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## Nationalism Discourse in Es Ito's *Negara Kelima*

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### Abstract

The discourse of nationalism is present not only in classic, or 'high' literature, but also in products of popular literature such as crime fiction, which provides a 'deep look' at the culture of everyday life. This paper addresses one popular work of Indonesian crime fiction, Es Ito's *Negara Kelima* (The Fifth State, 2005). Ito, popularly known as an Indonesian writer of crime fiction, is interesting as his work blends historical ingredients and legends into its crime plots. The historical insight embedded in the story-telling tradition, combined with the concept of the ideal state and contemporary issue of terrorism, makes his crime fiction worthy of attention. This paper focuses on the discourse of nationalism, its presentation in the novel through characters' interactions and perspectives in dealing with the conflict they face. It will do so using Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, which highlight analysis at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. At the micro level, it deals with linguistic devices; at the macro level, it examines the social political context; and at the mezzo level it deals with discursive analysis, bridging the micro and macro, the consumption and production of the text. *Negara Kelima* tells of the murders of high school girls as well as the investigation into a radical group. This investigation examines the mystery of the first state, second state, third state, fourth state, and fifth state, and unravelling this mystery will lead to understanding the group's goals and agenda. This paper focuses on how the discourse of nationalism is constructed within the novel. It reveals that the discourse of nationalism is highlighted through the perspective of the young policeman Timur Mangkuto and the radical group members. Nationalism, the sense of being united in one nation, emerges in this novel through the characters' dynamic relationships. In the main character's

perspective, nationalism is closely related to his investigation into the schoolgirls' murders and the radical group. Meanwhile, members of the younger, such as the schoolgirls and members of the radical group, are examples of how corrupt institutions victimise them and trap them on the wrong side of the civilisation.

### Introduction

Detective fiction, commonly known as 'crime fiction', is a popular genre of fiction characterised by a focus on crime and the operations of those hunting the culprit. Within the Indonesian literary tradition, this genre did not exist until the 1920s, when imported works were translated from the Chinese tradition, including C.P. Chen's *Souw Lian Eng (Tjerita Politie Resia di Tiongkok)*, a story of a secret police officer in China (1924); Thia Siau Tjeng's *Soeara Menggonggongnja Andjing: Satoe Tjerita dari Detective Hok Song* (The Dog's Bark: A Story of Detective Hok Song), translated by Haij Teng Djin (1935); and Nyonya The Tiang Ek's *Huang Jing Hoa (Tjerita Politie Rahasia)* (Huang Jing Hoa: A Secret Police Story, 1925). These works were translated and adapted into the Chinese Malay language so they could be popularly consumed and re-produced within the Dutch East Indies (Jedamski, 2009:350). This crime fiction could be accepted by Malay colonial society because of cultural closeness, as there were many Chinese people and publishers in the Malay world. The Chinese community, thus, was a major agent developing literacy in the colonial period.

Colonial Malay readers became familiar with the genre of crime fiction when Balai Pustaka began publishing novels in this genre, though they were not classified as 'canonical works'. The term 'canonical' has controversially been used for the literary works that were published by Balai Pustaka and widely distributed in schools and public. It necessarily possesses a political meaning, showing Balai Pustaka's power to determine which works can be classified as of 'good' quality. As Jedamski (2009; 251–252) noted, the colonial publisher strongly advocated the categories of 'low' literature versus 'high' literature. Consequently, 'low' popular literature, including detective stories, were less exposed to colonial monitoring and censorship than other print media (the indigenous press, for instance). However, indigenous intellectuals and readers perceived the genre as being in no way inferior to other literary genres.

The fact that popular literature was viewed poorly in the Balai Pustaka era is further reflected in its designation as 'trashy' literature (Maier, 1991). This term showed Balai Pustaka's policy of marginalising 'low' Malay literature, particularly that by the ethnic Chinese. However, this label evidently overlooked the fact that Chinese-Malay 'trashy' literature dominated the popular literature market from the 1910s through the 1930s.

At first, Balai Pustaka (an organ of the Dutch colonial government) was reluctant to publish crime fiction for several reasons. Jedamski (2009: 356) notes that the colonial authority was worried that such fiction would make the colonial system unstable. Any severe crime and violence was, in a colonial society, seen as a threat to the justification and legitimacy of the colonial system. On the other hand, the Dutch had to enforce the Ethical Policy, implying that they could not simply ban all unwanted literature. As such, the publishing the selection of Western detective fiction was a bitter compromise.

