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The Use of Minangkabau Folklore "Cindua Mato" in the Community Movement in Minangkabau and Batavia 1922-1939

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Abstract

The Minangkabau epic Cindua Mato embodies values of courage, justice, and resistance against oppression. During the late colonial period, this narrative evolved into a vital medium for galvanizing resistance and fortifying collective consciousness. This study analyzes the utilization of the Cindua Mato narrative between 1922 marking its early institutionalization as a modern fundraising tool and 1939, the final era of cultural mobilization prior to the Pacific War. Employing historical methods with primary sources from the Delpher archives, the research examines how this folklore served as a socio-political instrument in both the Minangkabau highlands and the diaspora in Batavia. The findings reveal a multifaceted application of the narrative: the elite utilized it to legitimize political sovereignty and cultural diplomacy, while the masses embraced it as a tool for inter-ethnic solidarity and nationalistic mobilization. A crucial bridge exists between the epic's "heroism" and functional "social charity" through the principle of gotong royong (mutual cooperation). The narrative's emphasis on sacrifice was recontextualized by movement organizers as a collective call for humanitarian fundraising and patriotic resistance. By purchasing tickets to these performances, the public was indirectly yet actively involved in supporting indigenous organizations and social welfare. This study underscores the efficacy of folklore as a strategic resource for community mobilization and identity preservation in a colonial context.

Keywords: *Folklore, Cindua Mato, Minangkabau, Batavia, Movement.*

Introduction

During the period of Dutch colonial rule, socio-political conditions were characterised by significant injustice and oppression. The populace existed in conditions of extreme poverty and social inequality, were subjected to onerous taxes, forced labour, and economic policies that prioritised Dutch interests. The Dutch colonial government's policies of political, economic and social colonization had a profound impact on the structure of Indonesian society. However, this suffering also triggered resistance and a spirit of struggle that ultimately became the basis for the struggle towards Indonesian independence. The various forms of struggles and movements that emerged over time covered various aspects, including armed struggle, resistance through education and ideology, and the utilization of local culture such as folklore.

Folklore, along with storytelling itself, constitutes an important methodological medium for examining forms of coloniality and understanding practical strategies of resistance. Narratives are embedded within relations of power and function as forms of representation that extend beyond simple depictions, reflecting particular perspectives rooted in specific sociocultural contexts. Storytelling also serves as a mechanism for connecting narrators and audiences while simultaneously influencing social, economic, and political transformation. Moreover, narratives operate as responses to dominant discourses, including those imposed by colonial powers, through interventions that challenge, disrupt, and renegotiate prevailing structures of meaning. Consequently, stories possess the capacity to generate radical forms of thought and collective movements that encourage individuals and communities to act by shifting or transforming the terrain of struggle (Clarke & Mullings, 2022). This dynamic is particularly evident in colonial spatial formations, where urban literature, heteroglossic expressions, indigenous voices, and local traditional narratives constantly competed for discursive influence (Manning, 2023).

Folklore also implies complex dimensions of politics and resistance. Central figures within narratives often become subjects of legends and folk songs, such as Sătbek Batyr in the oral traditions of Kazakh society (McGuire, 2024). Similarly, storytelling has been employed within Caribbean societies, particularly in Nalo Hopkinson's Midnight Robber (2000), which is regarded as a significant milestone in the decolonization of mainstream Western science fiction. The narrative employs values of solidarity among human communities and multiple species as decolonial tools for addressing oppression and unequal power relations while simultaneously offering hope for constructing a more equitable world (Su & Grydehøj, 2022). Within East Asian contexts, the stories of resilient female figures such as Tomoe Gozen from

Japan, Mulan from China, and Princess Bari from Korea have transcended mythological boundaries and entered real-life social discourse through their representation as courageous warriors and symbols of life and death. Their collective impact has stimulated ongoing dialogue concerning identity, empowerment, cultural resilience, inspiration, and a shared cultural legacy that transcends geographical, cultural, and temporal boundaries (Sung, 2025).

Thus, folklore possesses enduring power through its iconic figures in shaping discourses of heroism across cultures and generations. The character of Cindua Mato from Minangkabau, examined in this study, emerged from a popular oral tradition transmitted across generations, and the values embedded in the narrative were used by Minangkabau communities, both in their homeland and in migrant communities, as instruments for charitable movements and resistance against Western colonialism.

Guided by the Minangkabau philosophy "Adaik basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah" which signifies that customary practices are grounded in Islamic law and Islamic law is based on the Qur'an the use of the Cindua Mato folklore by Muslim Minangkabau communities in social and political movements may be interpreted as evidence of the productive capacity of Islamic civilization in appreciating the humanities and the arts. Similar patterns can be observed across broader Islamic civilizations, where artistic expressions including architecture, painting, music, literature, and other cultural forms have played significant roles in religious practices, social relations, and state formation (Nasr, 1987).

Within the Ottoman Empire, the emergence of "Turkish Drama" during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was fundamentally rooted in the practices of Ottoman minority communities, particularly Greek and Armenian groups adhering to Christian and Jewish traditions. Across three major phases of the late Ottoman period—the Tanzimat, Istibdat, and Meşrutiyet eras ethnic and religious minorities, despite being institutionally separated under the Ottoman millet system, generated profound cultural and literary influences that ultimately formed the foundations of Turkish drama and its subsequent development (Menemencioğlu, 1983; Çakırtaş, 2017).

Cindua Mato folklore is a prominent legend from Minangkabau that contains values of culture, heroism, and struggle. It recounts the tale of a hero named Cindua Mato, a dashing young man who is held in high esteem and renowned for his courage and strength. The narrative is set against the backdrop of tribal strife in Minangkabau, with Cindua Mato's family embroiled in the ensuing events. The narrative commences with Cindua Mato, a figure of noble descent, encountering a fall and defeat at the hands of a more powerful tribe. The narrative commences with a confrontation between Cindua Mato's family and a family from a rival tribe. This conflict ultimately culminates in the death of Cindua Mato's father. Driven by a desire for revenge, Cindua

Mato embarks on a mission to conquer his enemies. However, his endeavours are fraught with challenges and difficulties.

The narrative is renowned for its depiction of the bravery of Cindua Mato, who utilises his physical strength and combat proficiency to vanquish his adversaries. Additionally, it serves as a poignant exemplification of the paramountcy of values such as courage, loyalty, and familial bonds within Minangkabau society. The Cindua Mato narrative is replete with profound meanings and values, including: 1) Courage and Heroism: Cindua Mato exemplifies heroism, demonstrating a willingness to face and overcome enemies in order to maintain honor and family ties; 2) Loyalty and Family: The death of his father motivates Cindua Mato to seek vengeance, but the narrative also underscores the importance of loyalty to family and homeland; 3) Struggle and Sacrifice: Cindua Mato's arduous journey is replete with adversity, which underscores the significance of self-sacrifice in pursuit of a higher purpose. The narrative ultimately culminates in Cindua Mato's triumph over his adversaries, thereby underscoring the paramountcy of moral integrity, wisdom, and dignity in life. The Cindua Mato narrative is not merely an epic tale of adventure, but is replete with values that reflect the culture and life of the Minangkabau people.

The role of folklore in the formation and strengthening of community identity has been demonstrated in various studies. This phenomenon was particularly evident during the colonial period. During this period, folklore functioned not only as a form of entertainment, but also as a medium for the preservation of cultural values and as a medium of resistance against colonialism. The subsequent discussion will explore the manner in which folklore contributed to the strengthening of people's identities during the colonial period.

