THE NEW MEDIA AND THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF HISTORY IN MALAYSIA

Ideas on National History and Other Histories

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Introduction

- Debates on different historical perspectives of the nation
- Mainstream history
- Alternative history
- Challenged? Subverted? Undermined? Threatened?
- End of Cold War
- Social use of networked media coincided with a new expression
- Blogs, web sites, etc. spawned and made visible the various centrisms
Objectives

- Gauge the consciousness on history by the nation’s population
- Gauge the consciousness on the nation’s history
- Identify the different perspectives on the nation’s history through online sources used and consumed
- Study the trajectories and arguments on selected themes and sites in the online media
Project description

- New media, consciousness, national history and other histories
- Categorize the various centrisms existent amongst Malaysians based on ethnicities and political ideologies
- How these centrisms are consumed through the networked media – blogs, Facebook, online newspapers, television, radio, etc.
The Literature

The Literature

- Nation overwhelmed with many histories
- Eurocentric
- Malay-centric
- Chinese-centric
- Indian-centric
- Hindraf-centric
- Palace-centric
- Orang asli-centric
- Thai-centric
The Literature

- UMNO-centric
- PAS-centric
- Sarawak-Centric [e.g. Iban-centric]
- Sabah-Centric [e.g. Kadazan-centric, Suluk-centric, Filipno-centric]
- Indonesian-centric
The Literature

- *The Chinese Dilemma, The Problems of the Tamils*
- Accusations of bias by the Malaysian government in history school textbooks
- Discourses on social contract
- Representation and misrepresentation of the nation’s history through the networked media
Concepts

- Mainstream History
- Alternative history
- Historiography
- Networked media
- History consciousness
- Context
Research methodologies and framework

Baseline data

- who, what, when, where
  - cohort, demographic, psychographic
- 1000 respondents aged 16-39 - survey
- 90 respondents – focus group
- 6 regions across the nation
  1. Central (Greater Klang Valley)
  2. Northern (North Selangor, Perak, Penang, Kedah, Perlis)
  3. Southern (Negeri Sembilan, Melaka, Johor)
  4. East Coast (Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang)
  5. Sarawak
  6. Sabah
Research methodologies and framework

Baseline data
Focus Group
6 groups of 10 to 15 people each age 16 and above

Interviews [10 to 15 individuals]
Opinion leaders, community leaders, writers, journalists, teachers, ngo activists, government servants, members of parliament
Research methodologies and framework

**Content Study**

- Blogs, Facebook, online newspapers, television over a two decade period
- Themes and issues to be identified: events, narratives, orientations and perspectives, actors, representations, etc.
- Interpretative and representation
Milestones/activities

- Duration – 24 months
- Commencement - November 2014
- Completion - October 2016
- Developing research framework/ 1 months
- Formulating questions for focus groups, survey questionnaires and interviews/ 1 month
- Establishment of networks, contacts, participants, interviewees
- Pilot study/2 month
- Data collection / 7 months
- Interpretation and analyses / 7 months
- Report writing and presentation / 6 months
Implications

- Public policy
- Electoral behaviour
- Forecast of themes and issues