NEW SCHOLARS FORUM

THE COLONIAL DOUBLING, OR THE CHALLENGE FOR COLONIAL AUTHORITY

Yohanes Hartadi
Atma Jaya Catholic University, Indonesia
yohanes.hartadi@atmajaya.ac.id

Abstract
This essay discusses R.M. Minke's (partial) presence in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's The Buru Quartet. The quartet starts with signs exhibiting the triumph of Western colonialism in the Dutch East Indies. The Western-educated Minke acknowledges the superiority of Western science and technology. He writes in Dutch, the signifier of the colonial authority. This essay examines Minke's adoption of Western culture and the colonial representation where his (partial) presence challenges the authority of colonial discourse. Framed within Bhabha's theory of hybridity, this essay will find out how the colonial discourse is always in the state of splitting which menaces the colonial authority.

Keywords
hybridity, Indonesian literature, nationalism, postcolonial novel

About the author
Yohanes Hartadi obtained his Honours in English Literature from Sanata Dharma University in Indonesia, his Postgraduate Diploma in English and MA in English from University of Melbourne in Australia. He was a recipient of The Australian Development Scholarship. He is presently part of the staff of the English Department of Atma Jaya Catholic University in Jakarta, Indonesia.

INTRODUCTION

Pramoedya composed The Buru Quartet when he was imprisoned in the Buru Island, denied of paper and pen. The quartet, comprising This Earth of Mankind, Child of All Nations, Footsteps, and House of Glass, has captured international acclaims. The quartet, as well as Pramoedya’s other novels alike, have been subjects of academic reading in universities around the world. Minke the protagonist in the quartet is a young, Dutch-educated author who turns to journalism in which he voices the calls for Indonesian nationalism. The academic discussions on the quartet mainly concern the awakening of nationalism at the turn of the twentieth century. The issue of colonialism in Pramoedya’s novels cannot be separated from his personal experience and commitment in the revolution. As revealed in a conversation with Matthew Rothschild, he writes the quartet in the spirit of anti-colonial since he was socialized from childhood to be anti-colonial. He highlights the importance
of his father’s upbringing as a non-cooperator. Writing the novel using the Indonesian language, Pramoedya claims to take efforts in nation-building. Language is a bond that unites Indonesians who come from numerous ethnic and sub-ethnic groups (Rothschild 3). This statement supports Jameson’s thesis on third-world literature: he argues that all third-world texts are necessarily allegorical. They are to be read as “national allegories” although their forms develop out of predominantly western machineries of representation such as the novel (545). In Minke’s case, it is his writings in the newspapers and magazines.

Critics have received the quartet as postcolonial literature. Like what Pramoedya says to Rothschild, Rajeev Patke asserts that Minke is the focal point for the growth of nationalist opposition to colonial rule. He first learns to modernize his approach to his own society and its outmoded conventions of thought, belief, and practice. He then learns to politicize resistance to colonialism. Patke approaches the quartet in a modernist fashion through which he finds that Minke faces a double irony repeated throughout the colonial world—the modern hero learns to ask for self-rule from the European nation who denies him access to the freedom it cherishes for itself (Patke 8). Keith Foulcher who studies Pramoedya’s early works also finds that these works are laden with themes of postcolonial transitions. Signals of turning point are articulated in the discussion of locality, such as how to create Indonesian persons and give color and structure to their life (Foulcher 17).

Still viewing the quartet in the postcolonial gesture, this essay will discuss Minke’s identity as a colonial doubling that is the result of Western colonial education whose effort is to produce beneficial indigenous people loyal to the colonial ruler. This process turns out to be problematic because it creates a double, rather than a loyal colonial subject as expected. Minke himself undergoes hardship and strong criticisms from his own people. This essay will approach the quartet within Homi K. Bhabha’s theory of hybridity which will be discussed in the following section.