First, folklore functions as a conduit for the propagation of cultural values, morals, and traditions from one generation to the next (Yusnan, 2022). During the colonial period, folklore functioned as a conduit for the preservation and transmission of local teachings that were at risk of being eroded by the influence of foreign cultures introduced by the colonisers. A notable illustration of this phenomenon is the folklore of Cindua Mato, which disseminates profound moral messages concerning the significance of collective strength, fidelity, and perseverance. The act of engaging with folklores, whether as a listener or a narrator, facilitates the perpetuation of community identity in the face of external oppression.

Secondly, folklore is characterised by its tendency to incorporate elements of struggle and resistance to injustice. Folklores frequently contain elements of struggle and resistance to injustice. During colonial times, folklore functioned as a medium to cultivate a spirit of resistance among colonized communities (Vickers, 2013). People drew upon the narratives of heroes or

characters who fought the colonisers as symbols of resistance and courage. The function of folklore in this context is twofold: first, as a reminder of the existence of local heroes who fought colonialism, and second, to strengthen a sense of pride in local identity and history.

Thirdly, the maintenance of collective consciousness is of paramount importance in every society. Indeed, studies have demonstrated the pivotal role of folklore in shaping and fortifying the collective consciousness of a society by instilling its values. In the context of colonialism, where local identities and cultures were often marginalised or even destroyed, folklore served as a medium to maintain awareness of origins and preserve cultural distinctiveness (Geertz, 1981). Anderson (2020) work elucidates the pivotal role of folklore and local culture in the broader process of national identity formation. These narratives underscore the importance of solidarity, cohesion and resilience in the face of adversity. In the context of Dutch colonization, these narratives functioned as instruments to strengthen communal unity and increase the resilience of the local population in the face of external invaders.

Fourthly, folklore serves to foster national pride in the context of cultural heritage. The function of folklore is twofold in this respect: firstly, it serves as a medium for the preservation of historical memory; secondly, it functions as a catalyst for the cultivation of a sense of pride in cultural heritage (Hobsbawm, 1992). During the colonial period, numerous aspects of local culture were regarded as inferior by the colonisers. However, folklore provides a medium through which individuals can appreciate and value their own traditions. A notable example of this is the use of folklores, which often employ narratives of wisdom, strength and resilience to reinforce a sense of pride in local culture.

Folklores such as Cindua Mato functioned as a remarkably efficacious medium for fortifying the spirit of resistance against Dutch colonialism. By imparting values such as courage, justice and solidarity, and by offering readily comprehensible symbols of resistance, the narrative effectively fostered a shared consciousness and a sense of nationalistic pride. The reiteration and dissemination of this narrative in various forms has ensured the perpetuation of the spirit of resistance, enabling it to flourish amidst the oppressive colonial regime. The problem formulation that can be used as the focus of this research is as follows: "How did the use of the Cindua Mato folklore shape and strengthen the spirit of struggle of the Indonesian people during the Dutch colonization?".

Method

This research employs the historical research method, which comprises four stages: source collection or heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography (Gottschalk, 1986; Heller, 2023). The present study adopt-

ed a literature-based approach as the primary data collection technique. The research data sought were various archives, in the form of colonial reports, letters, books, journals, photographs and other materials. The sources were then searched on Google Scholar, Google Books, and prioritized on Delpher's website. In the domain of historical research, documents and writings are recognised as invaluable resources for the preservation and recording of historical events (Seignobos, 2015). Furthermore, the research analysis was conducted interactively, where the analysis process began with the collection of research data sources and ended with the reduction of data to its most salient elements. This process ensures the exclusion of redundant information, thus simplifying the analysis and increasing its precision. The final stage of the process is conclusion drawing (Sutopo, 2006). The final stage of the historical research process is historiography.

Regarding source criticism, considering that the primary data in this study were largely derived from Dutch archival sources accessed through Delpher, a methodological strategy was employed to balance perspectives by incorporating documentary sources from two distinct viewpoints: publications produced by Dutch actors and those generated by indigenous communities during the colonial period. These included organizational announcements, such as those of Minangkabau Saijo, as well as commentaries and reports from local newspapers, including Sinar Sumatra and Pandji Poestaka. Furthermore, the Cindua Mato narrative was not approached merely as a form of theatrical performance. However, it was interpreted as a complex medium of resistance narratives and cultural diplomacy in response to colonial domination.

Examining resistance through the lens of folklore constitutes a form of decolonial research methodology. Decolonial approaches seek to expose the inappropriate application of positivist, modernist, and universalist frameworks frequently employed in Western scholarship. Such approaches are generally grounded in constructivist principles and emphasize qualitative methods, including participatory action research, local knowledge systems, and the active involvement of indigenous communities and their lived experiences (Denscombe, 2025). Similar approaches have been applied in Turkey and Iran, where folklore-based research has helped preserve and promote the Kurdish language, which has historically faced pressure from state-led language assimilation policies in both countries (Bocheńska & Ghaderi, 2023).

Decolonial research employing folklore as a medium of resistance against colonialism also represents an effort to "revitalize" folklore for twenty-first-century generations, among whom traditional narratives are becoming increasingly marginalized. Such efforts serve to transmit moral values and strengthen processes of social identity formation. Nevertheless, these initiatives should be adapted to the educational needs and sociocultural con-

texts of contemporary generations. It can be achieved through the reinterpretation of existing folklore particularly narratives that were prominent among previous generations or through initiatives to develop new forms of folklore (Motinyane, 2022).

As a historical study, the temporal scope of this research was defined as 1922 to 1939. The selection of 1922 as the starting point was based on its significance as the initial phase of the institutionalization of Cindua Mato within modern public spaces during the colonial era. One of the key historical indicators was the establishment of the fiftieth-anniversary committee of Kweekschool Fort de Kock, which organized performances by Cindua Mato for cultural presentations and social fundraising activities. The endpoint of 1939 was selected because it represents the latest archival evidence identified regarding these events, while also marking the period immediately preceding the political transition associated with the expansion of Japanese influence within the colonial landscape of Indonesia.

The Use Of Minangkabau Folklore "Cindua Mato" In The Community Movement 1922-1939

The folklore "Cindua Mato", a product of Minangakabau culture, has been shown to impart significant values to people's lives. This folklore is not only documented in written form and transmitted through oral narratives, but it also serves as a cultural performance event. Its function extends beyond mere aesthetic purposes; the performance of this folklore serves as a social instrument for the Indonesian people in their struggle for survival during the colonial period.

Historical Record of Cindua Mato Performance in Minangkabau Land 1922-1934

In the course of a meeting convened at Fort de Koek to deliberate the arrangements for the Kweekschool's 50th anniversary celebrations in 1923, Mr. Scholte[1] delivered a tribute to the Kweekschool students and Mr. Th. A. van Dijk[2] for their enthusiasm in taking the initiative to organise the anniversary party. The meeting concluded with the decision to hold the anniversary party between the 9th and 14th of April, a period preceding the Idul Fitri fasting holiday, which commenced on the 17th of April. The party committee received support from various officials, including Mr. W.A.C. Whitlau,[3]

1 The chairman of the party committee and the director of the school.
2 The Director of the Kweekschool, who had recently retired at that time.
3 The Governor of Sumatra's Westkust (West Coast of Sumatra).

C.E. Sayers,[4] and Mr. L.C. Westenenk.[5] These individuals will be formally presented with honorary membership. The same invitation will be extended to Superior Fischer[6] and Engkoe Nawawi.[7] The feast will be chaired by the director of the Kweekschool, Mr. John Scholte, while high school staff and representatives of the former students' committee will assist the chairman as members of the feast committee (Een Herdenkingsfeest, 1922, p. 1). The preliminary events of the party included a parade, a large and lively celebration, the installation of a memorial stone, an open-air movie theatre, fireworks and, last but not least, the appearance of the famous Minangkabau legend Cindua Mato. A proportion of the funds raised through the charity fundraising at this event will be set aside as the basis of a fund to be established to enable talented students at the Kweekschool to further their studies (STADSNIEUWS, 1922, p. 2).

