



Antiphonal Histories: Resonant Pasts in the Toba Batak Musical Present (Music/Culture)

Julia Byl

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Positioned on a major trade route, the Toba Batak people of Sumatra have long witnessed the ebb and flow of cultural influence from India, the Middle East, and the West. Living as ethnic and religious minorities within modern Indonesia, Tobas have recast this history of difference through interpretations meant to strengthen or efface the identities it has shaped. *Antiphonal Histories* examines Toba musical performance as a legacy of global history, and a vital expression of local experience. This intriguingly constructed ethnography searches the palm liquor stand and the sanctuary to show how Toba performance manifests its many histories through its “local music”—Lutheran brass band hymns, gong-chime music sacred to Shiva, and Jimmie Rodgers yodeling. Combining vivid narrative, wide-ranging historical research, and personal reflections, *Antiphonal Histories* traces the musical trajectories of the past to show us how the global is manifest in the performative moment.

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