



GAMBUS LUTE TYPES



(BORNEO)

Version	Date	On line	Updates	
V1.0	Nov. 2016	yes	Creation	dHerouville P.
V2.0	Apr. 2017	yes	Creation	dHerouville P.
V3.0	May. 2020	yes	Creation	dHerouville P.

The **Gambus** designation nowadays took an unexplicit acception in the Indonesian archipelago, since the word became synonymous of “middle east-like lute” there. If the word is certainly rooted in the Yemeni name “Qanbus”, according to the homonymous lute of the Sana’an plateau, for sure, every current Indonesian avatars now embody various designs.

Three main categories of **Gambus** coexist Malaysia and Indonesia:

1. - **Gambus Hijaz**, a monoxyle, long necked lute. Now rare and hardly survives reportedly in Johor state, Sarawak (near Kuching), Sabah (Semporna, and seldom in Papar, Bongawan), Kalimantan (**panting** music in Benjarsin /Banjarmasin) and various districts of Sumatra districts : Bengkalis, Penyengat, Jambi, & Medan. The Panting lute is a tiny avatar in South and South-East Kalimantan.

In the East & South Kalimantan, the variant named “Panting” is unusually widespread and successful., so far. Unlike the Kutai (East Kalimantan), the banjarese standards are very flexible and the neck may not be hollowed.

2 - **Gambus Hadramawt**, a.k.a. « **Gambus Johor** », an **oud**-like lute. We describe the relevant process in the document named “process_malay_gambus_Vx.pdf” . This is famous in peninsular Malaysia as the « **Gambus Johor** », as this is appreciated there still when performing local avatars of the **Ghazal** musical performance. This can be found still in Johor state, Brunei, Sabah, Java , Sumatra, Madura, Sulu.

3- Bruneian monoxyle **Gambus Seludang** is a local crossover design family in Brunei and Sabah. Though often named “**Gambus Hijaz** “ , the bruneian making of “**Seludang** feature the typical 100% wooden soundboard - unlike the existing **Gambus Hijaz** and **Gambus Hadramawt** families. We describe the relevant process in the document named “process_malay_gambus_Vx.pdf”. Anyhow the acception of the term « **Seludang** » highly varies between Riau and Brunei - Sabah.

Now on the way to extinction in many places, the **Gambus Hijaz** lute is still (seldom) accompanying **Zapin / Jepen** dance (Ar. **Zafin**, a dance genre from Hadhramawt, still widespread in **Sawt**-like sessions in the Gulf countries) namely the local **Hamdolok** dance – Batu Pahat – and the **Zapin Banjar** - Kalimantan-. Considering that Johore’s **Ghazal** music now substituted **Gambus Hijaz** lute with **oud** in continental Malaysia, the relevant regional musical avatars for **Zafin & Gambus Hijaz** are nowadays **Hamdolok** (Batu Pahat), **Tingkilan** (Kutai tribesmen, south Kalimantan) and **Panting-Banjar** (south Kalimantan and surroundings of Benjarsin/Banjarmasin city). The name **Banjar** echoes obviously “**Banjarmasin**”, which is an harbor-city, situated south of Kalimantan.

IN BORNEO

Considering the size of the island, the spread of the lute is not amazingly not homogenous. In one hand we observe some distinctive sources dating back to the introduction by the makassareses (16th century).

- Kota Baru, Paser & the Paser hinterland
- The “kutai” shore (Samarinda, Penajam, Balikpapan, Kaman) and the Mahakam valley: Tenggarong, Kotabaru.
- The “bajao” shore & hinterland: Berau regency, Semporna, ...
- Brunei and the western Sabah
- The coast of Sarawak: Kuching, Saratok, Pontianak
- Kumai , Sukamara & Kota Waringin

In a second hand, some secondary sources appeared later, with a noticeable footprint of the Abdoel Molok theater art in the late 19th century..

