



## Stereotypes and Discrimination against Indigenous Characters in Novels *Parijs Van Java* by Remy Sylado's

Dini Eka Wijayanti; Nurhadi

Indonesian Language and Literature Education, Yogyakarta State University, Colombo Street Number 1,  
Yogyakarta, Indonesia

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### **Abstract**

This study aims to describe and reveal stereotypes and discrimination against natives in the novel *Parijs Van Java* by Remy Sylado. Stereotyping is a concept regarding the nature of a group based on prejudice and is subjective. Discrimination is the act of distinguishing between groups. Literary works in the form of novels can be a place to convey criticism and depict a certain situation. Through the novel *Parijs Van Java*, the author conveys the problems of life, social, romance, and power that occurred during the Dutch government in the Dutch East Indies. This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach to explain the phenomena experienced by the characters. The approach used is the postcolonialism approach. The research objects are phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. Data collection techniques used reading and note-taking techniques. The data analysis approach used in this study is Miles Huberman's data analysis technique, which includes (1) data collecting, (2) data condensation, (3) data presentation, and (4) conclusion draughting. The findings of this study demonstrate that stereotypes against natives are separated into two categories: (1) stereotypes against fellow natives and (2) Dutch stereotypes against natives. The novel shows a number of discriminatory practices, such as (1) prejudice based on socioeconomic class, (2) discrimination based on skin colour, and (3) discrimination based on clothing style.

**Keywords:** *Stereotypes; Discrimination; Novel; Postcolonial*

### **Introduction**

Indonesia was settled by the West, primarily the Dutch, for around 3.5 centuries. This event had a wide-ranging influence on the Indonesian people, including the literary scene in Indonesia. Both imperialism and colonialism are inextricably linked when considering colonisation. Colonialism and imperialism may be characterised as an endeavour to govern a region away from the metropolitan Said (via Dermawan, R.N., Santoso, 2017). The various phenomena, characteristics and practices of Western colonialism in Indonesia, as well as the resistance that was carried out, are represented in many literary works, both those written during the colonial period and those written when Indonesia was already independent. The birth of literary works during the colonial era also caused controversy in society and in the post-independence government.

Several literary masterpieces emerged as a result of colonialism and imperialism in post-independence Indonesia. For example, Pramoedya Ananta Toer's Tetralogy of Buru, Iksaka Banu's Rasina, Remy Sylado's *Parijs Van Java: Blood, Sweat, and Tears*, and numerous more authors' works set in colonial times. Remy Sylado was one of the Indonesian writers that released his works during that time period. Remy Sylado's name is recognised in the world of Indonesian literature. Remy Sylado is one of the authors whose name is celebrated because he likes to bring archaic Indonesian terms that are seldom used. This is the unique thing about his works. The works produced by Remy Sylado are not only novels, but he also writes criticism, poetry and short stories. He is also good at painting and playing dramas. His works include *Ca-Bau-Kan (Hanya Sebuah Dosa)* (1999), *Kerudung Merah Kirmizi* (2002), *Kembang Jepun* (2003), *Parijs Van Java* (2003), *Menunggu Matahari Melbourne* (2004), *Puisi Mbeling* (2005), etc.

This research looks at *Parijs Van Java*, a book by Remy Sylado that takes place in Indonesia during the colonial era. The story concentrates around the main character's introduction to her surroundings and how she deals with intrigue in her life. Gertruida, the novel's main character, encounters a series of unpleasant realities after arriving in the Dutch East Indies, namely Bandung, often known as Paris Van Java. Trying to confront the powerful individuals of the day, and breaking free from the dark circle established by powerful people who intended to exploit her. Putting her spouse in a dark, stifling jail. This novel is studied utilising postcolonial theory against the backdrop of colonialism's brutal tactics.

