

Football Fans in Indonesia and Malaysia in the 2000s: Fanaticism, Conflict, and Friendship

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the interaction between football fans in Indonesia who identify with the Mania culture and football fans in Malaysia who identify with the Ultras culture. Similar to the political relationship between Indonesia and Malaysia, there are ups and downs in the relationship between football fans in both nations. This study attempts to provide an overview of the emergence of fanaticism, conflict, and amicable interactions among Malaysian and Indonesian football fans. This study uses historical research methods, the historical method consists of 4 steps namely; (1) heuristics; (2) verification; (3) interpretation; (4) historiography. The findings indicate that the industrialization of football influences the growth of obsessive football supporters in Indonesia and Malaysia. Football is also affected by the political tension between Indonesia and Malaysia. In conclusion, because of their common origin and comparable languages, football clubs in both countries are the starting point of the friendly relationship between fans of the game in Indonesia and Malaysia. Mania, the identity of the Indonesian football culture, and Ultras Malaya, the identity of the Malaysian football culture, have emerged as distinct cultures among football fans from the two nations. The harmony that often exists between fans of Indonesia and Malaysia started to alter as a result of the positive relationships that exist between fan bases at the club level, as demonstrated above by the friendship between Aremania (Indonesia) and UltrasSel (Malaysia).

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INTRODUCTION

Football has become a business, with its industrialization beginning in continental Europe and spreading to the rest of the world. There is frequently a conflict of interest between capital owners and football supporters who feel sidelined by industrialization. According to football critic Walter Lutz, football has always existed despite wars, crises, disasters, gaming scandals, bribing of referees, and fair play betrayals. It continues to provide entertainment for the world. Perhaps because football has become both a popular sport and a source of human amusement. Football also strongly engages the audience always to risk being between triumph and defeat (Sindhunata, 2002). Dutch employees of the Dutch East Indies government agency brought the sport of football to Indonesia. They select this game, currently popular in Europe, as a form of recreation and exercise (Maladi, 1997).

Sindhunata (2002) explain that football has demonstrated that it may influence social, economic, and political factors in addition to being merely a game. Through football, temporary ceasefires between warring nations can be halted, and solid diplomatic contacts between nations can be built. A region that does not have international recognition as a country from the United Nations (UN) may compete in world football championships with FIFA's authorization, despite not being an independent and sovereign country under international law. According to Muslikhah (2022). The fandom includes football fans. The phrase "fandom" refers to a group of people who share a common appreciation for popular culture, including movies, TV shows, novels, music, sports teams, fitness centres, and public personalities (Muslikhah et al., 2022).

Football can also be a tool for a country's diplomatic relations; for example, Indonesia and Yugoslavia have used the sport as a diplomatic connection. The origin of this diplomatic relationship was a football match. Maladi, the chairman of the Indonesian Football Association (PSSI), attended the 1952 Yugoslavia national team football match at the Helsinki Olympics. He was pretty pleased by their disciplined style, which relied on good teamwork and was extremely persistent on the pitch. Maladi asked Tony Pogacknik, the coach of the Yugoslavia national team, to lead the Indonesian national team a year after the Olympics. There were no diplomatic ties between Indonesia and Yugoslavia at the time. Thus, the request was not answered quickly. The ratification of the diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Yugoslavia followed President Sukarno's invitation to the Yugoslavia national team. Here begins the state diplomacy that is wholly fueled and formed by football. After diplomatic relations were established, the coach, whose full name was Antun Tony Pogacknik, became the longest-lasting coach of the Indonesian national team, serving nine years (1954-1963). Similar to the course of Indonesian politics when Sukarno was commanded, the direction of Indonesian football was towards Eastern Europe (Al Fadillah, 2016).

Similarly, newly independent nations quickly sought legitimacy by submitting the conditions to join FIFA (Federation International Football Association), whose membership is even greater than that of the United Nations (United Nations) (Isharuddin, 2008). During the period of the Indonesian national movement, football played a role in social and economic life. It served as a source of inspiration for the campaign, both in efforts to promote national unity and as a medium for discussion and establishing the All-Indonesian Football Association (currently the All-Indonesian Football Association) (Palupi, 2004). This demonstrates that football has embraced all nations and countries in the world regardless of the strength of the state in terms of economic, political, social, and cultural power. Every nation desires international recognition within the context of international football competitions.

