



# UNIVERSITAS SANATA DHARMA

## LEMBAGA PENELITIAN DAN PENGABDIAN KEPADA MASYARAKAT

MRICAN, TROMOL POS 29 YOGYAKARTA 55002

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### SURAT PERJANJIAN PELAKSANAAN PROGRAM PENELITIAN INTERNAL TAHUN 2018 UNIVERSITAS SANATA DHARMA-YOGYAKARTA PERIODE JULI - NOVEMBER 2018 No: 032/ Penel./LPPM-USD/VII/2018

Pada hari ini, Senin tanggal 2 bulan Juli tahun 2018, kami yang bertanda tangan di bawah ini:

No	Nama	Status
1	Dr. rer.nat.Herry Pribawanto Suryawan	Ketua Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat Universitas Sanata Dharma (LPPM-USD) Yogyakarta, yang selanjutnya dalam Surat Perjanjian ini disebut sebagai <b>PIHAK PERTAMA</b>
2	P. Sarwoto, S.S., M.A., Ph.D.	Dosen Tetap Universitas Sanata Dharma, pengusul dan pelaksana Penelitian Internal Universitas Sanata Dharma Periode Juli-November 2018 yang selanjutnya dalam surat perjanjian ini disebut sebagai <b>PIHAK KEDUA</b>

**PIHAK PERTAMA** dan **PIHAK KEDUA** secara bersama-sama bersepakat mengikatkan diri dalam suatu Perjanjian Penelitian Internal Universitas Sanata Dharma Periode Juli - November 2018 dengan ketentuan dan syarat-syarat yang diatur dalam pasal-pasal sebagai berikut:

#### PASAL 1

- (1) **PIHAK PERTAMA** memberi tugas kepada **PIHAK KEDUA** untuk melaksanakan Penelitian Internal Universitas Sanata Dharma Periode Juli - November 2018 yang berjudul :

Ethicity and Imagined Indonesia in Literature and Political Discourse

- (2) **PIHAK KEDUA** bertanggungjawab penuh atas pelaksanaan, administrasi, dan keuangan atas pekerjaan sebagai dimaksud pada ayat (1).  
(3) Pelaksanaan Penelitian sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (1) didanai oleh Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat Universitas Sanata Dharma Pos Penelitian Dosen Internal Reguler tahun 2018.

#### PASAL 2

- (1) **PIHAK PERTAMA** menyerahkan dana yang dialokasikan untuk kegiatan penelitian sebagaimana dimaksud dalam Pasal 1 sebesar :

Rp. 11.000.000 (sebelas juta rupiah)

- (2) Dana Penelitian sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (1) dibayarkan oleh **PIHAK PERTAMA** kepada **PIHAK KEDUA** secara bertahap dengan ketentuan sebagai berikut:  
a) Pembayaran tahap pertama, sebesar 30% (tiga puluh persen), dibayarkan setelah perjanjian ini ditandatangani oleh ke dua belah pihak.

- b) Pembayaran tahap kedua, sebesar 30% (tiga puluh persen) , dibayarkan setelah **PIHAK KEDUA** menyerahkan Laporan Kemajuan Pelaksanaan Penelitian kepada **PIHAK PERTAMA** dan mengunggahnya di SIA Dosen paling lambat 28 September 2018.
- c) Pembayaran tahap ketiga, sebesar 20% (dua puluh persen) , dibayarkan setelah **PIHAK KEDUA** menyerahkan Laporan Akhir Hasil Penelitian dan Laporan Keuangan (Penggunaan Dana Penelitian) kepada **PIHAK PERTAMA** dan mengunggahnya di SIA Dosen paling lambat 30 November 2018
- d) Pembayaran tahap keempat , sebesar 20% (dua puluh persen) , dibayarkan setelah **PIHAK KEDUA** menyerahkan Hasil Luaran kepada **PIHAK PERTAMA** dan mengunggahnya di SIA Dosen paling lambat 30 November 2018
- e) **PIHAK KEDUA** bertanggungjawab mutlak dalam pembelanjaan dana tersebut pada ayat (1) dan berkewajiban untuk menyerahkan semua bukti-bukti pengeluaran sesuai jumlah dana yang diterima oleh **PIHAK PERTAMA**.

### **PASAL 3**

Dana Penelitian sebagaimana dimaksud dalam Pasal 2 ayat (1) dibayarkan kepada **PIHAK KEDUA** melalui rekening yang diajukan dan atas nama **PIHAK KEDUA**

### **PASAL 4**

- (1) **PIHAK KEDUA** bertanggungjawab penuh atas pelaksanaan penelitian sesuai judul yang diajukan sebagaimana dimaksudkan pada Pasal 1 ayat (1).
- (2) **PIHAK KEDUA** berkewajiban menghasilkan produk hasil penelitian dalam bentuk laporan penelitian dan publikasi ilmiah dalam jurnal, artikel buku atau buku dan mendeseminasikannya dalam deseminasi hasil penelitian .
- (3) Perolehan/luaran penelitian seperti dimaksud pada ayat (2) dimanfaatkan sebesar-besarnya untuk pelaksanaan Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi.

### **PASAL 5**

- (1) **PIHAK PERTAMA** melakukan Monitoring dan Evaluasi Internal terhadap kemajuan pelaksanaan program Hibah Penelitian Internal tahun 2018, setelah **PIHAK KEDUA** mengumpulkan Laporan Kemajuan dan mengunggahnya di SIA Dosen.
- (2) **PIHAK KEDUA** berkewajiban menyerahkan Laporan Hasil Penelitian, Luaran Penelitian ,dan Laporan Keuangan (Penggunaan Dana Penelitian) dalam bentuk *softcopy (pdf)* dan *hardcopy* kepada **PIHAK PERTAMA** dan mengunggahnya di SIA Dosen selambat-lambatnya pada tanggal 30 November 2018
- (3) Apabila sampai batas waktu habisnya masa penelitian ini **PIHAK KEDUA** belum menyerahkan laporan/dokumen sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (1), maka **PIHAK KEDUA** akan mendapat teguran dari **PIHAK PERTAMA** untuk segera memenuhi kewajibannya menyelesaikan pekerjaan dalam tenggang perpanjangan waktu paling lama 1 (satu) bulan.
- (4) Apabila sampai batas waktu habisnya masa perpanjangan sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (2) **PIHAK KEDUA** belum juga menyerahkan laporan / dokumen sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (1) dan tidak ada niat menyelesaikan pekerjaan, maka **PIHAK KEDUA** berkewajiban mengembalikan dana penelitian yang telah diterimanya kepada Universitas Sanata Dharma.
- (4) **PIHAK KEDUA** wajib menyerahkan 2 (dua) eksemplar laporan Hasil Penelitian beserta luarannya dan 2 (dua) Softcopy dalam bentuk CD kepada **PIHAK PERTAMA** untuk didistribusikan lebih lanjut kepada para pihak yang berkepentingan: 1) Perpustakaan USD, 2) LPPM USD, dan 3) Program Studi.
- (5) Format dan sistematika Laporan Hasil Penelitian sebagaimana dimaksud pada ayat (1) mengikuti aturan-aturan yang tertuang dalam *Buku Pedoman Penelitian LPPM USD 2013*; dengan warna sampul warna merah untuk penelitian dasar, kuning untuk penelitian terapan dan hijau untuk penelitian pengembangan.

## PASAL 6

Apabila di kemudian hari terbukti bahwa judul penelitian sebagaimana dimaksud pada Pasal 1 dijumpai adanya indikasi duplikasi dengan penelitian lain dan/atau diperoleh indikasi ketidakjujuran/itikad kurang baik yang tidak sesuai dengan kaidah ilmiah, maka kegiatan penelitian tersebut dinyatakan batal dan **PIHAK KEDUA** wajib mengembalikan dana penelitian yang telah diterima ke Kas Universitas Sanata Dharma.

## PASAL 7

Hal-hal dan/atau segala sesuatu yang berkenaan dengan kewajiban pajak berupa PPN dan/atau PPh menjadi tanggungjawab **PIHAK KEDUA** dan harus dibayarkan ke Universitas Sanata Dharma sesuai dengan ketentuan peraturan perundang-undangan yang berlaku.



## PASAL 8

Hak atas kekayaan intelektual yang dihasilkan dari pelaksanaan penelitian sebagaimana dimaksud pada Pasal 1 diatur dan dikelola sesuai dengan peraturan dan perundang-undangan yang berlaku.

## PASAL 9

- (1) Apabila terjadi perselisihan antara **PIHAK PERTAMA** dan **PIHAK KEDUA** dalam pelaksanaan perjanjian ini, maka akan dilakukan penyelesaian secara musyawarah; apabila jalan musyawarah tidak tercapai, maka Pengadilan Negeri Yogyakarta akan dipilih untuk menyelesaikannya.
- (2) Hal-hal yang belum diatur dalam perjanjian ini diatur kemudian oleh kedua belah pihak secara musyawarah.