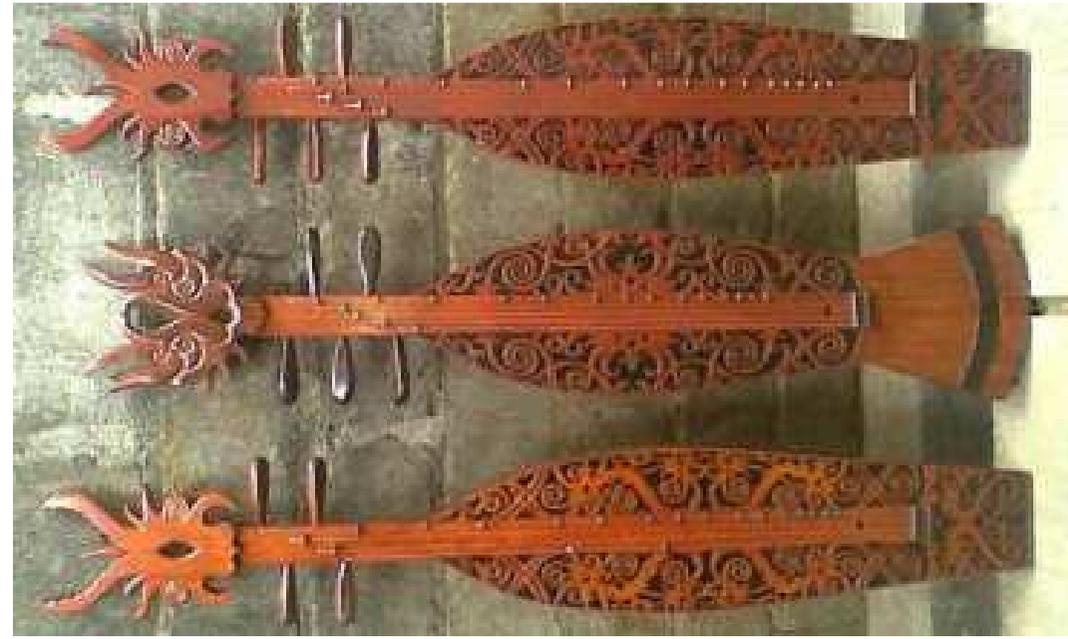
- Banjarmasin and the Sungai valley (Barikin, Barabai)
- Central Kalimantan: Sanggau, Rantau

Having said that the typical use of the **Gambus** varies a lot, pending on the history of ethnics and style.

1. Accompaniment of the arab –like style (Zapin) in Brunei, Sabah, Kotabaru, Pontianak, kumai, Sukamara, Kota Waringin & Paser
2. Accompanying the collective dance (Tari Ronggeng) in Paser.
3. Accompanying the theater plays (**Mamanda**) & related dances in the lower Sungai & Banjarmasin. Accompanying the related dances in the upper Sungai, such as Barikin, Barabai, Haruyan (province of Banjarmasin).
4. Accompanying a late variant of the kronchong, namely: the tingkilan all over the Kutai shore (East Kalimantan).



A tiny **Gambus** lute (Brunei) .



The **Sape** lute (Kalimantan). **Panting** makers used to borrow their flower carvings



A modern **Gambus** lute of the Bruneian in West Sabah.



The influence of the 2 strings **Kacapi** lute (Kalimantan) is obvious on **Panting**

Having said that, the available technologies anticipated a shut of the hollowed bodies, with a distinctive defiance vs the monoxyle design of the Arabs. In spite of “*The One & thousands Nights*” rooted **Mamanda** theater, the aesthetical evocation of the Arabic way of life seem nowadays more tied here with imagination than with any realistic imitation. At the end of the day, the trends below have been recently observed in the lutery of Kalimantan:

1. Would any hollowed neck be needed, the monoxyle structure of the gambus lute turned optional i(Banjarmasin & Sabah). The banjarese proto-industrial lutery optimized some “standardized” production of the components. Plain wood neck and carved soundbox may be produced in parallele with optimized shapes, and fast assembly.

A significant consequence is a recent produsion of bowl, and then: 8-shaped soundboxes regardless to any fluidity from the soundbox with the neck. This latter body shape possibly caused metaphoric names for such variant, such as **Putri Kurung** (“Rounded” lady), **Putri Bungsu**, (« *young lady* ») to be compared with the previous **Putri Mayanguk** (virgin lady), **Mayang** (virgin) design.