**Bhabha’s Theory of Hybridity**

In his essay “Signs Taken for Wonders: Questions of Ambivalence and Authority Under a Tree Outside Delhi, May 1817,” Bhabha quotes writings of Robert Southey and Anund Messeh, the latter being one of the earliest Indian catechists. From their writings, Bhabha proposes the idea of authority upon the indigenous people’s reception of a new European text—an English book and English Bible—which they mistranslate, misread, and misinterpret. Bhabha says that these texts are written with authority and they are
meant to carry a civilizing mission. They suggest the triumph of the colonialist moment in early English Evangelism and modern English literature. However, the discovery of the book in the wild is a repetition and a distortion. As a signifier of authority, the English texts acquire its meaning after the traumatic scenario of colonial difference, cultural or racial, returns the eye of power to some prior, archaic image or identity. Paradoxically, however, such an image can neither be “original” —by virtue of the act of repetition that constructs it—nor “identical”—by virtue of the difference that defines it. Therefore, Bhabha asserts, the colonial presence is always ambivalent, split between its appearance as original and authoritative and its articulation as repetition and difference (9). It is a disjunction produced within the act of enunciation as a specifically colonial articulation of those two disproportionate sites of colonial discourse and power: the colonial scene as the invention of historicity, mastery, or as the “other scene” of displacement and “open textuality.” Its discriminatory effects are visible in the split subjects of the racist stereotype such as the simian Negro which ambivalently fix identity as the fantasy of difference (9).

Bhabha further points out that the exercise of colonialist authority requires the production of differentiations, individuations, identity effects through which discriminatory practices can map out subject populations that are tarred with the visible and transparent mark of power. Colonial authority requires modes of discrimination (cultural, racial, administrative…) that disallow a stable unitary assumption of collectivity. The “part” (which must be the colonialist foreign body) must be representative of the “whole” (conquered country), but the right of representation is based on its radical difference (13-4).

To this point, Bhabha suggests a necessity for a theory of “hybridization” of discourse and power. In this theory, he argues that the discriminatory effects of the discourse of cultural colonialism, for instance, do not simply or singly refer to a “person,” or a dialectical power struggle between self and other, or to discrimination between mother culture and alien cultures. Produced through the strategy of disavowal, the reference of discrimination is always to a process of splitting as the condition of subjection: a discrimination between the mother culture and its bastards, the self and its doubles, where the trace of what is disavowed is not repressed but repeated as something different—a mutation, a hybrid (14). It is such a partial and double force that is more than the mimetic but less than the symbolic, that disturbs the visibility of the colonial presence and makes the recognition of its authority problematic. Hybridity is the sign of the productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities; it is the name for the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal (that is, the production of discriminatory
identities that secure the “pure” and original identity of authority). Hybridity is the revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity effects. It unsettles the mimetic or narcissistic demands of colonial power but reimplicates its identifications in strategies of subversion that turn the gaze of the discriminated back upon the eye of power (15).

Bhabha argues that the crucial moments in English texts mark the disturbance of its authoritative representations by the uncanny forces of race, sexuality, violence, cultural, and even climatic differences which emerge in the colonial discourse as the mixed and split texts of hybridity (17). Bhabha thereby wants us to see cultural identity as not in a bipolarity but as something that emerges in a contradictory and ambivalent space, which for Bhabha makes the claim to a hierarchical “purity” of cultures untenable (Ashcroft et al. 118). Hybridity is not a third term that resolves the tension between two cultures in a dialectical play of “recognition.” The displacement from symbol to sign creates a crisis for any concept of authority based on a system of recognition: colonial specularity, double inscribed, does not produce a mirror where the self apprehends itself; it is always the split screen of the self and its doubling, the hybrid. Hybridity is a problematic of colonial representation and individuation that reverses the effects of the colonialist disavowal, so that other “denied” knowledges enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority—its rules of recognition (Bhabha 18). In this light, we will see in the following section how Minke struggles in the third space which somehow alienates him from the colonial identity and his own cultural root.

MINKE AND THE DUTCH COLONIAL EDUCATION

The first installment of the quartet Bumi Manusia (This Earth of Mankind) opens with various symbols of European modernity. As a young man, Minke admires the advances of technology signified by printing, particularly zincography which enables one to multiply a photograph. He admires the invention of train alike. He also identifies a sign of globalization with the invention of telegraph which connects people in different parts of the world. He takes pride in being a student of Dutch school and starts to feel that he has changed into a modern man amid the traditional Javanese society. Being an HBS student, Minke thinks about a bright future in the Dutch government office in the East Indies. He entirely believes in Europe’s superior knowledge:
Your teachers have given you a very broad general knowledge, much broader than that received by students of the same level in many of the European countries. Naturally this breast of mine swelled. I’d never been to Europe so I did not know if the director was telling the truth or not. But because it pleased me, I decided to believe it. And, further, all my teachers had been born and educated in Europe. It didn’t feel right to distrust my teachers. (Toer, *This Earth of Mankind* 11)

Minke is a highly privileged person in his age: son of a *bupati* or a regent and he is the only indigenous student who is admitted in HBS (Hoogere Burger School, a high school for Dutch young people, a five-year course of study). This could possibly be the reason that has irritated his Dutch teacher that he called him Minke (probably a euphemism for “monkey”).