Surat Perjanjian Pelaksanaan Program Penelitian Internal Universitas Sanata Dharma Periode Juli-November 2018 ini dibuat rangkap 2 (dua) dan bermaterai cukup sesuai dengan ketentuan yang berlaku.

<p>PIHAK PERTAMA Ketua LPPM Univ. Sanata Dharma</p>  <p><u>Dr. rer.nat. Herry Pribawanto Suryawan.</u> P.2236</p>	<p>PIHAK KEDUA Ketua Pelaksanaan Penelitian</p>  <p><u>P. Sarwoto, S.S., M.A., Ph.D.</u> P.1676</p>
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# **LAPORAN PENELITIAN**

## **Ethnicity and Imagined Indonesia in Literature and Political Discourse**



**Paulus Sarwoto, Ph.D.**

**Magister Kajian Bahasa Inggris/Pascasarjana**

**Universitas Sanata Dharma**

**Indonesia**

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### Lembar Pengesahan

1	Penelitian	
a	Judul Penelitian	Ethnicity and Imagined Indonesia in Literature and Political Discourse
b	Bidang Ilmu	Sastra
c	Kategori Penelitian	Penelitian Reguler
2	KetuaPeneliti	
a	Nama Lengkap	Paulus Sarwoto, Ph.D.
b	Jenis Kelamin	Laki-laki
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d	Pangkat/Golongan	Pembina/IVa
e	Jabatan Fungsional	Lektor Kepala
f	Program Studi/Fakultas	Magister Kajian Bahasa Inggris/Pasca Sarjana
3	LokasiPenelitian	Yogyakarta dan Jakarta
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a	Sumber dari USD	11.000.000
b	Sumber lain	0
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Yogyakarta, 2 Juli 2018

Mengetahui:

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Menyetujui dan Mengesahkan

Ketua Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat

Universitas Sanata Dharma

Dr. rer. Nat. Herry Pribawanto Suryawan, M.Si.

## **Kata Pengantar**

Penelitian ini merupakan kajian interdisipliner dengan menjadikan teks sastra sebagai teks utama. Sumber sekunder berasal dari berbagai teks baik sejarah maupun politik. Sebagai penelitian interdisipliner, hasil yang diharapkan adalah kemampuan melihat persoalan secara multi dimensi. Hal ini sejalan dengan Rencana Induk Penelitian pada tingkat universitas, dalam hal ini LPPM dan juga pada tingkat Program Studi. Tema yang dipilih adalah juga tema yang sejalan dengan Rencana Induk Penelitian tersebut, yakin terkait dengan tema radikalisme dan multikulturalisme.

Penulis mengucapkan terimakasih yang tulus kepada LPPM Universitas Sanata Dharma yang telah menyediakan skema yang memungkinkan penelitian ini dilaksanakan. Terimakasih juga kami haturkan kepada seluruh kolega dosen di Magister Kajian Bahasa Inggris atas dorongan dan diskusi-diskusi yang telah dilaksanakan. Tak lupa, kami haturkan terimakasih kepada Direktur Pascasarjana yang telah merestui penelitian ini untuk dijalankan dan diselesaikan.

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## Intisari

*Penelitian ini melacak ambivalensi orang Jawa dalam mendefinisikan identitas poskolonial mereka dan bagaimana identitas terbayang ini dimanipulasi untuk memelihara relasi kekuasaan sebagaimana tercermin dalam karya sastra dan wacana politik. Analisis artikel ini akan berpusat pada karya-karya Umar Kayam, terutama “Musim Gugur Kembali ke Connecticut” (1967), “Sri Sumarah” (1970), “Bawuk” (1973), Para Priyayi (1992 dan novel terakhirnya yang ditulis pada masa akhir Orde Baru, Jalan Menikung (1999). Narasi karya-karya itu melingkupi masa Orde Baru dan setelahnya dan isinya menunjukkan semakin menyempitnya apa yang oleh Homi Bhabha disebut sebagai wilayah ketiga bagi priyayi Jawa. Pilihan bagi para priyayi baru semakin sempit sementara korupsi di kalangan mereka semakin merajalela. Penelitian ini juga mengkaji bagaimana wacana politik dalam berbagai teks memanipulasi ambivalensi dengan cara menormalisasi ketidakseimbangan relasi kuasa. Fokus utama akan pada bagaimana karya-karya Kayam itu menyiratkan logika yang dibangun Orde Baru, yakni mereproduksi mitos keaslian etnis dan wacana anti komunis untuk melanggengkan kekuasaan. Argumen penelitian ini adalah bahwa karya-karya Kayam tersebut mencerminkan bagaimana wacana esensialis telah digunakan secara efektif dalam arena politik untuk menanamkan kesadaran palsu sekaligus menentang wacana esensialis itu dengan menawarkan penggambaran identitas yang lebih cair.*



## Abstract

*This research traces the ambivalence of the Indonesians, particularly the Javanese, in defining their postcolonial identity and how this imagined identity is manipulated to exercise, maintain, and manipulate power relation, reflected in literature and political discourse. The analysis will focus on the literary works of an Indonesian author, Umar Kayam, especially "Musim Gugur Kembali di Connecticut" (Fall in Connecticut) (1967), "Sri Sumarah" (1970), "Bawuk" (1973), Para Priyayi (The Nobles) (1992) and his last novel and Jalan Menikung (The Winding Road) (1999). These narratives were written during and the end of the New Order. They signify the narrowing of Homi K Bhabha's third space, leaving fewer options for priyayi (the Javanese noble) action with the result that corruption becomes the more prominent option. This research will also scrutinize how political discourse in various texts manipulates the ambivalence by normalizing unequal power relation. In this research I am particularly interested in how the stories reveal the logic underlying the New Order political legacy by reproducing the myth of ethnic purity and anti-communist discourse. I argue that these stories reflect how that essentialist discourse has been deployed effectively in Indonesian political arena to induce false consciousness and challenge this by offering a figuration of fluid identity.*

## Introduction

Comprising of more than 300 ethnic groups with long history of colonization, Indonesia has been a site of endless contestation and manipulation for domination. Contestation among local sultanates was manipulated by the colonial machinery for easier control of the colony. Even social class within an ethnic group, like Javanese nobility (*priyayi*) and peasantry (*abangan*), has also been engineered to make colonial machine more effective and efficient at the cost of the lowest class, the peasantry<sup>1</sup>. In the post-war period, especially during the New Order, both the diverse ethnic groups and social gap have been maintained and exploited for political hegemony through the exercise of power. Now in the supposedly more democratic Indonesia, it turns out that the old rifts – ethnic and class - maintained by colonial and New Order system have never really gone. They have

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<sup>1</sup> Heather Sutherland elaborates this mechanism in *Pangreh Pradja: Java's Indigenous Administrative Corps and Its Role in the Last Decades of Dutch Colonial Rule* (1973)

even exacerbated with the present political trend to exploit religious sentiment for vote gathering in both local and national elections.

Indonesian literature and literary criticism have been used to being non-political, especially since 1965. A passing mention of political chaos involving the Indonesian Communist Party, like the one in Ahmad Tohari's *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk* (1982), resulted in Tohari's being interrogated by the central military commander (Kopkamtib) in its head office in Jakarta for a couple of days in 1986 (Nugroho, 2015). It is therefore interesting to see some works problematizing incidents around 1965, such as Kayam's "Musim Gugur Kembali di Connecticut" (Fall in Connecticut) (1967), "Sri Sumarah" (1970), and "Bawuk" (1973) got published without complication. Kayam's position perceived as part of the New Order structure – he has been a director general under Soeharto presidency and a professor in a state university, Universitas Gadjah Mada – might have helped the publication of the works, not to mention his euphemistic writing style.

Born to a petty *priyayi* family, Kayam is able to portray this class as an insider. Through his stories, he deconstructs Clifford Geertz triadic division of Javanese society of *santri*, *priyayi* and *abangan* into a more liquid category whose boundaries often overlap. Kayam claims that literature is a much better vehicle for revealing the complex reality of Javanese *priyayi* than ethnography probably because of its imaginativeness. In the following analysis, I would explore how Kayam's strategy of imagining ethnicity, class stratification and political discourse for a possible imagined Indonesia.

### **Javanese *Priyayi***

*Priyayi* is the Javanese term for Javanese nobility. Etymologically the term *priyayi* may have been derived from two Javanese words: *para* and *yayi*, meaning the younger brothers (of the king).<sup>2</sup> This etymological speculation is in line with Geertz's statement saying that *priyayi* originally refers to "a man who could trace his ancestry back to the great semi-mythical kings of pre-colonial Java" (Geertz, 1964, p. 229). Two other dominant social groups in Java are the Moslem *Santri* and the syncretic *Abangan*.

