

CultureTalk Indonesia Video Transcripts: <http://langmedia.fivecolleges.edu>  
**Palembang in South Sumatra**

**Indonesian transcript:**

Pewawancara: Ehmmm.. Palembang itu kota diatas sungai, bisa disebutkan sungai...

Agus: Musi?

Pewawancara: Sungai Musi..

Agus: Ya..

Pewawancara: Apakah sungai Musi itu sungai terbesar di Indonesia atau..

Agus: Untuk ukuran eee.. ter ... terpanjang saya tidak begitu ingat tapi salah satunya disamping sungai di Kalimantan, itu termasuk sungai yang terbesar. Kalau di Palembang itu banyak di kota itu dulunya ada sembilan sungai, kenapa dia disebut Batanghari sembilan, tapi kemudian Belanda menimbun beberapa sungai untuk dibuat jalan. Ini salah satu kemudian yang membuat eee.. orientasi masyarakat yang dulu pada awalnya sepenuhnya ke sungai, jadi ketika masih ada celah di pinggir sungai, pantang bagi orang untuk membuat rumah di darat. Tapi ketika jalan dibangun, orang orientasi ke darat. Nah, sungai kemudian ditinggalkan, jadi tempat buang ya.... limbah rumah tangga dan lain-lain sekarang ini.

Pewawancara: Jadi pembangunan di Palembang kalau begitu tidak melihat kondisi alam?

Agus: Betul, kondisi alam dan faktor sejarah. Tidak hanya Palembang saya pikir, semua ketika kota, konsep kota itu dibangun, dengan eee perangkat-perangkat modernitas, modernism, kita banyak melupakan, meninggalkan sebuah identitas di belakang kita.

Pewawancara: Apakah Palembang akan terus menjadi kota yang multi kultur di masa depan?

Agus: Saya tidak begitu tahu tapi, contoh yang menarik bagi saya bahwa mesjid agung di Palembang itu dia mesjid dengan gaya eeee gaya perpaduan antara... Pernah ngelihat Klenteng Cina? Atapnya dari Klenteng, gaya klenteng Cina, kemudian gaya Hindustan, dan dengan lantai rumah joglo gaya Jawa. Nah ini bagi saya multi kultural, bagian dari semangat multi kultural. Tapi pada hari ini, yaa saya tidak tahu karena ini persoalan pendidikan bagaimana pendidikan, kultur kita membangun budaya kita.

Pewawancara: Palembang itu kalo dibandingkan dengan Padang lebih besar atau lebih kecil ?

Agus: Kalau dalam konteks luas, Palembang lebih besar hmm Sumsel itu lebih besar dan pada kalau dibedakan dari konteks kultur Palembang itu homogenitas, kalau Padang, Sumbar itu eee.. Palembang itu Hetero..ge.. Hetero...

Pewawancara: genitas..

Agus: Heterogenitas, Sumbar itu homogenitas.

Pewawancara: Dari sisi penduduk dilihatnya atau dari sisi apa ?

Agus: Komposisi eee.... Etnik.. He eh..

Pewawancara: Jadi lebih multikultural di Palembang daripada di Padang ?

Agus: Ya.. he eh..

Pewawancara: Termasuk budayanya ?

Agus: Eehmmm iya betul.

Pewawancara: Kalau kehidupan agamanya lebih... multi dimana?

Agus: Lebih multi di Palembang karena untuk di Sumatera Barat itu mayoritas muslim, dan agama dan agama yang menjadi mayoritas itu agama Islam. Eehmm.. jadi kita bisa menghitung gereja itu hanya ada di kota besar, seperti Padang, Payakumbuh, tapi kalau di Sum.. Sum.. Palembang terutama di Palembang eee.. kita bisa menemukan eee... biara, menemukan klenteng, gereja, pun Islam pun dia Islam dari Hadratut maut, orang-orang India atau orang-orang keling, Hmm he eh..

Pewawancara: Bisa dijelaskan dari Jakarta ke Palembang itu ke arah mana dan kotanya kalau dibandingkan dengan Jakarta lebih baik mana untuk hal apa?

Agus: Palembang itu kalau dari Jakarta kita ke arah Lampung, hmm kurang lebih sekitar dua atau delapan belas jam kalau jalan darat. Kalau jalan, menggunakan pesawat terbang kurang lebih satu... setengah, satu jam. Dan satu setengah jam paling lama.

### **English translation:**

Interviewer: Um ... Palembang<sup>1</sup> is a town above the river. Can you mention the name of the river?

Agus: Musi?

Interviewer: Musi River?

---

<sup>1</sup> Palembang is the capital of South Sumatra, province in Indonesia.