Because football is the most popular sport in the world, it plays a role in international communication. Almost definitely, this sport is widely known around the world. Even if some individuals dislike or cannot play this sport, at least they are aware of its existence. Therefore, football is undoubtedly the most popular sport in the world. People of all ages, without distinction between men and women, are highly fond of this sport (Salim, 2007).

Then, how can football serve as a communication bridge between two allies, such as Indonesia and Malaysia, whose sociopolitical dynamics frequently cause friction? Especially when considering the interaction between groups of supporters in two allies, Indonesia and Malaysia, where physical and non-physical fights occur often. The two groups, Indonesian football fans identical to Mania culture and Malaysian football fans who adopt European Ultras culture with Eastern culture, called Ultras Malaya, interact and develop a shared perspective. This does not imply that there are no ultras groups in Indonesia; however, the dominant group will be the subject of this research.

The relationship between the two countries based on the topic of this discussion has not been discussed and linked extensively, including in literature that the author can process to explain this; however, based on observations and in-depth analysis, this can be explained through a historiographical process based on historical methods from heuristics to historiography processes, so that this paper can be completed appropriately.

METHODS

The historical approach is used in this study. According to (Southgate, 1996), several possibilities result from using historical research methods, which force historians to be able to find data that is free from bias (without bias), facts that are distinct from opinions, evidence that is acceptable from impartial witnesses, go through a critical analytical process, and maintain objectivity. Therefore, we require the appropriate approach to solve a historical problem. Then some steps must be completed using the historical method. The five steps of historical research, according to (Kuntowijoyo, 2005), are topic selection, heuristics (source gathering), verification (historical criticism, source validity), interpretation (analysis and synthesis), and historiography (writing). Newspapers, periodicals, and relevant articles from the same day were used as the data sources for this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To give readers an in-depth understanding of the study's findings and results, all the actual results were described in this part.

The Industrialisation of Football and The Rise of Fanatical Football Fans in Indonesia and Malaysia

Fanaticism is exemplified by an overly enthusiastic and unquestioning person regarding religion and politics. In essence, fanaticism is a social phenomenon that occurs in everyday life. When individuals join the group, they will have a strong affection for various things and be willing to sacrifice for specific causes (Bajari, 2017). The meaning of the word Ultras is derived from the Latin word for extraordinary. During the games, the ultras football fans never cease singing pride songs. *Fossa di Leoni*, a group of AC Milan supporters from Italy, was the first Ultras organization to form in 1968. A year later, supporters of Internazionale Milan's rival club, Internazionale Milan, founded *Inter Club Fossati*, which then changed its name to *Boys S.A.N (Squad d'Azione Nerazzurri)*. In the late 1960s, during a period of political unrest in Italy, youths staged demonstrations that spawned the ultras movement. Even if they support the same club, each extreme group has a unique ideological basis and political stream. Ultras play a role in preserving outdated ideologies such as fascism and communist socialism. These commonalities are evident in the singing of songs that are typically traditional communist anthems, the waving of flags and banners, unwavering commitment to the group, shifts in alliances with other ultras, and the advent of physical fights with the security forces.

In Italy, Ultras are connected with the culture of football fans, whereas in England, hooligan culture is associated with masculinity. In football, hooliganism is described as social violence between organized football fans, mainly focused on competitors who are viewed as adversaries. Hooliganism arose in England in the 1960s when football matches were institutionalized (Spaaij, 2006). Contemporary hooliganism in football refers to the social milieu that develops from a subculture of football fans regularly and collectively involved in violence, particularly with their opponents or rivals (Giulianotti, 1999). In addition, the Casuals culture arose as a kind of indirect resistance to hooligan organizations, particularly in England against security forces, because in every football riot involving hooligans, supporters who are registered in the incident are typically banned from accessing stadiums in England. As a strategy to deceive the cops, football fans with a casual culture typically choose certain clothing brands to remain safe while supporting their club throughout competitions. In Latin America, there is a culture known as Barras Bravas, which, at first look, resembles that of ultras and hooligans but is distinct from that of Europe. According to Doidge & Lieser (2018), ultras have also spread worldwide. The emergence of this phenomenon in North America, Australia, and Southeast Asia was aided by social media, television, and migration.