Moreover this break-down approach lead to alternate, unseen subassemblies, linking now the soundbox with such a plain wood (half-)neck, thanks to a variety of shaped interfaces, such as dovetail, mortises or V-shape.

2. Excepting the kutai people (East Kalimantan), the new trends in style caused also an inflation of string choirs. Overall, the peghead are now featuring up to 12 strings, then the modern guitar pegs are welcome for such a layout of the pegbox.

3. The existing tradition of wood carving in Kalimantan caused a decorative digression of the lutery artwork, also involves the overall appearance of the lute, such as its colorful paintings, much regardless to the arab forecomers. The soundboard might be also be decorated sometimes with wooden carvings.

4. The existing tradition of wood carving in Kalimantan caused various innovations in the art of peghead (malay **Kepala**). These latter components are much involved in such an expression of the skills of the lutemaker, as a decorative wood carver actually. Such an artwork clearly echoes surrounding arts of house decorating and **Sape** lutery. As a tiny, light instrument for stage use, the aspect of the **panting** of South Kalimantan may alternatively meet various influential aesthetics of the Indonesian cultures of Borneo and around, such as:

- a. Patterns of the surrounding theater: flower or puppet, mask-shaped ornamentations
- b. Various decoractive patterns from the alternate lutery, such as the flat-boxed **Sape** lute from NW Kalimantan. The carved pattern of “flower” (Sarawak) is prominent in the peghead artwork of the Kalimantan.

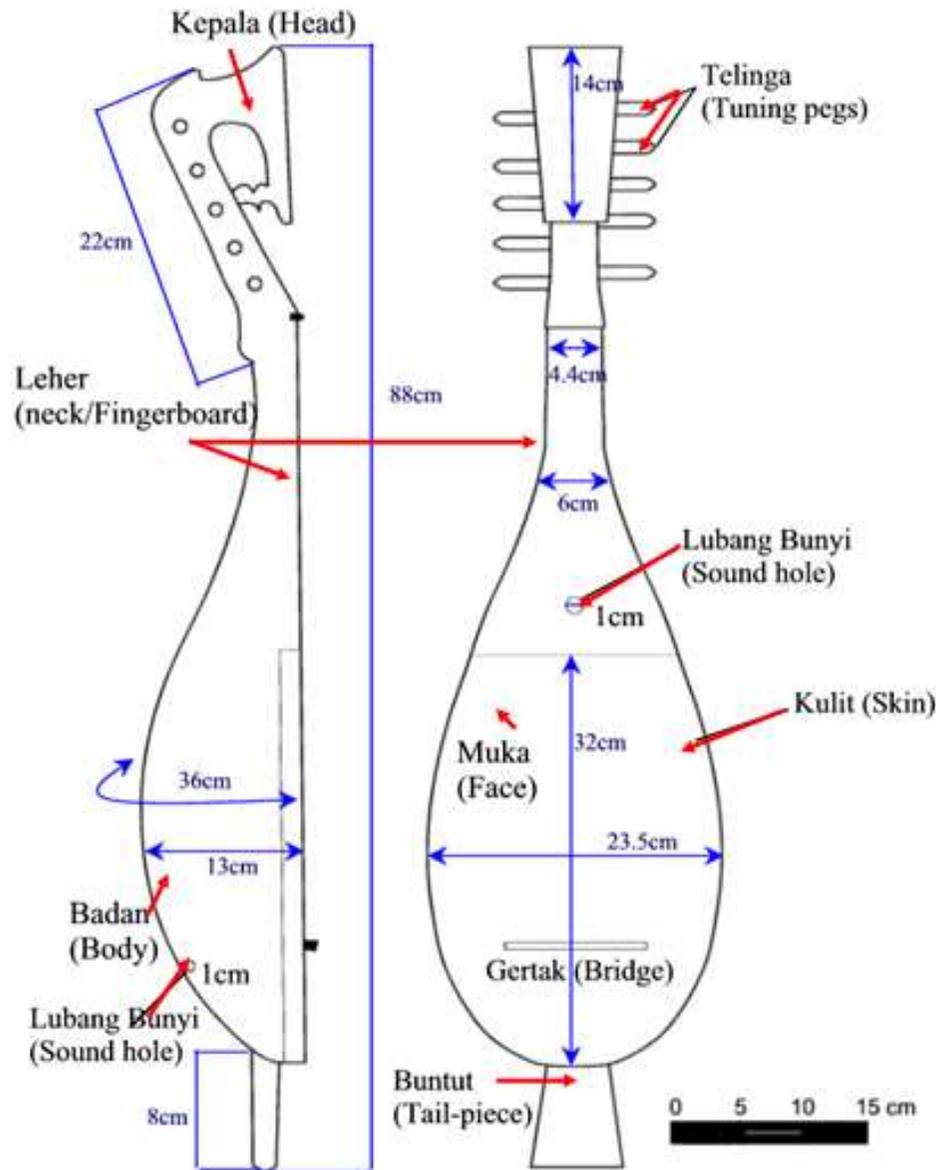
- c. Some decoractive patterns, such as flowers or bird head, are obviously borrowed from the artwork of the flat-boxed **kacapi** lute, in central Kalimantan
- d. Some unexpected developpments of the well-known pattern of “Naga” / dragoon (Riau) in the artwork of the peghead. Basically, there is an infinity of nuances ranging from Lotus petals to a teethed dragoon face, and all are virtually met in the production of Kalimantan.
- e. Some carving developpments of the well-known pattern “bird” (Sabah, Sarawak) in the artwork of the peghead (malay **kepala**).
- f. Sometimes meeting some details of a scaled-down, middle-eastern oud, such as the rose, the rounded soundbox and the S-shaped pegbox. This influence occurs very seldom and exclusively in the coastal areas, such as Kota Bahru (S-E Kalimantan).