The positive impressions of the Cindua Mato performance were recounted years later. Those who attended the performance of Cindua Mato at the Kweekschool's birthday celebration in acknowledge that they experienced an unforgettable evening at the Kweekschool. There was a unanimous consensus among all in attendance that the event was a resounding success. The show was held at the Kweekschool again the following year, and this time it was even more popular than the first. The audience was captivated not only by the traditional Minangkabau attire, but also by the novel customs and practices that were entirely unfamiliar to them. The Studiefonds Minangkabau (Minangkabau Studies Fund) association at Fort de Koek ,[8] has recognised the significant influence of Cindua Mato, and will be organising a fair from 6-11 June, featuring the story of Cindua Mato on stage. This initiative merits the attention of the public, as it will have a positive impact on H.I.S., while also fostering a deeper understanding of Minangkabau traditions and practices (Opvoering „Tjindoea Mato", 1924, p. 6).

4 The assistant resident of Agam accepted the position of honorary chairman at the meeting.

5 The Governor of Sumatra's East Coast also attended the meeting. He was among those who had consistently demonstrated a keen interest in the Minangkabau region and its people.

6 He was Inspector of Dutch education and inland education of the West Coast of Sumatra.

7 He was previously employed as a teacher at the Kweekschool Fort de Koek in .

8 At that time, the association had been under private ownership by H.I.S. for a number of years.



Tentoonstelling

van

KUNST, NIJVERHEID, LANDBOUW EN HUISVLIJT

bij gelegenheid van de vierde **Pasar-Derma**
tenbate van de Vereeniging
Studiefonds Minangkabau te Fort de Kock
op 6 tot en met 11 Juni 1924.

Als prijzen worden uitgeloofd, gouden, zilveren en bronzen medailles en eerediploma's.
Prachtige gelegenheid voor heeren fabrikanten en importeurs tot het maken van reclame.
Voor inzendingen en 't bespreken van standen zich te wenden tot 't Bestuurslid L. H. SCHEFFERS, liefst vóór 25 Mei met 't oog op de uitgave van 't tentoonstellingsprospectus.

De Pasar-Derma zal worden opgeluisterd met muziek-, tooneel-, (Tjindoer Mato) en bioscoopuitvoeringen, kerontjongconcours, voetbal-fiets- en vliegerwedstrijden, volksspelen, schitterend vuurwerk, enz., terwijl op 8 en 9 Juni tevens de jaarijksche groote races worden gehouden.

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Figure 1. *Advertisement promoting the theatrical production "Cindua Mato"*

at Derma Fort de Koek Market

Source*: "Sumatra Bode" April-May 1924 Edition.*[9]

9 These advertisements are found in several publications of the newspaper Sumatra Bode April to May: "Pasar Malam", *Sumatra-bode*, jrg. 31, no. 86, 11-4-1924, (Padang: Sumatra Bode & Tjaja Sumatra), p. 6; "Tentoonstelling", *Sumatra-bode*, jrg. 31, no. 97, 26-4-1924, (Padang: Sumatra Bode & Tjaja Sumatra), p. 7; "Tentoonstelling", *Sumatra-bode*, jrg. 31, no. 102, 3-5-1924, (Padang: Sumatra Bode & Tjaja Sumatra), p. 7;

"Tentoonstelling", *Sumatra-bode*, jrg. 31, no. 105, 8-5-1924, (Padang: Sumatra Bode & Tjaja Sumatra), p. 7;

"Tentoonstelling", *Sumatra-bode*, jrg. 31, no. 106, 9-5-1924, (Padang: Sumatra Bode & Tjaja Sumatra), p. 7;

"Tentoonstelling", *Sumatra-bode*, jrg. 31, no. 107, 10-5-1924, (Padang: Sumatra Bode & Tjaja Sumatra), p. 7; "Tentoonstelling", *Sumatra-bode*, jrg. 31, no. 109, 13-5-1924, (Padang: Sumatra Bode & Tjaja Sumatra), p. 7;

"Tentoonstelling", *Sumatra-bode*, jrg. 31, no. 111, 15-5-1924, (Padang: Sumatra Bode & Tjaja Sumatra), p. 7;

"Tentoonstelling", *Sumatra-bode*, jrg. 31, no. 112, 16-5-1924, (Padang: Sumatra Bode & Tjaja Sumatra), p. 7;

"Tentoonstelling", *Sumatra-bode*, jrg. 31, no. 114, 19-5-1924, (Padang: Sumatra Bode & Tjaja Sumatra), p. 7;

The folklore of Cindua Mato began to be utilised with increasing frequency in public spaces within Minangkabau society, with the objective of generating social funds. A performance of Cindua Mato was held at an exhibition at the Derma Market in Fort de Koek . A charity market is defined as a place for charity, that is, the act of bestowing money, food, or other items to those in need. Charity is often conceived as a philanthropic act. It can also refer to the donation of money or objects to a social organisation.[10] The performance was based on the interest of the Vereeniging Studiefonds Minangkabau (Study Fund Association) at Fort de Koek . Advertisements for the event were published in the daily newspaper "Sumatra Bode" in April-May 1924. On the occasion of the inaugural performance, a gathering of numerous native officials, Penghulu, and noblemen was observed in traditional attire and national costumes. This assembly was situated in the vicinity of the entrance to Pasar Derma. The event was further enriched by the presence of traditional music, including Talempong, Puput and Sarunai, contributing to an atmosphere of festivity. In addition to the aforementioned festivities, guided tours were also offered, providing visitors with the opportunity to view a variety of indigenous industrial and agricultural products. Malay operas and movie theatres were also highlights of Pasar Derma. The event culminates with a fireworks display in the evening and a performance of Cindua Mato in the afternoon (De Pasar Derma te Fort de Kock, 1924, hal. 6).

The success of the Cindua Mato performance at Pasar Derma Fort de Koek , and the positive benefits it brought, led to the decision to stage it at the Padang Night Market in June 1924. A writer for the newspaper Pemandangan noted that the play, Cindua Mato, would be performed by performers in traditional Minangkabau attire. He encouraged the public to revive these traditions, emphasising the importance of maintaining their cultural heritage (INHOUD, 1924, p. 513). This is of particular significance in light of the ongoing encroachment of Western cultural influences, which have the potential to erode the integrity of Minangkabau culture, including its distinctive

"Tentoonstelling", *Sumatra-bode*, jrg. 31, no. 115, 20-5-1924, (Padang: Sumatra Bode & Tjaja Sumatra), p. 7;

"Tentoonstelling", *Sumatra-bode*, jrg. 31, no. 117, 22-5-1924, (Padang: Sumatra Bode & Tjaja Sumatra), p. 7;

"Tentoonstelling", *Sumatra-bode*, jrg. 31, no. 118, 23-5-1924, (Padang: Sumatra Bode & Tjaja Sumatra), p. 7.

10 The performance was held from 6-11 June 1924. The event culminated with the prestigious presentation of gold, silver and bronze medals, along with diplomas of honour, to the distinguished winners. The Pasar Derma (a charity market held at Fort de Koek) was enlivened with musical performances, Cindua Mato theatre, cinema, keroncong competitions, soccer, cycling and kite flying competitions, folk games, beautiful fireworks, and so on. The Pasar Derma also featured the annual grand race on 8-9 June.

modes of dress. In response to this challenge, the committee for the Cindua Mato performance at the Padang Night Market was established. The committee was chaired by Demang Padang, with Dr. Hakim as vice chairman, Mr. Marah Soetan as secretary, and Mr. Sampono Radjo as treasurer. A series of rehearsals were conducted under the guidance of Mr. Soetan Ibrahim, a former Kweekschool teacher in Fort de Koek. The financial proceeds from the performance were allocated as follows: 25% was donated to the Pasar Malam Fund, 25% was allocated to the fund for the subsequent Cindua Mato performance, and the remaining 50% was donated to a charitable organisation (Tjindoer Mato, 1924, p. 6).

