

MAPPING MINANGKABAU TRADITIONAL MUSIC:
STRATEGY FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL CULTURE

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The focus of this paper, entitled Mapping the Traditional Music of Minangkabau: A Strategy for The Protection of National Culture, is to chart the presence of traditional Minangkabau music for its potential from the standpoint of geo-cultural and geo-political aspects. The results of this research are central to efforts to preserve and develop traditional music in Minangkabau. Developments in technology, media, and open ideology of MEA impact on the process of growth, development, and continuity of Minangkabau musical tradition in the face of the pressures of modern culture which is oriented towards capitalism and industrial culture. The growth of industrial culture enhances the strategy of preservation, development, and maintenance of Minangkabau traditional musics to compete with other popular culture art forms. The culture war between popular and traditional culture has attained a level which is disturbing. The strategy includes mapping, taking inventory, reconstructing, and revitalizing traditional musics so that they can exist as a political identity for Minangkabau society. The mapping can be done via Geocultural and Geopolitical mean. The method used is qualitative. Data was collected through library resources, observation, interviews, and documentation as well as through fieldwork using a phenomenological approach. This work reveals the importance of “arts mapping” in the strategy of maintaining people's cultural identity rooted in the Geocultural and the Geopolitical.

Keyword: Minangkabau traditional Music, Mapping, Geocultural, Geopolitical.

INTRODUCTION

The Republic of Indonesia is a nation which has a wide array of regional and local cultural art forms which are a source of national pride and spread throughout the country. The *ASEAN Community Declaration* is intended to provide more strength, accelerate, and implement cooperation between ASEAN member countries. In fact, the ASEAN Community itself has three pillars in its fundamental conception: 1. Community in politics, security and law (ASEAN Political Security Community); 2. Cooperation in the economic sector (ASEAN Economic Society); and 3. Cooperation in the sociocultural sector (ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community).

Cooperation in the sociocultural field has led to an ideological war which has in turn resulted in a blurring of geocultural and geopolitical boundaries, hybridity of political identity. The free market on one hand impacts to strengthen national identity, and simultaneously results in the adoption of global culture as a threat to national culture. Arts and culture, especially traditional music has the potential to become a shield which can become an internal motivating factor in presenting and realizing political culture.

In the fact of several cross-cultural phenomena between cultures there will emerge an ideological war as well as the compelling pressures of modern cultures which are oriented towards capitalism and industrial culture in this era of information and technology. Thus, Indonesians must take a strategy role in protecting arts and culture as a national asset. One of these strategies is to remap, preserve, revitalize, and reconstruct those arts. An open ideology becomes a point of potential degradation of the regional cultural identity which has its own high symbols, values, meaning and philosophy.

Historically, Minangkabau music has experienced dynamic change, marginalization, and development in tandem with the developmental growth of civil society. In order that this cultural inheritance shall not be lost without a trace, without inheritors, without any records it is necessary to undertake mapping, creation of literature, inventories¹ and documentation. Though much productive research has been done by students, researchers and university faculty, this work has not been introduced widely to society. In this case surely it is hoped that Minangkabau tradition which still exists and is developing will be documented, as well as those which have already shown to be heading for extinction.

DISCUSSION

Mapping Traditional Music in Terms of The Geocultural and Geopolitical

Mapping is one type of step in the arena of documentation or recording of data in relation to graphical positioning and the locations of cultural objects and their environments. The activity of mapping is intended to uncover a picture of the situation of cultural objects which can be used as an instrument of establishing further decisions in relation to aspects of preservation. One of the cultural objects which is deemed important for mapping is the traditional music of Minangkabau².

Mapping the traditional music of Minangkabau is based on the concepts of Geoculture and Geopolitics has not gotten special attention in the past, even has been ignored, such that the limits of study in an academic sense has not been identified. Geoculture originates from two words: “Geo” in the sense of geography meaning a space occupied on the earth, and is closely related with the interrelations between humans and their environment.

Mapping studies based in the geocultural sense of Minangkabau will encounter difficulties from the standpoint of the philosophy and sociocultural aspects of that society. Regarding maps of the Minangkabau area in previous times compared with the perceptions of people today, it turns out that the map is far more expansive than the province of West Sumatra. This is because carriers and users of Minangkabau tradition are beyond those borders. This fact is expressed in the following Minangkabau *tambo*:

First opinion: *sajak dark rink nan balaua, siluluak punai mati, siranagak nan badankuang, buayo putih daguak, taratak aie hitam, sampai ka durian nan ditakuak rajo.* Second opinion: *Dari riak nan badabua, sehiliran pasia panjang bayang sampai sialang balantak basi, gunuang patah sambilan, lalu ka durian di takuak rajo.* Third opinion: *sajak durian ditakuak rajo, sialang balantak bai, buayo daguak, siranagak nan badangkang, sampai taratak air hitam, sampai riak nan badabua, sampai Indropuro, sampai ka siak Indragiri, hinggo sipisak pisau hanyuik, sampai sikilang air bangih.*¹