Postcolonial theory is a literary theory that emerged and developed in Indonesia. Postcolonial theory is present and developed on the basis of historical events and terrible experiences faced by the Indonesian people. The term "postcolonial" is derived from the word "colonial". The term "colonia" in Roman means "farmland" or "settlement". The term refers to Romans living in other lands, but still as Roman citizens. Makaryk (via Sultoni & Utomo, 2021) defines postcolonialism as a collection of methodologies for investigating the culture, literature, history, politics, and other aspects of what was left behind during Western colonisation and its influence, particularly in Indonesia. Postcolonialism is an empirical discipline that fulfils the academic mission of reviewing, recalling, and researching the past in connection to colonialism. Postcolonial discourse is a complicated form that results in a culture intermingled with colonialism (Gandhi, 2001).

Bill Ashcroft et al. (via Saputri, 2019) argued that postcolonial is a relationship between the coloniser as superior and the colonised as inferior, which is hegemonic. The colonisers are seen as superior, strong, intellectual, and powerful, among other qualities. On the other hand, the colonised are viewed as less valuable and not on par with the colonisers' social standing. Westerners saw easterners as sluggish and so incapable of administering their own governments. This was the motivation for Western countries to colonise Eastern countries (Said, 2016). Postcolonial involves three definitions, according to Ratna (2008), as follows: (1) the end of colonial empires around the world; (2) documentation related to the experience of colonial practices, concerning related writings; (3) theories used to analyse postcolonial issues.

Postcolonialism evolved as a result of critical thinking on scientific procedures, knowledge, research, and other human creative works that are inextricably linked to interests, power, and ideology. Postcolonialism emerged as a result of Edward Said's work on orientalism, which revealed concealed colonializations. Stereotyping is one of the key postcolonial notions. Stereotypes may be understood as a sort of knowledge and identification between superior and inferior parties (Bhabha, 1994: 95). Stereotypes are constructions of western understanding of the east as an effort to build its power. Stereotypes include selective idealization of other races or nations. The Western idea of the East as another nation from Europe is a practice deliberately created to support European superiority (Said, 2001: 8-10). In addition, the position of the West as a colonizer can be said to be superior and the natives as inferior. So it can be concluded that stereotyping is the nature of a group based on prejudice and is subjective. The practice of colonialism in the eastern nation, specifically Indonesia, has additional consequences, such as prejudice. Discrimination is an action performed against individuals or groups that

fosters a connection between the dominant and minority parties. What is done often discriminates against racial, ethnic, religious, cultural, and social class characteristics at Fulthoni, et.al (via Nurafia, 2022).

This study will discuss indigenous stereotypes of natives, Dutch stereotypes of natives, and discrimination against colonized people in the novel *Paris Van Java*. Several research are related to this topic. The first research is titled “Stereotypes, Discrimination, Social Segregation, and Resistance in Risa Saraswati's Novel *Ivanna van Dijk*”. The study's findings focus on racism as shown in the novel *Ivanna Van Dijk*, including stereotypes, discrimination, social segregation, and resistance. Stereotype is a term used by colonisers to the colonised nation, implying that the colonised nation is a low-income nation, which drives coloniser behaviour. The preconceptions against the Van Dijk Family resulted in vocal and nonverbal discrimination. The character who discriminates is a character who occupies a superior position. The Van Dijk family is told to experience social segregation because of its purely Dutch identity but love for the indigenous people. The resistance carried out by this family is an attitude of ignoring other people's opinions by carrying out verbal resistance (Gunawan, M. A. P., Harini, Y. N. A., 2022).

*Second*, a study entitled “Discrimination of the Dutch in the Novel *Salah Asuhan* by Abdoel Moeis (Postcolonial Studies)”. The results of the study are that there are several discriminatory behaviors carried out by the Dutch against the natives, namely, controlling and instilling the ideology that the Dutch nation is a civilized, polite, advanced and dignified nation; ethnic/racial discrimination, gender discrimination, and discrimination of customs or culture. The impact of discrimination by the Dutch is depicted through the characters in the novel, Hanafi and Corrie. The discrimination they experienced was caused by the marriage between Hanafi, a native man and Corrie, a western woman. Hanafi's behavior is considered to undermine the culture, customs and dignity of his own people. So Hanafi and Corrie were ostracized, insulted, harassed until they died (Hafid, 2017).