The history of Dutch school in the Indies dates back to 1842 when the *Delftshsche Academie* was founded in Delft, the Netherlands, as the center for Indology and the place for the education of candidates for service in the Dutch East Indies government. It was also hoped that afterwards these would initiate improvements for education in the Indies. After 1848, the Indies government itself became more serious about offering educational opportunities to Indonesians, instead of handing schooling over to others, including missionaries. This endeavor was parallel to the *Gouvernements-cultures* program or, as it was more familiarly known, *cultuurstelsel*, which needed services of educated indigenous people. So after 1848, there were various new decisions to expand school opportunities for Indonesians, including organizing of teacher-training facilities. However, by and large, the decisions were based more upon the needs of the indigenous society (Aritonang 6).

The new policy taken in 1863 by Fransen van de Putte, the Minister for Colonies, encouraged the mobilization of government funds for education without requiring the financial support of the indigenous community, and was a reflection of the politics of liberal education. Here it is evident that the government-sponsored education was no longer directed towards the production of governmental employees, but was directed towards the aim of developing indigenous communities. As a result, the total number of schools increased rapidly, especially in Java (Aritonang 7).

During the years of transition to the twentieth century, a new political concept was born, usually known as “Ethical Policy,” which was paired with the concept of a “policy of association” under the slogan of “education, irrigation, and emigration.” Leaders involved were from the Liberal Party and included C. Th. van Deventer, C. Snouck Hurgronje,
and from the field of education, J. H. Abendanon in particular. In the main, this concept’s reasoning was that since for years the Dutch increased their wealth through exploitation of the indigenous peoples of the Indies causing the latter to become increasingly poor, now the Dutch had a moral obligation to them. The time had come for endeavoring to repay this debt in as large an amount as possible in the form of improving the general welfare of the indigenous people of the Indies. The “Ethical Policy” essentially not only involved social and economic responsibilities, but ethical and moral ones as well. One key step of embodying the ideals of the ethical policy was providing the most extensive opportunities to Indonesian pupils to profit from modern western education so they could develop as competent persons who can cultivate the natural and indigenous human resources. Furthermore, if possible, a large number would be sent to study in the Netherlands. This meant that western education and science would be related as much as possible to the life and culture of the Indonesians. Therefore this was called the policy of association, especially by Snouck Hurgronje. But what was really intended was westernization, more of a kind of spiritual annexation of Indonesian society (Aritonang 12). This is quite similar to what Bhabha theorizes as “mimicry”—that is, a desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite (2).

In Indian context, this is parallel to Macaulay’s conception of the need for English-instructing Indians in the British India. In his essay “Minutes on Indian Education,” Macaulay emphasizes the urgent need to produce an indigenous class who can assist the British colonial government in running the administration in India:

We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and color, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect. (Macaulay 10)

For the elite of that period, the children of the Javanese aristocracy (priyayi), this policy was much welcome because they could preserve their social status. Minke knows this well. He trusts his teacher Magda Peters, ostensibly a liberal person, who says that having a Dutch education he will rise onto the same status as the white Dutch people. And yet this is another form of imperialism, a hidden one, and Minke is not aware of it. In the first novel, Sarah de la Croix, the daughter of Herbert de la Croix, the Assistant Resident of B., tells Minke about Hurgronje’s association theory:
Association theory means direct cooperation, based on European ways, between European officials and educated natives. Those of you who have advanced would be invited to join together with us in governing the Indies. So the responsibility would no longer be the burden of the white race alone. The bupatis could cooperate directly with the white government. (Toer, *This Earth of Mankind* 216)