The Minangkabau region historically consisted of two main areas, namely *luhak* dan *rantau*. (1923)⁴, The term *luhak* or location originally was inhabited by the Minangkabau ethnic ancestors known as *Luhak Nan Tigo* which consists of: 1. *Luhak Tanah Data*; 2. *Luhak*

¹ Ediwar, 1999. “Perjalanan Kesenian Indang di Padang Pariaman, Sumatera Barat”. Tesis. Universitas Gadjah Mada Yogyakarta. p. 35

Agam; and 3. *Luhak Limo Puluah*. All three *Luhak* were situated in the area *Darek* Minangkabau which represents the origin of Minangkabau society, customs, and system of government according to tradition. The boundaries of the site of these *Luhak* has no relation to the administrative boundaries of several regencies which use the same names today, including Tanah Datar Regency, Agam Regency and Lima Puluh Kota Regency⁵.

The Rantau area is a new location for ethnic Minangkabau migrants who moved out of *Luhak Nan Tigo* in search of new living areas. The migratory area encircles *Luhak Nan Tigo* all the way to the Minangkabau coastal area and even includes a small portion of Riau Province, a small portion of Jambi Province, and part of the Mandailing-Natal Regency in the Province of North Sumatra. These migratory areas are also referred to as *rantau sekitar* (*dakek*) dan *rantau jauh*. Migrants from *Luhak Tanah Datar* such as the Pagu river area, Indrapura, the southern coast (Bandar Sepuluh), parts of Padang Pariaman, Padang; Rantau Agam are found around Tiku, Air Bangis, Padang Nunung, sebagian Padang Pariaman.⁷

On this matter Rasyid Manggis has stated that there is a close relational connection between *luhak* and *rantau* which relates to customary regions.⁸ Mapping and taking data on music based on geoculture can begin from the *nagari-nagari* which are the smallest republican areas in the Minangkabau geocultural government. The concept of ownership of traditional music is still maintained and influences the existence of traditional music, which is not known to be the property of any individual, but rather the common property of the society within a *nagari*⁹

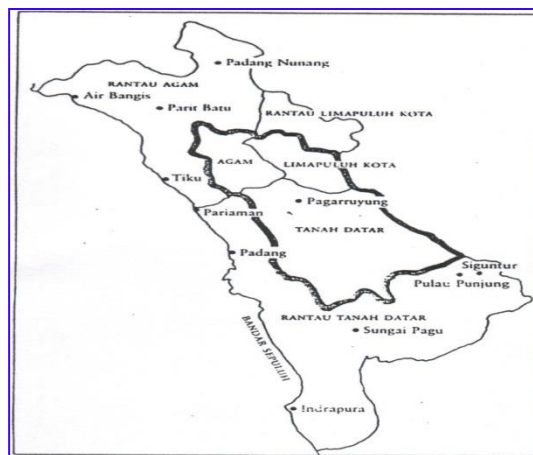


Figure 1

MAP of Darek and West Sumatra
(Dok. Tsuyushi Kato) thn?

The same applies to mapping of traditional music based on geopolitics. Geopolitics derives from two roots, 'geo' and 'politic'. To discuss this, it is necessary to understand the connection generally understood between geography and politics. Geo means earth, and politics refers to matters which unite an independent society (Wikipedia). In the territorial context the geopolitical will relate to the regional function and range of interactions of regions in the hierarchy of actors: national, international, bay areas, provinces, regency and below. It means that geopolitics is understood as studying the strategies and politics of a geographical area to include location, area and natural resources which are found there. At the very least the geopolitics has four developmental aspects, namely: geographical situation, politics and strategies, reflexive relations between geography and politics, and matters of decision making.¹⁰

Based on the above the mapping of music based on the geopolitical with relate to the areas under the aegis of the government of the Province of West Sumatra which share borders to the north with North Sumatra, to the south with Bengkulu Province, to the east with Riau Province, and to the West with the Indian Ocean. The provincial areas also are divided further into Regency/City, and Districts. There are 18 regencies/cities in West Sumatra grouped eight and six.

Based on the two concepts above, the mapping will be completed with an inventory of music based on the geocultural and geopolitical locations. Inventory here is meant also as a strategy for protecting and conserving Minangkabau traditional music. Now there is much Minangkabau traditional music which still lives and develops. However, we are devoid of data in the form of an inventory. Surely this mapping study and inventory of traditional music will contribute an enriching of knowledge which will be useful to parties interested in studying this subject further.