*Third*, a study entitled “Postcolonialism in the Novel *Panggil Aku Kartini Saja* by Pramoedya Ananta Toer”. The results of the study of the study of the novel *Panggil Aku Kartini Saja* using the theory of postcolonialism are divided into three. First, the view of the colonizers in controlling their colonies, how to dumb down the community, and slow down the education system. Second, the oppression of the colonizers against the colonized nation by carrying out a forced labor system. Third, Kartini's form of resistance to eradicate ignorance by learning the knowledge gained from the Netherlands (Nimasari, 2018).

Relevant research entitled “The Western View of the East in Pidi Baiq's *Helen and Sukanta* Novel (Edward Said's Orientalism Study)” conducted by (Ningrum & Septiyani, 2024). Research conducted by Firza Aulia Ningrum and Rizki Endi Septiyani analyzed the novel by Pidi Baiq, the results of the analysis in the study, namely during the Dutch colonialism in Indonesia, the natives received stereotypes from the Dutch, received discrimination from the Dutch who considered themselves higher, more civilized, more knowledgeable, more advanced, compared to the natives and the attitude of superiority and inferiority towards the natives. In the novel *Helen and Sukanta*, the Dutch character as the superior party views eastern culture as strange, foreign, and full of mystical things. The position of the natives as the inferior party allows them to behave arbitrarily and be in control.

This research is different from previous research; this research discusses the perspective of the position of the colonised and colonisers and the forms of discrimination experienced by the natives in the novel *Parijs Van Java* by Remy Sylado. The data sources used in this study have not been used as research objects. Based on this explanation, the problem formulations in this study are (1) what is the perception of the natives towards the natives and the Dutch towards the natives that occur in the novel *Parijs Van Java*? (2) What is the form of discrimination against the natives? The study of postcolonialism with this focus in the novel *Parijs Van Java* is motivated by the lack of literary research that reveals the problem of colonialism in the novel.

## Methods

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method. The descriptive method is used to describe the problems discussed by describing the subject and object of research. In this research, the method is used to find and describe stereotypes and discrimination experienced in the novel *Parijs Van Java* from the perspective of postcolonialism. The data source in this research is a novel entitled *Parijs Van Java* by Remy Sylado published by Kepustakaan Popular Gramedia (KPG), Jakarta, in 2003 for its first edition. The research data collected are conversations, sentences, and discourses regarding the form of mimicry contained in the novel. The data collection techniques used were reading and note-taking techniques. The data collection stage begins with (1) reading repeatedly and understanding the novel that is the source of data; (2) identifying the problems contained in the novel *Ndoro Darmabumi* with the problem of the form of mimicry; (3) then recording, done by marking the sentences in the novel; (4) after getting the appropriate data, the data is categorized in the data card table. Data analysis was carried out using data analysis techniques according to Miles, Huberman and Saldana (1994). There are four stages of data analysis; (1) data collection; (2) data condensation; (3) data presentation (data display); (4) conclusion drawing.

## Research Result and Discussion

Based on the explanation in the introduction, this research examines a novel entitled *Parijs Van Java* with a research focus on native stereotypes towards their countrymen, colonial stereotypes towards natives and discrimination experienced by natives.

### Indigenous Stereotypes towards the Natives

The practice of colonialism cannot be separated from the figure of the Western nation and the Eastern nation as the natives. The existence of the practice of colonialism has caused a lot of impact, both materially and mentally. The character of the Westerners who occupied the colonies in the Dutch East Indies also became a scourge for the indigenous people. Discrimination, forced labour, regulations that require the natives to submit make the indigenous people a party to many disadvantages from this practice. Inhabiting the Dutch East Indies for a long time has led to various perspectives from both the colonial and indigenous parties. Perceptions of the natives can be seen from the Dutch view of the natives and the indigenous view of the natives themselves. However, there are native figures who actually turn a blind eye and lean pro-Dutch with various reasons that justify their actions. Like the character Martosoewignjo in the novel *Parijs Van Java* below,

