan menggunakan pendekatan hermeneutika Paul Ricoeur yang mencakup kajian latar belakang karya, struktur karya, serta apropriasi dalam

konteks yang lebih luas. Hasil penelitian menemukan bahwa movement pertama Konserto Piano di F-Kres Minor mencerminkan identitas budaya hibrida yang memadukan idiom musik klasik Barat dengan elemen musik lokal Hindia Belanda, seperti melodi Lagoe Soenda yang diadaptasi menjadi pola menyerupai gamelan. Transformasi ini mencerminkan penghormatan terhadap budaya lokal yang berakar pada tradisi Nusantara sekaligus mentransformasinya dalam kerangka musik klasik Barat. Karya ini tidak hanya mencerminkan dinamika artistik tetapi juga menjadi dokumen sosial-budaya yang menunjukkan relasi kuasa dan dialog antarbudaya dalam konteks kolonial. Seelig menonjolkan tema lokal untuk menjembatani kesenjangan budaya, memperlihatkan potensi musik lokal sebagai medium yang setara dengan tradisi musik Barat. Temuan penelitian ini mengungkap bahwa identitas budaya dalam karya Seelig tidak statis, tetapi merupakan hasil interaksi dinamis antara dua tradisi yang berbeda. Pendekatan ini berbeda dengan komposisi kolonial lainnya, seperti Claude Debussy, yang cenderung mengadopsi impresi estetika tanpa mempertahankan tema lokal. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi dalam memperluas pemahaman tentang relasi sosial-budaya melalui musik kolonial, serta menegaskan pentingnya musik sebagai medium yang mampu merepresentasikan dinamika sosial, identitas, dan kekuasaan pada masa kolonial. Selain kontribusi teoretisnya, penelitian ini menawarkan perspektif baru dalam kajian musik hibrida dan apropriasi budaya. Pendekatan ini relevan untuk mendorong kesadaran akan pentingnya dialog antarbudaya dalam seni, sekaligus menunjukkan bagaimana musik dapat menjadi alat untuk menjembatani perbedaan budaya dan melampaui hierarki kolonial.

Kata Kunci: Musik kolonial, identitas budaya, musik hibrida, identitas rimpang, Paul Johan Seelig, relasi antarbudaya.

INTRODUCTION

The cultural interactions that took place in the Indonesian Archipelago during the Dutch colonial era gave birth to a unique fusion of arts and culture, including in the field of music (Hofman et al., 2021). Music, within the colonial context, became one of the mediums for the encounter between the colonizers and the colonized, reflecting power relations, acculturation, and cultural resistance (Grever & Legène, 2023; Wintle, 2023). Music research can open insights into the social, economic, and cultural dynamics that colored colonial life (Barendregt & Bogaerts, 2014). This phenomenon is significant because music not only functions as entertainment but also as a tool for spreading ideologies, cultural diplomacy, and resistance.

Hybrid music between Western and local cultures emerged in various contexts, ranging from the dissemination of colonial ideologies to forms of local cultural expression that adapted elements of Western music (Hofman et al., 2021). Music genres such as *keroncong*, *stambul*, and *tembang Sunda* became an integral part of the lives of the people in the Dutch East Indies, and they also reflected the interactions between cultures (Barendregt & Bogaerts, 2014). In this context, Dutch East Indies composers like Paul Johan Seelig played an important role in creating musical works that reflected hybrid identities. These works not only represented cultural diversity but also challenged the boundaries between Western and local music (Van Dijk, 2008).

However, the relevance of these works is often overlooked in colonial music discourse. In today's global context, where cultural encounters are becoming increasingly complex, it is important to revisit the history of colonial music to understand how intercultural relations are reflected in the arts and to explore new approaches in the analysis of cultural identity (Bijl, 2018).

Research on composers from the Dutch East Indies, influenced by local music, has been conducted extensively, but most of it focuses on biographies or general studies. Henk Mak van Dijk, in his book *De Oostenwind Waait Naar Het Westen* (2008), provides an extensive overview of Dutch East Indies composers, including Paul Seelig. However, this research does not delve deeply into specific works but instead focuses more on the social and cultural context surrounding them.