The dominance of this tri-partite distinction is driven by Clifford Geertz's groundbreaking study of Javanese society in Mojokuto from 1953 to 1954, published as *Religion of Java* in 1960, which categorized the Javanese into three typologies: syncretistic *abangan*, Muslim *santri*, and *priyayi*. Geertz bases his grouping on people's occupations and religious systems of values. Based on their occupation, *abangan*, *santri* and *priyayi* are understood as Java's peasantry, traders, and gentry respectively (Geertz, 1960, pp. 228-229). Mapped onto religious structures, the *abangan* believe in a combination of animism and some imported values derived from Hinduism and Islam; the *santri* adhere to the orthodoxy and orthopraxy of Islam more rigorously; while the *priyayi*, by contrast, although adopting Hinduism like *abangan*, do so in a more subtle way (Geertz, 1960, pp. 234-235).

Three periods of Indonesian history are crucial to understanding the development of the social status of the *priyayi* in the colonial period and after independence as reflected in Kayam's works, namely the context of colonialism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, marked by the beginning of the processes of modernization in the Dutch East Indies; the struggle for Indonesian independence after the Japanese defeat in 1945; and

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<sup>2</sup> See Kartodirdjo, Sudewo, & Hatmosuprobo (Kartodirdjo, Sudewo, & Hatmosuprobo, 1987, p. 3)(1987, p. 3) and Sutherland (H. Sutherland, 1975, p. 57).

the effects of 1965, the year of the abortive communist coup of September 30<sup>th</sup>, also known as *Gestapu* and *Gestok*, leading to the eventual rise to power of Soeharto and his New Order. In each of these periods, Indonesia faced substantial challenges that forced *priyayi* to define and redefine themselves.

### ***Priyayi* and the New Order**

The New Order began in March 1966 when president Soekarno transferred executive responsibility to (then) General Soeharto. When finally installed as acting President in March 1967, Soeharto started to take the state in a different direction from his predecessor. Indonesia stopped its offensive war against Malaysia, perceived as a symbol of neo-colonialism, and became friendlier to the West in exchange for financial aid. The early economic achievement of this regime by contrast with the chaotic financial situation during the years of the previous government was extraordinary; Soeharto was said to have successfully built “the most powerful state in Indonesia since Dutch colonial times” (Lipsky & Pura, 1978, p. 489).

This economic success story, however, was tainted by widening gap between the rich and the poor as well as with a culture of cronyism and corruption. These negative symptoms were manifest in:

monopoly power and economic privilege for a few favoured cronies in or close to the presidential circle of family and friends. It is reflected above all in the widening gap between the very rich and ordinary Indonesians, the middle class, urban poor and peasantry, in terms of their income levels, assets and control over crucial resources. (Hill, 1994, p. 3)

The discontent of the poor was usually directed towards the Chinese minority, especially shopkeepers and wealthy traders. This can be seen in several racially nuanced

riots which happened in Jakarta and several other cities, such as Solo and Bandung, in the 1970s, 1980s and, most recently, in May 1998. Urban dissatisfaction was deflected from the government onto minorities perhaps because opposition to, let alone strong criticism of, the New Order, was out of the question. Jamie Mackie and Andrew MacIntyre argue that:

[T]he New Order has effectively coopted key elements of Indonesian society into the power structure at every level by controlling access to the benefits which it can offer its supporters, and withhold from its opponents. The socio-political system that has emerged provides rewards to those who conform or at least do not rock the boat, but penalises dissidents or critics heavily. Hence the costs for any individual of opposing the system openly are high. (Hill, 1994, p. 3)

The importance of *priyayi* class in state affairs in this period was fading. Military careers became an important avenue for anyone, regardless of their social background, wishing to advance themselves in a political career. Soeharto's background as a peasant's son from Kemusuk village testifies this new condition. The dominant role of the military proved social classes irrelevant. The social dominance of the military was made possible by the doctrine of *dwifungsi*, or the dual function of the armed forces. The doctrine stipulated that the function of the armed forces was not limited to national defence. Military personnel were also to be deployed ministerial and ambassadorial positions and in other crucial executive offices up to the regency level and were granted substantial representation in the Parliament. The New Order lasted for about 33 years until May 1998 when president Soeharto was forced to resign amid the staggering financial recession and nation-wide student protests. Kayam personally witnessed many of these massive changes in the social and political world of Indonesia from colonial time to the end of the New Order. Born to a *priyayi* family, he also saw through an insider's perspective the changes and dilemmas that the *priyayi* were facing in those historical phases. Firsthand experience

and an insider's perspective have shaped Kayam's works to reflect on the social and political issues worth looking. Kayam's re-imagination of the figuration of the communist, Chinese and Jewish fictional characters are especially important.

### **The Communist**

Kayam's complex relationship to the 1965 events is reflected in his *Gestapu* stories. The four Kayam works relating to the *Gestapu* events in 1965 are "Musim Gugur Kembali ke Connecticut" ("Fall in Connecticut") (1967), "Bawuk" (1970), "Sri Sumarah" (1973) and *Para Priyayi* (1992). In this post-independence context, some of the *priyayi* characters are involved in *Gestapu* events to various degrees and all main characters are accused of being members of the Communist Party. Sri Sumarah in "Sri Sumarah", Bawuk in "Bawuk", Tono in "Musim Gugur" and Harimurti in *Para Priyayi* are related to the Communist Party in a very problematical way. The problematic relation implies the complexity behind the criminalization of these characters. These stories depict the complex relation of the characters to the Communist Party in order to reveal their struggle to question and re-define that essence of *priyayi-hood*, sympathy for the masses, that is ruled to be illegal in the transition from the Old Order to the New Order.

These *Gestapu* stories present a different third space in the post-independence context. This is a space in which the idealised *priyayi* figures negotiate their ambivalent position in between the masses and an authoritarian regime. Kayam portrays Bawuk, Tono, Harimurti and Sri Sumarah in ways which signify the *priyayi* class's failure to redefine itself in the face of this authoritarian regime. The *priyayi* class that used to rely on first a feudal and then a colonial system becomes obsolete in the post-independence state. Sri Sumarah's

life, therefore, looks anachronistic because she holds on the old concepts while living in a new system. Characters' efforts to redefine *priyayi-hood* by passing the borders between the *priyayi* and the oppressed peasant are manipulated by both the Communist Party and the New Order. Their humanitarian motives are channelled and coopted by both parties. Consequently they become involuntary supporters of political agendas. When they finally try to clarify their involvement with the Communist Party, their voice becomes *subalternized* and hence unheard or misunderstood. The *Gestapu* narrative written by the New Order state provides no space for an alternative story without it being labelled treason against the state. Their figuration as compassionate characters sympathizing with the proletarian causes has to meet a tragic end.

Looking back at what constitutes the essence of *priyayi-hood* as formulated by Kayam in his previous novel *Para Priyayi*, that service for the 'little people' is precisely what Harimurti, Bawuk and Tono strive to achieve. However *priyayi-hood* also has other dimensions, i.e. authoritarianism and discrimination. It is this other dimension that is actually adopted by the state and turned against the more humane aspects of *priyayi-hood* as represented by Bawuk, Tono, Harimurti and Sri Sumarah. The victory of authoritarianism and discrimination against alleged communists signifies the failure of the third space to be a transforming site. This condition gave birth to the New Order, the dominant political ideology of Indonesia post-*Gestapu*, with whose effects on people and institutions Kayam grapples in his fictions.

## The Chinese

In Indonesia discrimination against the Chinese has been going since the colonial times, part of a larger and more complex set of arguments about racial purity<sup>3</sup> and the position of the Indonesian Chinese during the New Order was problematical. On the one hand they benefited financially from cronyism and a corrupt system but on the other hand they were stripped of their socio-cultural legacy – a situation that might be called as “ghettoization of citizen-Chinese – political exclusion and economic privilege” (Anderson, 1983, p. 491). Consequently the very rich Chinese near the power centre were capable of influencing national economic policy while the less rich in the periphery had to cope with corrupt officials in order to improve their lot. Further, they were not allowed to retain their Chinese language and names but encouraged instead to adopt Indonesian names. Although they were recognized as Indonesian citizens (*Warga Negara Indonesia* – *WNI*) but it is with another qualifier: *keturunan* hence *WNI keturunan*, meaning Indonesian citizen but non-native. The difficult political position of the Indonesian Chinese is explored by Kayam in his last novel, *Jalan Menikung*.

An inter-racial marriage in Kayam’s story manifests itself in the fourth generation of Sastrodarsono’s family, with Anna marrying a Chinese Indonesian and Eko marrying a Jewish American. Their marriage is met with mixed feelings and even some degree of antagonism by their *priyayi* parents. Tommi’s antagonism against Anna, her daughter, marrying a Chinese is similar to Noegroho’s antagonism against his daughter, Anna, marrying a peasant’s son. The parallel between Eko, Anna, and Marie is very interesting

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<sup>3</sup> See for instance John T. Sidel (Sidel, 2007, pp. 20-24)(2007)



because this younger generation of *priyayi* is depicted as marrying into a social group often regarded as subaltern class, the Indonesian Chinese, and enemy of the Islamist, the Jewish.