PANTING as a MUSIC STYLE

As a musical style, the formalization of the Panting-Banjar genre doesn’t date back later than the mid 1970’s, since this possibly merged actually various remnant reliefs of previous folklores & musicals. Actually it used reportedly to accompany **Gandut** dance and **Zapin**. A former musical forecomer was the **Kasenian Bajapin**, whose original line up (1973) was 1 **Gambus melayu/ Gambus Hadramawt** lute, 1 **Babun** percussion, 1 gong. Violin is reported to have substituted the former Triangle idiophon. Now the usual line up features alternately 2 **Gambus melayu/ Gambus Hadramawt** lutes , 1 locally made **Cello**, or, alternately, 1 **rebana** viele, 1 **marwas** –like drum, and some additional mandolinas, or 1 **Panting** (a.k.a. **Gambus melayu/ Gambus Hadramawt**), 1 violin, 1 **Kendang** framedrum. From 1979, one can observe additional **talinting** and **giring giring** musical instruments, then sound systems. In 1977, the vocal repertoire is reported to have been infected by **Banjar** language sung songs. In the early 1980’s it has grown up as an identitary genre and every district in Kalimantan now have an official ensemble at least. The proper variant of the **Zapin** dance for **Panting Banjar** in Kalimantan is named **Zapin Sigam**.

The Tingkilan/ Betingkilan genre is the exclusive chamber music among the Kutai people (Kalimantan) Now the usual line up features alternately 2 **Gambus melayu/ Gambus Hadramawt** lutes with 1 locally made **Cello**, or, alternately, 1 **rebana** viele, 1 **marwas** –like drum, and some additional mandolinas. The instrumental music is named **Tingkilan**, and its vocal variant is named **Betingkilan**. This chamber music accompanies the **Zapin** dances for occasions, such as weddings, one performs such **Tingkilan** and **Zapin** dance. It seems that the genre is actually typical of the Kutai tribesmen of the Kalimantan.