Other studies, such as those by Barendregt and Bogaerts (2014), trace the works of composers like Constant van de Wall. This research shows how Van de Wall combined elements of *Javanese* music with Western *Romantic* music. However, its focus is solely on Van de Wall and does not discuss other composers like Paul Seelig. Additionally, Margi Ariyanti et al. (2021) compared the works of Van de Wall and Ki Hadjar Dewantara, but their research does not give special attention to Paul Seelig's works, nor does it analyze them from a theoretical perspective such as the *rim pang* identity.

Research on Claude Debussy and the influence of *Javanese gamelan*, as written by Tamagawa (2020), also provides insights into the appropriation of non-Western music within the Western classical canon. However, this

study differs in its approach and social context compared to Seelig's works, which were situated in the colonial environment of the Dutch East Indies. Therefore, a significant gap exists in research that provides an in-depth analysis of Paul Seelig's specific works, especially from the perspective of cultural identity and Édouard Glissant's theory of *rimbang* identity.

This study aims to analyze the first movement of Paul Johan Seelig's *Concerto for Piano in F-sharp Minor*, specifically in relation to Western classical music and the music of the Dutch East Indies during the 1910s–1930s. Using the concept of *rimbang* identity from Édouard Glissant (2009), this research explores how complex cultural identities are reflected in this work and how intercultural relations played a role in Seelig's creative process.

This study argues that the first movement of *Concerto for Piano in F-sharp Minor* by Paul Seelig reflects *rimbang* identity by blending elements of Western classical music with local Dutch East Indies music, particularly *Sundanese* and *Javanese* music. Seelig's approach to colonial music demonstrates respect for local cultural roots while simultaneously transforming them through the dominant idioms of Western music. Through this fusion, Seelig's work not only serves as an aesthetic medium but also represents the complex intercultural relations of the colonial era. This perspective enriches the discourse on colonial music as an arena for cultural hybridity and identity transformation.

METHOD

This study focuses on the first movement of Paul Johan Seelig's *Concerto for Piano in F-sharp Minor* as the primary object of analysis. This work was chosen because it represents the fusion of Western classical music with elements of Dutch East Indies music, particularly *Sundanese* and *Javanese* music, which reflect intercultural relations in the colonial era. The score for this concerto was obtained from the International Music Score Library Project (IMSLP) (2024), along with additional supporting data in the form of other Seelig scores from the *Nederlands Muziek Instituut*, the *Perpustakaan Nasional Indonesia* (National Library of Indonesia), and private collections. The research context includes the musical life in the Dutch East Indies during the 1910s–1930s (Smith & Wilde, 2002).

This study is qualitative, employing a *hermeneutic* approach (Lune & Berg, 2017; Melikova, 2021; Schleiermacher, 1977; Setia & Rosele, 2024). The data used consists of both primary and secondary data. Primary data includes the score for *Konzert in Fis-moll für Pianoforte* by Paul J. Seelig and other works by Seelig. Secondary data includes Seelig's biography written by Henk Mak van Dijk, digital newspaper archives related to music in the Dutch East Indies accessed through the Delpher website, and other relevant literature related to this study (Reagan, 1979).

Data collection was carried out through archival and literature studies. Digital archives were obtained from *IMSLP*, the *Nederlands Muziek Instituut*, and Delpher, while physical archives were sourced from libraries in Bandung, Jakarta, Solo, and Yogyakarta, as well as from music collectors. The research process began with a literature review to understand the social and cultural context in the Dutch East Indies, followed by an in-depth study of the scores. The researcher also recorded and analyzed supporting data, such as newspaper archives containing reviews of concerts or works by Seelig, to enrich the analysis (Barrett, 2000).