Meanwhile, the culture of football fans in Indonesia is known as Mania Culture. Mania as a culture of Indonesian football fans appeared massively in the early 2000s when the industrialization faucet of Indonesian football was relatively stable when the Indonesian League was held professionally in 1999. 1994 with the merger of two amateur and semi-professional competitions, Perserikatan and Galatama. Despite being halted during the 1997-1998 season due to reforms, the Indonesian League restarted the following year. It began demonstrating its stability so the football business could be subsequently strengthened. This is marked by the emergence of fanatical supporters of the Indonesian football team, who have become one of the lifelines of the football club, with the existence of passionate supporters providing a positive

aspect to the club's income. However, sometimes the club is harmed by sanctions from the federation (PSSI) due to the actions of fanatical fans, including clashes between supporters and the police.

This study allows researchers to categorise the emergence of football fans with Mania culture, such as Aremania supporters of Arema Malang (Arema FC), Bonek Mania supporters of Persebaya Surabaya, The Jakmania supporters of Persija Jakarta, LA Mania supporters of Persela Lamongan, Persikmania supporters of Persik Kediri, Slemania supporters of PSS Sleman, and others, is cause for concern. Influential in the development of Indonesian football in the twenty-first century. Several groups of supporters still have Mania culture. Still, they do not use Mania frills, including Viking Persib Club (VPC) supporting Persib Bandung, Pasoepati supporting Persis Solo, The Macz Man supporting PSM Makassar, SNEK and Panzer Biru supporting PSIS Semarang, Laskar Benteng Viola (LBV) supporting Persita Tangerang, etc. Mania culture in Indonesian football differs from the emergence of Ultras in Italy, who have an ideological background, as well as from the personality and culture of British hooligans, who are associated with violence, and from the Casuals culture, which conjures up images of football fans dressed in fashionable attire. The usage of outstanding team traits by supporters exemplifies the distinctive nature of Mania culture in Indonesian football. For example, The Jakmania is equal to the colour orange. Therefore, the entire stadium is orange, with orange team jerseys, scarves, flags, and banners, and Aremania and Bonek Mania, identical to the colours blue and green, respectively. – *argumen dan Analisa peneliti*

The rise of numerous European Ultras supporter organizations in the early 2010s began to influence the purity of Mania culture in the world of Indonesian football fans, even though it was still in its developmental stages. For instance, the appearance of Brigata Curva Sud (BCS) as a fan of PSS Sleman, followed by Curva Sud Arema, Green Nord 27 Persebaya, Curva Boys Persela, and Curva Nord Persija, etc. There are often riots between ultras and Mania fans. – *argumen dan Analisa peneliti*

According to Rafie (2014), A different point of view can be seen in the culture of football fans in Malaysia. Malaysia's fans are generally influenced by European Ultras culture, especially Ultras in the Turkish Super League, which led to the formation of Ultras Malaya. The rise of Ultras in Malaysia can't be separated from the disappointment of football fans in Malaysia over the failure of the Malaysian national team at the Asian Cup in 2007 when Malaysia was one of the four hosts along with Indonesia, Vietnam, and Thailand. From this disappointment, and after talking about it on the online forum tigermalaya.com, a group of forum members decided in 2007 to form Ultras Malaya to support the Malaysian national team more seriously (Rafie, 2014). So, as things have gone on, Ultras Malaya has become more organized than the presence of fans in Indonesia, which has grown naturally as the club has grown.

Thus, the primary objective of Ultras Malaya (UM07's) founders is to bring about a good transformation in the Malaysian football scene, which appears to have stagnated after the 2007 Asian Cup ended. The "positive change" that the informant speaks of is not the expectation that the national team will see sudden and spectacular success, but rather an internal improvement that comes from enhancing local football leagues, empowering grassroots talent, and transparent management from football associations and other authorities (Helmy & Nurzalyna Mohamed Zaki, 2020).