“... *Belakangan ini negeri kami sedang dimabukkan oleh tokoh - tokoh pergerakan yang salah baca buku. Apalagi pendiri Indische Partij yang didirikan trio Dekker-Tjipto-Soewardi. Mereka bilang “Indie los van Nederland. Mereka kira ada negara modern yang bebas dari sistem bergantung.*” (Sylado, 2023: 138)

The first time Rob Verschoor met Martosoewignjo in Yogyakarta, that sentence came to mind. Martosoewignjo's views on his own countrymen left Rob stunned and shocked. He could see how Martosoewignjo was indeed a pro-Dutch native rather than a supporter of his own countrymen's efforts. Martosoewignjo's motive for being pro-Dutch was because he also benefitted from joining the ranks of the powerful Dutch. In contrast to Martosoewignjo's view of his people, AbA believes that the natives are capable of breaking free from the shackles of colonialism. AbA's perception is expressed in the following excerpt from his dialogue.

“*Kalau Belanda tidak menjajah suku-suku di pelbagai pulau, niscaya tidak lahir dorongan untuk merasakan diri menjadi satu dan senasib-sepenanggungan. Saya setengah yakin, dalam waktu dekat, akan tercetuskan deklarasi yang berangkat dari perasaan ini*” (Sylado, 2023: 215)

AbA's belief in the strength and efforts of his people gave birth to thoughts that contradicted Martosoewignjo's views. Despite the impact of colonialism experienced by the natives, there are still things to be grateful for to build enthusiasm for students, youth and Indonesian national figures to fight Dutch colonialism. For people like Martosoewignjo who were pro-Dutch, the presence of Westerners in Indonesia had a positive impact. But for people who were against the Dutch and who realised that they were being used by the West, they would rebel and fight to break free from the Dutch grip.

### Dutch Stereotypes of Natives

Stereotypes are concepts relating to the nature of a group based on subjective and inaccurate prejudices. In the Dutch colonialist practice in Indonesia, they built a stereotype about the natives or inlanders as follows.

*Tapi siapa percaya kepada bangsa terjajah. Bangsa terjajah akan selalu dijajah, sebab mereka dungu, tidak punya kebanggaan apa-apa...* (Sylado, 2023: 275)

Based on this quote, there is one Dutch totok character named Rumondt who looks down on the natives because he feels his nation is better. The colonisers' perception of the colonised tended to be unfavourable; they considered the colonised to be a group of people who had less knowledge than the colonisers. Due to the lack of educational opportunities for the common people at that time, the natives easily believed the words of the colonisers. The naive nature of the natives at that time was well utilised by the colonisers. They considered themselves masters in a land that did not belong to them and looked down on the natives. The character Rumondt is one of the arrogant Dutch totok characters. The negative Dutch stereotype towards the natives can also be seen from the following quote.

*Aku yakin sifat-sifat primitive itu, karena berasal dari gen biadab, sampai abad ke-21 nanti pun masih akan terus berlanjut* (Sylado, 2023: 54)

The stereotype of the Dutch character towards the natives described in the narrative explains that the colony considers the natives not as good as their genes. The Dutch character's view of the natives as lowly shows that the Dutch are in a superior position and the natives are inferior. Despite being criticised in such a way, the natives still cannot fight back. Whether their predictions were correct or just a coincidence, in the 21st century there are still many cases of immorality and sexual harassment experienced by indigenous women committed by indigenous figures as well.