Data analysis was conducted using Paul Ricoeur's *hermeneutic* approach (1981), which involves three stages: describing the background of the work, analyzing the structure of the work, and appropriation. The data was analyzed thematically using data reduction to identify key elements in the score and its context. The description focused on the historical and cultural background of the work, while the structural analysis examined musical elements in the score, such as themes, textures, and harmonies. The appropriation stage linked the findings to Édouard Glissant's concept of *rimbang* identity (2009) and positioned the work within the broader discourse on intercultural relations. This process helped produce a deep interpretation of the cultural identity transformation in Paul Seelig's work.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Concerto for Piano in F-sharp Minor and Its Context

The *Concerto for Piano in F-sharp Minor* (*Konzert in Fis-moll für Pianoforte*) is a monumental work composed by Paul Johan Seelig in 1933 (1937). This piece was created specifically for the farewell concert of the *Batavia Stafmuziek* orchestra, which was disbanded due to the economic crisis that affected the Dutch East Indies at the time. The farewell concert featured renowned pianist Käthe Haasse-Diehm Winzenhöler as the main soloist. Additionally, the entire repertoire for this concert consisted of works by Paul Seelig, highlighting his position as one of the leading composers in the colonial music landscape of the Dutch East Indies (Van Dijk, 2008). The score for

the concerto was later published by *Edition Matatani* in 1937 in collaboration with Hug & Co. This publication marked the formal recognition of the work as one of the major achievements in Seelig's career.

This concert serves as an important testament to how music can reflect the social, political, and economic dynamics of the Dutch East Indies in the early 20th century. The disbandment of the *Batavia Stafmuziek* orchestra due to the economic crisis highlights the vulnerability of the arts in the face of global economic change. However, this farewell concert was not only a moment to celebrate the orchestra's contributions but also a stage to honor the works of Paul Seelig. As a colonial composer who combined elements of Western and local music, Seelig's works demonstrate an effort to bridge the cultural gap between the colonial settlers and the indigenous population (Seelig, 1937).

The concert also reflects how the colonial audience received Seelig's works. In newspaper reviews documenting the event, one audience member noted that the concert seemed more of a tribute to Seelig than simply a farewell to the orchestra. Another audience member remarked that the fusion of Western musical motifs and *Indies* elements in Seelig's work created a contrasting yet harmonious impression while also opening up a new space for appreciation of local music. One review even stated that Seelig's work "helped us understand the idealism and soul of indigenous music," a significant tribute to the multicultural approach Seelig applied in his compositions (Afscheids-Concert Stafmuziek, 1931).

The social and cultural context surrounding the creation of *Concerto for Piano in F-sharp Minor* is relevant to Édouard Glissant's concept of *rim pang* identity. *Rim pang* identity emphasizes the importance of intercultural relations as a dynamic, mutually enriching process. In this case, Seelig's concerto reflects how Western and *Indies* cultural roots can interact and result in a work that transcends the traditional boundaries of colonial music. This concert also demonstrates how music can serve as a medium for cultural dialogue, creating a space where both local and colonial identities can meet and interact.

In addition to being an artistic work, this concerto also serves as a medium to articulate the power dynamics and appreciation between colonial and local cultures. In a colonial environment where local arts were often viewed as inferior, Seelig's work succeeded in creating a space where local music could be valued equally with Western music traditions. One review mentioned that the indigenous motifs in Seelig's work "possess a life of their own, rich in character," and his compositions "force us to see these values more clearly." These comments suggest that the colonial audience began to appreciate the local musical elements integrated by Seelig (Seelig, 1922).

The *Concerto for Piano in F-sharp Minor* consists of three movements, each with unique characteristics that represent the cultural fusion that defines Seelig's work. The first movement, which is the focus of this study, is developed from a theme found in Seelig's earlier work, *Lagoe Soenda*. The third movement draws inspiration from *Gandrung*, a short song by Seelig that also reflects local cultural influences. The themes in the first movement reflect an exploration of *gamelan* textures and rich Romantic harmonies, while the orchestration as a whole demonstrates Seelig's deep understanding of Western classical music (Seelig, 1928).