The state football squad serves as the foundation for Malaysian football. Whether they compete in Class 1 or Class 2 leagues, Malaysian states each have a representative from a football team. As a result, football supporters in Malaysia perceive the sport as becoming closer to a state-based identity. For example, a person cannot support other teams if they are born a citizen of the state of Johor. As citizens of the state, their love and dedication are ingrained in them no matter how the state football team performs. Furthermore, the support is not only provided out of interest; it also demonstrates their allegiance to the states in question. The 2013 incident involving the burning of Kelantan's team flag by Selangor football supporters incited anger and rage among Kelantan supporters. Even outside the stadium, fights broke out between the two supporters (Hafizah Yusoff & Hafizah Yusoff, 2015).

Ultras Malaya has sub-supporters at the club or state level, including 1. Silver State Ultras (Perak FA); 2. Ultras Kedah (Kedah FA); 3. UltraSel (Selangor FA); 4. Boys of Straits (B.O.S.) (Johor Darul Takzim FA); 5. Brigade Gialloblu Perlis (Perlis FA); 6. The Red Mania (Kelantan FA); 7. Ultras Nogori 9-Negeri Sembilan FA; 8. Ultras Tranung-Terengganu FA; 9. Elephant Army-Pahang FA; 10. Kuala Lumpur Ultras-Kuala Lumpur FA; 11. Ultras Taming Sari-Melaka FA; 12. North Borneo Ultras-Sabah FA; 13. Gallore Buceros (GB 13)-Sarawak FA; 14. Ultras Panthers-Penang FA. Ultras of football clubs in the Malaysian Super League (MSL) add to the league's beauty, making the stadium always complete at every game and sometimes causing chaos between fans of different clubs. Ultras Malaya not only backs the team but

also criticizes the federation, in this case, the FAM (Malaysian Football Federation), when the team's performance goes down or when there are policies that seem strange or unfair (Rafie, 2014) (Helmy & Nurzalyna Mohamed Zaki, 2020).

The Impact of Political Conflict on Indonesian and Malaysian Football

The political relations between Indonesia and Malaysia are relatively unstable, appearing peaceful yet frequently in conflict. The romantic aspect of Indonesia-Malaysia relations cannot be separated from their shared past. Malaysia's kingdom or sultanate is closely related to Indonesia's sultanate (Tate, 1977). Due to the tight relationship between Selangor and Johor and South Sulawesi, the Sultans of Selangor and Johor are of Bugis heritage. Negeri Sembilan has ties to Minangkabau, as the mother of Pagaruyung is the King of Negeri Sembilan. Similarly, the Malacca Sultanate, a descendant of King Parameswara, originated in Palembang, where the ancestor of the Malacca empire originated. Before the connection connecting Aceh, Perak, and Kedah (Sunarti, 2009)

As allied nations, Indonesia and Malaysia have different historical backgrounds due to their establishment as sovereign and independent nations. However, at the beginning of each country's establishment, there was a relationship and communication between the founding figures to establish a state free of colonialism and imperialism. In the 1940s, left-leaning Malay nationalists such as Ibrahim Yaakub, and Ahmad Bustaman, and members of the Malay Nationalist Party established ties with Indonesian communist leaders such as Tan Malaka and Alimin (Mackie, 1974). However, the bond was severed in the middle of the road when each nation and state began to travel independently. Until the early days of Malaya's independence, the positive relationships built since the revolutionary era persisted. In August 1957, when Malaya attained its independence, relations with Indonesia were cordial. This became apparent when Indonesia became the first nation to dispatch an ambassador to Kuala Lumpur (Penerangan, 1963)

The relationship's romance, however, did not endure. The Cold War between the Western and Eastern blocs influenced the relationship between the two nations. The rise of the PRRI-Permesta insurrection aggravated the situation, culminating in the Indonesian confrontation with Malaysia between 1962 and 1966, during which Indonesian President Sukarno carried the slogan "Destroy Malaysia." This conflict between Indonesia and Malaysia came from the Federation of Malaya, also known as the Malayan Alliance, in 1961, wanting to incorporate Brunei, Sabah, and Sarawak into the Federation of Malaysia, which was contrary to the Manila Agreement. Therefore, this ambition was resisted by President Sukarno, who viewed the establishment of what is now Malaysia as a "puppet of England" as a new type of colonialism and imperialism and backed various domestic security crises and rebellions in Indonesia (Mezerik, 1965)

The fall of the Sukarno government due to the G30S (*Gerakan 30 September*-Movement of September 30) event in 1965 also marked the end of the conflict between the two nations. Suharto, the representative of the New Order regime, came to power after the fall of Sukarno's regime, which affected the conflict's ending with Malaysia. It led to more cordial relations between the two countries, although they maintained their distance. Jakarta witnessed the signing of an agreement on August 11, 1966, that ended the conflict and marked the beginning of normalized ties between the two nations (Weinstein, 1976).