In essence, Hurgronje’s association theory is a covert politics of co-optation. Minke is not convinced by Sarah’s explanation of the theory. He does not have a slight suspicion about this theory. Sarah, as well as her sister Miriam de la Croix, seems to believe in the truth of the theory:

The important thing is that he has undertaken a valuable experiment with three native youths. The purpose: to find out if natives are able truly to understand and bring to life within themselves European learning and science. The three students are going to a European school. He interviews them every week to try to find out if there is any change in their inner character and whether their scientific knowledge and learning from school is only a thin, dry, easily shattered coating on the surface, or something that has really taken root. (Toer, *This Earth of Mankind* 215)

Hurgronje was the architect behind the success of General van Heutz in overcoming the rebellions of the Aceh people. Miriam describes Hurgronje as a brilliant scholar, one who has courage to think, to act, and jeopardize himself for the advancement of knowledge; this includes his crucial role in placing the Dutch in the upper hand in the Aceh War (Toer, *This Earth of Mankind* 215).

**MINKE AS THE COLONIAL DOUBLING**

Minke is a brilliant HBS student. However, he is already indoctrinated by his teacher Magda Peters about the superiority of Europe. The first novel of the quartet describes the success of Hurgronje’s project of “civilizing” the indigenous Javanese. Minke feels optimistic about his future career as a Dutch colonial bureaucrat. On the other hand, Sarah and Miriam find it extraordinary to find an indigenous young man in HBS. Minke looks
like a part of Hurgronje’s project. Indeed, the first novel demonstrates the positive result of it. When he is summoned by the Regent of B. and must do *sembah* in front of him, he feels awkward to do the proper ceremonial etiquette. He has changed into a very different person, no more like a native Javanese:

What’s the benefit of learning European knowledge, socialize with Europeans, if finally I have to crawl slowly like a snail and worship a little king, who is probably illiterate?... I worship like what the officials do to my grandfather and grandmother and my parents, at *lebaran* day...When I am worshipping it feels like all knowledge I have learned in the past few years disappears. Gone is the beautiful world as promised by the progress of knowledge. Gone is the enthusiasm of my teachers in welcoming the bright future for mankind. And I don’t know how many more worships I should do in the future. Worship—a glorification of the ancestors and the elite through self-humility! Flat on the ground if possible! (Toer, *This Earth of Mankind* 179-82)

Minke’s hybridity is confirmed by his mother’s judgment of him. She said, “You are no longer a Javanese. Dutch-educated and becoming Dutch, a dark-skinned Dutch like this. You probably have converted to Christianity too” (Toer, *This Earth of Mankind* 193). She finds that her son has lost his Javanese manner as well when Minke speaks his disagreement with his mother’s judgment: “That is a sign that you are no longer a Javanese, disrespecting the older person, and think you deserve honor and power” (Toer, *This Earth of Mankind* 193).

Responding to his mother’s judgment that he has forgotten Javanese poetry, Minke says that he still reads Javanese epics. However, he strongly argues that these poets are wrong in teaching people to be defeated and trampled on. Minke has moved far from his origin, the Javanese people and the Javanese culture. His parents repudiate his modern attitudes and manners.

The influence of Dutch education is also shown in his writing activity. Minke has developed a talent in writing. He writes short stories and publishes articles in newspapers. He writes in Dutch. Dutch is his instruction language. This separates him further from his root. Minke has already been shaped by Dutch language. His best friend Jean Marais, a Frenchman who takes the side of the indigenous people in the Indies, feels sorry for him because he writes in Dutch and only the Dutch understand his writings. He demands that Minke write in Malay as the *lingua franca* in the Indies so that more people learn insights
from his writings. Minke is offended. He realizes that his character is inseparable from his writing, and his writing is inseparable from Dutch. He thinks that “My individuality could not be separated from the Dutch language. To separate these would only make this person named Minke nothing better than roadside rubbish” (Toer, *This Earth of Mankind* 72).