The score for the *Concerto for Piano in F-sharp Minor* was published four years after the concert in 1937. This publication indicates that Seelig's work was not only valued during its performance but was also immortalized as an important part of colonial musical heritage. The publication also marked recognition of the artistic and historical value of the piece, particularly within the historical context of Dutch East Indies music (Afscheidsconcert van de Stafmuziek, 1931).

The context surrounding the creation of *Concerto for Piano in F-sharp Minor* reveals the crucial role of music as a medium for cultural dialogue during the colonial era. This work is not only an artistic expression but also a historical document that reflects the social, political, and cultural dynamics of the Dutch East Indies. By combining elements of Western and local music, Paul Seelig created a piece that is not only artistic but also functions as a cultural bridge. This aligns with the concept of *rim pang* identity, where intercultural relations do not merely lead to artistic transformation but also enrich the understanding of cultural identity.

Structure of the First Movement of *Piano Concerto in F-sharp Minor*

The first movement of *Piano Concerto in F-sharp Minor* by Paul Seelig presents a unique synthesis between Western classical music and traditional Nusantara elements, particularly through the use of textures resembling *gamelan*. This composition takes inspiration from Seelig's other short work, *Lagoe Soenda*, which serves as the basis for developing the main theme in this movement. In its development, Seelig utilizes various tonalities, such as pentatonic *pelog* and *slendro*, heptatonic major and minor scales, as well as chromatic and atonal elements, creating a complex and varied musical impression (Seelig, n.d.).

The melody of *Lago Soenda*, which resembles the sound of the *kecapi* (a traditional string instrument), is adapted into a *gamelan*-like pattern in the first movement of this concerto. This transformation aligns the piano's rhythmic pattern with the regular beats of *gamelan*, while the characteristic harmony of Western Romantic music is added to create a majestic and emotional feel. These elements reflect Seelig's attempt to bridge two distinct musical traditions—Western classical and local *Hindia Belanda* traditions.

The first movement utilizes four main materials that serve as the foundation of the melodic structure: the opening theme, the *gamelan*-like theme, the first main theme, and the second main theme. The first main theme originates from the first phrase of *Lago Soenda*, while the opening theme is developed from its second phrase. The *gamelan*-like theme, adapted from the second section of *Lago Soenda*, is played with a more regular rhythm, producing a pattern closer to the Javanese *gamelan*. The second main theme is a variation of the first main theme, modified with additional chromaticism.

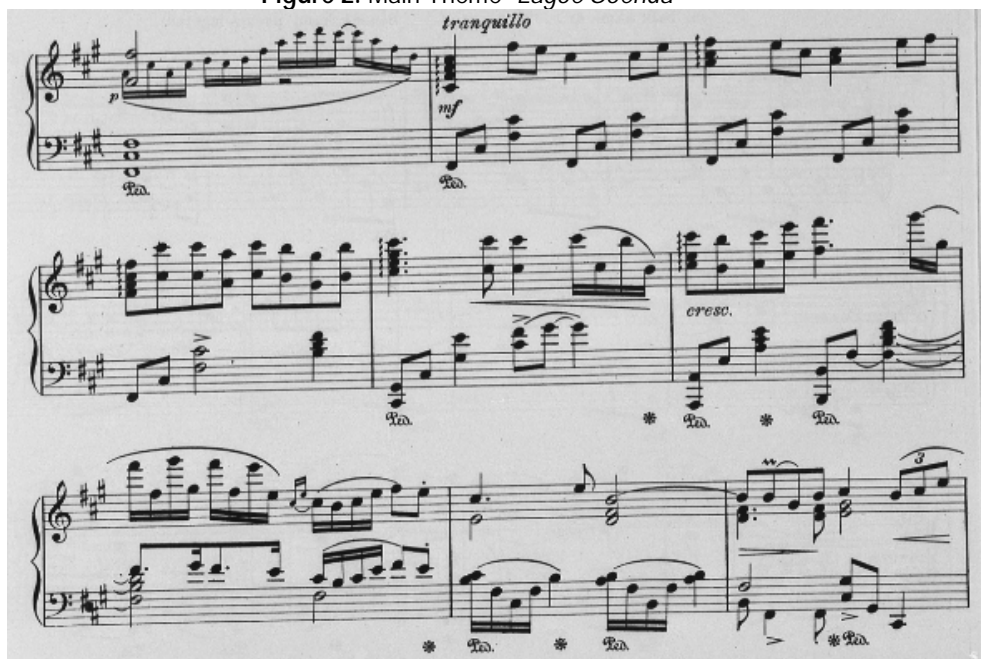
Figure 1. Measures 207-208, Rehearsal Mark 25, Ambiguous Tonality as Transition