In addition, the performance of Cindua Mato continued until the 4th Pasar Derma at Fort de Koek in . This performance was regarded by observers and journalists as a catalyst for the realisation that the Europeans and Minangkabau people had long been acquainted with democratic principles prior to the establishment of a parliament among the Europeans. This revelation served as a source of pride for the Minangkabau people, who had previously been regarded as a land of 'lengang', lacking a distinct language and cultural identity. The Europeans in attendance were enlightened as to the contrary, as the Minangkabau people were in fact very much a 'land of deserted' (TJINDOEA MATO, 1924, pp. 620-621).[11] The press reviews of Cindua Mato's performance were favourable, noting that:

> *"kerajaan Paga Roejoeang (Pagaruyung) sudah tertata dengan baik pada waktu itu, bahasanya beradab untuk rakyat, pemerintahan dilakukan sesuai dengan kepala rakyat dan adat dijaga dengan baik"*

Translation:

> *"The kingdom of Paga Roejoeang (Pagaruyung) was well organised at that time, the language was civilised for the people, the government was conducted according to the heads of the people and adat was well maintained"*

All of this was reflected in this play. In conclusion, the writers of this press exhorted the Minangkabau race to uphold their arts and customs to develop the self-respect of the Minangkabau race (TJINDOEA MATO, 1924, p. 621).

The performance of Cindua Mato at Fort de Koek received a mixed re-

11 There was a question from a European teacher to a famous native: "*apakah Hindia-Belanda hanya berpenduduk 5.000 orang?, orang-orang di sana tidak memiliki bahasa sendiri dan tidak mengenakan pakaian?*". Translation: "Is the Dutch East Indies only 5,000 people, and do they have no language and no clothes?". The reality was different from what was staged after he saw it. He even asked for the play to be included in the Press Review (Overzicht).

sponse, with both positive and critical reviews. As reported in an article by Simbab in "Sinar Sumatra" on June 3, 1924, the editorial board was compelled to defend the necessity of theatrical performances by respectable native girls in the June 2 and June 14, 1924 editions.[12] The editors expressed no objection to this and stated that "*im reine ist alles rein* (everything is pure)". The performance was met with approval and commendation, with particular praise directed towards the actors, who delivered their performances for the benefit of the Minangkabau people. The press writers granted the progressives an opportunity to craft a play that diverged from their customary colonial era works, particularly in the context of the influx of Western education in the East (EENSGEZINDHEID, 1924, p. 622).

Prior to the June 1924 performance of Cindua Mato at Padang's night market, a series of rehearsals were conducted, attended by various authorities at the public meeting (Tjindoer Mato, 1924, p. 6). The performance, which had been meticulously prepared since June 17, 1924, featured a substantial script, necessitating its division into two parts. The first part was scheduled for performance on the inaugural night, with the second part scheduled for Sunday evening. Concerns regarding the duration of the performance began to emerge from European visitors in the city of Padang. However, the organisers provided reassurance to the visitors, assuring them that the extensive narrative would be meticulously staged and that the exquisite traditional Minangkabau attire, worn by fifty-five individuals of both sexes, would be showcased to its fullest. The direction of the performance was overseen by Mr. Soetan Ibrahim and M. Rasjid Manggis, who also provided a concise explanation. For the convenience of European visitors, the Dutch text commenced at 9pm, with the exception of Saturday and Sunday. It is also worth noting that further performances took place in the subsequent month, on the 29th and 30th of July and the 1st and 2nd of August 1924 (Tjindoer Mato, 1924, p. 6).

The official opening of the 8th Night Market at the Michielsplein (Michiel Monument in Padang City) preceded this event. The event was attended by a range of guests, including representatives from the authorities, the commercial sector, the press, and other distinguished individuals. Following the gathering of all attendees in the European restaurant, the chairman of the Night Market Committee, Mr. Ouwerling, proceeded to deliver the inaugural address. The event featured meticulously arranged booths, a diverse selection of European and Chinese culinary offerings, various rides, including the carousel, and a noteworthy folk dancing performance by the Komedi Bangsawan, where the top-tier Javanese troupes were showcased. Notably, the

12 A contentious debate ensued regarding the aesthetic presentation of young Minangkabau girls on stage, with a particular emphasis on the distinction between the charity market at Fort de Koek in and the malem market in Padang (TJINDOER MATO, 1924, pp. 188-189).

fairground was set up in the tent, where the traditional Minangkabau drama, Cindua Mato, was performed on a weekly basis. It is noteworthy that this drama was not only staged at Fort de Koek, but also in Padang City, a testament to its widespread appeal and cultural significance. The realisation of the Night Market was facilitated by the collaboration between the Demang of Padang City, the chief prosecutor, and notably Mr. De Haze Winkelman. The opening ceremony was conducted in both Dutch and Malay languages, and the Governor, Mr. Willau, lauded the committee's dedication and proposed that the night market should adopt a more restrained approach compared to its predecessor. In addition to Minangkabau arts, a performance was given by the Mentaweiers (Mentawai) or Pagaiers (Pagai), who performed their signature dances to the delight of the native and European audiences alike.[13] Visitors to the night market appeared to derive considerable pleasure from the rides, and the performances by Cindua Mato and Bangsawan Comedy attracted a significant number of spectators. The night market was illuminated to a high standard. The Michael monument, adorned with red, white, and blue electric lights, created a visually appealing effect, and the gates were similarly illuminated with a profusion of colourful lights during the evening. At the European restaurant, which featured a dance floor, attendees were observed dancing to Indonesian music. The event garnered positive attention from the press, who expressed a desire to return (DE OPENING VAN DEN PASAR MALAM, 1924, p. 1).

The success of Cindua Mato's performances at Fort de Koek and Padang has generated renewed interest in the cultural impact of the play. This seminal work is widely regarded as marking the onset of a new era in the indigenous culture,[14] with the stage and opera serving as a crucible for the emer-

13 This group of 10 men and women once again attracted a considerable amount of attention, if only because of their unconventional attire. Indeed, the subjects' attire was minimalist in nature, with the men adorned in gorilla-inspired waistcoats and the women sporting hats fashioned from dried banana leaves, a sartorial manifestation of the "short skirt period". Their appearance, at first glance, evokes the image of the Indians of the Far West, with their facial features displaying a high degree of similarity. However, their stature is notably smaller, and they share a resemblance with the Javanese in terms of their hair and belt arrangements. The Mentawai people also possess a distinctive aesthetic, characterised by floral adornments in their ears, contributing to an image reminiscent of divine beings. Their dances are distinctive but not aesthetically pleasing. Their demeanour is amiable, though it is noteworthy that they do not express the same degree of cruelty that is evident in the Balinese folk dance, in which live chicks are auctioned off.

14 The success of the Cindua Mato performance has established a standard of 'authority' for the Minangkabau people and their customs. The "Komite Pergerakan (Movement Committee)" has issued a statement declaring that the Minangkabau Natural Traditional Society did not act as a representative of the Minangkabau people during the event honouring Queen Wilhelmina on September 1, 1924. This information has been disseminated to the public through pamphlets. Furthermore, the chairman of S.A.A.M.

gence of creative indigenous geniuses. The Ass. Mr. Ouwerling, a resident of Padang, was attributed to his background as an ethnologist and a thirst to advance Minangkabau society. However, a significant decision was reached, prohibiting women from performing on stage again. This decision was made with the intention of respecting conservative views and was regarded as an expression of democracy. This decision was made with the aim of demonstrating a commitment to the emancipation of women in the right direction and was a stunning blow to those who had hoped to see young girls on stage. In addition to the aforementioned decision, it was also announced that the proceeds from the night market in Padang City would be allocated to the vacant colonies, Sjarikat Oesaha and Studiefond Minangkabau (Minangkabau Study Fund). This decision was met with criticism from the committee, who expressed their belief that the sentiments of the people of Padang had not been taken into consideration (TOONEEL, 1924, p. 234).