In 2002, Malaysia claimed the islands of Sipadan and Ligitan as its territory. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) in Den Haag, Netherlands, ruled that Sipadan and Ligitan were Malaysian territories. Sipadan and Ligitan are two small islands in the oceans close to the coasts of the states of Sabah and East Kalimantan that are claimed by two different nations, generating a dispute. Due to Indonesia's lack of effective supervision, Malaysia acquired possession of two islands that Indonesia had previously owned: Sipadan and Ligitan (Djala, 2003; Lestari & Arifin, 2019).

Three years later, a dispute involving the territorial boundaries and ownership of Ambalat arose between the two countries. Ambalat was ultimately recognized as part of Indonesia. During the 2000s, diplomatic relations between the two countries were contentious. The issue of unresolved territorial problems increased in 2007 with the rise of conflicts over the ownership of the song Rasa Sayang. This conflict developed when the Ministry of Tourism of Malaysia utilized music to promote Malaysian tourism. In addition to the political dispute between the two countries, which the advent of different social problems has compounded, Malaysia's Indonesian Migrant Workers (TKI) issue has further strained relations between allied nations. There are a lot of complex disputes between Indonesia and Malaysia. These range from land border issues, labour disputes, illegal logging, and labour Indonesia (TKI) to maritime border issues, particularly concerning Indonesia's maritime border issues. One of the more frequent disputes between these two nations is an overlap in the Malacca Strait, which is a busy international trade route (Yusvitasari, 2020).

The frequently escalating political conflict between Indonesia and Malaysia significantly impacts Football matches. The term "ganyang Malaysia" is another factor contributing to the dispute between Indonesia and Malaysia. When the Indonesian national team plays Malaysia, this phrase is frequently heard. In the conflict between the Ganyang Malaysia Military, the term "ganyang Malaysia" was employed. Indonesia's rejection of the formation of the Malaysian Federation on September 16, 1963, led to this confrontation, an armed conflict that lasted from 1963 to 1966. Different perspectives on the plans for the integration of Sabah, Sarawak, and Brunei with other portions of North Kalimantan set off this dispute (Santoso & Syahri, 2023).

Several times a year, trial and official matches between the Indonesian and Malaysian national football teams are rife with political overtones of heroism, and the impact of friction between the supporter groups of the two countries is endless. It can be prevented. The anti-Malaysia prejudice that always exists in Indonesia due to historical political battles has migrated to the football world and vice versa. A confrontation between Malaysian and Indonesian fans during the 2012 AFF Cup began with insults directed at one another. One such incident occurred in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, when Malaysian fans battered Indonesian supporters. There was a racist movie uploaded to www.youtube.com that horrified the people of Indonesia and Singapore. Malaysian supporters were shown in the broadcast attacking Singapore and Indonesia with their poetic singing. There's no denying that the actions of the Malaysia fans incited hostility among Indonesia fans (Kuntjoro, 2020).

According to Amri Marzali's article *Romantika Hubungan Bangsa Serumpun Indonesia-Malaysia*, the critical element that made Indonesian-Malaysian relations difficult was the problem of miscommunication; Indonesians were unaware of Malaysia's predicament, and Malaysians were similarly unaware of Indonesia' (Othman, 2013). Some Indonesians and Malaysians are still embedded in the war frame of the past, and vice versa for Malaysian society. Relations between the two countries have been aggravated by the propaganda war and competition in the political, social, and economic areas, which are exacerbated by mutual claims in cultural matters. At one point, it was possible to handle it diplomatically such that it appeared there were no problems at the intergovernmental level. Still, it remained a problem at the local level. Diplomacy between the two countries is insufficient to stop the media coverage that has reached the public. The sensitive attitude of Indonesians toward Malaysians in their nation, and vice versa, cannot be handled through political methods; therefore, alternative bridges capable of mediating the issue are required. Wardhani (1999) explains that Indonesian political relations with Malaysia may be a commonality of family relationships.