Source: Seelig, 1937

The uniqueness of this movement lies in the transitions between sections, which not only serve as melodic connectors but also create new musical dimensions. In measures 207-208 (rehearsal mark 25), Seelig uses ambiguous harmony that blends the *pelog*, *slendro*, and chromatic scales. This transition creates a sense of jumping from one section to another, generating a dynamic and unpredictable sensation. Complex harmonies, such as augmented, major, minor, and atonal chords, are often used in these transitions, adding emotional depth to the movement (Seelig, 1914).

Figure 2. Main Theme "Lago Soenda"

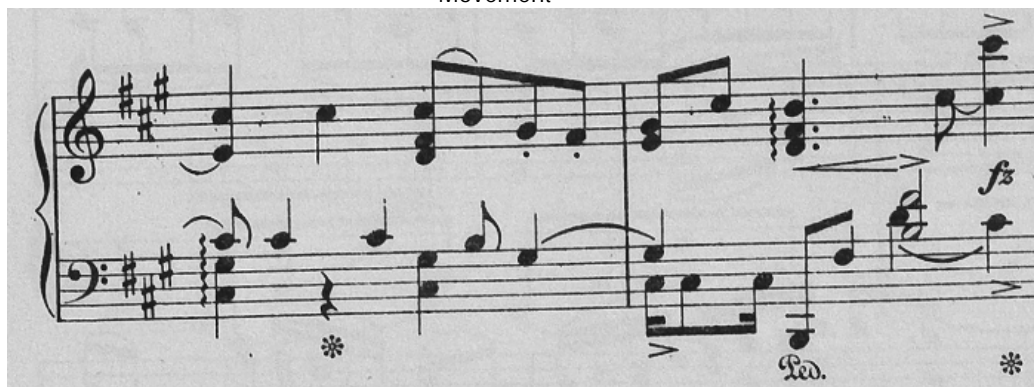


Source: Seelig, 1916

The main melody, though simple, is modified in ways that enrich its expressiveness. These modifications involve changing the scale tonal modulation and incorporating dissonant harmony to create a dramatic effect. *Gamelan*-like melodic patterns are used both as the main theme and as accompanying piano patterns, with textures resembling the percussive sound of *gamelan*. In some sections, the piano plays unison octaves, giving a majestic feel, while in others, dissonant harmony is used to increase emotional intensity.

The use of *gamelan*-like textures and complex harmony in this first movement illustrates how Seelig blends Western and local identities. Through the reinterpretation of *Lagoe Soenda*, Seelig shows his respect for the local Nusantara tradition while adding an innovative touch that enriches the Western classical idiom (Seelig, 1916). These local elements not only serve as inspiration but are creatively fused with Romantic elements, resulting in a hybrid musical identity.

Figure 3. Melody from “Lagoe Soenda” Used by Seelig as Material for the *Gamelan*-like theme in the First Movement



Source: Seelig, 1916

In his creative process, Seelig does not simply use local elements literally. Instead, he reinterprets the *gamelan* patterns by adding Romantic harmony and tonal modulation that create a new impression. This approach reflects the concept of *identity rhizome* by Édouard Glissant, where cultural identity is seen as the result of dynamic and ongoing interactions between various traditions.

In this movement, tonal transitions play an essential role in creating a profound effect on the listener. Seelig often uses ambiguous harmony in the transitions to create a captivating sense of tension. For example, before the main theme is introduced, dissonant chords delay the harmonic resolution, giving a sense of waiting. In some sections, these transitional patterns resemble portals between musical dimensions, introducing the listener to various tonal nuances.

