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## The Effects of Colonialism toward the Timorese as depicted in Nesi's *Orang-Orang Oetimu*

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### Abstract

*This research scrutinizes the effects of colonialism toward the Timorese in Oetimu as depicted in the novel of Orang-Orang Oetimu by Felix K. Nesi. From the perspective of postcolonial criticism, the combination of the invasion of the Portuguese, Japanese, and Indonesian in East Timor leaves changes in social structure and relations among the Timorese. This study aims to unveil from postcolonial view, especially Said, Gandhi, Foulcer and Day, the destructive cultural and social effect, clash of local parties, and hidden colonial power which still exists in the Timorese society. Colonialism in East Timor operated by Portuguese, Japan, and Indonesia brought about physical, social, and cultural conflicts. Portuguese colonialism impacted on the socio-political friction among Timorese and destructive vanishing of their culture. Japanese colonialism left trauma amongst them as physical oppression was often used to have domination over the people. Indonesian invasion also resulted in horizontal conflicts amongst the Timorese. Violence and corrupt culture became new perspective in solving the problems. Presenting the colonial conflicts and destructive cultural effects, the novel voices postcolonial discourse that the effect of colonialism can last long and its ideology of binary opposition and cultural justification of domination in the name of civilization can be reproduced.*

**Keywords:** colonial conflict; colonial effect; postcolonial discourse

### Article information

Received:  
5 November  
2021

Revised:  
11 January  
2022

Accepted:  
12 February  
2022

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### Introduction

As the mirror and reflection of the real life, literary works illustrate the interaction between men and society. Through the lens of a literary work, the readers can see the real problems which happened around us. Colonialism always becomes an interesting

issue to be discussed since it is closely related to us. Moreover, the theme of the novel, *Orang-Orang Oetimu*, is about colonialism which happens in East Timor. Kohan (2010) describes colonialism as a domination of one group towards another group. Originally from Latin word, *colonus* means colony (p. 68). Furthermore, Ayegboyin (2008) defines

colonialism as a system and an ideology. As a system, it refers to the occupation and domination towards weaker countries by stronger countries. In terms of ideology, colonialism is used to give the benefits of the system to the colonizers (p. 33).

East Timor experiences waves of invasion and colonialism from the Portuguese, British, Japanese, and Indonesian. After colonizing for three hundred years, Portuguese left East Timor to the new colonialism era. Indonesia's military invasion and the clash between the local groups later brought the unending grief to the Timorese. They were put into the oscillation to join the Fretilin, which declared East Timor Independent, or to join Indonesia. The brutal military occupation by the Republic resulted in the genocide which mostly was not captured by cameras. Indonesia, which was once colonized by the Dutch, then became a new colonizer in East Timor. In his novel, Nesi highlights the destructive cultural and social effect, clash of local parties, and hidden colonial power which still exists in the Timorese society in light and simple language.

This novel is important to be analysed because we are asked to take a look at the real problem and the effects of colonialism in East Timor. This ethnographic novel was selected because it contains a criticism and sometimes a scold towards the oppressors. In addition, the researchers were interested to deconstruct the issues raised by the writer through the lens of the Timorese. Though the author focuses on illustrating the life of the Oetimu people, the events which take place outside Oetimu have brought such great impacts to this region. Some of them are the effects of decolonization of East Timor by the Portuguese, Japan's occupation, the fall of Soeharto regime, and even the World Cup Final Match. Based on the issues mentioned above, this research puts special focus on the attempt to scrutinize the effects of colonialism in East Timor.

This issue is important to be discussed for appreciating, respecting, and maintaining the diversity of all cultures and traditions are essential. Importantly, it is also a reminder to develop future generation's empathy to understand the misery and suffering of others. Moreover, this research is also an attempt to

reveal postcolonial discourse the novel intends to propose. Postcolonial discourse is suitable to be employed for it may illuminates literary works written by the oppressed that comes from the East (Ashcroft et. al., 2002, p. 11). Though many previous studies discussed the same novel, those only highlight the issue on the binary opposition, hegemony, and deconstruction. Moreover, none problematized the destructive cultural and social effect and hidden colonial power which still exists in the Timorese society. Thus, based on the background and problem formulations above, this study puts special focus to: 1) unveil the conflicts described in the novel, 2) reveal the colonial effects which are resulted from the conflicts, and 3) find the postcolonial discourse the novel intends to propose.