This document summarizes endemic construction techniques , mostly for the skin-boarded **Gambus Hijaz** lute of Malaysia, namely **Gambus Melayu, Panting** or **Gambus Seludang** of Malaysia. About wood-boarded **Gambus** lute making, see alternate file



Malay name of the components , drawing and data from Larry Francis HILARIAN

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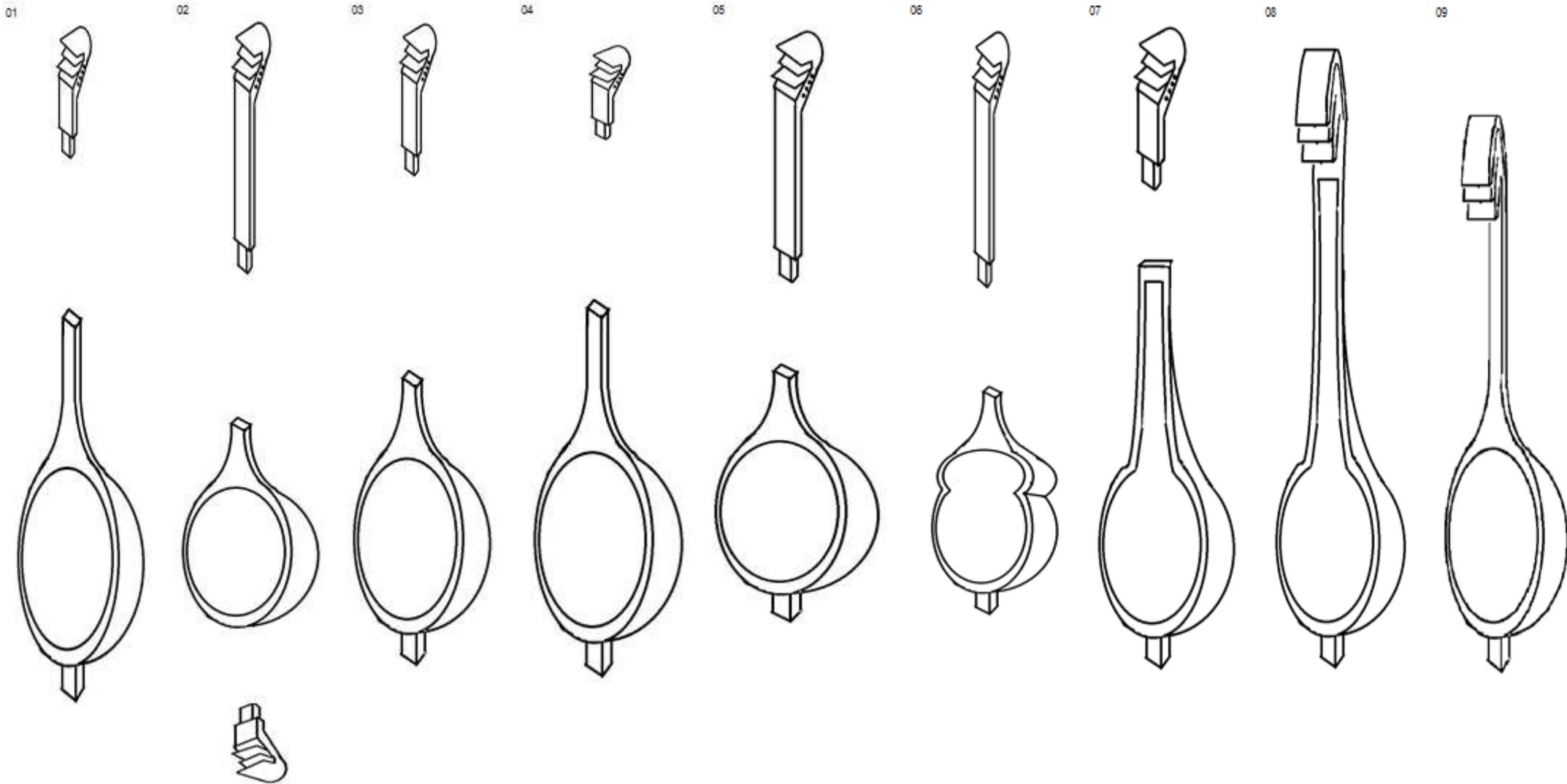
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PANTING LUTE (HARUYAN & BANJARMASIN) – BODY CONCEPT ASSY



Assy concepts n°01-05, 07 observed among the lutes by Wayang ALPI, in Desa Panggung, Haruyan (S. Kalimantan).