In addition to tonality, texture and articulation are also crucial elements. For instance, the opening section of this movement is played in unison octaves but accompanied by thick harmonies that provide a majestic and dramatic feel. In some sections, the *gamelan*-like pattern serves as a minimalist accompaniment that creates a meditative atmosphere. However, as the musical intensity increases, these accompanying patterns are replaced by complex harmony that highlights the Romantic idiom.

The first movement of *Piano Concerto in F-sharp Minor* is a testament to Seelig's ability to bridge two distinct musical traditions. By modifying the theme of *Lagoe Soenda*, he creates a work that not only honors local cultural roots but also enriches the language of Western classical music. Tonal instability, the use of *gamelan*-like textures, and rich harmonies make this movement a real example of a hybrid musical identity that reflects the interaction between Western and *Hindia Belanda* cultures. Seelig's innovative approach not only demonstrates his respect for local traditions but also illustrates how local elements can be integrated into great works with a global scope.

Cultural Identity Transformation in Seelig's Works

Paul Seelig used the themes of local music from the Dutch East Indies, such as the melody from *Lagoe Soenda*, to create works that showcase the fusion of Western and local musical traditions. These melodies were significantly altered into patterns resembling *gamelan* music while maintaining their relevance through the incorporation of typical Romantic harmonies from Western classical music. In the first movement of the *Piano Concerto in F-sharp Minor*, these themes were expanded through the combination of chromatic chord progressions

and complex tonal modulation. This transformation directly reflects Seelig's approach to integrating local elements into the Western musical language (de Leeuw, 2005).

Seelig's approach to local music is also evident in his other works, such as *Gambus Pulau Penang* and *Burong Ti-ung*, where he used the whole tone scale to create transitions between sections. This technique gives a modern impression while still retaining traces of traditional *Nusantara* music. Additionally, his tendency to use ambiguous or atonal harmonies as bridges between sections is consistent across Seelig's works, including the first movement of the *Piano Concerto in F-sharp Minor*. This demonstrates that although inspired by local musical roots, Seelig preserved Western idioms as the foundation of his compositions.

The transformations Seelig made involved not only modifying local themes but also blending 19th- and 20th-century Western classical music techniques. In the first movement of the *Piano Concerto in F-sharp Minor*, the Romantic harmonies are strengthened by the use of chromatic progressions and dissonant chords. For example, the opening section of this movement features a series of thick chords that create a majestic and emotional effect. In contrast, certain sections that resemble *gamelan* music use minimalist harmonies to create a meditative and static impression. The shift between thick and minimalist harmonies creates dynamics that reflect a dialogue between Western and *Nusantara* traditions.

Seelig's transformation of local music differs from Claude Debussy's approach to Javanese *gamelan*. Debussy (as cited in Tamagawa, 2020) used the logic and structure of *gamelan* to enrich his Impressionistic idiom without directly adopting musical themes. In contrast, Seelig retained the original melodies of local songs, such as *Lagoe Soenda*, and modified them to create a harmonious blend of local and Western traditions. Debussy tended to avoid deep exploration of the cultures that inspired him, while Seelig explicitly tried to understand and bring out the local cultural identity in his works.

Seelig's approach to transforming local melodies into Western musical structures reflects *Édouard Glissant's* concept of cultural identity as rhizomatic. According to Glissant (2009), cultural identity is not fixed but rather results from a dynamic interaction between different traditions. Through his works, Seelig not only fused local and Western elements but also created space for both traditions to engage in dialogue. Therefore, Seelig's works are not merely forms of entertainment but symbols of cultural identity transformation within a colonial context.

Seelig's appropriation of local music was not merely an aesthetic act but also a step toward acknowledging the existence of *Nusantara* musical traditions within the discourse of Western classical music. Although Seelig often did not credit the original composers of the local songs he adapted, this was more due to the limitations of documentation at the time rather than an attempt to claim the works as his own. In the introduction to *Siameisische Musik*, Seelig (1922) even acknowledged the difficulty in tracing the origins of the local songs he studied.

