



Chapter 7
The Instrument of
Rebana Kercing



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THE REBANA KERCING DRUM



The Rebana Kercing performing art is an invaluable cultural heritage that has been inherited for many generations. As mentioned in previous chapters, the performing art requires the involvement of drum players who use drums or tambourines to produce the pleasant sound of “kercing” when played. The term Rebana Kercing occasionally refers directly to such tambourines used when performing.

Visually, Rebana Kercing is a single-face frame drum or a membranophone made of *nangka* (jackfruit) wood and goat skin, attached with pairs of small copper cymbals or zills. It is similar to the western tambourines and produces a ringing sound or “kercing”, differentiating it from *kompang*. The Rebana Kercing is mainly similar to the *terbang* in Indonesia and the *duf* of middle-eastern countries. The drum comes in two sizes, 12- and 14-inch in diameter, measured from the drum head, or *muka*. Rebana Kercing belongs to the broader *rebana* family of the Malay world, which is associated with religious vocal performances such as *hadrah*, *maulid*, *qasidah*, and *marhaban*. The goat skin (called *kulit* or *belulang*) is stretched over the larger opening of the *baluh* or round wooden frame and attached using metal tacks through a strip of red cloth over the circumference of the body (Hazirah & Ahmad Zakaria, 2020).