Traditional Music Influenced by Agrarian Culture

Minangkabau traditional music influence by agrarian culture is music that lives and develops among people whose livelihood derives from farming. Their lives are completely

determined in customary practices of Minangkabau society. Customs to them are something that must be adhered to collectively to create a feeling of togetherness. In tandem with that the arts for them also reflect closely that communal sense. They present the arts also for common needs in the customary practices, not for individual ones. The artists are members of agrarian society who are entwined in the norms that apply to that society and which are one with the activities of the local society. When they are not playing traditional music (theater music, dance, *bakaba* and others), they are likely farmers, fishermen, or businessmen. They are nonetheless not removed from the expressive restraints of their society which are based on the living values according to the customary system. This is an important aspect of agrarian culture.¹¹

Considering the above points traditional music which is born in the influence of agrarian culture represents a reflection of that agrarian society which in turn is closely connected with the traditions of that society. Symptoms of this can be known from earlier times, when arts did not function solely as entertainment or elements for customary rituals, but also functioned as emblems of social status. A *penghulu* (village headperson) would feel below other *penghulu* if within his domain there were no arts practitioners, because arts activities would be held at least once a year.

At least three characters of Minangkabau traditional music can be identified based on the technique of playing: 1. Traditional wind music (*saluang, sampelong, bansi dan pupuik*); 2. Traditional percussion music, both melodic and rhythmic (*talempong pacik, talempong duduak, gandang tambua*); 3. Traditional bowed strings (*rabab darek, rabab pesisir, rabab piaman, dan rabab badoi*); 4. Traditional plucked strings (*kucapi payakumbuh*). These genres of music are closely related with the Minangkabau agrarian culture. The development of this music is often tied to agricultural activities, to help encourage people who are working in the rice fields, in other fields, and after a harvest period.

Traditional Music Influenced by Islam

Minangkabau traditional music with major influences from Islamic culture has very different characteristics from the arts which existed before the arrival of Islam. Texts which are sung in recitation always present a pronounced Islamic character. If they do not relate the life of Nabi Muhammad, they surely recount the details of religion. The dance movements tend to a *bersyaf* sitting position while playing rebana.

After the Islamic religion developed in Minangkabau the rebana instrument was adapted together with other Minangkabau instruments. Acculturation is a major trait in Minangkabau Islamic arts. Different types of rebana produced by society became distinctive features in Surau style music. So also, is the case of dance, where dance movements brought in from outside were merged with Minangkabau pencak silat movements, thus making these into traditional Minangkabau arts.¹²

Minangkabau traditional music influenced by Islam is often referred to as *gaya surau*. Surau style traditional music which is quite popular includes *salawat dulang*, *dikie rabano*, *barzanji*, dan *indang*. These art forms originated in the practices of surau students studying Islamic religion. Islamic teachings were conveyed through these arts, such as praise to Allah, extolling Nabi, and his life, etc. Arts in the genre surau at first were studied in the surau environment alone and the main lessons were in Islamic religion. Subsequently they were given function also to celebrate Islamic rituals, such as Maulid Nabi Muhammad, Isyra` Mikraj, Nuzulul Qur`an, and others.¹³

Traditional Music Influenced by popular

The development of popular music in Indonesia had a major influence on the life of Minangkabau traditional music. Popular music has dominated the stages of entertainment in several contexts in West Sumatra, as for example Dangdut and *musik Pop*.

With the emergence of this “new culture” Minangkabau traditional music artists and popular artists to the initiative to include popular music melodies into performances of traditional music. Nowadays songs which are popular such as pop Minang and dangdut are perceived as songs which can become part of the structure of Minangkabau music. Alongside with the emergence of these new collections all types of song melodies which are trendy or “top” in the society become part of their performances.¹⁴

Mauliy Purba and Ben M. Pasaribu in the book *Musik Popular* affirm that most of the popular music in the world has the same basic characteristics, that is, songs which are short, with musical features that are not too strange or difficult to accept, themes and atmosphere which is familiar to the target audience, and several systems and processes which guarantee innovation.¹⁵

Additionally, Ignas Klideden states that popular art that is often referred to as pop art tends to be viewed as art which goes astray from the cultural patterns which are established, in fact even said to be a premature cultural development. Because of this popular culture always appeals to products and cultural behavior which is construed not to be acceptable culture and is temporary in character.¹⁶

One type of traditional music influenced by popular culture is the *ensambel talempong goyang* which primarily consists of Minangkabau traditional musical instruments and electronic musical instruments (western). Traditional instruments which are melodic include *talempong*, *bansi* (a recorder type instrument), *sarunai* and others. Melodic electronic musical instruments include keyboard and electric guitar. Rhythmic musical instruments are *giring-giring*, set-drum and *gendang*. In its development, there is also *talempong goyang* which includes wind instruments such as saxophone, trumpet, dan trombone. *Talempong* musical instruments which are used for melodic functions in song introductions, interludes, and accompaniment for vocal melody (playing chords). Traditional Minang songs (*dendang*) and pop Minang is the primary material for performances of *talempong goyang*. Wind instruments function in melodic solos accompanied also by instruments such as melody guitar, keyboards, bass guitar, *gendang* and drums.