Nevertheless, the Night Market event in Padang City continued to garner significant attention from visitors throughout August 1924, although this was accompanied by a number of criticisms from the press.[15] Spectators congregated at the entrance of the European restaurant to witness Mr. Guy Neilo and Mademoiselle Gina d'Orsay, while within the restaurant, seating was at full capacity. The Cindua Mato performance continues to act as a magnet, attracting visitors to the Night Market with the novelty of its performers. The enthusiasm of the visitors meant that the Night Market was extended for two nights, with the audience continuing to be engaged by the Cindua Mato performance and other performances.[16] However, a decline in attendance was observed when this drama was staged at the Padang Night Market in 1925. Consequently, it proved less efficacious in generating funds for charitable causes.[17] Nevertheless, performances of the drama Cindua Mato at the Night

was criticised for stating in his speech that these countries had achieved prosperity under Dutch rule. This assertion stands in direct opposition to the depictions of affluence portrayed in the dramatic work Cindua Mato, which chronicles the Minangkabau people's sartorial elegance from centuries prior to the arrival of the Dutch. The pamphlet was later deemed unworthy of attention. At the time, the notion that the "Movement Committee" would act as the representative of the Minangkabau people was regarded as implausible (Zielig gedoe, 1924, p. 6).

15 It has been documented that the press representatives at Cindua Mato's show at Pasar Malam were accommodated in first class, with substandard seating. This resulted in a sense of embarrassment and subsequent departure from the event. The notion that individuals are considered unfit to sit in a stall or lodge is a matter that should be reconsidered (DIVERSEN, 1924, p. 289).

16 The Night Market Committee was responsible for the organisation of a fireworks display at the old shooting range, which attracted a considerable number of spectators. The event featured a variety of engaging displays, including naval gunnery demonstrations, pig hunting, and other attractions (De Pasar Malam, 1924, p. 6).

17 According to the findings of a report, the performance by Cindua Mato in

Market in Padang city continued to be held from July to August 1925 (Pasar Malam, 1925, p. 6).



Pasar Malam.

1. Grappige spelen met prijzen voor Europeesche kinderen op **Dinsdag 28 Juli** n.m. **5½** uur.
   Bij regenweer in Europeesch restaurant.
2. Proeven van onkwetsbaarheid elken avond van **7** tot **9 uur** in Tjindoer Mato-loods.

HET PASAR MALAM COMITÉ.
2007

Figure 2. *Promotional Advertisement for the Drama "Cindua Mato" at the Padang Night Market*
Source*: "Sumatra-bode" no. 170, (1925, p. 7).*

The success of the performances at Fort de Koek and Padang also led to the presentation of the Cindua Mato performance in Padang Panjang. Consequently, a Night Market event was organised, which was held from 9-15 September 1924 (Pasar Malam te Padang Pandjang, 1924, p. 6). As far as can be verified, Night Market receipts have reached 11,000 gulden. The expenditures are estimated to amount to approximately 7,000 to 8,000 gulden, resulting in a substantial surplus. The financial yield of the eight performances of the Cindua Mato traditional play was 2,749.69 gulden. Of this amount, 80% is attributed to the Night Market Committee and 20% to the city government, prior to the deduction of taxes. However, due to significant expenses incurred for the theatre and decorations, a portion of the proceeds from ticket sales could not be allocated to charitable activities, as desired by the committee (Pasar Malam, 1924, p. 6). The Cindua Mato performance was also held to celebrate Medan Moeda Setia's birthday at Koto Gadang on May 23-24, which ended with a festive parade, as reported by "Soeara-Kota-Gedang" in the June 1925 issue, No. 6 (SOEARA-KOTA-GEDANG, 1925, p. 237).

Padang, which was organised for the benefit of various institutions, generated a surplus of +f 3,000, while the expenditure amounted to f 3,100, resulting in a deficit of approximately f 100. It is hoped that the initial target will still be met (DIVERSEN, 1924, p. 174).

Furthermore, the drama Cindua Mato was performed by youth organisations such as Jong Sumatranen Bond (J.S.B.) in August 1926. Previously, on 1 August 1926, the drama Cindua Mato was staged at the Batavia city theatre and succeeded in attracting interested audiences. A donation of 10 gulden was received from several "girls' school students in Djokjakarta" (Steunverleening aan Sum. Westkust, 1926, p. 2). Subsequent to this performance, a meeting was held on 14 August 1926 at the K.J.B. at Waterlooplein to raise funds for the relief efforts in Sumatra. The hall, which had been festively decorated for the occasion, was filled to capacity. A series of festive events were presented, including several musical performances, conducted by Mr Breton de Nils, led by the S.T.O.V.I.A orchestra, the Jong Sumatranen Bond choir and a Cindua Mato drama performance, all of which were equally well organised. The gross income that night amounted to around 550 gulden (Voor Sumatra's Westkust, 1926, p. 1).



Figure 3. *Advertisement Cindua Mato Performance at the Orange Cinema 4-5 December 1926*
Source: *"De Sumatra post", no. 281 (1926, p. 13).*

The final reports concerning the performance of the drama Cindua Mato in Minangkabau were received in 1934. However, there were several individuals who misused the scenes from the drama Cindua Mato for personal gain. On 2 June 1934, the head of various luhak in Minangkabau protested against

the use of a scene from the traditional story of Cindua Mato at a fair in Fort de Koek. The scene in question was used by a Chinese trader, Lie Sam Peng, as the background to his establishment. This representation is particularly noteworthy given its use as an advertisement, where figures of people holding a cockfight are depicted wearing headman clothing. A formal protest lodged with the annual exhibition board resulted in the trader initially promising to cover up the offending images, but ultimately closing the entire booth and informing them that the same images were used by Mr. Lie Sam Peng for his establishment at the night market in Padang. Despite this, no further firm action was taken by the exhibition board, presumably due to the Padang people's ignorance regarding custom (De Minangkabausche adat, 1934, p. 358). Subsequent research has not yielded any further information on the performance of the drama Cindua Mato in Minangkabau land.

Cindua Mato performances spread to Batavia 1924-1939

The Minangkabau community in Batavia has been observed to utilise cultural resources, including folklore and charity, to strengthen their cultural identity and improve the lives of their overseas community during the colonial period. For instance, since the establishment of the Minangkabau migrant organisation in Batavia, known as "Minangkabau Saijo", the folklore book "Cindua Mato" was produced to commemorate the organisation's founding and serve as its financial foundation.[18] Concurrently, the Minangkabau people in Weltevreden established the "Tjindoer Mato Committee" with the objective of demonstrating the grandeur of Minangkabau in times past through the medium of engaging theatrical performances. This initiative was spearheaded by Mr. Abdoel Moeis, who assumed the role of chairman, with Mr. Sutan Palindih serving as secretary and Mr. Djamil as treasurer. The Cindua Mato performance is designed to cater to the needs of Minangkabau associations and migrants. In addition to this, it is also planned to support those who trade Minangkabau products at the event later (COMITÉ TJINDOER MATO, 1924, p. 222). The outcomes of this performance are expected to contribute to the advancement of the Minangkabau movement. The performance, which finally took place on 1 August 1924, attracted a considerable audience (Tjindoea Mato, 1924, p. 9).