Theoretically, this research can be beneficial to overview the theories on Postcolonialism, especially the problems on destructive cultural and social effect and hidden colonial power. Practically, the students of *Contemporary Literary Criticism, Prose, Indonesian Studies*, and *Thesis Writing* class can employ this research to sharpen their critical thinking in examining literary works from Postcolonialism perspective. Thirdly, it can be used as a way to educate and raise the readers' awareness that protecting and giving the oppressed opportunities to speak are essential. Furthermore, it is a reminder to develop the young generation's compassion to understand the suffering of the Timorese. The researchers also hope that the readers can be the agents who can expose that the study on postcolonial issue is essential to scrutinize, review, recall, and to interrogate the trace of colonialism. The effects of colonialism will stay even though the colonizer has left the colony. It is for the reason that colonialism is not only focus on the conquest of the territory but also on the occupation of minds, selves, and cultures. Thus, it will control the way the people live and express their thoughts.

The problem in East Timor, now officially known as Timor Leste, will always be interesting to be discussed. Moreover, there are many different perspectives which are still potential for the other authors to write. *Orang-Orang Oetimu* has invited scholarly discussions in Indonesia. The academic discussion towards

the novel does not only highlight the binary opposition or deconstruct the issue of power relation and the domination of the ruler, but also our new offer in Postcolonialism under Indonesia's authoritarian soldiers. Furthermore, the snowball effects on the military aggression are always an interesting topic to be discussed. However, the other researchers' perspective on this novel is essential as the stepping stone to start this research.

The first article written by Nurhidayah (2019), "Hegemoni Kekuasaan dalam Novel *Orang-Orang Oetimu* karya Felix K. Nesi: Kajian Sosiologi Sastra", has the similar focus to the second research. In the second research, Hildayati and Rengganis (2020) also employ Gramsci's theory to illuminate the issue on hegemony and domination. Nonetheless, Nurhidayah's research employs a theory on sociology of literature to break down the social classes in the novel. Using the theory, the researcher presents the division of the upper class (soldiers, Portuguese, police) and the lower class (the Timorese). Furthermore, she finds that the domination of power uses both persuasion and violence in dominating the lower class. While Hildayati and Rengganis (2020) in "Hegemoni Negara dalam Novel *Orang-Orang Oetimu* Karya Felix K. Nesi (Kajian Hegemoni Antonio Gramsci)", describe the forms of hegemony and the place where it is occurred.

The third research to review is by Nisak and Putra (2020) who shows how the lower social groups must live under the hegemony and the domination of religion, state, and military forces. The researchers focus on the violence presented in the novel which is investigated by using Gramsci's theory on hegemony. In line with "Bentuk Kekuasaan dalam Novel *Orang-Orang Oetimu* karya Felix K. Nesi", they find that the ruled class use both violence and persuasion to maintain its power and domination. Though the researchers discuss the social structure in *Oetimu*, they do not present enough information on the theory of binary opposition. A short description on binary opposition will help the readers to get more insights on the dualistic issue.

Another research on the same literary work is conducted by Sholikhah and Parmin (2020) in "Relasi dan Resistensi Kuasa dalam Novel *Orang-Orang Oetimu* Karya Felix K. Nesi: Kajian Kekuasaan Michel Foucault". Sholikhah and Parmin (2020) highlight the issue on power relation by using Foucault's theory. The researchers unveil the form the power resistant which focus on mind and body and the way to resist the dominant power. They put the data in tables and interpret them in description. Nevertheless, there is no clarification which shows the reason why the researchers use the items in the tables. Additionally, deeper argument and other examples will help the readers to get more insights on the research.

The last research uses Derrida's deconstruction approach in analysing the novel. Pramesti (2020) in "Kajian Dekonstruksi Novel *Orang-Orang Oetimu* Karya Felix K. Nesi" finds four forms and reversal of binary opposition. They are the hero, the state apparatus, the love for the country, and the trust the people put on the church. In this article, the researcher presents the binary opposition in order to find the irony and see how the things are actually related each other. Additionally, the researcher also asks the readers to see things carefully and critically for it may be their reversal. The real figure of the hero is not Sersan Ipi but Am Siki; the state apparatus is actually the criminal state; the state and the church do not protect and love their people but betray and hurt them.