Through cultural relations, it is intended that the unfavourable stereotypes between the two countries can be diminished. In this approach, mutual suspicion caused by a lack of communication can be reduced, which will positively affect the relationship between the two countries so as not to interfere with the national interests pursued by the two nations. The world of football fans is represented by the Mania and Ultras cultures; in this case, the Mania Indonesia and Ultras Malaya groups, through the interaction process that appears in the fan group at the club level, which will be discussed in the following subchapter, explain how the seeds of this brotherhood emerged and can serve as a basis for hopes to build Indonesia-Malaysia relations at the grassroots level.

The Formation of Friendships between Indonesian and Malaysian Football Fans

Identity is the primary link between individuals and society, with communication as the connecting element. Communication is a technique for establishing one's identity and altering the mechanism of oneself and others. The first level of identity is the personal layer, which consists of how we represent ourselves in social situations. The second level of the enactment layer is what others know about us based on our possessions, actions, and behaviour. The third level, the relational layer, consists of one's interactions with others. The fourth community level is an individual's sense of self in a broader community or culture (Littlejohn, 2009).

According to this description, a group of fans with a strong sense of loyalty and wholly back their clubs comprises Ultras and Mania as personal layer identities. As an enactment layer identity, Mania and Ultras have their traits. Mania in Indonesia is identical with uniform attributes when watching matches with scarves and flags that have their characteristics in each group. In contrast, ultras have generic characters with all-black details and occasionally remove their clothing. When the practice of using flares or smoke bombs while viewing a game is present, each Mania and Ultras group at the club level has a relationship with another Mania or Ultras group as a relational layer identity. In Indonesia, for instance, there is a relationship between Aremania and Jakmania, the Viking Persib Club and Bonek Mania, and so on. For Ultras, in Malaysia, there is a vertical relationship between Ultras Malaya and Ultras at the club level. Mania Indonesia and Ultras Malaya are two communities that support Indonesian football in greater groups, respectively. Indonesian football fans also grow through culture. Bonek ada Aremania serves as an illustration of a

cultural strategy. Their strength lies in the resemblance of names, logos, and endorsements. There is only one unofficial leader, an elder, rather than a chairman or deputy chairman. Symbolic interactionism is the term used to describe it in communication studies (Cahyani & Sari, 2021).

Based on the initial identity construction, Indonesia and Malaysia can be described as the primary meaning units, as the primary function of a supporter is to support the team. This link will continue between the club's supporters and the country. Mania Indonesia represents the identity of Indonesian football fans and Ultras Malaya represents the identity of Malaysian football fans. As a result of observing the background of the past conflict between the two countries carried on the green field and the stands to the outside of the area, it becomes evident how significant the political conflict between the two countries is as a representation of the national identities of the two countries. One of the sectors in which the battle extended was the world of football.

Malaysian and Indonesian football fans at the club level and the regional (in Indonesia) and state (in Malaysia) groups do not have the same characteristics. The seeds of conflict that emerged due to the national-level political struggle's influence on the world of supporters do not appear to have germinated at the grassroots level. A calming scene emerged when Indonesian fans exchanged chants (songs of encouragement) with Malaysian football club supporters. One was spotted when Aremania (supporters of Arema Malang, now Arema FC) travelled to Selangor, Malaysia, for the resumption of the 2014 AFC Cup Grup F initial encounter against Selangor FA, Malaysia, as an away team (Prayugi, 2014).

Text in Indonesian:

"Kami Selangor Tunjang Malaysia, selamat datang Aremania. Semoga selamat semuanya. Salam satu saudara. Kami doakan pada Arema juara Liga Indonesia. Doakan kami Aremania, Selangor takluk Asia," demikian sambutan Ultras Selangor Curva (UltraSel Curva), dalam salah satu testimoni yang diunggah di fanpage UltraSel Curva dikutip dari media online juara.net, 25 Februari 2014 (Prayugi, 2014).