The subalternity of the Indonesian Chinese is demonstrated by their being marginalized from the government positions and some other discriminatory measures, especially during the New Order.<sup>4</sup> Several incidents involving racial riots in 1970s, 1980s and 1990s indicate that social dissatisfaction against the government was often deflected towards the Chinese Indonesians.<sup>5</sup> They were often used as a target of racial antagonism to divert people's anger and disappointment about the lack of social and economic progress away from the government. They were also barred from pursuing their career in civil servant and military services. During the most recent incident, the Jakarta riot in May 1998, many Chinese Indonesians had to flee abroad.<sup>6</sup> In the novel this discriminatory treatment is identified by Harimurti saying:

*Di atas kertas mereka sama haknya dengan kami, apa yang disebut pribumi. Tapi, dalam praktek, hak mereka tidak sepenuhnya dilindungi.*

....

*Mereka ini, keturunan Cina kita ini, mungkin nasibnya masih seperti Yahudi jaman dahulu. Di mana-mana diburu-buru, dipojokkan, diperas, dikurangi haknya (Kayam, 1999, p. 144).*

Theoretically they [the Chinese] have the same rights as us, indigenous. But in reality their rights are not protected.

....

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<sup>4</sup> For a comprehensive analysis of the discrimination against the Chinese Indonesian during the New Order era, see Charles A. Coppel's *Studying Ethnic Chinese in Indonesia* (Coppel, 2002), especially chapter 1. Analysis of this issue can also be seen in articles by Frans H. Winarta (Winarta, 2004), "Racial Discrimination in the Indonesian Legal System: Ethnic Chinese and Nation-Building" and A. Dahana (Dahana, 2004), "Pri and Non-Pri Relations in the Reform Era: A Pribumi's Perspective."

<sup>5</sup> See for example the article by Ingrid Wessel (Wessel, 2001), "The Politics of Violence in New Order Indonesia in the Last Decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century."

<sup>6</sup> John T. Sidel (2007, pp. 1-2) mentions that "In May of that year, simultaneous rioting in Jakarta and such cities as Solo, Medan, and Palembang led to the destruction of hundreds of Chinese business establishments, the rape of dozens of Chinese women, and the deaths of more than one thousand people in Jakarta alone."

These Chinese Indonesians' fate is similar to the Jews in the past. They are everywhere hunted, cornered, blackmailed and their rights are violated.

The unfavourable attitude to the Chinese that is also depicted in Tommi's figuration.

He expresses his strong opposition to his daughter's, Anna, marrying a Chinese boy:

*Kalian tahu, saudara-saudaraku, nama Handoyo itu sebenarnya? Han Swie Kun! Coba, adik-adikku, darah Sastrodarsono mau dicampur dengan darah Han Swie Kun. Apa tidak kacau nanti!* (Kayam, 1999, p. 78)

*Ini soal darah cucu-cucu saya nanti, Hari. Saya tidak mau kalau darah priyayi Sastrodarsono, ditambah darah pejuang angkatan '45 Nugroho, lantas tercampur dengan darah Cina.* (Kayam, 1999, p. 83)

Do you know what Handoyo's real name is? Han Swie Kun! Imagine brothers, Sastrodarsono's blood will mix with Han Swie Kun's. What a mess!

This is about my grandchildren's blood, Hari. I don't want Sastrodarsono's *priyayi* blood and Nugroho's warrior blood gets mixed with the Chinese blood.

Despite Tommi's leaving behind the ideals of *priyayi-hood*, he still holds the orthodox view on the purity of a *priyayi* biological identity by challenging his daughter's decision to marry a Chinese Indonesian. Kayam's criticism of this racist attitude is of course clearly depicted in his characterization of the Chinese character as embodying true *priyayi* values.

## **The Jews**

Generally postcolonial literature highlights the consequences of the unequal social positioning of people who are identified as belonging to different races, especially in an inter-racial marriage, because the experience of colonialism highlights the perceived markers of difference. When Eko in *Jalan Menikung* is hosted by the Levins, a Jewish American family, during his U.S. study there is no indication of such a colonial or

postcolonial component in his reception. Although Claire, their only daughter, also stays at the same house, they do not hesitate to host Eko. Claire seems to enjoy Eko's company and even falls in love with him. When finally Eko and Claire express their intention to get married, Claire's parents also accept this without reservations.

A very different reaction is seen from the Javanese family's side. Upon receiving a telegram informing them of their son's wedding plan, they, especially Sulistianingsih, the mother, feel offended:

*Anak ini sudah luntur, hilang tata karma Indonesianya. Sudah jadi orang Amerika apa? Kalau orang-orang tua kita itu masih ada, oooh akan bagaimana mereka! Melihat cucunya kawin dengan orang asing, Yahudi lagi! (Kayam, 1999, p. 38)*

This kid has lost his Indonesian politeness. Has he become an American? I couldn't imagine how our ancestors would have reacted: their grandchild is marrying a foreigner, a Jew!

The fact that Eko does not consult his family in deciding his future wife is considered impolite. Secondly, the fact that Claire is a Jewish complicates the problem. As we notice in Kayam's stories, such as "Sri Sumarah", "Bawuk", and *Para Priyayi*, typically a *priyayi*'s purity is maintained by marriage between two *priyayi* descendants and is usually arranged. This is the case for Sastrodarsono and his children, for example.

A further complication is that with this twist in the plot of the novel Kayam explicitly engages with the supposedly traditional enmity between Islamists and Jews in the context of Java and Indonesia's growing involvement in world politics. Perhaps it is because Harimusti's family has adopted a stronger Islamic political identity that this enmity leaves its traces in his mother's worries:

*"Eko mau disuruh jadi Yahudi? No way! Tak usah, ya! Paling-paling yang cocok dengan mereka, kita sama-sama mengharamkan daging babi. Tapi masuk agama Yahudi?"* (Kayam, 1999, p. 39)

"They want Eko to be a Jew? No way! Out of the question! Our only common ground is that both religions forbid us to eat pork. But becoming a Jew?"

Kayam situates this antagonism in a Javanese postcolonial context. In this context the West is pluralized to include the Jews that Eko's mother detests. If in colonial times the Javanese alignment with the Dutch was considered favourable, in post-independence times Eko's alignment with the Jewish family is seen as a big problem by this *priyayi* family. Their stronger Islamic identity as *priyayi Islam* rather than *priyayi abangan* (which would be more syncretistic and tolerant) has situated them in a position opposing Jewish identity vehemently.

Kayam offers a different perspective amid this enmity. His stories seem to suggest that despite their racial and religious sentiment there are some common ground on which his characters negotiate their comfort zones. In this case, Kayam universalises *priyayi* values by going beyond class and race. An American immigrant writer, such as Tahira Navqi, has explored the similarity between Muslims and Jews in his short story "Thank God for the Jews." Kayam, who might have read the story, also describes the melting pot that the two faiths share. Kosher and *halal* are two similar categories to label certain food that is religiously edible:

*"Kau itu, Alan, sering membingungkan saya. Seakan pastrami kosher atau tidak kosher itu jadi persoalan penting betul buat kamu."*

*"Iya, dong. Saya kan orang Yahudi. Sebentar lagi kau juga jadi menantu orang Yahudi. Penting dong kosher itu. Seperti agama Islam, kan? Halal!"* (Kayam, 1999, p. 64)

“Alan, you have often puzzled me. You act as if whether or not the pastrami were kosher an important issue for you.”

“Of course, it is important. I am Jewish. You will soon marry a Jewish girl. Kosher is definitely important. Just like in Islam: *Halal!*”

Kayam also portrays another shared belief in that the Jews and Muslims consider circumcision as an important religious observance as reflected in the dialogue between Eko and Claire:

*“Kenapa pada hari perkawinan kita, kita bicara soal sunat?”*

*“Entahlah. Mungkin karena saya semakin mantap Islam dan Yahudi banyak persamaannya.”*

*“Karena agama-agama kita sama-sama mengharuskan laki-laki sunat dan sama-sama mengharamkan daging babi dan memotong leher ayam harus sampai mengucurkan darah dan menodainya?”* (Kayam, 1999, p. 75)

“Why do you talk about circumcision in our wedding day?”

“I don’t know. Perhaps because I am getting more convinced that Islam and Judaism have a lot in common.”

“Because our religions require men to be circumcised and forbid eating pork and stipulate that when slaughtering chickens we have to shed their blood?”