Assy n°06, monoxyle n° 08 concepts observed among the lutes by Farhul ANWAR, in Banjarmasin (S. Kalimantan).

Monoxyle concept n° 09 (plain neck) observed among the lutes by Rashiyah SYIR HAYATI, in Banjarmasin (S. Kalimantan).

Monoxyle n° 09 concepts observed among the lutes by Awang PESAR, in Bongawan (Sabah)

Monoxyle n° 08 concepts observed among the lutes by Malai Osman Ali, in Papar (Sabah)

GAMBUS LUTE (S-W KALIMANTAN) - OVERVIEW

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Items n°01 (southern Banjarmasin), n°02, 9-11 (Sukamara), n°05 (Desa Kubu in Kumai), n°12 (Pangkalan Bun, southern Banjarmasin) .

GAMBUS LUTE - S-W KALIMANTAN (1)

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Items n°08 (Kumai, SW Kalimantan) , n°09-14 (Sukamara) .

GAMBUS KECIL LUTE (S-W KALIMANTAN) - OVERVIEW

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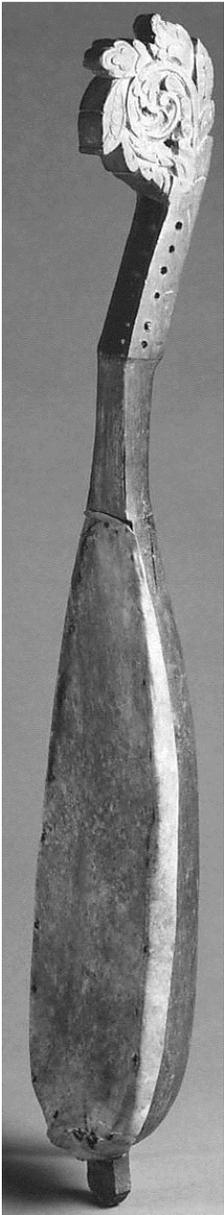
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Items n°16, 17, 18 (Sukarama), n°17 by JALI (Sukamara), n°19-22 by KITAMA (Kotawaringin Lama).

GAMBUS LUTE – W. SABAH & SARAWAK (1)

01



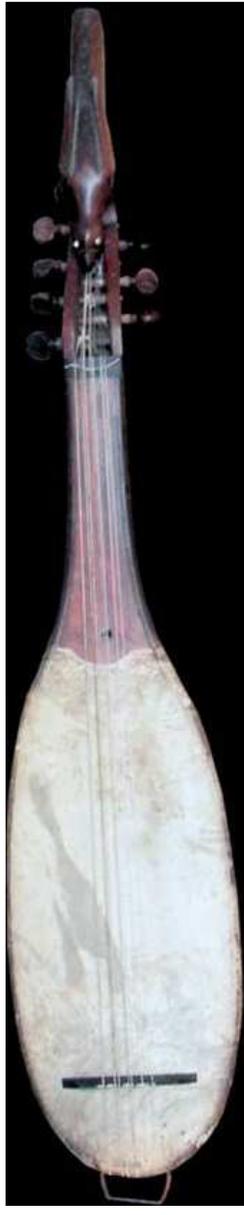
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Every items n°01-02,07 (Sarawak) , n°03 (Meliau, Kalbar), n°04 (Sabah), n°05 (Brunei), , n°06 (unknown dayak)

GAMBUS LUTE – W. SABAH & SARAWAK (1)

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Every items n°08 (Sabah) , n°09 (Sekadau, W. Kalimantan),, n°13-14 (Sarawak)

GAMBUS LUTE – W. SABAH & SARAWAK (3)