English Translation:

"We support Malaysia as Selangor; welcome Aremania." Best of luck, everyone. Greetings to one brother. We fervently hope that Arema wins the Indonesian League. Pray for us, Aremania, Selangor has conquered Asia," claimed Ultras Selangor Curva (UltraSel Curva) in one of the testimonials published to the UltraSel Curva fan page, as cited by juara.net, February 25, 2014. (Prayugi, 2014).

This positive relationship continued with Aremania's visit to UltraSel's offices on 14 May 2014, when Arema supporters stopped in Selangor, Malaysia, en route to Hong Kong for the AFC Cup round of 16 matches against SC Kitchee, the frontman of Aremania sang *Jiwa Kami untuk Selangor*, which was formed of *Jiwa Kami untuk Arema*. The interchange of shouts as a symbol of the friendliness of allied soccer supporters continues with chants such as Selangor FA's *Bersatu Dalam Jiwa*, which Aremania frequently repeats, and Aremania's sang *Mau Jadi Apa*, which UltraSel has sang on multiple occasions (Prayugi, 2014).

The exchange of chants, particularly the widespread use of chants typical of Indonesian football fans by Malaysian football club supporters, indicates a positive relationship. Sarawak FA supporters, Malaysia (GB 13), in addition to Aremania and UltraSel, frequently use Mangosteen chants typically performed by Aremania, Pasoepati's Kami Come cries (Persist Solo supporters), Jakmania's (Persija Jakarta supporters), etc. In addition, there are European Ultras-style cries frequently repeated by Malaysian supporters, such as Elephant Army 12 and Brigata Curva Sud (BCS) followers (Pahang FA Supporters). In addition to exchanging chants, Malaysian and Indonesian fans have visited each other on multiple occasions, both for personal reasons and on behalf of the group (Prayugi, 2014).

Football chants express collective identity, typically used by fans to express their pride in the team or boost the home team. They can even be shouted to honour a specific player or manager. Fans may also utilize football chants to ridicule the opposition, and many fans sing songs about their club rivals, even if one of the songs includes insulting chants (Sihombing et al., 2021). The exchange of chants is not considered plagiarism; rather, it strengthens the link of brotherhood between these two allies. The mutual visits between the two groups of fans indicate a positive relationship that can be pursued as a kind of cultural integration exemplified by football fans at the Indonesian and Malaysian club levels. Furthermore, this relationship between Ultras Malaya and Mania Indonesia as a culture and community of football fans can continue to be positive on a national level. Although provocations of derision and blasphemy frequently

arise on social media, this is normal given that the football world cannot be isolated from the practice of supporters blaspheming one another.

Aremania and Ultras Selangor (UltraSel) communicate through the internet and social media, managed by the community media of Selangor Fans and Aremania on social media. Junaedi & Sukmono (2020) explain that the Internet provides football fans with a new method of managing community media. The Internet is more accessible than expensive broadcast and print media.

CONCLUSION

Good relations exist between football fan groups in Indonesia and Malaysia, driven by shared language, race, and the European-style Ultras culture, which promotes equality, loyalty, and solidarity. This connection is strengthened by the presence of Indonesian Migrant Workers (TKI) and Indonesian students in Malaysia, fostering contact between fans of both nations. The influence of Indonesian football culture is evident as Malaysian fans often adopt Indonesian chants.

Positive interactions occur through direct communication and international matches, such as the Asian Champions League and AFC Cup, where groups like Aremania and UltraSel exemplify harmonious relationships. However, the lack of frequent international matches between the countries' clubs hampers further cultural integration. The Football Association of Malaysia (FAM) and the Indonesian Football Association (PSSI) play crucial roles in bridging fan groups.

Mania (Indonesia) and Ultras Malaya (Malaysia) have become distinct football supporter cultures. Despite socio-political tensions, club-level relationships, like those between Aremania and UltraSel, foster hope for continued cultural integration. This harmonious relationship can extend beyond football to broader societal ties if both governments respond positively.

The industrialization of football has increased dedicated supporters in both nations. While political relations may be tense, fan friendships between Malaysia and Indonesia often begin with their football teams. The partnership between Aremania and UltraSel illustrates how positive club-level relationships can enhance national ties and cultural integration.

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