MÉDIA E COLONIALISMO(S)
“THE BLACKS OF INDONESIA”: THE ARTICULATION OF PAPUAN ETHNIC IDENTITY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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ABSTRACT
This study aims to explore how Indonesian ethnic minorities construct their identity online. It will focus on the way Papuans articulate their ethnic identity online particularly on Facebook. It looks for the way in which Papuans present and express themselves through posted and shared messages. The articulation of Papuan identity from the Papuans’ view is significant due to the fact that Papuans were denied the freedom to express their ethnic identity. Multimodal discourse analysis is chosen as the method. This method offers a tool to collect and analyse data that is appropriate to study texts in social media. This study will provide analysis on the way Papuans articulate their “Papuanness”, through the posted messages within the Orang Papua group. It reveals that through social media, Papuans are strengthening their identity by raising their distinctive ethnic consciousness. Papuans are emphasising their affiliation to Melanesian race to show their ethnic distinctiveness and to contrast with Indonesians, creating the notion of ethnic authenticity to redefine their ethnic identity, contesting the negative stereotype previously attached to them to empower themselves. Papuans’ marginalisation, oppression and economic exploitation along with being recognised by their black skin and curly hair, have made Papuans “the Blacks of Indonesia”. Papuan ethnic consciousness is facilitated by Facebook platform which allow them to choose and post messages to support their preferred online identity. Through social media, members of the Orang Papua group have shown attempts for power struggle by constructing identity according to their values and interests.

KEYWORDS
Ethnic identity, Authenticity, Strategic essentialism, Papuanness, Social media

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HTTP://DX.DOI.ORG/10.14195/2183-5462_29_6