

The Representation of American Society in the New Order's Literary Works: A Postcolonial Studies

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates how American society is represented in two Indonesian prose of the New Order era, Umar Kayam's *Seribu Kunang-Kunang di Manhattan* (1972) and Budi Darma's *Orang-Orang Bloomington* (1980). Both stories tell about the life of the Americans in the 1960s-70s. This paper employs Stuart Hall's concept of representation and Hasan Hanafi's Occidentalism to see how the East inversely constructs the image of the West. Besides, this paper accommodates the intersection of racial issues with gender and class. As for methodology, Martin Suryajaya's 'broad-close-deep' reading is applied as the literary criticism approach. On that account, this paper focuses on textual and contextual analysis by bringing biographies, historical books, and archives as supporting data. This paper unearths several findings: 1) American society as mysterious being and foreign to the East; 2) American men and women as patriarchist; and 3) American working-lower class as less civilized and apolitical. Such representations of America arise from the authors' involvement in the dynamic of the cultural Cold War: 1) the rise of Umar Kayam dan Budi Darma as national-caliber authors cannot be separated from their ideologies that fit, or at least do not conflict with, the ideology of the New Order that resonated the capitalist bloc's liberalism and anti-communism; 2) although both authors had a closer relationship with the US, their works do not reflect total support for the West's ideology. On the one hand, they support individual freedom and democracy, but on the other hand, they expose the wretchedness of modern life in America.

Keywords: American, Cold War, New Order's Prose, Occidentalism, Representation