The Dutch language has shaped Minke’s character and this is the purpose of colonial education of the indigenous elite. The hegemonic colonial education successfully co-opted Minke’s mindset. African postcolonial critic Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o argues that the real aim of colonialism is to control the people’s wealth. Economic and political control can never be complete or effective without mental control. To control people’s culture is to control their tools of self-definition in relationship to others. The domination of a people’s language by the languages of the colonizing nations is crucial to the domination of the mental universe of the colonized. The domination of the colonial language can never break the native languages as spoken. Therefore, Thiong’o argues, the most effective area of domination is the written (Thiong’o 525). Minke has crystallized the Dutch manners and the taste. Not even his parents can bring him back to his cultural root. The experience of colonial domination, Amilcar Cabral asserts, shows that the colonizer not only creates a whole system of repression of cultural life of the colonized people, but also provokes and develops the cultural alienation of a part of the population, either by supposed assimilation of indigenous persons, or by the creation of a social gulf between the aboriginal [indigenous] elites and the mass of the people (Cabral 477). As a consequence, some indigenous people regard themselves as culturally superior to the people to which they belong and whose cultural values they ignore or despise.

In the second novel, *Child of All Nations*, Minke belongs to the elite class who are alienated from the rest of the colonized. What makes it intriguing is that Minke turns out to keep all his privileges as a descendant of *bupati*. He keeps enjoying his privileges as a *priyayi*, the Javanese aristocrat. Recognizing himself as a man inspired by the spirit of enlightenment and the French Revolution, it turns out that he fails to liberate himself from his aristocratic rights when Trunodongso, a poor peasant in Tulangan, speaks to him in *Jawa ngoko* (low Javanese). He confesses that the spirit and the ideas of the French Revolution have not inspired his attitudes in his daily life. They are only decorations in his mind. His conscience says that he demands Trunodongso to speak in *Jawa kromo* (high Javanese) to him due to his social standing as a *Raden Mas*. Minke’s conscience cannot escape the fact that he is cheating. He ignores the slogan of Liberté, Égalité and Fraternité in favor of his own royal rights (Toer, *Child of All Nations* 186-7).
MINKE’S RECONVERSION: A MENACE TO THE COLONIZER

Minke begins to be aware of his problematic identity after his defeat in the colonial court. Minke is married to Annelies, the daughter of Herman Mellema and his mistress Nyai Ontosoroh. Under the consent of Nyai Ontosoroh, Minke is married to the *indo* girl (an Indisch creole) in the Islamic law. The ordeal in the family starts when Maurits Mellema comes from the Netherlands and demands his father’s property. Maurits is Herman’s son from his legitimate wife in the Netherlands, Amelia Mellema-Hammers, so he possesses rights to Herman’s property including the right to be Annelies’s trustee.

As the legal dispute between Nyai Ontosoroh and Minke against Maurits is progressing, the trial turns into a theater of racial contest: the white against the indigenous. The prosecutor humiliates Minke and Nyai Ontosoroh in front of the public by disclosing his private visits to Annelies. The prosecutor and the judge raise the racial issue regarding the relationship of Annelies being an *indo* and Minke a native Javanese. According to Dutch law, an *indo* occupies higher status than any native. Therefore, any relationship between an *indo* and a native is a crime. The Amsterdam Court finally decides to give most of Herman’s property to Maurits. The Court also appoints Maurits the trustee of Annelies considering her immature age. The marital bond between Annelies and Minke is annulled since the colonial court does not acknowledge Islamic marriage. Minke is now aware of the politics of identity in the colonial law. The theater of the court has demonstrated the shallowness of the occupying power. Even the *forum privilegium*, rights of the *priyayi* cannot save him in the colonial court. Worse still, the court annuls the privilege. In *Child of All Nations*, Minke listens to Nyai Ontosoroh who concludes that the colonizer has stolen their possession and taking someone’s possession without permission is a form of theft. It is not right and it must be opposed. In their case, she says, they have stolen their freedom. Minke thinks that these are the lessons that he had never learned in the Dutch school or in books (Toer, *Child of All Nations* 15).

At this point, it will be beneficial to look at the theory of Martinian postcolonial critic Frantz Fanon concerning the works of indigenous writers. Fanon argues that the progress of the evolution of the indigenous writers can be divided into three phases. The first phase is when the indigenous intellectual gives proof that he has assimilated the culture of the colonial power. In the second phase, the indigenous is disturbed, he decides to remember what he is. Since the native is not a part of his people, since he only has exterior relations with his people, he is content to recall their life only. In the third phase, which Fanon calls the fighting phase, the indigenous, after having tried to lose himself in the people and with
the people, will on the contrary shake the people. He turns himself into an awakener of the people (Fanon 453).