Agus: Yes.

Interviewer: Is Musi River the biggest river in Indonesia or ...?

Agus: For the size ... the most ... the longest river I cannot remember very well, but it is one of the longest rivers besides the river in Kalimantan.<sup>1</sup> It is considered one of the biggest rivers in the country. There are a lot of rivers in Palembang. There were nine rivers, that is why it was referred to as Batanghari sembilan,<sup>2</sup> but then the Dutch amassed several rivers for roads. This is one among many reasons that has caused ... eeee ... the community orientation that used to be completely centralized on the river. So while there are spaces available by the edge of river, people would not build house above the land. But when the roads were built, people changed their orientation to the land. Then the rivers were abandoned. It became a garbage dump, household waste and etc.

Interviewer: So development in Palembang nowadays no longer considers natural factors?

Agus: That's right...natural conditions, historical factors. I think this doesn't happen just in Palembang, but when a city, a concept of a city, was built, using modern equipment, modernism, we forget. We leave an identity far behind us.

Interviewer: Will Palembang remain a multi-cultural city in the future?

Agus: I don't know much about it. One interesting example for me is that Palembang's grand mosque is a mosque with a style uh ... a mixed style between ... have you ever seen a Chinese temple? The roofs of the mosque are modeled on the style of Chinese temple, and then Hindustan style and the floor is that of a *Joglo* house,<sup>3</sup> Javanese style. Well, for me that's multi-cultural, part of the multi-cultural spirit. But nowadays, well I do not know. It's an educational issue, an issue of our culture and how we build our civilization.

Interviewer: Compared to Padang,<sup>4</sup> is Palembang bigger or smaller?

Agus: In a wider context, Palembang is bigger ... hmmm Sumsel<sup>5</sup> is bigger and then we're differentiating from a cultural context. Palembang is homogenous whereas Padang, *Sumbar*<sup>6</sup> is uh ... Palembang is heter ... Hetero . . . .

Interviewer: ... geneous.

Agus: Heterogeneous. Sumbar is homogenous.

---

<sup>1</sup> Kalimantan, the term Kalimantan refers to the Indonesian portion of the island of Borneo.

<sup>2</sup> Batanghari is a river name in Jambi, a province nearby Palembang. This river has nine (*sembilan*) brooks, one of the brook is Musi river.

<sup>3</sup> *Joglo* house is a traditional house style in Java.

<sup>4</sup> Padang is the capital of West Sumatra, province in Indonesia.

<sup>5</sup> Sumsel stands for Sumatera Selatan, literally translated as South Sumatra, province in Indonesia.

<sup>6</sup> Sumbar stands for Sumatera Barat, literally translated as West Sumatra, province in Indonesia.

Interviewer: In terms of its dwellers, or in terms of other things?

Agus: The composition uh ... ethnicity ...

Interviewer: So, Palembang is more multi-cultural than Padang?

Agus: Yes.

Interviewer: Including the culture?

Agus: Ehmm ... yes, that's right.

Interviewer: How about religious aspects? Is it more . . . which is more diverse?

Agus: Palembang is more diverse because, in West Sumatra, the majority of the people are Muslims, and religion ... the religion, the largest religion is Islam. Um ... so we can count the number of the churches, which are only located in big cities, such as Padang, Payakumbuh, but in Sum ... Sum ... Palembang, especially in Palembang uh ... we can find uh ... Buddhist monasteries, Chinese temples, churches, Islam ... Islam, the type that originates from Hadratul Maut,<sup>1</sup> the Indians or *Keling*<sup>2</sup> peoples. Hmmm ...

Interviewer: Could you please which direction is Palembang in relation to Jakarta and the city, compared to Jakarta which one is better in terms of which aspects?

Agus: Palembang, from Jakarta is on the way to Lampung ... hmmm ... It's about 12 or 18 hours by land. If you go by plane, it's about one, half, one and half . . . the most around one and a half hour.

**About CultureTalk:** CultureTalk is produced by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and housed on the LangMedia Website. The project provides students of language and culture with samples of people talking about their lives in the languages they use everyday. The participants in CultureTalk interviews and discussions are of many different ages and walks of life. They are free to express themselves as they wish. The ideas and opinions presented here are those of the participants. Inclusion in CultureTalk does not represent endorsement of these ideas or opinions by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages, Five Colleges, Incorporated, or any of its member institutions: Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

© 2003-2009 Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and Five Colleges, Incorporated

---

<sup>1</sup> Hadratul Maut is a place in the Middle East

<sup>2</sup> *Keling* is a Javanese term which means really black. This term is usually used to refer to Indians or anyone with a dark complexion.