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The Case of Minangkabau

Suryadi

1. Regional recording industries are a major site for ethnic cultural (re)production in Indonesia. Embracing elements of global culture and using modern foreign-made recording media technologies, they tend to exclusively involve practitioners of the ethnicity in question. *This thesis.*
2. One of the most significant factors facilitating the emergence of the West Sumatran recording industry in the early 1970s was the considerable political recovery of the homeland of the Minangkabau people in Central Sumatra after the terrible suffering due to the PRRI civil war, during which the rebellion was crushed militarily by Soekarno’s regime in 1961. *This thesis.*
3. The aesthetic alteration of *pop Minang* marked by the advent of *pop Minang baru* (new *pop Minang*, which is musically, lyrically, and linguistically different to its “standard” counterpart) has engendered debate about the essence of Minangkabau music. This debate in turn has redefined the sense of Minangness. *This thesis.*
4. In all three categories of West Sumatran recording industry products (*pop Minang*, Minangkabau verbal arts, and media-bound genres) one encounters the specific Minangkabau folk emotion of melancholy (*ratok*) and Minangkabau migrants’ longing for home. *This thesis.*
5. Reproduced sounds of Minangkabau culture continue to accumulate over time, from the era of the gramophone to the current VCD era, and these preserved sounds from the past have significantly contributed to the moulding of local identity. *This thesis.*
6. One historical factor that is overlooked in the study of the European colonization of Indonesia is the socio-cultural and political impact of the technology of sound replication.
7. One shortcoming of contemporary studies of oral tradition in Indonesia is the scholarly lack of attention for the effects, structural and social, of mediation of oral tradition in commercial recordings.
8. Most Facebook groups in Indonesia are highly regionalized and ethnicized, and demonstrate the importance in Indonesia of the culture of orality and communality.
9. One of the real challenges faced by authoritarian regimes in Southeast Asian countries is to maintain the effectiveness of modern media as instruments of state propaganda.
10. The multitude of visual images parodying and making jokes about Indonesia’s president and other high state officials in social media, in the atmosphere of media freedom that has followed political reforms in the country, suggest declining public trust in the government and the eroding of its authority.
11. Sound recording technology in the 21st century has not only brought about economic, technical, ideational, practical, and environmental changes, but has also triggered political, social, and individual discord, and has raised distrust, even among very close friends and political allies. (Reflections on the case of whistleblower Edward Snowden.)
12. One of a teacher’s profound challenges nowadays is to prevent ill-disciplined students from connecting with social media during class meetings. This takes their minds to the virtual world, leaving only their physical bodies in the classroom. When such students are addressed by the teacher, they snap out of their virtual journey like someone awakened by a nightmare in the middle of the night.