*"Coba saja pikir, mereka memiliki banyak sekali perkataan beaute, yaitu indah, elok, molek, permai, asri, cantik, dan lain-lain, tapi mereka tidak punya kesadaran untuk memeliharanya. Malahan mereka cenderung merusak yang indah."* (Sylado, 2023: 53-54)

One of the reasons the Dutch occupied the Dutch East Indies for three and a half centuries was that Indonesia is rich in natural resources, both biological and animal. Indonesia has no shortage of beautiful natural attractions, but its people have not realised that. In addition, the Indonesian people who were still less educated at that time did not have the knowledge to develop what was around them. Some people in the past have not realised the natural potential in their area. The Dutch, who realised this, took the opportunity of the ignorance of the people to collect rupiah coffers for the welfare of their government.

In addition to negative views or perceptions of the natives, the Dutch also viewed some natives positively, such as when viewing the Javanese royal family.

*"Keluarga kerajaan Jawa termasuk yang paling beradab diantara pelbagai suku di Hindia," kata Rumondt.* (Sylado, 2023: 52)

Rumondt's views on one of the tribes in Indonesia were conveyed to Rob when he wanted to invite him to the Dutch East Indies. The royal family, especially in Java, has manners and *unggah-ungguh* that must be followed by the royal family. *Adab* and *unggah-ungguh* are manners, politeness in accordance with social status. Westerners call it manner, but *adab* and *unggah-ungguh* are more specific. *Adab* and *unggah-ungguh* are demanding rules that must be carried out by the royal family. So, in acting and speaking, they cannot be careless like commoners in general.

During colonialism, the Dutch people living in the Dutch East Indies were not all pro-Netherlands. But there were some who were pro-native, such as the character Kluyver.

*“Kami menganggap ciri-ciri modern abad ke-20 ini adalah nonkooperatif. Kami lihat ada seorang mahasiswa Bandoeng Technische Hoogeschool, namanya Soekarno yang menunjukkan sikap-sikap ke arah itu”* (Sylado, 2023: 172)

According to Kluyver, seeing the persistence and enthusiasm of young people like Soekarno, Indonesia would soon be able to break away from Dutch pressure. Kluyver was one of the Dutch people who was pro-native, seeing from the struggle and that there were young people who began to be intellectually literate, he was sure that Indonesia could break away. Not that he did not support the vision and mission of his country, but he saw for himself how his people caused misery with the regulations made. Even these regulations tend to harm the natives and only benefit the nation.

### Discrimination against Natives

The colonisation that Indonesia experienced had a lot of impact on the natives. Many things were experienced by the natives during the Dutch colonialism: discrimination, concubinage, prostitution, forced labour, and so on. Discrimination can also be caused by various stereotypes. Indigenous people, or what the Dutch used to call *inlanders*, experienced discrimination in the form of skin colour discrimination and social strata in society. The novel *Parijs Van Java* also mentions the following.

*AbA hanya bisa mengantar sampai didepan Gedung. Dia membaca tulisan didepan Gedung yang berbunyi ‘verboden voor honden en inlander- terlarang untuk anjing dan pribumi’* (Sylado, 2023: 221)

Not only the relationship between the people, but also the buildings are differentiated between the Dutch and the natives. The class gap during the practice of colonialism was felt by the natives. As in the quote, there are places that prohibit natives from entering, one example is the *Societeit Concordia Building*, which is now *Gedung Merdeka*. At that time the building was a symbol of Dutch colonial racism in Bandung. (Sylado, 2023).

Evidence of the social class differences between the Dutch and Indonesians is corroborated by the following quote,

*Ketika AbA hendak menggotong dua buah lukisan, di tangan kiri dan kanan, hendak naik di bagian depan Gedung. Seorang petugas Belanda totok serta-merta menahannya. Petugas itu menarik dengan kuat tangan AbA untuk kembali ke depan, dan di situ, tanpa mengucapkan kata-kata, dia menunjuk-nunjuk tembok yang tergantung tulisan ‘verboden voor honden en inlander.* (Sylado, 2023: 221-222)

The warning written in front of the building is indirectly used to intimidate the natives, emphasising that the natives are not worthy of even stepping on the floor of the building. They considered themselves superior, and the natives were not equal to their class. The Dutch were not all able to enter the building; only certain people could enter. Of course, people who have official permission and high social strata. The social stratification carried out by the colonial nation against the natives led to acts of racism

that divided the natives and the colonists (Yasa, via Widyawati & Andalas, 2021). Not only social strata discrimination experienced by the natives, but the natives also experience discrimination in the form of skin colour discrimination. As follows.