In contemporary Indonesia, 'crime fiction' is one of the most popular genres. However, it is easier for Indonesians to enjoy crime fiction in the form of Hollywood movies and television series than in the form of Indonesian literary works. Many popular works of crime fiction are

translated from works by Western authors such as Agatha Christie and James Patterson, whose work has been popularly consumed by Indonesian readers for decades. Names such as Sherlock Holmes or Philip Marlowe are popular among Indonesian readers. Indonesian audiences are also very familiar with television series presenting 'crime fiction' such as *The Wire*, *NYPD Blue*, or the *CSI* series.

Crime fiction can be defined as fiction that centres on crime as the basis of its plot, as well as a detective or police officer who seeks to unravel it. This article discusses one work of crime fiction, *Negara Kelima*, written by Es Ito and published by Serambi in 2005, focusing on the discourse of nationalism constructed in the novel. This article applies a critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach, as presented by Fairclough (1995), which proposes the analysis of a textual discourse by comparing, interpreting, and synthesising data. Fairclough's CDA is based on three levels of analysis. The first level is the micro level, with analysis related to language phenomenon such as wording, metaphor, and syntax. Analysis on the mezzo level is related to the production and consumption of the text, i.e. the particular references consumed by those producing the text, and thus it highlights intertextuality. At the macro level, analysis examines the socio-political context of the text. In discussing the novel *Negara Kelima*, I will focus upon the discourse of Indonesian nationalism and the way it is constructed in this particular work of Indonesian crime fiction. As crime fiction is a genre consumed mostly by young readers, the novel's discourse of nationalism will be of particular interest owing to its influence upon them. Finally, this essay is also meant to enrich analysis of popular literature as a medium for the literary construction of political ideology.

*Negara Kelima* begins with the murders of three high school girls in Jakarta: Lidya, Maureen, and Ovi. These three girls all belong to the same 'gang'; the only other member, Alish, survived, having hidden from her would-be killer. All of these girls came from middle-class families in metropolitan Jakarta, and thus enjoyed more facilities than average teenagers and tended to socialise exclusively within their group. The first victim, Lidya, was the daughter of Riantono, the chief commissioner of the Greater Jakarta police. She was killed at a small hotel popularly known as a place of prostitution. Using his prestigious position, Riantono manipulates the location of his daughter's murder, feeling ashamed that his daughter was killed in a 'brothel'. Lydia is quickly followed by another victim, Maureen, who is killed in her own bedroom. The third victim, Ovi, is killed at her school toilet. It is obvious that the murderer is seeking something important held by the girls.

While busy with this series of murders, the police are also fervently investigating 'KePaRad', the Kelompok Patriotik Radikal (Group of Radical Patriots). Although the police do not know this alleged terrorist group's location or goals, they do suspect it of being behind several cases of crime and sabotage, as well as the hacking of public institutions, banks, airports, and other public facilities. The only clue the police have is from arrested members, who only chant mysterious lines about the first, second, third, fourth and fifth state. The police are certain that unravelling this mysterious chant will lead to the group's identity, goals, and agenda.

The main character of *Negara Kelima* is a young policeman, Timur Mangkuto, who is tasked with finding the girls' killer. Unfortunately, Timur must flee after being accused of murdering a policeman—a close friend with information about the terrorist group. The police try to trap him, but he manages to escape with the help of another colleague. Timur is also accused of being involved with KePaRad. To prove his innocence, Timur must find the murderer and unravel the mystery of the terrorist group while still on the run.

In his search, Timur is helped by a young historian named Eva Duani, the daughter of senior historian Professor Duani Abdullah. Timur also gets help from his adoptive father, Makwo Katik, who explains the political history of Minangkabau people in the 1950s. Katik also helps Timur find a person who used to tell traditional stories (*kaba*) in the Minangkabau tradition. This knowledge of history and the *kaba* provide him important clues to understand the puzzle of the radical group KePaRad.