The combination of elements of traditional music with modern has produced a new style of musical format. The new nuances have made the music of *talempong goyang* as modern Minang music. The combining of traditional music and western music is intended to bring nuances of traditional music back to life amid modernization. The adjustment of musical pitches of *talempong* with western music creates an opportunity for the adjustment of songs which are accompanied, both songs originally from *dendang-dendang* Minang as well as pop Minang, *dangdut* and Melayu songs.¹⁷ Mapping traditional music influenced by popular culture which has a commercial orientation can be done with attention to the sources of the development of such music.

CONCLUSIONS

Minangkabau traditional music can be mapped. An inventory can be made, grouped according to geocultural and geopolitical categories. The unity of traditional music becomes

an asset with potential for supporting the political identity of its society. However today the open ideology of the market has produced an opportunity for competition between traditional culture and popular culture. The problem of maintaining traditional culture becomes an important issue to be developed in the context of creating the politics of culture and the politics of identity. Efforts can be made in two areas, namely mapping, creating inventories, reconstruction and revitalization of traditional music which grows and develops in Minangkabau.

Mapping of traditional music in Minangkabau can be done according to geocultural and geopolitical bases. The term *luhak*, that is the original location inhabited by the ethnic ancestors of Minangkabau, is known as *Luhak Nan Tigo* consisting of: 1. *Luhak Tanah Data*; 2. *Luhak Agam*, and 3. *Luhak Limo Puluah*. These three *luhak* are in the *darek area* of Minangkabau which represents the origin of the development of Minangkabau society customs and traditional system of government. Further the area of *rantau* which are new locations for the emigrations of ethnic Minangkabau away from the *Luhak Nan Tigo* in pursuit of new settlements. Areas of emigration are around the *Luhak Nan Tigo* still the *pasisia* Minangkabau, even including small parts of Riau Province, Jambi Province, and parts of the Mandailing-Natal Regency of the North Sumatra Province.

Mapping of Minangkabau traditional music based on the geopolitical will be concerned with areas which are situated in the area under the government of West Sumatra administratively governed by the government of the Republic of Indonesia into provinces, regencies, districts and nagari.

Thus, the mapping of traditional music will be found to have two bodies within those two areas with the categorization of Minangkabau traditional music according to genre and technique of performance: 1. Percussion tradition; 2. Wind instrument tradition; 3. String instrument tradition; 4. Plucked instrument tradition. Each type of music has similarities and differences in function and use.

Traditional music found today is still alive and developing. There is also some music which has experienced a rise and fall due to the absence of a generation which can continue to support it. Mapping has been done in both the *Luhak* and *Rantau* Minangkabau areas.

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ENDNOTES

1 Making an inventory is an important action to protect and preserve historical and cultural objects. At this time many tangible objects with have historical and cultural value have not been included in an inventory, both inventory of attributes as well as location of objects. The creation of basis of data on historical and cultural objects in an area is important to enable those involved in the protection of those objects.

2 Wikipedia

4 M. Joustra, 1923. *Minangkabau: Overzicht Van Land, Geschiedenis en Volk, s'Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff*, p.4

5 Tsuyushi Kato, 1982. *Matriliny and Migration: Evolving Minangkabau Traditions in Indonesia*. (Ithaca, .N.Y: Cornell University Press. Terj. Gusti Asnan dan Akiko Itawa). 2005, *Adat Minangkabau dan Merantau dalam Perspektif Sejarah*. Jakarta: Balai Pustaka.

6 Erlinda, 2012. *Diskursus Tari Minangkabau di Kota Padang*. Padang: Creatif Production. p. 67; Gusti Asnan dan Akiko Itawa, 2005.p 27.

7 Gusti Asnan dan Akiko Itawa). 2005, *Adat Minangkabau dan Merantau dalam Perspektif Sejarah*. Jakarta: Balai Pustaka. p. 4.

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16 Yon Hendri, "Perkembangan Dendang menjadi Lagu Pop Minang Sebuah Kajian Musikologis", *Tesis S2* (Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, 2000), 34

17 Suci Fitri, "Talempong Goyang: Fenomena Musik Bercitarasa Populer di Minangkabau". *Undergraduate thesis*, (Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia Padangpanjang, 2007), 53