Departing from the previous studies, the researchers propose a study which problematized colonialism in East Timor under the microscope. From five discussions, those highlight the issue on the binary opposition, hegemony, and deconstruction using Gramsci, Foucault, and Derrida. Moreover, none of them specifically problematized the destructive cultural and social effect and hidden colonial powers which still exist in the Timorese society. As a result, this investigation tries to full fill the niche that is still possible to be explored. This research employs the discourse on Postcolonialism since the novel which describes the issues in East Timor is written by a Timorese. In triggering the discussion, the previous studies are used as a guideline to

perceive all aspects which have encouraged the colonizer to conquer and dominate East Timor.

### Socio-Historical Review

East Timor's journey to independence is long and traumatic. The country has experienced three waves of colonialism era. It was occupied by the Portuguese for three hundred years, and then took over by the Japanese forces in the Second World War, and later lived under the Indonesian forces. After the Portuguese withdrew its administration in East Timor, Indonesia was afraid of the communist movement in East Timor. Using this issue, Indonesia's ruling power (New Order) took the great opportunity to claim the territory as part of the country (unification). Jakarta sent the troops and one-sidedly claimed the territory. Indonesian military invasion brutally holds back the independent movement and caused many people died. Rourke (2019) claims that 100.000 people died as the Indonesian forces crushed the armed resistance and the civilians who were kept in detention camps died in famine.

Indonesia's declaration towards the new province was opposed by the Timorese. This is for the reason that the culture of the Timorese was totally different from most culture in Indonesia. Rourke (2019) believes that the influence of Portuguese's culture resulted on a very different culture from Indonesia. Moreover, the Timorese are mostly Catholics and they have their own local language. Due to that condition, Indonesia approached the tribal leaders to get their support through patronage. Indonesia gave them high position in the new social structure where the division of the area was altered identically into the structure of Javanese civil administration (Bertrand, 2004). Consequently, this brutal invasion had invited the resistance movement from the Timorese and Fretilin party. To repress the resistance, the leader of Fretilin party, Xanana Gusmão, was later captured and imprisoned in Jakarta.

After the fall of Soeharto regime and a change of the leadership in Indonesia, the Timorese were allowed to vote in an independence ballot. However, the referendum was obstructed by the Indonesian forces by

terrorizing the citizen so that they will choose to join Indonesia.

*Indonesia-backed militia groups who had terrorised the population before the vote stepped up their attacks, aided by Indonesian security forces. A three-week campaign of violence killed 2.600 people, nearly 30.000 were displaced, and as many as 250.000 were forcibly shipped over the border to Indonesian West Timor after the ballot (Rourke, 2019).*

The integration effort has put the Timorese in suffering since the bloody attack of Indonesian forces was ordered. Many of them ran away from East Timor to the Indonesian border and some also hid in Java. The hidden motive to own the oil, the gas, and the minerals in East Timor had sacrificed women, children, and innocent people. Unfortunately, the truth about the genocide was hidden by the Indonesian government. Thus, it should be the future generations' agenda to unveil and reveal the truth of this historical event.

### Theoretical Review

Colonialism existed long before the Greeks, the Romans, the Ottomans, and the Moors invaded another territory. Modern colonialism is developed along with the innovation, industrial revolution, and the invention of the new region. Spain, Portuguese, and Dutch were the pioneers in this explorative project and later followed by Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Belgium. Economics, civilization mission, and security are factors which inspire colonialism in Africa, Asia, and South America (Mac Queen, 2007, pp. 25-44). Khapoya (2012) adds that colonialism is the civilizing mission. It is a mission to civilize the East that are seen as primitive, retarded, traditional, and uncivilized (pp. 106-107). Thus, the European, as the superior, has a holy mission to save the East.

Essentially, this civilization project is used to maintained the territories and the domination of the West. Here, the colonial administrative system, socio-economic relation, and culture of the colonized are disturbed (Khapoya, 2012, p. 125). Foulcher dan Day (2008) suggest the discourse of

postcolonialism which can be used as a strategy to criticise and identify the signs and effects of colonialism in the literary text (p. 3). On the other words, it is employed to find the effects of colonialism which will stay forever in the literary works. However, Ashcroft et. al. (2002) argue that this discourse occurs because Western theories are proportionally failed in understanding the complexity of the problem and condition presented in the literary works written by the East.