Working with Eva and Duani, the mysteries are revealed one after another. The first through fourth states turn out to be ancient historical states found in the Indonesian archipelago, which provide ideal prototypes for Indonesia. The first state refers to Atlantis, the second to the Darmasraya Kingdom, the third to the Majapahit Kingdom, and the fourth to the Indonesian Emergency Government in Bukittinggi. In this narration, the first up to fourth states are considered ideal references for manifesting an ideal fifth state, which they will soon establish and declare in Indonesia. This group plans to base its new state in the lengthy historical trajectory of the first through fourth states, without acknowledging Indonesia as a legal nation. The police must soon find where and when the group will establish and declare their state, and who is involved in this illegal group.

### **Nationalism Discourse in *Negara Kelima***

According to Anderson (2001), a nation is a political community imagined as an entity that is inherently limited but fully sovereign. As a community, a nation builds solidarity among members and provides opportunities for them to perform social actions. Nationalism, following Anderson's concept, refers to the sum total of the thoughts and feelings of solidarity among the members of the nation. In this novel, there is an issue of nationalism among the young people involved in a series of criminal events. The first is nationalism as viewed by the 'radical patriotic group' that plans to build a new nation. Second, nationalism as viewed by the young idealist policeman, the hero of this fiction.

In the beginning of the novel's second chapter, it is stated that KePaRad has broadcast a statement: 'Raganya Indonesia tetapi jiwanya tidak lagi nusantara. Satu kelompok berkuasa, sisanya pengaya saja. Sebagian kecil kelompok kaya, sisanya menanggung derita. Bubarkan Indonesia. Bebaskan nusantara. Bentuk negara Kelima.-Kelompok Patriotik' (p.17). This statement highlights the ideas that 'Indonesia' is not something idealised by the group, the producer of the text. Many paradoxes are present in this statements, such as the body not matching the soul. Here, Indonesia and *nusantara* are given the same meaning. The first sentence says that Indonesia has lost its soul. This is clarified in the second sentence: there is only one group in power, and the rest suffer. This is the motivation for the group's campaign to dissolve Indonesia and free *nusantara* by establishing the Fifth State.

KePaRad's statement is spread through the internet the day after Indonesia celebrates its Independence Day. There is soon chaos throughout Jakarta after signs indicate that the communications and internet systems have been hijacked. This causes panic at the Soekarno-Hatta International Airport, errors at several banks, as well as telecommunication problems at Plasa Senayan, Mall Taman Anggrek, and Plaza Semanggi, and at Telkom Indonesia.

This statement implies feelings of distrust in Indonesia. The statement says 'Raganya Indonesia Tetapi jiwanya tidak lagi nusantara' (The body is Indonesia, but the soul is no longer that of the archipelago). This compares contested identities of Indonesia and *nusantara*. It implies that Indonesia has lost its soul, its basic identity, the *nusantara* identity that the group

has fought for. By hacking into systems throughout Jakarta, the group launches its statement and identity and campaigns for its goal. This includes government websites, where the Indonesian 'red and white' flag replaced by a map of Nusantara, which covers a wider territory than Indonesia.

Nationalism, as understood by the 'patriotic group', is one represented in its political statement. The group's urging that Indonesia be dissolved and a Fifth State established indicates that they do not view Indonesia as representing their ideals. The current Indonesian state must be dissolved owing to the crucial social and political gaps between different groups. KePaRad does not believe in the existing government, as only one group exercises power while the rest suffer. This can be seen from the group's statement 'Satu kelompok berkuasa, sisanya pengaya saja. Sebagian kecil kelompok kaya, sisanya menanggung derita.' (Only one group is in power, while the rest follow. Only a small minority are rich, while the others bear nothing but suffering). This credo shows that Indonesia cannot be trusted because only one of the country's many groups practices power, and only a few enjoy wealth while the remainder are poor. As such, KePaRad has united to dissolve the existing state and establish a new one.

This group also perceives that Indonesia's territory should be larger than its present territory, based on its previous history. In its creed 'Free the archipelago' and replacing of the Indonesian flag with a map of the archipelago, it shows a view that *nusantara* (rather than existing Indonesian territory) based on old maps, with the territory being much larger than presently.

The 'patriotic group' sees Indonesia as being in great trouble because of the socio-political gaps between generations and between groups. It has thus sought to establish a new state called the 'Fifth State', dismissing the existing government. From its name Kelompok Patriotik ('Group of Patriots'), it clearly identifies itself as being concerned for the nation, for defending and fighting for its 'ideal' country. However, the police have named the group 'Kelompok Patriotik Radikal', adding the word 'radical', and used the acronym 'KePaRad'. In Indonesian, the word *keparat* is a pejorative, a curse used to indicate disapproval or anger. In the view of the police, by labelling the group 'radical', it essentially becomes a terrorist group and must thus be hunted down and exterminated.