As the novel progresses Kayam constructs a typically Javanese mystical thought, namely that underneath religious differences there is a similar principle, i.e. the need to be aware of the differences between good and evil. By disregarding the superficial religious and racial differences, Eko’s marriage with a Jewish American revises his ancestors’ idea of racial and religious purity. An Islamic identification that is still a strong part of the family up to the third generation represented by Kayam is reinterpreted in a characteristically Javanese mystical way by the fourth generation. Javanese mysticism is more adaptive to new influences than many other religious formations and this helps Eko to become a cultural commuter. Ashcroft notes that “the paradox of global culture is that it makes itself ‘at home’ in motion rather than in place” (Ashcroft, 2001, p. 207). Eko as a global citizen

does not have to rely on his origin, neither geographical, cultural, nor even religious to feel at home. In fact his geographical home has refused him due to his father's involvement in the banned Communist Party.

Eko is also depicted by Kayam as a *priyayi* figure who sees the familial bond in different way – the kind of bond in which individualism is more prominent than collectivism. He is adopting the American concept of being a responsible adult to whom individualism is more valued than the familial bond:

*Kemudian, kalau sudah tamat, apalagi sudah mencapai umur dewasa, mereka harus bertanggung jawab kepada dirinya sendiri. Anak itu sudah harus mandiri. Dia juga sudah menjadi "merdeka". Dan Orang tua, apalagi keluarga besar, tidak akan menuntut janji apa-apa dari anak-anaknya. Hidup dijalani sendiri. (Kayam, 1999, p. 22).*

After graduation, especially if he is an adult, he has to be responsible for his own life. He has to be independent. He also becomes "free". And his parents, moreover his extended family, will not ask for anything from their child. Life has to be lived alone."

This is clearly seen in his marriage procedure that does not comply with traditional *priyayi* standards anymore. He marries a Jewish American in a civil ceremony without seeking the advice from his extended family – in contrast to the traditional practice upheld by the Sastrodarsono's extended family at some cost. Kayam portrays Harimurti's family as the first to set Eko free from familial and class bond. Eko's universalism is achieved through individualism. Indeed in the novel Kayam seems to argue that collectivism emphasising harmony and kinship in the Javanese culture has become potentially corrupting when set against an international background.

In a discussion hosted by the *Kompas* daily in 1986, Kayam points out two important traditional values potentially corrupting Indonesian minds, namely *keharmonisan*

(harmony) and *kekeluargaan* (kinship, 'cronyism')<sup>7</sup>. These aspects of Javanese wisdom are not evil in themselves but when wrongly enacted, can be shown to be a fertile source of economic and political corruption. In the same forum, Kayam also critically reassesses some Javanese ascetic practices, such as sleeping on the floor and fasting, and concludes that such practices are often motivated by greed: to be rich therefore able to live in luxury. In this context, the ascetic practices are considered as a temporary *laku*, practice, to gain a strong financial, social or political position for himself or his descendants. As such, uncritical reverence for the traditional values will only damage the nation. Kayam calls this uncritical reverence for one's own culture "*kompleks narsisme budaya*" (cultural narcissism complex) (dn/efix, 1986).

In the novel, this unthinking reverence for traditional values has led the Javanese blaming the Chinese for the social gap that this postcolonial state has created:

*Salah mereka karena mereka bekerja keras lebih dari bangsaku dan sering jauh lebih berhasil, yang menerbitkan rasa cemburu bangsaku yang lebih malas, mau enak-enak saja, mau memetik hasil kerja keras keturunan Cina itu* (Kayam, 1999, pp. 114-115).

It was their [the Indonesian Chinese] own fault because they worked harder and were much more successful than my people. This incited jealousy. My people were lazier, never worked hard and just wanted to reap what the Chinese had struggled for.

This auto-criticism that Kayam expresses through *Jalan Menikung* makes it clear that the *priyayi* racial prejudice against the subaltern classes is unfounded. Against the stereotypical image of Chinese Indonesians, Kayam presents the reverse. Anna's Chinese husband, Boy, for instance, is described as "*pintar, cerdas, tidak sok, baik hati, rendah hati*,

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<sup>7</sup> Reported in *Kompas* daily (Kristanto & Krastawan, 1986): "*Harmoni Sumber Kemandulan*" (Harmony as the root of the problem).

*simpatik*” (clever, smart, not vain, kind, humble and sympathetic) (79). Against the anti-Semitic sentiment Kayam presents the Levins as compassionate and kind. They do not see their daughter’s relation with a Javanese boy with racial prejudice

By putting forward this issue, Kayam proposes the idea that the quality of *priyayi-hood* is not and should not be determined by racial, religious or class identity but by inner qualities of restraint and selfless service for the people. With these inter racial marriages the novel argues that the quality of *priyayi-hood* is not only found in the Javanese *priyayi* but is also found in other races. Consequently individual qualities are more important than class and racial identity.

## **Conclusion**

Failure of living by rigid racial and class categories is enacted in Kayam’s Gestapu stories *Jalan Menikung*. Faced with an authoritarian and corrupt state system, the only options that appear to be left to Kayam’s ethnocentric characters are to join the corrupt system and thrive, or refuse the system and perish. These fictions show in different ways how the ‘third space’ envisaged by Bhabha (2002) emerges in Indonesia not as a progressive reconstruction of the site of postcolonial politics, but as a failure to find a moral centre for the emergent nation. In *Jalan Menikung*, Kayam generalises *priyayi* values by including Chinese and Jewish American figures as major characters in his narrative. They are two social groups that have often experienced racism in part because of their successful business enterprises whilst being racial minorities in countries in which they are seen as outsiders (Chirot & Reid, 1997, p. 6).



The fluidity of *priyayi-hood* in *Jalan Menikung* goes beyond racial and national borders. The novel reveals that the Javanese and Indonesia have failed to revitalize *priyayi* values to empower the postcolonial state. Refuting the chauvinistic discourse of the Javanese *priyayi*, the novel presents a universal view that the values initially seen as particularly Javanese are also found in the so-called subaltern groups. The Jewish and the Indonesian Chinese figures are presented as embodying *priyayi* values that the Javanese characters fail to sustain. The characters of Alan Barnstein, Claire and the Levins portray the friendly and welcoming side of the West. The stereotype of selfish and money-oriented Indonesian Chinese is depicted the other way around in the figuration of Boy.

*Jalan Menikung* apparently presents Kayam's reconstruction of the liquidity of ideal values with a special emphasis on the subaltern groups and individualism. This is apparent, for instance, when Kayam names the newborn Jewish-Javanese baby, Eko and Claire's son, Solomon, who, in Kayam's reckoning, is a universal character found in Torah, Bible and Quran. As such the identity of the traditional *priyayi* is no longer important because global interaction has dissolved racial borders and always creates another space to inhabit by the younger generations.

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**LUARAN PENELITIAN**

**Ethnicity and Imagined Indonesia in Literature and Political Discourse**



**Paulus Sarwoto, Ph.D.**

**Magister Kajian Bahasa Inggris/Pascasarjana**

**Universitas Sanata Dharma**

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Luaran terlampir sudah diseminarkan dalam Colloquium yang melibatkan USD, Ateneo de Manila, University of Santo Tomas (Manila), University of San Carlos (Cebu), University of the Philippines, Universitas Indonesia dan UKI. Artikel ini saat ini dalam proses diterbitkan dalam jurnal internasional secara bersama melibatkan universitas-universitas di atas. Setelah diterbitkan dalam jurnal, langkah selanjutnya adalah menerbitkan semua artikel itu dalam sebuah buku oleh penerbit luar negeri.

**“LITERARY LIQUIDITIES 2:  
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## **Ethnicity and Imagined Indonesia in Literature and Political Discourse**

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### **Abstract**

This research will trace the ambivalence of the Indonesians, particularly the Javanese, in defining their postcolonial identity and how this imagined identity is manipulated to exercise, maintain, and manipulate power relation reflected in literature and political discourse. The analysis will focus on the literary works of an Indonesian author, Umar Kayam, especially "Musim Gugur Kembali di Connecticut" (Fall in Connecticut) (1967), "Sri Sumarah" (1970), "Bawuk" (1973), Para Priyayi (The Nobles) (1992) and his last novel and Jalan Menikung (The Winding Road) (1999). These narratives were written during and the end of the New Order. They signify the narrowing of Homi K Bhabha's third space, leaving fewer options for priyayi (the Javanese noble) action with the result that corruption becomes the more prominent option. This research will also scrutinize how political discourse in various texts manipulates the ambivalence by normalizing unequal power relation. In this research I am particularly interested in how the stories reveal the logic underlying the New Order political legacy by reproducing the myth of ethnic purity and anti-communist discourse. I argue that these stories reflect how that essentialist discourse has been deployed effectively in Indonesian political arena to induce false consciousness and challenge this by offering a figuration of fluid identity.