Seelig's transformation of local melodies also serves as a way to reconcile two different cultural roots. For example, in the *Piano Concerto in F-sharp Minor*, elements of *gamelan* are not merely local accents but integral parts that form the identity of the piece. Seelig placed local elements within a symphonic format, such as the concerto, which is typically regarded as the representation of "serious music" in the Western tradition. In this way, Seelig demonstrated that *Indies* themes also deserved appreciation within the context of Western classical music.

Seelig's choice to use Western instruments, such as the piano and string orchestra, indicates that his primary audience was the European community in the Dutch East Indies. However, by incorporating local elements, he expanded his aesthetic scope to include a more complex local cultural identity. Works like *Kebo Giro* and *Wireng* show Seelig's effort to integrate *gamelan* ornamentation and rhythmic patterns with the harmonies and minimalist textures of Romanticism (Haynes, 2007).

Seelig's transformation demonstrates his respect for local cultural roots while innovating to create a hybrid musical language. This approach not only broadened Seelig's artistic identity but also served as a bridge between two distinct musical traditions. In the colonial context of the Dutch East Indies, Seelig's works became an important medium for introducing local music to European audiences. Through the fusion of Romantic harmonies, local themes, and modern compositional techniques, Seelig created works that reflected a complex and dynamic cultural identity (Seelig, 1922).

In Glissant's view, Seelig's actions can be seen as an attempt to *rimbang*, that is, to connect Western and local traditions in a mutually enriching space of dialogue. However, as emphasized by Glissant, cultural identity is fractal and full of ambiguity. Therefore, Seelig's works cannot be reduced to mere acts of appropriation or representations of local culture. Instead, these works stand as proof that cultural identity is the result of a complex, dynamic, and ever-evolving interaction.

***Piano Concerto in F-sharp Minor* by Paul Seelig as a Medium for Cross-Cultural Dialogue**

This research demonstrates that the *Piano Concerto in F-sharp Minor* by Paul Johan Seelig presents a unique synthesis of Western and local musical traditions. In this context, the research highlights the transformation of cultural identity in line with the findings of Henk Mak van Dijk (2008), who describes the efforts of composers in the Dutch East Indies, such as Seelig, to integrate local musical elements within the framework of Western classical music. However, Seelig's approach, which emphasizes the transformation of original themes such as *Lagoe Soenda*, differs from Claude Debussy's approach to Javanese gamelan music. Debussy (2020) prioritized the structure and logic of gamelan music without retaining the original themes, while Seelig explicitly preserved the local traces through melody and rhythmic patterns.

This work also shares similarities with Tamagawa's (2020) research on the appropriation of music by Western composers but in a more specific colonial context. The research reinforces that Seelig's approach not only enriches the idiom of Western classical music but also serves as a cultural dialogue medium that reveals the power dynamics and appreciation within the colonial context. In this regard, Seelig's work can be seen as an effort that respects local cultural roots more than other colonial composers.

The results of this study mark an important indication that cultural identity, as outlined in Édouard Glissant's concept of *identité rimpang*, is dynamic and continuously evolving through interactions between various traditions. The *Piano Concerto in F-sharp Minor* reflects how music can serve as a medium connecting two different cultures—Western and Nusantara—in the colonial context. The transformation undertaken by Seelig also signifies the importance of cultural continuity through adaptation and innovation (Glissant, 2009).

This phenomenon also reflects the dynamics of power relations during the colonial era. In the Dutch East Indies colonial environment, local art was often considered an inferior culture (Bijl, 2018). However, Seelig succeeded in demonstrating that local elements could be integrated equally into music works regarded as "serious" by colonial audiences. Thus, the findings of this study affirm the importance of music as a cultural dialogue space that transcends the boundaries of colonial hierarchy (B. Barendregt & Bogaerts, 2014).