This KePaRad has many young people as its members, and although members do not know the whole structure, they do know their specific tasks. For example, Dino Tjakra and Ilham Tegas are tasked with finding an ancient black stone believed to have been part of an orichalcum pillar in the centre of Atlantis, as stated in Plato's *Timaeus and Critias* (p. 124). This stone is also called *serat ilmu* because it symbolises the goodness or merits of the Atlantean people. According to the mission, once the stone is found, it will be brought out at the time the Fifth State is declared. However, their patriotism turns out to have been manipulated by the leader of the group, whose identity is not known by members. Prof Budi Sasmito is the man who wants the *serat ilmu* by exploiting the group built by Sunanto Arifin. He intends to obtain the stone and sell it at a very high price to the European collector, Mr Wolfgang.

Nationalism among the group members, especially young ones, is perceived as providing an ideal view of the nation, with solidarity among most people and fair socio-economic access for people there are no gaps that leave the majority in squalor. That is why group members are highly dedicated to achieving their goal of recreating the ideal state of Atlantis through what they call the Fifth State. The group educates members on the shared goal of building an ideal

state. This implies that the existing Indonesian nation is far from an ideal state. This group also exploits the socio-political gaps experienced by young people to build solidarity and create a new ideal state. This can be seen from the lines that members must chant:

'Negara pertama. Solon membawa berita.

Plato membuat cerita. Sejarah mencari asalnya. Satu-satu kosong kosong kosong terlalu lama.

Negara kedua. Negara kedua adalah kedatangan kembali. Pada celah puncak-puncak kedua di mana tidak ada bayangan...

Negara Ketiga.

Pada dataran setelah celah puncak-puncak kedua mereka bersimharaja, tetapi angin telah menjemput mereka untuk Negara Ketiga. Ketika dua orang dara Para Penjemput menuai janji mereka, dari rahim dua dara lahir dua raja...

Negara Keempat...

Ketika matahari memberi siang kepada selatan, utara ditimpa malam yang panjang, para penjemput menyambung nyawa dari negara yang sekarat. Tempat yang dijanjikan tetapi terlupa.

Negara Kelima.

Negara Kelima adalah kebangkitan masa silam. Ketika matahari hadir tanpa bayangan, keputusan diambil pada puncak yang terlupakan. Para Penjemput menuai janji kejayaan masa silam. Itu adalah saat penentuan, ketika Para Penjemput tidak lagi ingat akan masa lalu berbilang tahun tetapi mendamba masa lalu berbilang ribuan tahun...' (pp. 93–94).

('The First State. Solon brought the news.

Plato brought the story. History sought the origin. One one zero zero zero is far too long.

The Second State. The Second State, a rebirth. In the crevices between the second peaks, without a trace...

The Third State.

On the plateau after the second peak they rested, but the wind carried them to the Third State. When the two girls of The Bringers made their promises, from these two girls two wombs came two kings...

The Fourth State...

When the sun brought the day to the south, the north fell under a lengthy night, and the Bringers brought life to the dying country. The Promised Land was forgotten.

The Fifth State

The Fifth State is a rebirth of the past. When the sun shines without a shadow, decisions are made at the forgotten peaks. The Bringers reap promises of past glory. It is the time when the Bringers no longer remember the years, but long for a thousand-year-past ...' (pp. 93–94).)

These mysterious lines are chanted by the members of 'KePaRad' that Timur interrogates, narrating about the first, second, third, fourth, and fifth states. The fifth state is the ideal state the group will build, and it is Timur's task to unravel the puzzle and discover the group's real agenda.

With the help of Eva and Duani, Timur is able to unravel the mystery bit by bit. The first state refers to Atlantis, as stated in Plato's book *Timaeus and Critias*, which is believed to be located within the archipelago. Atlantis is considered an ideal prototype state because of the rules applied therein. After lengthy discussions between Timur, Eva, Duani, Makwo Katik, and Malin Saidi, the police officer is able to unravel the other clues in the chant. The 'satu satu kosong kosong kosong' ('11000') refers to the chronological gap between Atlantis and the modern day, some eleven thousand years. The first state refers to the Atlantis, believed to be located in the ancient *nusantara* (p. 173). The second state refers to the Darmasraya Kingdom in Sumatra (p. 361), the third state refers to the Majapahit Kingdom (363–368), and the fourth state refers to the Indonesian Emergency Government established on 22 December 1948 at Halaban, Bukittinggi (p. 446). All of these states populate the historical trajectory for the group's Fifth State, to be declared at some place at some time. Timur and his friends unravel this mystery as they seek the girls' murderer.