### **Introduction**

Comprising of more than 300 ethnic groups with long history of colonization, Indonesia has been a site of endless contestation and manipulation for domination. Contestation among local sultanates was manipulated by the colonial machinery for easier control of the colony. Even social class within an ethnic



group, like Javanese nobility (*priyayi*) and peasantry (*abangan*), has also been engineered to make colonial machine more effective and efficient at the cost of the lowest class, the peasantry<sup>1</sup>. In the post-war period, especially during the New Order, both the diverse ethnic groups and social gap have been maintained and exploited for political hegemony through the exercise of power. Now in the supposedly more democratic Indonesia, it turns out that the old rifts – ethnic and class – maintained by colonial and New Order system have never really gone. They have even exacerbated with the present political trend to exploit religious sentiment for vote gathering in both local and national elections.

Indonesian literature and literary criticism have been used to being non-political, especially since 1965. A passing mention of political chaos involving the Indonesian Communist Party, like the one in Ahmad Tohari's *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk* (1982), resulted in Tohari's being interrogated by the central military commander (Kopkamtib) in its head office in Jakarta for a couple of days in 1986 (Nugroho, 2015). It is therefore interesting to see some works problematizing incidents around 1965, such as Kayam's "Musim Gugur Kembali di Connecticut" (Fall in Connecticut) (1967), "Sri Sumarah" (1970), and "Bawuk" (1973) got published without complication. Kayam's position perceived as part of the New Order structure – he has been a director general under Soeharto presidency and a professor in a state university, Universitas Gadjah Mada – might have helped the publication of the works, not to mention his euphemistic writing style.

Born to a petty *priyayi* family, Kayam is able to portray this class as an insider. Through his stories, he deconstructs Clifford Geertz triadic division of Javanese society of *santri*, *priyayi* and *abangan* into a more liquid category whose boundaries often overlap. Kayam claims that literature is a much better vehicle for revealing the complex reality of Javanese *priyayi* than ethnography probably because of its imaginativeness. In the following analysis, I would explore how Kayam's strategy of imagining ethnicity, class stratification and political discourse for a possible imagined Indonesia.

1 Heather Sutherland elaborates this mechanism in *Pangreh Pradja: Java's Indigenous Administrative Corps and Its Role in the Last Decades of Dutch Colonial Rule* (1973)

## Javanese *Priyayi*

*Priyayi* is the Javanese term for Javanese nobility. Etymologically the term *priyayi* may have been derived from two Javanese words: *para* and *yayi*, meaning the younger brothers (of the king).<sup>2</sup> This etymological speculation is in line with Geertz's statement saying that *priyayi* originally refers to "a man who could trace his ancestry back to the great semi-mythical kings of pre-colonial Java" (Geertz, 1964, p. 229). Two other dominant social groups in Java are the Moslem *Santri* and the syncretic *Abangan*.

The dominance of this tri-partite distinction is driven by Clifford Geertz's ground-breaking study of Javanese society in Mojokuto from 1953 to 1954, published as *Religion of Java* in 1960, which categorized the Javanese into three typologies: syncretistic *abangan*, Muslim *santri*, and *priyayi*. Geertz bases his grouping on people's occupations and religious systems of values. Based on their occupation, *abangan*, *santri* and *priyayi* are understood as Java's peasantry, traders, and gentry respectively (Geertz, 1960, pp. 228-229). Mapped onto religious structures, the *abangan* believe in a combination of animism and some imported values derived from Hinduism and Islam; the *santri* adhere to the orthodoxy and orthopraxy of Islam more rigorously; while the *priyayi*, by contrast, although adopting Hinduism like *abangan*, do so in a more subtle way (Geertz, 1960, pp. 234-235).

Three periods of Indonesian history are crucial to understanding the development of the social status of the *priyayi* in the colonial period and after independence as reflected in Kayam's works, namely the context of colonialism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, marked by the beginning of the processes of modernization in the Dutch East Indies; the struggle for Indonesian independence after the Japanese defeat in 1945; and the effects of 1965, the year of the abortive communist coup of September 30<sup>th</sup>, also known as *Gestapu* and *Gestok*, leading to the eventual rise to power of Soeharto and his New Order. In each of these periods, Indonesia faced substantial challenges that forced *priyayi* to define and redefine themselves.

<sup>2</sup> See Kartodirdjo, Sudewo, & Hatmosuprobo (Kartodirdjo, Sudewo, & Hatmosuprobo, 1987, p. 3)(1987, p. 3) and Sutherland (H. Sutherland, 1975, p. 57).



### *Priyayi and the New Order*

The New Order began in March 1966 when president Soekarno transferred executive responsibility to (then) General Soeharto. When finally installed as acting President in March 1967, Soeharto started to take the state in a different direction from his predecessor. Indonesia stopped its offensive war against Malaysia, perceived as a symbol of neo-colonialism, and became friendlier to the West in exchange for financial aid. The early economic achievement of this regime by contrast with the chaotic financial situation during the years of the previous government was extraordinary; Soeharto was said to have successfully built "the most powerful state in Indonesia since Dutch colonial times" (Lipsky & Pura, 1978, p. 489).

This economic success story, however, was tainted by widening gap between the rich and the poor as well as with a culture of cronyism and corruption. These negative symptoms were manifest in:

monopoly power and economic privilege for a few favoured cronies in or close to the presidential circle of family and friends. It is reflected above all in the widening gap between the very rich and ordinary Indonesians, the middle class, urban poor and peasantry, in terms of their income levels, assets and control over crucial resources. (Hill, 1994, p. 3)

The discontent of the poor was usually directed towards the Chinese minority, especially shopkeepers and wealthy traders. This can be seen in several racially nuanced riots which happened in Jakarta and several other cities, such as Solo and Bandung, in the 1970s, 1980s and, most recently, in May 1998. Urban dissatisfaction was deflected from the government onto minorities perhaps because opposition to, let alone strong criticism of, the New Order, was out of the question. Jamie Mackie and Andrew MacIntyre argue that:

[T]he New Order has effectively coopted key elements of Indonesian society into the power structure at every level by controlling access to the benefits which it can offer its supporters, and withhold from its opponents. The socio-political system that has emerged provides rewards to those who

conform or at least do not rock the boat, but penalises dissidents or critics heavily. Hence the costs for any individual of opposing the system openly are high. (Hill, 1994, p. 3)

The importance of *priyayi* class in state affairs in this period was fading. Military careers became an important avenue for anyone, regardless of their social background, wishing to advance themselves in a political career. Soeharto's background as a peasant's son from Kemusuk village testifies this new condition. The dominant role of the military proved social classes irrelevant. The social dominance of the military was made possible by the doctrine of *dwifungsi*, or the dual function of the armed forces. The doctrine stipulated that the function of the armed forces was not limited to national defence. Military personnel were also to be deployed ministerial and ambassadorial positions and in other crucial executive offices up to the regency level and were granted substantial representation in the Parliament. The New Order lasted for about 33 years until May 1998 when president Soeharto was forced to resign amid the staggering financial recession and nation-wide student protests. Kayam personally witnessed many of these massive changes in the social and political world of Indonesia from colonial time to the end of the New Order. Born to a *priyayi* family, he also saw through an insider's perspective the changes and dilemmas that the *priyayi* were facing in those historical phases. Firsthand experience and an insider's perspective have shaped Kayam's works to reflect on the social and political issues worth looking. Kayam's re-imagination of the figuration of the communist, Chinese and Jewish fictional characters are especially important.

### The Communist

Kayam's complex relationship to the 1965 events is reflected in his *Gestapu* stories. The four Kayam works relating to the *Gestapu* events in 1965 are "Musim Gugur Kembali ke Connecticut" ("Fall in Connecticut") (1967), "Bawuk" (1970), "Sri Sumarah" (1973) and *Para Priyayi* (1992). In this post-independence context, some of the *priyayi* characters are involved in *Gestapu* events to various degrees and all main characters are accused of being members of the Communist



Party. Sri Sumarah in "Sri Sumarah", Bawuk in "Bawuk", Tono in "Musim Gugur" and Harimurti in *Para Priyayi* are related to the Communist Party in a very problematical way. The problematic relation implies the complexity behind the criminalization of these characters. These stories depict the complex relation of the characters to the Communist Party in order to reveal their struggle to question and re-define that essence of *priyayi-hood*, sympathy for the masses, that is ruled to be illegal in the transition from the Old Order to the New Order.

These *Gestapu* stories present a different third space in the post-independence context. This is a space in which the idealised *priyayi* figures negotiate their ambivalent position in between the masses and an authoritarian regime. Kayam portrays Bawuk, Tono, Harimurti and Sri Sumarah in ways which signify the *priyayi* class's failure to redefine itself in the face of this authoritarian regime. The *priyayi* class that used to rely on first a feudal and then a colonial system becomes obsolete in the post-independence state. Sri Sumarah's life, therefore, looks anachronistic because she holds on the old concepts while living in a new system. Characters' efforts to redefine *priyayi-hood* by passing the borders between the *priyayi* and the oppressed peasant are manipulated by both the Communist Party and the New Order. Their humanitarian motives are channelled and coopted by both parties. Consequently they become involuntary supporters of political agendas. When they finally try to clarify their involvement with the Communist Party, their voice becomes *subalternized* and hence unheard or misunderstood. The *Gestapu* narrative written by the New Order state provides no space for an alternative story without it being labelled treason against the state. Their figuration as compassionate characters sympathizing with the proletarian causes has to meet a tragic end.