The implications of this finding go beyond merely appreciating the work of Paul Seelig. Works like the *Piano Concerto in F-sharp Minor* demonstrate the potential of music as a medium to bridge cultural differences, even within contexts of unequal power (Sengupta, 2024). In an increasingly globalized world, Seelig's approach can serve as a model for how local cultures can be elevated and respected within an international framework without losing their original identity (Seelig, 1928).

This finding also makes a significant contribution to the study of colonial music. As one of the works that reflects intercultural relations, the *Piano Concerto in F-sharp Minor* provides insight into how music can become a representation of history and culture. Moreover, this work inspires further discussions on cultural appropriation in art, including how local elements can be integrated ethically and creatively (Andita, 2018).

This study's findings reflect the social, political, and cultural context of the Dutch East Indies in the early 20th century. As a colonial composer, Seelig lived in an environment where Western music was regarded as the pinnacle of aesthetics, while local art was often marginalized (Gao, 2021). However, through the influence of the multicultural environment in the Dutch East Indies, Seelig was able to recognize the aesthetic potential of local music as a source of inspiration.

Seelig's choice to retain local themes, such as *Lagoe Soenda*, reflects his respect for the Nusantara music tradition. This also demonstrates that Seelig's musical identity was not only influenced by his education in Western music traditions but also by his observations of the rich local music (Kuitenbrouwer, 2017). Thus, the transformation in Seelig's works reflects not only his musical abilities but also his sensitivity to local culture.

This finding suggests that there is still much potential in exploring colonial music works as part of Nusantara music history. Institutions such as national archives, cultural institutions, and music communities need to be more active in documenting, analyzing, and popularizing works like the *Piano Concerto in F-sharp Minor*. Reissuing Seelig's sheet music with complete academic annotations could be a first step toward reintroducing these works to contemporary audiences (Widiasih & Rachman, 2022).

Additionally, this study encourages cross-cultural collaboration in the creation of art. In the modern, increasingly globalized world, hybrid approaches like Seelig's can inspire contemporary composers to create works that reflect cultural diversity (Kuitenbrouwer, 2022). Music education institutions should also introduce the concept of *identité rimpang* to students to encourage a broader understanding of how local and global traditions can mutually enrich each other.

This research not only enriches the discourse on colonial music but also provides valuable insights into how art can serve as a medium for cultural dialogue. By delving deeper into works like the *Piano Concerto in F-sharp*

Minor, we not only learn about the history of music but also about the social, cultural, and political dynamics that underlie it. The efforts to preserve and promote these works will ensure that this valuable cultural heritage can continue to be appreciated by future generations.

CONCLUSION

This research finds that the *Piano Concerto in F-sharp Minor* by Paul Johan Seelig reflects a unique blend of Western classical music tradition and local music from the Dutch East Indies, particularly through the transformation of the *Lagoe Soenda* melody theme into a pattern resembling gamelan music. The findings indicate that Seelig not only used the local theme as an aesthetic accent but also creatively reconstructed it within the structure of Western music, resulting in a hybrid musical identity that reflects Édouard Glissant's concept of *identité rimpang*. This finding differs from Claude Debussy's research, which tends to adopt the impression of gamelan music structure without retaining the original theme, making Seelig's work a more explicit effort to preserve the traces of local culture.

The main contribution of this research lies in its theoretical approach, which uses the concept of *identité rimpang* to analyze colonial works, offering a fresh perspective on colonial music studies as a dynamic cultural dialogue arena. This research enriches the discourse on cultural appropriation in art by showing how local elements can not only be creatively adapted but also serve as a means of honoring cultural roots. Additionally, this research presents a hermeneutic-based methodology that can be applied to analyze other artworks in both colonial and postcolonial contexts.

However, this research has limitations in terms of access to broader historical documentation, particularly related to the background of the work's creation and the reception of indigenous audiences at the time. Future research could include a comparative exploration between Seelig's works and other colonial composers, such as Constant van de Wall, to expand understanding of the cultural dynamics within colonial music. Moreover, studying the reception of local music by indigenous communities and how this cultural heritage is preserved today would also be a worthwhile area for exploration.

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