Nationalism, the perspective and sense of being of one nation, emerges in this novel through the dynamic relationships of its characters. Nationalism in the perspective of the main character, Timur Mangkuto, is related to his profession as a policeman and his personal history. The central plot is his attempt to discover the perpetrator of the crime, the killing of three schoolgirls in three days. These girls—Lidya, Maureen, and Ovi—were in life close friends who studied at the same high school. Timur must find the killer, because he has been framed for murder. He was first accused of killing his friend and fellow policeman, Rudi Djatmiko, because he was the last person to meet him before his death. Investigating the case of the girls' murder, Rudi found some data. However, some hours after Timur visited Rudi to discuss the case, the officer was found dead. As with the three murdered girls, Rudi's body was marked with a pyramid sign. Witnesses also mentioned that the killer was dressed in black, with the same sign on his collar. Timur was also accused of being involved in KePaRad.

Timur must thus work hard to find out the murderer while clearing his name. He is represented as an idealistic young policeman who overcomes his problems through his strength, skills, and intelligence. While avoiding the police chasing him, he manages to escape many times in Jakarta's traffic jams and disappear into the city's crowds. His representation as an honest policeman is opposed with that of the corrupt officer, represented by Chief Commissioner Riantono.

With his perspective as an idealistic young policeman who had to work hard since childhood to be able to go school and begin a career in the police, Timur questions the morality and solidarity of young middle-class Jakartans. The murdered girls were all high school students from wealthy families who enjoyed luxury in their daily lives. With their affluent background, these girls lived with their own lifestyles and norms. Despite still being high school students, they had sexual relationships with their boyfriends without their teachers or parents' knowledge.

The first murdered girl is Lidya, the daughter of Chief Commissioner Riantono—Timur's boss. The commissioner is divorced, and his daughter is living with him. As a highly ranked police officer, Riantono is affluent enough, but he does not know his daughter's daily activities. He is shocked to discover that his daughter was killed in a small hotel known for prostitution. He feels ashamed at this, and is worried that it will destroy his reputation as Chief Commissioner of the Greater Jakarta Police. As such, he manipulates the scene of his daughter's murder, and he does

not want the murder connected with the other two murders, only to save his face. Through this fictitious event, the author criticises the hypocrisy of the police, especially the elites.

The morality of the youth is also an important discourse in the novel. Through the morality of the murdered girls, the author criticises the morality of youths who live in big cities and ignore social norms and problems. In Indonesian culture, it is not acceptable for girls and boys to have sexual relationships before marriage. This norm is ignored by the girls, and moreover the girls celebrated their sexuality in a way that led to them being killed—in Lydia's case, by her boyfriend. Timur found evidence of this through a video kept by the girls.

Alish tidak bisa menahan untuk bercerita. Semuanya berawal dari keisengan mereka berempat. Mereka membuat komitmen untuk ritual melepaskan keperawanan mereka. Caranya dengan memperlihatkan video adegan intim mereka bersama pacar masing-masing (p. 486) (Alish couldn't hold back her story. Everything began with their game. They promised to rid themselves of their virginity. They would do so by showing a video of them being intimate with their boyfriends.)

As shown in the above quote, the schoolgirls planned to make video showing them having sexual intercourse with their boyfriends. Each girl has had sexual intercourse, making it a challenging game. Their parents do not know their daughters' activities outside the home. Tragically, Lidya's planned intercourse ultimately resulted in her being killed by her boyfriend, Melvin, a policeman under Chief Commissioner Riantono. That is why Melvin hunted the other videos, held on the laptops of the murdered girls. Finding the killer, Timur expresses his anger at the behaviour of the young girls and boys, as well as his regret that his friend Rudi was killed while investigating the case.

'Generasi sampah!'

Timur Mangkuto seperti menyesali kenapa Rudi harus mati untuk anak-anak kaya yang menjadi sampah peradaban ini. (p.488)

('This waste of a generation!')