Looking back at what constitutes the essence of *priyayi-hood* as formulated by Kayam in his previous novel *Para Priyayi*, that service for the 'little people' is precisely what Harimurti, Bawuk and Tono strive to achieve. However *priyayi-hood* also has other dimensions, i.e. authoritarianism and discrimination. It is this other dimension that is actually adopted by the state and turned against the more humane aspects of *priyayi-hood* as represented by Bawuk, Tono, Harimurti and Sri Sumarah. The victory of authoritarianism and discrimination against alleged communists signifies the failure of the third space to be a

transforming site. This condition gave birth to the New Order, the dominant political ideology of Indonesia post-*Gestapu*, with whose effects on people and institutions Kayam grapples in his fictions.

## The Chinese

In Indonesia discrimination against the Chinese has been going since the colonial times, part of a larger and more complex set of arguments about racial purity<sup>3</sup> and the position of the Indonesian Chinese during the New Order was problematical. On the one hand they benefited financially from cronyism and a corrupt system but on the other hand they were stripped of their socio-cultural legacy – a situation that might be called as “ghettoization of citizen-Chinese – political exclusion and economic privilege” (Anderson, 1983, p. 491). Consequently the very rich Chinese near the power centre were capable of influencing national economic policy while the less rich in the periphery had to cope with corrupt officials in order to improve their lot. Further, they were not allowed to retain their Chinese language and names but encouraged instead to adopt Indonesian names. Although they were recognized as Indonesian citizens (*Warga Negara Indonesia* – WNI) but it is with another qualifier: *keturunan* hence *WNI keturunan*, meaning Indonesian citizen but non-native. The difficult political position of the Indonesian Chinese is explored by Kayam in his last novel, *Jalan Menikung*.

An inter-racial marriage in Kayam's story manifests itself in the fourth generation of Sastrodarsono's family, with Anna marrying a Chinese Indonesian and Eko marrying a Jewish American. Their marriage is met with mixed feelings and even some degree of antagonism by their *priyayi* parents. Tommi's antagonism against Anna, her daughter, marrying a Chinese is similar to Noegroho's antagonism against his daughter, Anna, marrying a peasant's son. The parallel between Eko, Anna, and Marie is very interesting because this younger generation of *priyayi* is depicted as marrying into a social group often regarded as subaltern class, the Indonesian Chinese, and enemy of the Islamist, the Jewish.

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3 See for instance John T. Sidel (Sidel, 2007, pp. 20-24)(2007)



The subalternity of the Indonesian Chinese is demonstrated by their being marginalized from the government positions and some other discriminatory measures, especially during the New Order.<sup>4</sup> Several incidents involving racial riots in 1970s, 1980s and 1990s indicate that social dissatisfaction against the government was often deflected towards the Chinese Indonesians.<sup>5</sup> They were often used as a target of racial antagonism to divert people's anger and disappointment about the lack of social and economic progress away from the government. They were also barred from pursuing their career in civil servant and military services. During the most recent incident, the Jakarta riot in May 1998, many Chinese Indonesians had to flee abroad.<sup>6</sup> In the novel this discriminatory treatment is identified by Harimurti saying:

*Di atas kertas mereka sama haknya dengan kami, apa yang disebut pribumi. Tapi, dalam praktek, hak mereka tidak sepenuhnya dilindungi.*

*Mereka ini, ketaruman Cina kita ini, mungkin nasibnya masih seperti Yahudi jaman dahulu. Di mana-mana diburu-buru, dipojokkan, diperas, dikurangi haknya (Kayam, 1999, p. 144).*

Theoretically they [the Chinese] have the same rights as us, indigenous. But in reality their rights are not protected.

These Chinese Indonesians' fate is similar to the Jews in the past. They are everywhere hunted, cornered, blackmailed and their rights are violated.

The unfavourable attitude to the Chinese that is also depicted in Tommi's figuration. He expresses his strong opposition to his daughter's, Anna, marrying

4 For a comprehensive analysis of the discrimination against the Chinese Indonesian during the New Order era, see Charles A. Coppel's *Studying Ethnic Chinese in Indonesia* (Coppel, 2002), especially chapter 1. Analysis of this issue can also be seen in articles by Frans H. Winarta (Winarta, 2004), "Racial Discrimination in the Indonesian Legal System: Ethnic Chinese and Nation-Building" and A. Dahana (Dahana, 2004), "Pri and Non-Pri Relations in the Reform Era: A Pribumi's Perspective."

5 See for example the article by Ingrid Wessel (Wessel, 2001), "The Politics of Violence in New Order Indonesia in the Last Decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century."

6 John T. Sidel (2007, pp. 1-2) mentions that "In May of that year, simultaneous rioting in Jakarta and such cities as Solo, Medan, and Palembang led to the destruction of hundreds of Chinese business establishments, the rape of dozens of Chinese women, and the deaths of more than one thousand people in Jakarta alone."

a Chinese boy:

*Kalian tahu, saudara-saudaraku, nama Handoyo itu sebenarnya? Han Swie Kun! Coba, adik-adikku, darah Sastrodarsono mau dicampur dengan darah Han Swie Kun. Apa tidak kacau nanti! (Kayam, 1999, p. 78)*  
*Ini soal darah cucu-cucu saya nanti, Hari. Saya tidak mau kalau darah priyayi Sastrodarsono, ditambah darah pejuang angkatan '45 Nugroho, lantas tercampur dengan darah Cina. (Kayam, 1999, p. 83)*

Do you know what Handoyo's real name is? Han Swie Kun! Imagine brothers, Sastrodarsono's blood will mix with Han Swie Kun's. What a mess!

This is about my grandchildren's blood, Hari. I don't want Sastrodarsono's *priyayi* blood and Nugroho's warrior blood gets mixed with the Chinese blood.

Despite Tommi's leaving behind the ideals of *priyayi-hood*, he still holds the orthodox view on the purity of a *priyayi* biological identity by challenging his daughter's decision to marry a Chinese Indonesian. Kayam's criticism of this racist attitude is of course clearly depicted in his characterization of the Chinese character as embodying true *priyayi* values.

### The Jews

Generally postcolonial literature highlights the consequences of the unequal social positioning of people who are identified as belonging to different races, especially in an inter-racial marriage, because the experience of colonialism highlights the perceived markers of difference. When Eko in *Jalan Menikung* is hosted by the Levins, a Jewish American family, during his U.S. study there is no indication of such a colonial or postcolonial component in his reception. Although Claire, their only daughter, also stays at the same house, they do not hesitate to host Eko. Claire seems to enjoy Eko's company and even falls in love with him. When finally Eko and Claire express their intention to get



married, Claire's parents also accept this without reservations.

A very different reaction is seen from the Javanese family's side. Upon receiving a telegram informing them of their son's wedding plan, they, especially Sulistianingsih, the mother, feel offended:

*Anak ini sudah luntur, hilang tata karma Indonesianya. Sudah jadi orang Amerika apa? Kalau orang-orang tua kita itu masih ada, oooh akan bagaimana mereka! Melihat cucunya kawin dengan orang asing, Yahudi lagi! (Kayam, 1999, p. 38)*

This kid has lost his Indonesian politeness. Has he become an American? I couldn't imagine how our ancestors would have reacted: their grandchild is marrying a foreigner, a Jew!

The fact that Eko does not consult his family in deciding his future wife is considered impolite. Secondly, the fact that Claire is a Jewish complicates the problem. As we notice in Kayam's stories, such as "Sri Sumarah", "Bawuk", and *Para Priyayi*, typically a *priyayi*'s purity is maintained by marriage between two *priyayi* descendants and is usually arranged. This is the case for Sastrodarsono and his children, for example.

A further complication is that with this twist in the plot of the novel Kayam explicitly engages with the supposedly traditional enmity between Islamists and Jews in the context of Java and Indonesia's growing involvement in world politics. Perhaps it is because Harimusti's family has adopted a stronger Islamic political identity that this enmity leaves its traces in his mother's worries:

*"Eko mau disuruh jadi Yahudi? No way! Tak usah, ya! Paling-paling yang cocok dengan mereka, kita sama-sama mengharamkan daging babi. Tapi masuk agama Yahudi?" (Kayam, 1999, p. 39)*

"They want Eko to be a Jew? No way! Out of the question! Our only common ground is that both religions forbid us to eat pork. But becoming a Jew?"

Kayam situates this antagonism in a Javanese postcolonial context. In this context the West is pluralized to include the Jews that Eko's mother detests. If in colonial times the Javanese alignment with the Dutch was considered favourable, in post-independence times Eko's alignment with the Jewish family is seen as a big problem by this *priyayi* family. Their stronger Islamic identity as *priyayi Islam* rather than *priyayi abangan* (which would be more syncretistic and tolerant) has situated them in a position opposing Jewish identity vehemently.