The Cindua Mato performance is employed not only to satisfy the needs of life and movement of Minangkabau migrants in Batavia, but also to serve a social action function. A charitable performance is also scheduled to aid the victims of the Kebon Djeroek fire (Kebun Jeruk, Jakarta) at the theatre on 30 August 1924. This performance is to be delivered by a women's group known

18 The book was distributed in mid-August 1924 and sold at a price of f 0.95 for orders until 30 August, subsequently increasing to f 1.50. The book comprises five chapters, an introduction and an explanation (DE MINANGKABAU-BOND, 1924, p. 269).

as "Isteri Indonesia", which will also perform Javanese and Bugis dances. The event will also feature a jazz band performance by "Jong Java" and Mr. Chinese Kweekschool. Cornelis will perform two songs. The admission fees have been set at a highly affordable level, with the aim of making the evening accessible to all members of the community (Voor de Slachtoffers van den Brand, 1925, p. 2).

In consideration of the Pasar-Gambir period and in the context of analogous charity levies, the event committee resolved to refrain from imposing an undue financial burden upon the public. Consequently, the entertainment tax was reallocated in the form of subsidies, thereby ensuring that the entrance ticket price remained at a minimal cost. The drama Cindua Mato, performed by "Isteri Indonesia" for a duration of one hour, emerged as the most outstanding performance of the evening, without compromising the quality of the other musical compositions. The impression conveyed to the Batavians was as follows:

> *"pementasan ini merupakan lakon Minangkabau yang diambil dari kitab sejarah masyarakat Minangkabau. Setiap penduduk Pantai Barat Sumatera pasti hafal buku Cindua Mato, yang menceritakan tentang sejarah Ratu agung terakhir dari kerajaan yang pernah perkasa itu. Motivasi pementasan ini dikarenakan drama ini ditampilkan dengan sukses besar di Fort de Koek dan Padang. Ini merupakan sesuatu yang baru bagi Batavia. Dekorasi yang khas, pakaian yang berwarna-warni, dan gerak-gerik yang lincah jelas mencerminkan keaktifan orang Minangkabau".*

Translation:

> *"The performance was characterised as a Minangkabau play, drawing inspiration from the historical records of the Minangkabau people. It is widely acknowledged that every resident of the West Coast of Sumatra has memorised the book Cindua Mato, which chronicles the history of the last great queen of this erstwhile mighty kingdom. The impetus for this performance derived from its prior presentation in Fort de Koek and Padang, where it met with considerable acclaim. This performance signifies a novel occurrence in Batavia. The distinctive decorations, colourful attire and lively movements clearly reflect the vibrancy of the Minangkabau people".*

The Jong Sumatranen Bond (JSB) contributed to the vibrant atmosphere of the performance through their execution of traditional Minangkabau dances, namely the Tari Pisau (Knife Dance) and the Tari Piring (Plate Dance). The performance also featured contributions from other regional artistic traditions.[19]

19 The event featured a performance of the traditional Monkey Dance, choreo-

The Cindua Mato performance was also held during the "Indigenous Community Charity Night" to raise social funds to assist those affected by the recent fires in the Sawah Besar area. The Cindua Mato performance, presented by the Indonesian Indigenous Girls' Study Association, achieved full capacity and garnered significant attention from the Dutch community. The audience response was overwhelmingly positive, and during the intermission, the head of the committee expressed his profound satisfaction with the performance.[20] In addition to the Cindua Mato performance, other artistic displays were exhibited. Regardless of the late hour, all participants were observed to be working with the same level of enthusiasm, if not an increased one. The collection of charity funds was also successful (De weldadigheids-avond der Inheemsche vereenigingen, 1925, p. 2). The drama Cindua Mato was widely regarded by the press as the most notable performance of the evening (Inlandsch Tooneel, 1925, p. 2). However, the event received a mixture of praise and criticism, with feedback from both observers and members of the Minangkabau migrant community itself. The following table provides a comprehensive overview of the activities undertaken by these Minangkabau migrant women:

Organiser :
1. Perserikatan Isteri Indonesia[21]
2. Ikatan Kajian Gadis Pribumi Indonesia

Coordinators :
Datuk Tumenggung and Mrs. Datuk Tumenggung
Purpose :
Entertainment and Charity Fundraising
Appearance : Minangkabau Traditional Play "Cindua Mato"
Summary of the story :
The Minangkabau queen, known as Bundo Kandung, granted her son Dang Tuanku, her brother-in-law Cindua Mato and his entourage permission to tour various regions of the Minangkabau kingdom.

graphed by Ardjoeno school students, followed by a Penljak Betawi performance by Kaoem Betawi children, Krontjong and Stamboel by MelaJang, Javanese dance by Marsoedi Bekso, Boegis dance by Krido Jatmoko, and a Fencing or Jazz Band performance by Jong-Java. Mr. Cornelis provided two points. Consequently, it is anticipated that the evening's programme will meet with general approval (Liefdadigheids-voorstelling voor de slachtoffers van den brand, 1925, p. 2).

20 A variety of musical genres are represented, including performances of the Monkey Dance, Wayang Wong, Kroncong, Hawaiian and Bugis.

21 In the 79th issue of 8 September 1925, Pandji Poestaka published an illustrated article on the play "Cindua Mato", performed by members of the women's association "Isteri Indonesia" (PANDJI POESTAKA, 1925, p. 513).

However, they returned when Cindua Mato heard the announcement of the wedding of Puti Bugsu, Dang Tuanku's fiancé, to Prince Imbang Djajo.
The parents of Putri, incensed by the breach of their daughter's marital agreement, invoked the sacred gong to convene the nation's elders, in accordance with the Basa Ampek Balai tradition of Minangkabau. The Council of Ministers would like to bring. Initially, he was determined to declare war on Puti Bungsu's father, who was his own older brother.
However, following the counsel of the Council of Ministers and under the persuasion of Dang Tuanku and Cindua Mato, he underwent a change in his stance. The decision was made to dispatch Tjindur Mato to the wedding of the unfaithful fiancé, bearing a gift on behalf of the Minangkabau Queen. However, Dang Tuanku subsequently ordered Cindua Mato to expel Puti Bungsu, which she did.
Following a confrontation with Imbang Djajo, which ended in a victory for Dang Tuanku, the prince ultimately entered into matrimony with Puti Bungsu of his own volition, while Cindua Mato was betrothed to Lenggo Geni, the daughter of the governor of the Tarab River.

Praise :

The following assertion is made by the Governor General, who was in attendance at the event: He expressed his profound admiration for the capabilities of the indigenous populace, deeming the theatrical presentation of "Cindua Mato" to be the most captivating spectacle of the occasion.

Counter :

The critique was articulated by multiple individuals of Minangkabau origin, who expressed their disapproval of the notion that women should perform on stage, perceiving it as an affront to the cultural integrity of Minangkabau.
The following scene was omitted from a drama about the conquest of the Javanese by the Minangkabau people. These scenes were removed to avoid offending the sensibilities of the Javanese populace. The aforementioned critique was provided by indigenous circles themselves, who asserted:"While it is true that people here may have a different perspective on these issues compared to those in the West, it is crucial that we learn to value history for its true worth. It is suggested that the song be played in its original form. The Javanese audience will truly comprehend its significance, so there is no need to be offended, as this is a matter of historical significance."