The use of Postcolonialism theory is essential to illuminate the novel which recites the aftermath of Portuguese expansion to the East Timor for more than three hundred years. Encouraged to find world's best sandalwood, Portuguese's trading agenda shifted to imperialism which ruled and dominated the region. Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin (2007) underline that European Renaissance era has altered the system and forced the colonies as suppliers of raw materials for the colonizers (p. 40). Edward Said (2003) argues that Western uses Orientalism to elongate its domination and hegemony over the East and to maintain the binary opposition of the East and the West. Based on this dogma, the colony is always seen as uneducated and needs the assistant of the master to educate them. On the other hand, the Orient is also needed to maintain Western's image thus they are always stereotyped as the weak.

Gandhi (1998) argues that colonial domination stays even though the colonial occupation ends (p. 17). In fact, Postcolonialism takes over colonial domination and its legacy (Loomba, 2005, p. 16). The love-hate relationship between the colonized and the colonizer has encouraged the colonized to imitate the colonizer's habits, values, and ideologies. Indonesia also uses mimicry to camouflage, to appropriate, and in the end to fight for the colonizer. On the other hand, living in ambivalence has encouraged the country to mimic and to feed its desire to be more authentic and similar to the colonizer. In line with Ashcroft et. al., Gandhi (1998, p. 4) claims that postcolonial discourse is a resistance from theoretical and conceptual sides towards the effects of colonialism project which mostly forgotten and hidden but actually still exist around us.

After the Portuguese left, the post-colonial region did not actually get its freedom. Indonesia, the ex-Dutch colony, took over Portuguese occupation by sending the soldiers to "save" East Timor from the unstable political condition and the rivalry of the local groups. Due to these conditions, Indonesia wanted to prevent and stop communism in its doorstep which could be spread by Fretilin followers. Additionally, the new independent country tried to "help" East Timor to be more civilized by changing its socio-economics systems, culture, education, and language. Thus, the modernization agenda has forced East Timor to live under control of other nation's domination.

This is in line with Nandy's *The Intimate Enemy* (1983) which underlines the issue on modern colonialism. By utilizing Foucault's investigation of power, he states that the new way of colonialism firstly focuses on the conquest of land and the occupation of mind, selves, and culture. Secondly, the modern colonizers are the rationalists, the liberals, and the modernists who insist that colonialism can bring civilization into the uncivilized world. Ashcroft et. al. (2007, p. 10) state that the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized is ambivalent because the colonized is not fully opposed to the colonizer. However, the similarity that is the result of imitating the colonizer has threatened them for this can blur the binary opposition (McRobbie, 2005, p. 101). Ashcroft et. al. (2007) suggest the in-between space to overcome this problem. They add that it is a strategy "to create a new non-colonial identity which is a constant process of engagement, contestation, and appropriation" (p. 117).

Faruk (2007, p. 15) claims that postcolonial theory covers three aspects. First, it is the study on a culture which was once under the European occupation and maybe is still in progress or probably has converted into neo-colonialism. Second, the next possibility exists in the resistance or counter of the colonized societies. Third, it is all forms of marginality caused by capitalism. He adds that postcolonial theory is methodologically used to expose the operations of colonial power which are hidden behind their theories, attitudes, and practices that seem to have no pretensions of colonial power (2007, p. 17). This theory also

explores the operation of power behind the practices, attitudes, and theories of a colonized society that seems to have been free and independent. In addition, this concept examines the resistance operations of the colonized society that seem obeying the colonial powers. Based on the discussion mentioned above, the researchers use the discourse on Postcolonialism to investigate the issue on the destructive cultural and social effect and hidden colonial power which still exists in the Timorese society.

## Methodology

In this study, the researchers mainly employed the method of Descriptive Qualitative which used documentation as the data collection technique. There are two sources used, namely primary and secondary sources. The primary source of this research is *Orang-Orang Oetimu* (2019) by Felix K. Nesi, a writer from East Nusa Tenggara. To support the primary source and to enrich the discussion, journals, articles, book review, as well as a short history, cultural, and socio-political condition of East Timor, are be used as the secondary data. The research has four main steps. First, the researchers found the topic, sorted the literary work, and brain stormed the raw data. In this study, the researchers aim to unveil the problem of colonialism in East Timor even after Portuguese left the island. For the reason of building nationalism in East Timor, the Timorese also experience a forced modernization to learn the language and embrace the culture of their new colonizer. Second, the researchers wrote the problem formulations after reading the novel. Then, we searched for the secondary sources and the theory. Third, we applied Ashcroft's theory and the data from the supported sources to help us in unveiling the answer of the formulated questions. The secondary data are important to see the connection between the real socio-historical context and the events illustrated in the novel. Fourth, the analysis of the novel is presented in the discussion part and closed with a conclusion. Moreover, some suggestions to the future researchers who want to analyse the same novel is also offered in the last section.