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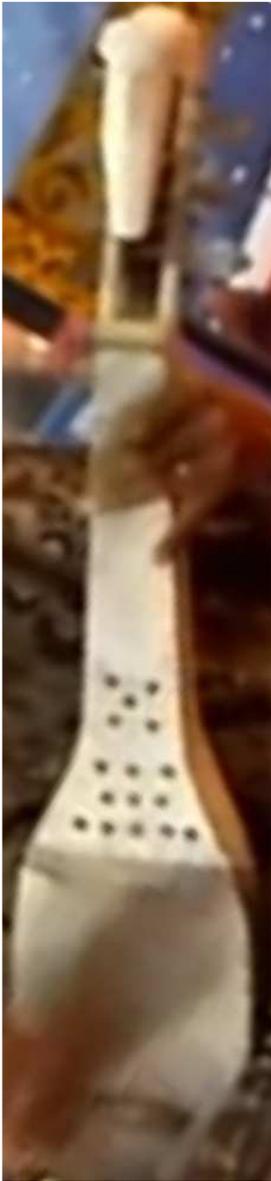


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Items n°17 (possibly central Kalimantan), n°18, 19, 20 (Kuching, Sarawak) , n°21 (Meliau, Kalbar)

GAMBUS LUTE – WEST KALIMANTAN (1)

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ITEMS n°15 (Ust. Abba, near Sauggau), n°16-20 from Sauggau (central Kalimantan), and n° 21 (Sauggau)

GAMBUS LUTE - WEST KALIMANTAN (2)

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ITEMS n°22-23 from Sanggau (central Kalimantan), *pandolin* n°24 (Kalimantan), n°27 (Sekadau, central Kalimantan)

GAMBUS LUTE - WEST KALIMANTAN (3)

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ITEMS n°29 from Sanggau (central Kalimantan), n°31 (Nanga Pinoh, Upper Kapuas Melawi, W. Kalimantan), n°32 (Sanggau)

GAMBUS LUTE - WEST KALIMANTAN (4)

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Item n°36-37 (Sanggau, W. Kalimantan) n°38 (Pontianak), n°39 (Landak, W. Kalimantan), n°40 (Sepauk, Central Kalimantan)

GAMBUS LUTE - WEST KALIMANTAN (4)

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Item n°41-42 (Sanggau, W. Kalimantan) , n°43-44 (W. Kalimantan, feat. Sape lute –type pegbox) , n°45 (Nanga Taman, W. Kalimantan), n°46 (Linkugan, West Sabah),.

GAMBUS SELUDANG LUTE - SABAH (1)

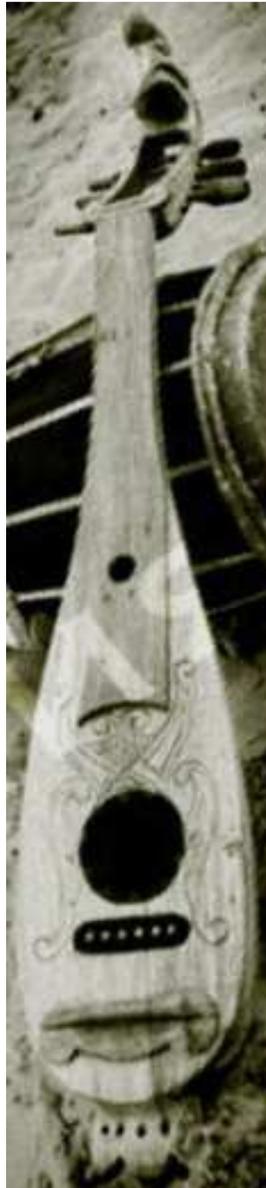
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ITEMS n°01 (Kota Kinabalu), n°03 (West Sabah), 04-06 (Bongawan, Sabah), n°07 (Brunei)

GAMBUS SELUDANG LUTE - SABAH (2)