Seeing Minke through Fanon’s theory, he is now stepping into the third phase. At the beginning of Child of All Nations, Minke has declared discontinuity from his confusing identity. By this time, Minke continues his informal education. Under the auspices of his French friend Jean Marais, Minke meets Kommer. Kommer is editor-in-chief of a newspaper in Surabaya. From him, Minke learns the role an indigenous intellectual is supposed to play. Kommer suggests that Minke write in Malay because the language is understood and read in every town, big and small, throughout the Indies while Dutch is not. Kommer strongly points out to him that Malay is the language of his own people and writing in the language is as sign of his love for his country and his people (Toer, Child of All Nations 111). Kommer’s suggestion stirs his consciousness. He wants to know his own people from whom he has been separated. His encounter with Trunodongso in Tulangan is his first experience of dealing with the real circumstances of the colonized. So far he knows his own people from a pamphlet written by a Dutch scholar. The encounter has opened Minke’s eyes to the suffering of his own people. Minke feels as if he has made an important discovery (Toer, Child of All Nations 168). In contrast to his pride as an HBS student taught by Dutch teachers, he is now aware that there is so much knowledge he does not get from the Dutch school. He begins to doubt the Dutch education he has received when he knows that he also needs to learn from many other nations on earth (Toer, Child of All Nations 169).

Minke learns an important lesson from his second wife Mei who is a member of a clandestine nationalist organization in China. In the third novel, Footsteps, Mei tells him that there have been so many Europeans who have caused so much suffering in the world—for instance, Sir John Hawkins, the Englishman who pioneered the slave trade between Africa and America—and Minke acknowledges that he has never come across such stories before. He has never heard it from anyone or read it anywhere, in school or elsewhere (Toer, Footsteps 110). It has become evident that Minke doubts his education in Dutch school. He develops suspicion that he has become part of Hurgronje’s project of educating the indigenous people for a colonial cause. Minke questions the authority of the Dutch colonial discourse in which he had been educated.

After Mei’s death, Minke has an audience with bupati Serang who is well known in educated circles as a student of Hurgronje. He wishes to invite him to an organization meeting. This bupati is the student Miriam de la Croix told him about a long time ago, the boy Hurgronje had used as a guinea pig in his experiment. Minke anticipates this person to be a modern man since he is also western-educated. Minke hopes to have an open and
frank discussion. Unfortunately, the person he comes to see is a good product of colonial education. The *bupati* is very proud and feudalistic (Toer, *Footsteps* 183). Minke finds out that Hurgronje has been successful in producing an elite that bridges the interest of the Dutch government and the indigenous people. *Bupati* Serang thinks only of his own status and the interest of the colonial government. He has completely dismissed the idea of nationalism from his mind. He serves only the colonial government.

Minke’s real act to realize his nationalist idea is by founding *Sarekat Priyayi* with his fellow indigenous intellectuals and elites. The second one is by founding a weekly, *Medan* (meaning “arena”). It is owned and operated by the Natives—not by the Dutch, not by the Chinese or any other newcomers (Toer, *Footsteps* 193-6). About two years later, Minke is involved in founding *Boedi Oetomo*, a nationalist organization whose members are exclusively Javanese. However, Minke denounces his own status as *priyayi* who normally would work for the colonial government as employees, wage addicts, slaves (Toer, *Footsteps* 255). He has fully awakened his nationalist consciousness. His experience in nationalist movement is later enriched by joining the *Sarekat Dagang Islamijah* (SDI, Islamic Traders’ Union) which turns out to grow more widely than the other nationalist organizations. From these real experiences, Minke comes in the front as one of the most important pioneers of the nationalist movement in the Indies.

*Medan* has reached more readers in the Indies. The mission of the weekly is to educate the indigenous people. Its circulation keeps on increasing. Since the weekly enlightens its readers, they become very loyal, clever, and critical, rich in experience and full of interesting suggestions. The magazine is also warmly welcomed among teachers and schools. It publishes diverse experiences and theories of educationists from around the world which give teachers an idea of how the advanced peoples had been molded and how they had molded themselves, how the younger generation are being made aware of the nation’s concerns and the problems and challenges of the future, and many other issues regarding the implementation of science in and out of school (Toer, *Footsteps* 357).