Timur Mangkuto was disappointed that Rudi was killed for such wealthy young girls, the trash of modern civilisation)

This discourse criticises the big city youths who come from wealthy families but fail to receive proper education from their schools, parents, or family. These youths, like the murdered girls and their boyfriends, are criticised by Timur as a waste of a generation. The 'waste' discourse draws on the extremely negative connotation of waste as something useless that must be discarded. This generation, implicitly, cannot be trusted to realise the nationalism expected by the people, but will instead only create more social and political problem. These affluent youths are represented as making no positive contributions to society, as having no sense of solidarity, and as ignoring the community. To make it worse, they are trapped with their own problems because of their parents' ignorance, becoming hedonistic and hypocritical is developed even while presenting themselves as good children, as with Bernard, Maureen's boyfriend. Parents' and society's ignorance leads to young people being victimised, as evidenced by the girls' murders. They are not only murder victims, but victims of the ignorance of society and their families.

The only surviving member of the girl gang is Alish, who was living at home while her parents were in Europe on a diplomatic assignment. To save herself, she hides with her boyfriend in a secret room. When Timur meets Alish and her boyfriend, Pierre, he cannot help

himself from mocking the latter, who is a student at the prestigious University of Indonesia in Jakarta.

'Masak kamu kuliah di kampus UI? Anak muda seperti kamu bisa kuliah di kampus itu? Berapa puluh juta orang tuamu mengeluarkan uang untuk membunuh kesempatan anak-anak miskin yang pintar?' (p.485) ('You study at UI? A young man like you is able to study at that campus? How many millions of rupiah did your parents spend for you, to kill the chances of poor but smart youths?')

Criticism of the younger generation is also exemplified with the character Pierre, Alish's boyfriend. Despite not being married, Alish and Pierre stayed in a hotel for several days. By presenting Alish as a high school girl, and Pierre as a student at the University of Indonesia, a prestigious campus in metropolitan Jakarta where rich people can buy 'seats' to study while blocking the opportunities of poor but smart students, the criticism of affluent metropolitan youth is not only targeted at wealthy families who ignore their children, but also at institutions of higher education that contributes to the hypocrisy and hedonism of the youth.

Criticism of youth life is closely linked to criticism of families, parents, and other public institution, such as university and the police. The discourse of morality among metropolitan youths is contrasted with that of the main character, Timur Mangkuto, who came from a remote village in Bukittinggi and overcame numerous obstacles since childhood. His father abandoned him and his mother when Timur was very young, and thus he had to work hard to go to school. In the face of this adversity, Timur grew into a smart and tough young man, so he successfully enrolled in the police academy. He became an ideal and knowledgeable policeman, able to successfully solve the murders and the mystery of the terrorist group.

The institution of the police, which assume the important role of keeping social order in society, is challenged internally and externally. Internally, as shown in the novel, the hypocritical Chief Commissioner Riantono allowed himself to be carried away by his ambition for higher position and thus manipulate the scene of his daughter's murder and tragically be fooled by his own staff, Melvin Donovan. Contestation between units and individuals posed a major internal challenge to the institution.

Externally, the police are challenged by the terrorist or radical group that has been used to recruit young people disappointed with current socio-economic conditions. KePaRad, a radical group led by some unknown leaders, is able to recruit and mobilise members through its organisational structure, transforming them into militant radicals willing to fight for their ideal or utopian goals. This group is able to make its members Dino Tjakra and Ilham Tegas go to a small village (Bidar Alam) in the Minangkabau Highlands to search for a mysterious stone known as *serat ilmu*. Members of group are also made to believe that their goal is to build a new nation, the leader of which would be declared at a pre-determined time. The intellectual leader of the group was the late Professor Sunanto Arifin, a historian who established the group for the dream of recreating a past civilisation. Below Sunanto are 'The Openers' (Kelompok Pembuka), including Dino and Ilham, whose mission is to find the *serat ilmu*, which will be combined with the golden plate *tataghata* held at the national museum. The combination of these two artefacts, according to the professor, will awaken the new civilisation they call the Fifth State.