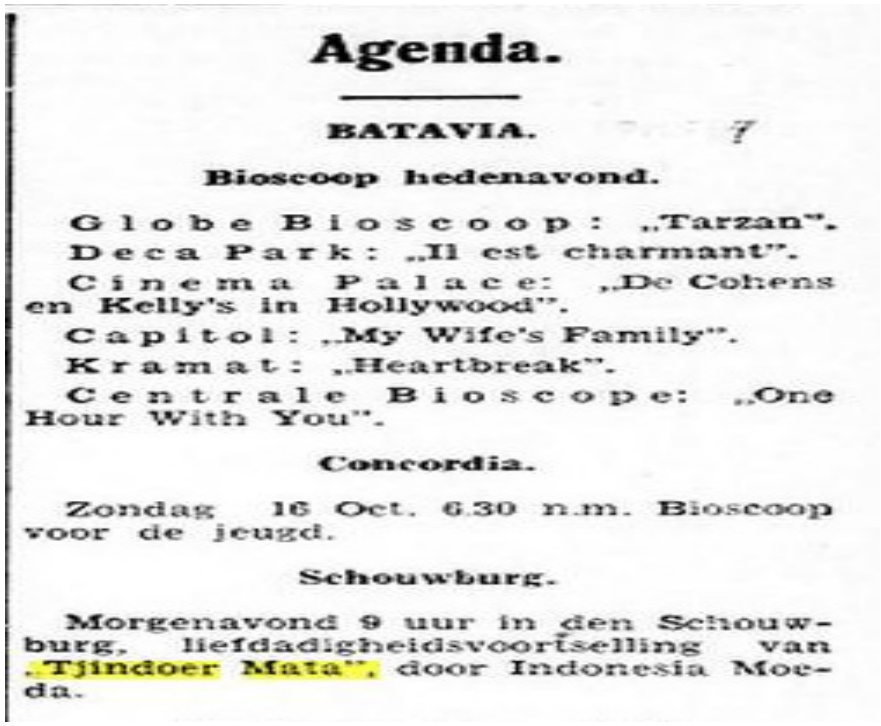
Improvisation :

Datuk Tumenggung and his family encountered difficulties in identifying individuals capable of playing the rabab musical instrument. The solution that was ultimately found was to seek an alternative instrument, and this was successfully accomplished by using a violin to which a mute had been attached.

Overview :

"The experiment was a success overall. It offers an original perspective that demonstrates considerable potential for development. It is our considered opinion that this represents a highly promising area for those who promote Indian art. It is imperative to refrain from the temptation to excise particular elements and character attributes from the work, as it encompasses stylised warfare manifesting as nimble boys' mirror fights. The play's duration could have been reduced by allowing the actors to traverse the stage. Finally, it is imperative to acknowledge the commendable conduct exhibited by all participants. It is anticipated that this group and this individual will continue to demonstrate their considerable potential". Observer with the initials Th. K (Inlandsch Tooneel, 1925, p. 2).

The popularity of the drama Cindua Mato also reached non-Minangkabau youth organisations in Batavia, such as the Indonesian Youth Association Moeda Department of Batavia. In accordance with prevailing trends, a theatrical performance of the drama was scheduled to be held on Saturday 15 October 1932, with proceeds allocated to assist victims of natural disasters in Minahasa. Tickets for this event were made available on 1 October 1932 and were sold at the City Theater building (Voor Slachtoffers van Minahassaramp, 1932, p. 5).



Agenda.

BATAVIA.

Bioscoop hedenavond.

Globe Bioscoop: „Tarzan".
Deca Park: „Il est charmant".
Cinema Palace: „De Cohens en Kelly's in Hollywood".
Capitol: „My Wife's Family".
Kramat: „Heartbreak".
Centrale Bioscope: „One Hour With You".

Concordia.

Zondag 16 Oct. 6.30 n.m. Bioscoop voor de jeugd.

Schouwburg.

Morgenavond 9 uur in den Schouwburg, liefdadigheidsvoorstelling van „Tjindoer Mata", door Indonesia Moeda.

Figure 4. Advertisement for the performance "Cindua Mato" by Indonesia Moeda.

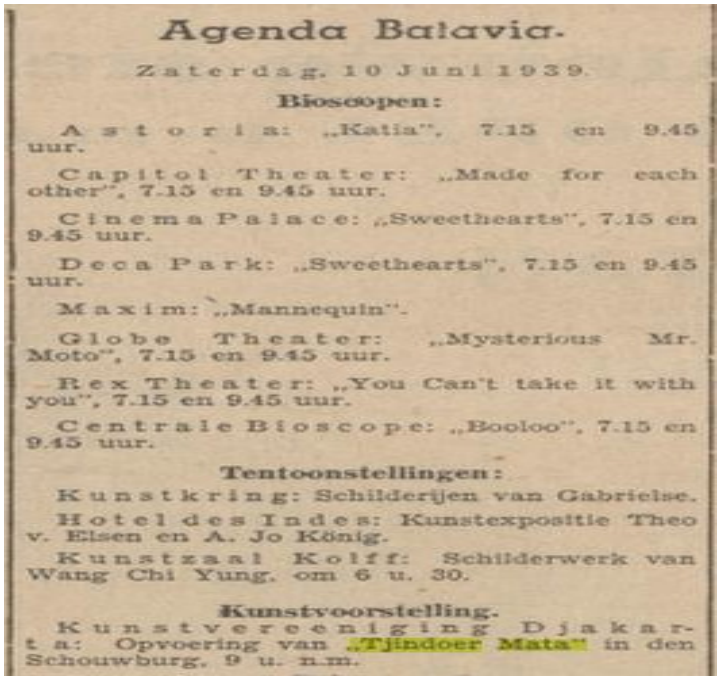
Source*: "Bataviaasch nieuwsblad", 14-15 October 1932.*[22]

The final documented performance of the drama Cindua Mato was in 1939, organised by the Indigenous arts association "Naga Djakarta" at the Batavia City Theater with the objective of raising funds for charity. The hall was filled to capacity, and the audience expressed great appreciation for the students' performance. The performance featured exquisite costumes and sets that harmonised with the overall aesthetic, garnering acclaim as the pinnacle of indigenous art expression (Liefdadigheidsuitvoering, 1939, p. 3). This sophisticated performance, directed by Mr Adnan Kapau Gani,[23] a medical student, showcased the talents of indigenous students. Despite the inclement weather, characterised by heavy rain, the event witnessed a remarkable turnout, underscoring the enthusiasm of the audience. The play, which consists of six short acts, was executed with remarkable fluidity and skill. The set design, though unembellished, was nonetheless tasteful and consistent with the

22 This performance was held for several days (Schouwburg, 1932, p. 1; Schouwburg, 1932, p. 1).

23 Later he was also named one of Indonesia's national heroes from Minangkabau.

Minangkabau aesthetic. Special commendation is due to Gani, as well as all the participants. As previously reported, the proceeds from this performance will be allocated to the underprivileged community in Minangkabau, as well as to domestic schools, the "Isteri Indonesian" association and the "Club Indonesia" (Liefdadigheidsuitvoering, 1939, p. 2). Subsequent research has failed to unearth any further data pertaining to Cindua Mato performances in Batavia, although a radio broadcast schedule was discovered, which exclusively featured the radio play "Tjindoer Mata". The context in which this play was performed remains unknown.[24]



Agenda Batavia.

Zaterdag, 10 Juni 1939.

Bioscopen:

Astoria: „Katia", 7.15 en 9.45 uur.

Capitol Theater: „Made for each other", 7.15 en 9.45 uur.

Cinema Palace: „Sweethearts", 7.15 en 9.45 uur.

Deca Park: „Sweethearts", 7.15 en 9.45 uur.

Maxim: „Mannequin".

Globe Theater: „Mysterious Mr. Moto", 7.15 en 9.45 uur.

Rex Theater: „You Can't take it with you", 7.15 en 9.45 uur.

Centrale Bioscope: „Booloo", 7.15 en 9.45 uur.

Tentoonstellingen:

Kunstkring: Schilderijen van Gabrielse.

Hotel des Indes: Kunstexpositie Theo v. Elsen en A. Jo König.

Kunstzaal Kolff: Schilderwerk van Wang Chi Yung, om 6 u. 30.

Kunstvoorstelling.

Kunstvereeniging Djakarta: Opvoering van „Tjindoer Mata" in den Schouwburg, 9 u. n.m.

Figure 4. Promotional advertisement for the performance "Tjindoer Mata"

by the Djakarta Arts Association.