Being the editor-in-chief of *Medan* with his fierce writings on nationalism and a leader of the fast-growing SDI, Minke invites oppositions and suspicion from groups attached to the colonial regime. One is *De Knijpers* (The Pincers), a gang of *indos*. They threaten Minke and other active members of SDI, demanding that all activities in the organization be stopped. The motive for their violent activities is not only a racial issue—the *indos* regard themselves as higher in social status than the indigenous people due to their European blood—but also an economic issue. They are hired by the Europeans who run plantations in Java to ensure that no one but Europeans will have success in major
businesses. Fightings occur frequently and in every fighting only the indigenous people get arrested. *De Knijpers* are active throughout West Java and Batavia (Toer, *Footsteps* 369). The colonial government colludes with this gang to crush the nationalists in order to protect their resources and capital.

In the last novel, *Rumah Kaca* (*House of Glass*), members of *De Knijpers* assist Pangemanann in watching Minke’s political activities. Jacques Pangemanann, a high-rank officer in the Dutch Indies police department, is Sorbonne-educated. He proposes a constant mechanism of surveillance over Minke. Pangemanann operates the colonial panopticon through an administration of archives. He collects and organizes newspapers and magazines published in the Indies, conducts interviews, studies documents, and writes a working paper to recommend a solution to the turbulent years (Toer, *House of Glass* 9). The outcry of nationalism from China and the Philippines cannot be resisted. It makes the new Governor General Idenburg feel worried. Pangemanann, as the think tank of the colonial police, has to bear the burden of inventing a good way of silencing the nationalist movement. The educated indigenous activists write widely in newspapers and magazines in their vernacular languages. As a result, the problems of colonization are disclosed to the public. Newspapers and magazines have fostered the spirit of democracy, which the colonial government abhors (Toer, *House of Glass* 8). For this reason, Minke occupies the top of the surveillance list. Knowledge drawn from a comprehensive archive finally leads to Minke’s arrest.

Upon Minke’s exile to Ternate Maluku, Pangemanann who is responsible for the corrective measure reads a report which explains Minke’s cultural identity. It reads that the Dutch teach the indigenous people reading and writing not to stand up against Europe. They pose a threat to the government because they spread chaos in the Indies. High education only leads indigenous people to exile like Minke (Toer, *House of Glass* 186).

Pangemanann’s contemplation reveals the ambivalence of the colonial discourse. He thinks that colonial Europe argues that everything they do to the colonized is always better than what the indigenous leaders do. Whatever colonial Europe does is always motivated by the holy call for “civilizing” the indigenous people who live in the darkness. However, this motive often justifies the means (Toer, *House of Glass* 98). His conclusion is similar to Minke’s earlier “discovery” after his defeat in the colonial court.

CONCLUSION

Minke’s long odyssey to the nationalist consciousness is through several paths.
The first one is the colonial education that he had in HBS and STOVIA. He used to be proud of his Dutch education because it is a privilege for indigenous people during his time. Nevertheless, he is sundered further from his own people. He has left his traditional culture which makes him alienated among the colonized Javanese. He has become a colonial doubling that is neither fully accepted by the colonized nor accepted by his indigenous fellows because he does not know the real condition of his people. The defeat in the court is the beginning of Minke’s doubt of the spirit of enlightenment that colonial education teaches. He has been denied his royal privileges. He understands that he is only a colonial doubling who will never be “present” in the colonial discourse. Minke starts to question the authority of the Dutch colonial discourse that for years has shaped his identity.

After he shifts from writing short stories to journalism, he becomes conscious of his duty to enlighten his fellow indigenous communities and know their situation well. Minke learns from Kommer and Jean Marais about the urgency of writing in Malay in order to reach wider readership and educate his people. His nationalism is sharpened when he gets connected with other indigenous intellectuals with whom he founds several nationalist organizations such as Sarekat Priyayi, Boedi Oetomo, and SDI. The hard-knocks have turned Minke from a proud Dutch educated young man into a reconverted colonial subject who interrogates the authority of the colonial discourse. Minke as a colonial doubling poses a threat to the colonizer through similar strategies he learns from them: writing and modern organization. However, these strategies have been “(mis)translated” into a different form.
WORKS CITED