Kayam offers a different perspective amid this enmity. His stories seem to suggest that despite their racial and religious sentiment there are some common ground on which his characters negotiate their comfort zones. In this case, Kayam universalises *priyayi* values by going beyond class and race. An American immigrant writer, such as Tahira Navqi, has explored the similarity between Muslims and Jews in his short story "Thank God for the Jews." Kayam, who might have read the story, also describes the melting pot that the two faiths share. Kosher and *halal* are two similar categories to label certain food that is religiously edible:

*"Kau itu, Alan, sering membingungkan saya. Seakan pastrami kosher atau tidak kosher itu jadi persoalan penting betul buat kamu."*

*"Iya, dong. Saya kan orang Yahudi. Sebentar lagi kau juga jadi menantu orang Yahudi. Penting dong kosher itu. Seperti agama Islam, kan? Halal!"*  
(Kayam, 1999, p. 64)

*"Alan, you have often puzzled me. You act as if whether or not the pastrami were kosher an important issue for you."*

*"Of course, it is important. I am Jewish. You will soon marry a Jewish girl. Kosher is definitely important. Just like in Islam: Halal!"*

Kayam also portrays another shared belief in that the Jews and Muslims consider circumcision as an important religious observance as reflected in the dialogue between Eko and Claire:

*"Kenapa pada hari perkawinan kita, kita bicara soal sunat?"*

*"Entahlah. Mungkin karena saya semakin mantap Islam dan Yahudi banyak*



*persamaannya."*

*"Karena agama-agama kita sama-sama mengharuskan laki-laki sunat dan sama-sama mengharamkan daging babi dan memotong leher ayam harus sampai mengucurkan darah dan menodainya?" (Kayam, 1999, p. 75)*

"Why do you talk about circumcision in our wedding day?"

"I don't know. Perhaps because I am getting more convinced that Islam and Judaism have a lot in common."

"Because our religions require men to be circumcised and forbid eating pork and stipulate that when slaughtering chickens we have to shed their blood?"

As the novel progresses Kayam constructs a typically Javanese mystical thought, namely that underneath religious differences there is a similar principle, i.e. the need to be aware of the differences between good and evil. By disregarding the superficial religious and racial differences, Eko's marriage with a Jewish American revises his ancestors' idea of racial and religious purity. An Islamic identification that is still a strong part of the family up to the third generation represented by Kayam is reinterpreted in a characteristically Javanese mystical way by the fourth generation. Javanese mysticism is more adaptive to new influences than many other religious formations and this helps Eko to become a cultural commuter. Ashcroft notes that "the paradox of global culture is that it makes itself 'at home' in motion rather than in place" (Ashcroft, 2001, p. 207). Eko as a global citizen does not have to rely on his origin, neither geographical, cultural, nor even religious to feel at home. In fact his geographical home has refused him due to his father's involvement in the banned Communist Party.

Eko is also depicted by Kayam as a *priyayi* figure who sees the familial bond in different way – the kind of bond in which individualism is more prominent than collectivism. He is adopting the American concept of being a responsible adult to whom individualism is more valued than the familial bond:

*Kemudian, kalau sudah tamat, apalagi sudah mencapai umur dewasa, mereka harus bertanggung jawab kepada dirinya sendiri. Anak itu sudah*

*harus mandiri. Dia juga sudah menjadi "merdeka". Dan Orang tua, apalagi keluarga besar, tidak akan menuntut janji apa-apa dari anak-anaknya. Hidup dijalani sendiri. (Kayam, 1999, p. 22).*

After graduation, especially if he is an adult, he has to be responsible for his own life. He has to be independent. He also becomes "free". And his parents, moreover his extended family, will not ask for anything from their child. Life has to be lived alone."

This is clearly seen in his marriage procedure that does not comply with traditional *priyayi* standards anymore. He marries a Jewish American in a civil ceremony without seeking the advice from his extended family – in contrast to the traditional practice upheld by the Sastrodarsono's extended family at some cost. Kayam portrays Harimurti's family as the first to set Eko free from familial and class bond. Eko's universalism is achieved through individualism. Indeed in the novel Kayam seems to argue that collectivism emphasising harmony and kinship in the Javanese culture has become potentially corrupting when set against an international background.

In a discussion hosted by the *Kompas* daily in 1986, Kayam points out two important traditional values potentially corrupting Indonesian minds, namely *keharmonisan* (harmony) and *kekeluargaan* (kinship, 'cronyism')<sup>7</sup>. These aspects of Javanese wisdom are not evil in themselves but when wrongly enacted, can be shown to be a fertile source of economic and political corruption. In the same forum, Kayam also critically reassesses some Javanese ascetic practices, such as sleeping on the floor and fasting, and concludes that such practices are often motivated by greed: to be rich therefore able to live in luxury. In this context, the ascetic practices are considered as a temporary *laku*, practice, to gain a strong financial, social or political position for himself or his descendants. As such, uncritical reverence for the traditional values will only damage the nation. Kayam calls this uncritical reverence for one's own culture "*kompleks narsisme budaya*" (cultural narcissism complex) (dn/efix, 1986).

In the novel, this unthinking reverence for traditional values has led the

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<sup>7</sup> Reported in *Kompas* daily (Kristanto & Krastawan, 1986): "*Harmoni Sumber Kemandulan*" (Harmony as the root of the problem).



Javanese blaming the Chinese for the social gap that this postcolonial state has created:

*Salah mereka karena mereka bekerja keras lebih dari bangsaku dan sering jauh lebih berhasil, yang menerbitkan rasa cemburu bangsaku yang lebih malas, mau enak-enak saja, mau memetik hasil kerja keras keturunan Cina itu* (Kayam, 1999, pp. 114-115).

It was their [the Indonesian Chinese] own fault because they worked harder and were much more successful than my people. This incited jealousy. My people were lazier, never worked hard and just wanted to reap what the Chinese had struggled for.

This auto-criticism that Kayam expresses through *Jalan Menikung* makes it clear that the *priyayi* racial prejudice against the subaltern classes is unfounded. Against the stereotypical image of Chinese Indonesians, Kayam presents the reverse. Anna's Chinese husband, Boy, for instance, is described as "*pintar, cerdas, tidak sok, baik hati, rendah hati, simpatik*" (clever, smart, not vain, kind, humble and sympathetic) (79). Against the anti-Semitic sentiment Kayam presents the Levins as compassionate and kind. They do not see their daughter's relation with a Javanese boy with racial prejudice

By putting forward this issue, Kayam proposes the idea that the quality of *priyayi-hood* is not and should not be determined by racial, religious or class identity but by inner qualities of restraint and selfless service for the people. With these inter racial marriages the novel argues that the quality of *priyayi-hood* is not only found in the Javanese *priyayi* but is also found in other races. Consequently individual qualities are more important than class and racial identity.

## Conclusion

Failure of living by rigid racial and class categories is enacted in Kayam's Gestapu stories *Jalan Menikung*. Faced with an authoritarian and corrupt state system, the only options that appear to be left to Kayam's ethnocentric characters are to join the corrupt system and thrive, or refuse the system and perish. These fictions show in different ways how the 'third space' envisaged by Bhabha (2002) emerges in Indonesia not as a progressive reconstruction of the site of postcolonial politics, but as a failure to find a moral centre for the emergent nation. In *Jalan Menikung*, Kayam generalises *priyayi* values by including Chinese and Jewish American figures as major characters in his narrative. They are two social groups that have often experienced racism in part because of their successful business enterprises whilst being racial minorities in countries in which they are seen as outsiders (Chirot & Reid, 1997, p. 6).

The fluidity of *priyayi*-hood in *Jalan Menikung* goes beyond racial and national borders. The novel reveals that the Javanese and Indonesia have failed to revitalize *priyayi* values to empower the postcolonial state. Refuting the chauvinistic discourse of the Javanese *priyayi*, the novel presents a universal view that the values initially seen as particularly Javanese are also found in the so-called subaltern groups. The Jewish and the Indonesian Chinese figures are presented as embodying *priyayi* values that the Javanese characters fail to sustain. The characters of Alan Barnstein, Claire and the Levins portray the friendly and welcoming side of the West. The stereotype of selfish and money-oriented Indonesian Chinese is depicted the other way around in the figuration of Boy.

*Jalan Menikung* apparently presents Kayam's reconstruction of the liquidity of ideal values with a special emphasis on the subaltern groups and individualism. This is apparent, for instance, when Kayam names the newborn Jewish-Javanese baby, Eko and Claire's son, Solomon, who, in Kayam's reckoning, is a universal character found in Torah, Bible and Quran. As such the identity of the traditional *priyayi* is no longer important because global interaction has dissolved racial borders and always creates another space to inhabit by the younger generations.



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### **Short bio**

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