*Jika ada perubahan kecil rona di wajahnya, itu dikarenakan oleh ingatannya, bahwa hotel megah ini memberlakukan diskriminasi warna kulit, dan nyatanya dia sekarang sedang melihat AbA di sini dibawa oleh Rob. (Sylado, 2023: 262)*

Discrimination is often practised in the colonialism of western nations against eastern nations. Not only in the Dutch East Indies, which was colonised for 3.5 centuries by the West, namely the Netherlands. The Dutch consider white-skinned Westerners to be better than Easterners who have darker skin tones. The difference in skin colour is a marker of the people; it can be seen clearly that westerners must have lighter skin than easterners, who have darker skin tones. This happens because of differences in genes. In a study conducted by Shokhan Mohammed Fatah entitled “*Race Defamation: A Postcolonial Reading of Derek Walcott’s Dream on Monkey Mountain*”. He highlighted the pain of Black people who were discriminated against by white people.

*Dengan congkak, sambil berkacak pinggang, Rumondt memandang rendah Bloom, sikap yang rata-rata melengket dalam diri orang Belanda totok terhadap Belanda-peranakan atau Indo. (Sylado, 2023: 153)*

Not only against inlanders or natives, discrimination is often experienced by Dutch girls, formerly called Indo. The Dutch consider Indo to be a different class from them even though they were born to a Dutchman. The blood that flows in Indo is considered impure, so they still consider their position unequal. During the three-and-a-half centuries of Dutch colonialism in Indonesia, social discrimination became daily fodder for the natives. The assumption that the colonisers were better than the colonised, that the West was better than the East, and that the whites were better than the Blacks became Dutch thinking for generations. So that discrimination always runs for generations. The discrimination found also concerns clothing or appearance. As follows.

*Di Hindia-Belanda ini memang banyak anak-anak muda yang berilusi, berpenampilan eksentrik, aneh, gila, supaya dianggap berhikmah pengetahuan. (Sylado, 2023: 275)*

The colonists are famous for their fashionable and modern European-style dressing style. Compared to the dressing style of indigenous people, colonies are much neater and classier. The Dutch, for example, are very concerned about their appearance wherever and whatever the occasion. For example, Dutch men and men at that time who used shirts and suits when working, not only on certain occasions. As well as women, they use typical dresses. This is in stark contrast to the indigenous appearance, which is limited due to limitations.

## Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that stereotypes can be carried out by natives, not only by the colonisers. Stereotypes arise from the practice of colonialism carried out in Indonesia. The stereotypes found in the novel *Parijs Van Java* are negative and positive stereotypes towards fellow natives and negative and positive stereotypes of the Dutch towards natives. Stereotypes that are carried out can have other impacts on natives, namely discrimination. In the novel, the forms of discrimination against natives found are social strata discrimination, skin colour discrimination, and clothing discrimination. The discrimination that occurs is described in the discrimination experienced by AbA, where he experiences social strata and skin colour discrimination. Social strata are very much taken

into account by the colonisers during the practice of colonialism. The difference in skin colour between the colonisers and natives can be seen clearly because of the striking difference in colour tones. Also, differences in taste in clothing and appearance often make natives experience discrimination.

### **Suggestion**

The following suggestions can be used as input for future research that can be done.

1. The main focus of this study is stereotypes and discrimination against indigenous characters in Remy Sylado's novel *Parijs Van Java: Blood, Sweat, and Tears* with postcolonial theory so that it can be combined with different topics or use other theories to enrich research in the field of literature.
2. Research related to the form of stereotypes and discrimination against Indigenous characters in Remy Sylado's novel *Parijs Van Java: Blood, Sweat, and Tears* can still be developed further with a different perspective.

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