Source: *"Het nieuws van den dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië", no. 122, (1939, p. 3).*

24 The radio broadcast airs on Bandung II 192.31; Batavia II 197, PMII 45 M: at 17.03 Event overview — 17.05 Sundanese ketjapi music — 18.30 wyding (Ocro) — 19.00 Ambon music — 19.30 Press reports and fairs — 20.00 Causerie : "Traditions and customs in the Surakarta palace" (Sri relay) — 20:20 Javanese gamelan music — 20:30 Radio play "Tjindoer mata" — 21:30 Javanese klenengan — 23:00 Studio orchestra — 24:00 Closing (Beurs te Batavia, 1940, p. 4).

Comparative Analysis And Meaning Transformation Of The Use Of Cindua Mato In Minangkabau And Batavia During The Colonial Era

To clarify the differences in the use of the Cindua Mato narrative across these two regions during the colonial period, this study demonstrates that in Minangkabau, the story was primarily used to strengthen customary identity and to legitimize local historical heritage as an expression of collective dignity and cultural pride. In contrast, in Batavia, which functioned as the colonial political center, the narrative transformed meaning, becoming an instrument of interethnic indigenous solidarity that served both social cohesion and nationalist movements resisting colonial domination.

Table 1. Comparative Analysis of the Contextual Use and Meaning Transformation of Cindua Mato in Minangkabau and Batavia during the Colonial Era

Comparative Aspect	Minangkabau	Batavia
Spatial Context	Traditional environments based on *luhak* and *nagari* systems.	Colonial political center characterized by ethnic diversity and strict colonial supervision.
Narrative Focus	Legitimization of Pagaruyung authority and the sacredness of Minangkabau customs and culture.	Emphasis on the modernization of Minangkabau society through clothing, artistic expression, and intellectual development.
Shift in Meaning	Reinforcement of cultural dignity and customary values in response to the growing influence of Western lifestyles.	Instrument for promoting interethnic unity, including through social fundraising initiatives.
Role Transformation	Performed by teachers, students (such as those at *Kweekschool*), cultural practitioners, and local officials for entertainment and charitable activities.	Organized by migrants, university students, cultural communities, and political figures for social fundraising and nationalist mobilization.

Beyond these differences, the targeted audience or "cultural market" for artistic performances in both regions also differed significantly. In Minangkabau, performances were attended primarily by Europeans and the local Minangkabau population. In Batavia, however, audiences extended beyond Europeans and Minangkabau migrants to include members of various ethnic communities. Consequently, Cindua Mato served not only as a cultural performance but also as cultural diplomacy, presenting Minangkabau society as a civilization with a long-established, sophisticated heritage. This representation served as a counter-narrative to colonial hegemonic assumptions that frequently portrayed indigenous populations as socially and culturally "backward."

The Stage Of The Drama "Cindua Mato" In A Review Of Social Theories

In order to analyse the use of Minangkabau folklore, specifically Cindua Mato, within the context of the Indonesian movement during the Dutch colonial period, a range of social theories can be employed to comprehend the role of culture in resistance and social mobilisation. These theories can facilitate analysis of how the Minangkabau folklore Cindua Mato functions as a cultural and social mobilisation tool that strengthens resistance to Dutch colonialism.

Social Identity Theory posits that individuals or groups form their identities based on social characteristics such as culture, ethnicity, or shared experiences. The influence of social identity on social interaction is a significant area of interest, given its implications for the dynamics of intergroup conflict and expressions of group solidarity (Turner, 2010). Folklore, including Cindua Mato, has been identified as a significant factor in the formation of collective identity among colonised communities. In the context of resistance to Dutch colonialism, Cindua Mato's narrative functions to strengthen a sense of shared identity among the Minangkabau people, who faced colonial rule. This analysis demonstrates that the performance of Cindua Mato fosters a sense of unity in Minangkabau identity among individuals from various social classes, both in the Minangkabau region and among those who migrated to Batavia.

Antonio Gramsci's Hegemony Theory represents a seminal concept in the domain of social and political studies. This theory posits the notion that dominant social groups or classes perpetuate their dominance through the medium of cultural and ideological influence, rather than being contingent upon military or economic power. Gramsci's (2000; 2020) conceptualisation of hegemony encompasses not only direct control over state institutions or military power, but also the pervasive influence of ideology and culture in shaping society's collective consciousness. During the Dutch colonial period, for instance, colonial rulers endeavoured to impose their ideology and cul-

ture as a means to maintain their power. Folk tales such as Cindua Mato can be regarded as a form of resistance to colonial hegemony, by introducing and strengthening local ideologies based on the values of justice, struggle and courage. These narratives can be regarded as a medium for enhancing class consciousness and fortifying communal bonds in the face of colonial subjugation. The Cindua Mato performance, a Minangkabau cultural performance, functions to increase the Minangkabau people's collective awareness of their core identity in facing the onslaught of European culture. This assertion is further substantiated by the dissemination of this performance from Fort de Koek to Padang, Padang Panjang, and ultimately to Batavia, which underscores the imperative of nurturing a sense of pride in one's original identity and the necessity to safeguard it.

The Resource Mobilisation Theory posits that social groups or social movements employ a range of resources, including ideology, social networks, and culture, to achieve their objectives. A close analysis of social movements reveals that their existence and success depend not only on existing dissatisfaction or oppression within society, but also on the movement's capacity to organise and mobilise existing resources (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). Cindua Mato, a folk tale, can be regarded as a cultural resource utilised by communities to organise themselves and mobilise resistance against colonialism. The propagation of values associated with struggle and resistance through these narratives serves to reinforce communal solidarity. The Cindua Mato performance, therefore, serves as a prime example of the community's ability to mobilize folkloric resources for the purpose of safeguarding its people, in this case, preserving both identity and social welfare objectives.

The following discussion will explore the meaning of Popular Culture Theory. Popular culture is defined as a form of cultural expression that develops within wider society and is frequently employed as a medium for the dissemination of social or political messages. The role of popular culture media in the formation of social and political identities has been demonstrated, as has the function of popular culture as a transmitter of ideology (Hall, 1980). The Cindua Mato folklore, which is comprehensible to diverse societal groups, can be employed as a conduit for disseminating narratives. In this particular instance, the Minangkabau people's original identity is promoted and strengthened by this folklore, and the use of this folklore to support the movement of indigenous community organisations and social activities is advocated. The popular folklore narratives can be interpreted in various ways, and can be used to support different forms of social movement in different aspects.

Conclusion

The study found distinct differences in the use of Cindua Mato performances in public spaces. Among elite groups, the story served to legitimize political sovereignty and promote Minangkabau cultural diplomacy, emphasizing the ethnic group's historical continuity and projecting Minangkabau society as a civilization with a long-established, sophisticated cultural heritage. In contrast, within the broader public sphere, Cindua Mato performances served not merely as entertainment or as a medium of Minangkabau cultural diplomacy in both local communities and migrant settings such as Batavia, but also as an instrument of interethnic social solidarity through charitable fundraising activities. Furthermore, these performances reflected contemporary moral debates regarding role positions and social norms within public entertainment spaces, while simultaneously functioning as a vehicle for nationalist mobilization that united both elite and common social groups in responding to colonial pressures through artistic and cultural expressions. The findings also indicate an interconnection between the notions of "heroism" and "charity" through the spirit of gotong royong (cooperation), which represents a distinctive characteristic of Indonesian society. The values of sacrifice for family and nagari embodied in Cindua Mato were highly relevant and strategically utilized by performers as a call for collective humanitarian action through fundraising initiatives, while also serving as a narrative of resistance and patriotism. Consequently, by merely attending performances and purchasing tickets, ordinary people indirectly became participants in the broader objectives of these theatrical productions, contributing simultaneously to humanitarian causes and nationalist aspirations.

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