Sunanto and Professor Amirudin Syah, who disguised himself as the group's driver Udin, built this historical background to justify their mission with a thoughtful and mythical goal: the re-awakening of a civilisation. The historical trajectories of the ideal states and the new Fifth

State is memorised and chanted by all group members. According to *Tambo Adat Minangkabau* (a Minangkabau oral tradition narrating the ancient histories), as well as the analysed by Timur and Eva, it is found out that the first state refers to the Atlantic; the second state refers to the Darmasraya Kingdom built in the Minangkabau region; the third state refers to Majapahit, a state based in East Java; and the fourth state refers to the Emergency Government of Indonesia. The Fifth State, thus, is an ideal state that will soon be declared. Discovering where this Fifth State will be declared, Timur and Eva go to a certain place.

All of this manipulation is unravelled as members were preparing to declare a new state. Ultimately, Melvin, Riantono, and Udin arrive at a small island north of Jakarta, followed by Timur. The conspiracy collapses, and Melvin is shot dead by Riantono.

In the novel, the police—including Timur Mangkuto—view the radical group as dangerous for the stability of the nation, as it has manipulated history to legitimise a new state. This radical group is also dangerous because it fooled its members only to benefit its manipulative leaders. The lack of correct and balanced information, as well as logical rational thinking, enables the group to easily brainwash youths. In this novel, this includes the young policeman Melvin Donovan; he ultimately takes a leading position after killing Professor Budi Sasmito. Melvin's goal is to obtain the orichalcum pillar *serat ilmu* from the radical group, so he can sell it at a very high price to an antiques collector in Paris.

The nationalism discourse is also addressed by proposing the idea that Indonesia is not limited to Java. When students study the history of Indonesia, it is frequently dominated by the history of Javanese kingdoms. The novel's author criticises the view that Indonesia is only Java, instead emphasising that Indonesian nationalism is not Java-centred. This novel articulates a nationalism that highlights Sumatra as having an important historical tradition of nation-building within the history of the Indonesian archipelago. Indonesia is an archipelagic nation that consists of thousands of islands, including large ones such as Sumatra, Java, Bali, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Papua, and Lombok. During the New Order regime, the development of Java, as the premier insular state, received priority. The resulting lack of equitable social development led to disparity, which has been an important aspect of nationalism discourse and is perceived critically by the author in his imagining of Indonesia as a nation. This criticism is also supported by the author's cultural background as a youth born in Bukittinggi.

In addition to highlighting nationalism through political and social history, the novel also highlights the Minangkabau story-telling tradition of *kaba*, a term synonymous with *kabar* or news/information. This traditional story, also known as a *tambo*, is a product of oral literature from West Sumatra, and contains stories, legends, and histories. Etymologically, *tambo* means 'the origin', and thus the *tukang kaba* (story-teller) tells stories of the origins of specific places or Minang kings. Traditionally, *tambo* have usually been performed as part of social gatherings. However, this tradition has lost popularity in recent years, and story-tellers can no longer earn a living through it. Malin Saidi, the *tambo* teller in this novel, had to migrate to Jakarta to survive, making a living by selling clothes at the traditional market. One of the most popular *tambo* stories is that of Iskandar Zulkarnain or Alexander the Great, whose son is said to have made an expedition to Sumatra and established the Darmasraya Kingdom—the largest of that era.

## Conclusion

Nationalism is closely related to how younger generations perceive the social and political issues in their lives. Mismanagement in formal and informal education will lead to moral and spiritual

destruction. This novel shows how youths fall victim to failures in education and corrupt social systems. Family and parents are important actors that must be aware of their children's growth and development. Corrupt institutions and officers victimise youths in many ways. Some disillusioned young people will easily be recruited by radical groups because such organisations offer ideal goals. They would rather become martyrs, exploited and manipulated by bad guys disguised as their leaders. However the novel also shows that there is still hope for healthy young people, when they are educated in the proper way. Formal and non-formal education, as well as a supportive social environment, will contribute to nationalism building among youths and equip them to resolve problems and overcome challenges, as exemplified by the ideal young policeman, Timur Mangkuto.

The discourse of nationalism is highlighted in the novel to articulate the idea that the Indonesian nation, or *nusantara*, cannot only be traced back to colonialism, as commonly assumed. Instead, 'Indonesia' as a nation is deeply rooted in history, corresponding to the mystery of Atlantis, as described by Plato, and held up as the ideal state. In a contemporary context, this novel expresses the view that Indonesia, or *nusantara*, is not only Java. Consequently, authorities in Jakarta must pay serious attention to building and developing regions outside Java. This is important to articulate, keeping in mind that the Indonesian New Order regime was Java-centric throughout its 32 years. This is the most real form of nationalism.

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