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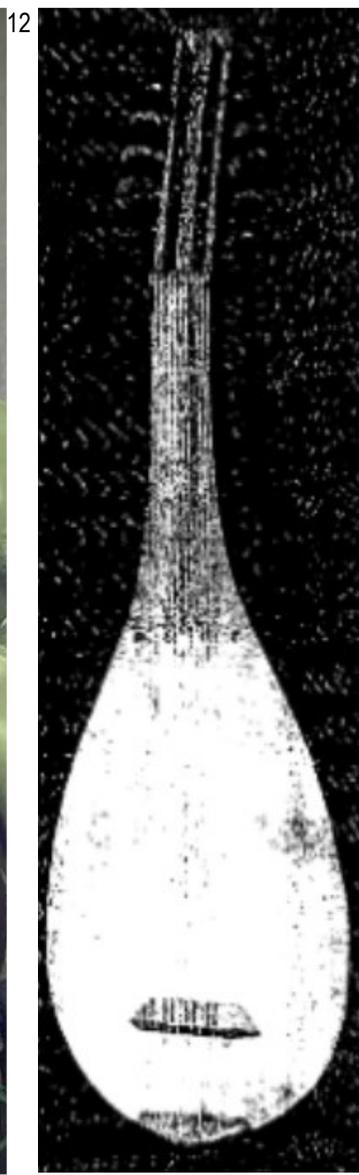
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ITEMS n°01 (Kinarut, Sabah), n°07 (Awang PESAR, Bongawan, Sabah)

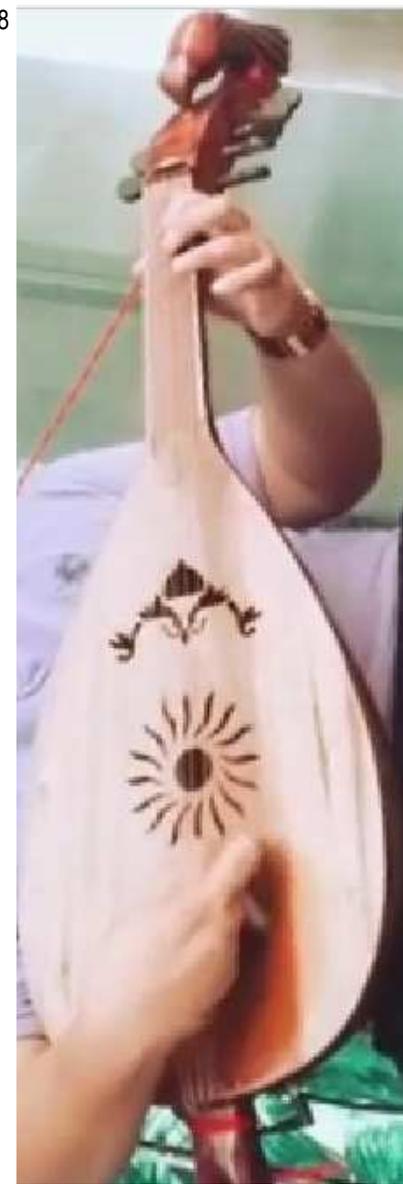
GAMBUS SELUDANG LUTE - SABAH (3)

08 09



Item n°08 (Tanjung Selor, N. Kalimantan), n°11 (Sabah) , n°09, 10 (Awang PESAR, Bongawan, Sabah). n°12 (Brunei), n°13 (Weston, Sabah)

GAMBUS SELUDANG LUTE - SABAH (4)



Item n°14, 18 (Sabah), n°16 (Malai Osman Ali, Papar, Sabah) , n°15 (Papar)

GAMBUS SELUDANG LUTE - NORTH KALIMANTAN

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Item n°47 (Sabah ?) n°48-50 (Tanjung Selor, N. Kalimantan), n°51,52 (Tarakan, E. Kalimantan),

GAMBUS SELUDANG LUTE - NORTH KALIMANTAN

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Item n°55 (Salim Batu, N. Kalimantan), n°56,57 (Tarakan, E. Kalimantan),

GAMBUS KECIL LUTE (1) – SABAH



06

Scaled downed lutes: Items n°01-02 (Bruneians of Kalimantan), n°03-04 (Bongawan, Sabah), n°05 (Banjarmasin, S. Kalimantan),

GAMBUS KECIL LUTE (2) – SABAH & W. KALIMANTAN

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Scaled down lutes: Items n°07-08 (Brunei), , n°09 (Kutai. E. Kalimantan) n°10 (E. Kalimantan),

GAMBUS KECIL LUTE (3) – SABAH & W. KALIMANTAN

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Scaled downed lutes: Items n°12 (Banjarmasin, S. Kalimantan), n°13 (Bekut, W. Kalimantan), n°16 (Paser),