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POPULAR CULTURE IN INDONESIA: Fluid Identities in Post-Authoritarian Politics. *By Ariel Heryanto. London and New York: Routledge, 2008. x, 206 pp. (Figures.) US\$160.00, cloth. ISBN 978-0-415-46112-2.*

This collection of articles on Indonesian popular culture, edited by Ariel Heryanto, is a very welcome addition to scholarship on Indonesian film, television, staged performances of music and dance. It is also a challenging volume for scholars and students alike. As Heryanto points out in his introduction, the main focus of the collection is the politics of identity in the production and consumption of popular culture. The challenge in the text comes from the fact that Heryanto and his contributors do not see identity as in any way a simple concept easily extractable from a text, whether it be written, film, televised, or recorded or performed music and lyrics. Instead, Heryanto argues, and the work of the contributors to this volume largely supports the notion, that identity is negotiated in a complex field of social issues and interactions that are constituted by considerations of gender, class (in the Weberian sense) ethnicity, regionalism, nationhood, globalization and age, among others. This produces articulations of identity that are layered and fluid, changing according to specific contexts and historical moments. In Heryanto's terms, this leaves the question of identity "open-ended."

Heryanto, in his lucid and well-argued introductory chapter, also asserts the need to situate readings of popular cultural products in their broader social, historical and political contexts of production and consumption. Further, he insists that ethnographic fieldwork is a crucial methodology in cultural studies for understanding the above-mentioned contexts as well as the ways people consume popular culture. All of this seems consistent with the general thrust of cultural studies as a practice during the past three decades, though in Heryanto's view, scholars of Indonesia have frequently not adopted such an approach.

The collection includes three articles on film (Clark, Hanan, Heryanto), four on television (Ida, Coutas, Yulianto, Jurriens) and two on music and dance (a substantial portion of Heryanto's introduction, Richter). Indeed, the majority of the articles seek, in Richter's words, to "complexify" previous notions of who uses popular culture, under what circumstances, how, and with what interpretive frameworks, and to what ends. In Heryanto's introduction, the discussion of the Inul controversies of 2003 and 2006 and the political stakes involved is particularly fascinating. He proposes several binary pairs of oppositions—including Regional Pride vs. Capital Power, Javanist Pleasure vs. Islamic Piety, Patriarchy vs. the Women's Movement, Lower vs. Upper Class Cultural Tastes, and Digital Divide vs. Empowerment—to show just how many kinds of identities and ideologies were implicated in debates over whether the popular singer/dancer was in fact ushering in a new era of national moral degradation or whether she was in fact a figure worth emulating in

her hard work, artistry, and rags to riches success. Heryanto uses this case to demonstrate convincingly that popular culture, far from being mere entertainment, can at times be "at the very heart of Indonesian national politics, the people's diverse senses of identity and self respect" (34).

Edwin Jurriens' contribution on the phenomenon of Indonesian political parody shows like *Republik BBM* and *Newsdotcom*, which present mimetic simulations of actual political figures, is another eye-opening study. In it, Jurriens shows how pro-democracy, pro-Reform media scholars, activists, and artists simulate Indonesian political reality through such shows in order to deconstruct it, while at the same time promoting an alternative vision of politics, democracy, and how to handle discourse in the public sphere. At the same time, Jurriens modifies Baudrillard's notion of *simulacra*, signs without referents, insisting that Indonesian political parody programmes are rather *referential simulations* that constantly switch between their fictional worlds and Indonesian political realities, as well as instructing viewers about "the ideological mechanisms behind media production" (144).

Most of the other studies are equally suggestive and engaging as they investigate representations of masculinity in contemporary cinema (Clark), compare Indonesian and Thai teen movies to those from Hollywood (Hanan), consider representations of Chinese-Indonesians in recent film (Heryanto), reflect on the response of Indonesian television viewers to Taiwanese soap operas (Ida), examine new kinds of celebrity and fandom produced in the intersection of global and local cultural realms such as displayed by Indonesian Idol and other talent search shows (Coutas), or contrast the physical experiences of those listening to village *jatilan* music/trance performances and those urban youth participating in modern rock band competitions and concerts in Yogyakarta (Richter). Not all of the articles are equally convincing in their analyses. For instance, Vissa Ita Yulianto's chapter on celebrity gossip shows presents an argument for her main thesis, that such shows "re-domesticate" women, which seems disappointingly underdeveloped. Yet despite this and a few other minor problems, on balance this collection offers a wealth of fresh thinking and perceptive studies of new developments in Indonesia's rich and thriving popular culture. Scholars and students interested in cultural studies, or in the intersection of politics and culture, will want to read this book carefully.

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