## Results and Discussion

In this part, the answers of the formulated questions are supported by using postcolonial discourse from various experts. This part is divided into three sections, namely: (1) conflicts in *Orang-Orang Oetimu*, (2) the effects of colonialism to the Timorese, and (3) postcolonial discourse proposed in the novel. The first section illustrates how the characters in the novel deal with the conflict between the Timorese and the society. In the second section, the effects of colonialism in *Orang-Orang Oetimu* are discussed further. Lastly, the researchers elaborate the postcolonial discourse the novel intends to propose.

### *Colonial Conflicts in Orang-Orang Oetimu*

According to Barnet, Burto, and Cain, (2008) a conflict is a complication which happens between a character and some obstacles. The obstacles may come both from the characters themselves and the other characters, society, or nature (p. 1586). The conflict mostly told in the novel was the external struggle pitted the men against the society. In this case, it took form in Portuguese and Japanese colonizers, a tyrannical government, systemic corruption, and hypocrite Catholic priests. Furthermore, borrowing postcolonial discourse, the researchers want to unveil various conflicts which happened in *Orang-Orang Oetimu*.

In this discussion, the researchers highlighted three waves of conflicts, which disturbed the life of the Timorese. The first conflict happened during Portuguese colonization. The second conflict took place in the Japanese colonization era during the World War II. The last conflict was between the Timorese and Indonesian, which came out after Portuguese and Japan left Timor Island. As the result of the coup d'état in Portugal, East Timor faced an unstable political system. This condition caused the clash of the local groups and parties and later followed by Indonesia's military invasion. Under the pretext of suppressing the communist movement, Indonesia's ruling power sent its military force to East Timor.

The first colonial conflict between Timorese and Portuguese was highlighted when three political movement collided. There are three parties affiliating to Portuguese (UDT), socialist Timorese (Fretilin), and Indonesian (Apodeti). They were all ready for decolonization. In the beginning UDT committed to submit themselves to the Portuguese government. The people were willing to be under Portuguese colonialism. Fretilin demanded full independence from foreign influence, and Apodeti declared to join Indonesia. However, finally UDT and Apodeti decided to join Indonesia, and Fretilin asked support from Portuguese.

Portuguese was represented by Julio Craveiro de Santos dan, a Portuguese colonial administrator, and Captain Gustavo, a police officer. They were actually posted in East Timor to manage the process of decolonization. However, UDT arranged coup d'état, and conducted an operation to imprison those who stood behind Fretelin. They were set free by Fretilin from jail. As they joined Fretelin, the conflict began to rise. Julio and other Portuguese were sentenced to death, while Laura, Juliso's daughter was raped by the Indonesian soldiers. (Nesi, 2019, p. 25). Then, Laura was saved by Am Siki, a local Timorese who dared to fight against Japanese colonial soldiers.

Revenge, rage, and violence coloured the process of decolonization. The conflict was around resistance of the UDT and Apodeti Timorese affiliating to Indonesia and Fretilin who declared submitting to the Portuguese colonial administrator. Who would control the country was the starting point of the conflict. Decolonization was not an easy and smooth process. Each party struggled to gain the authority, while the colonialist still had strong will to give influence upon the country.

The character of Am Siki was the witness how colonialists, including the Portuguese, did not give any respect to local culture. They forced Portuguese language to be spoken, began to relocate the Timorese natives from mountains to places where they could be supervised, and destroyed their rural housing complex. Portuguese colonial administration and church were actually employed as a means

of dominating the natives of Timorese and uprooting them from their culture.

The second conflict narrated in the novel was between the Timorese and the Japanese soldiers. The conflict was caused by the inhumanity of the Japanese soldiers to the Timorese, which is shown in this novel through the story of Am Siki, an elder who is highly respected by the Oetimu people, when he was taken by the Japanese soldiers along with his stallion and his mare. Am Siki was captured and taken by Japanese soldiers while on his way to Oekusi to trade forest products with the Portuguese. Apart from being looted and enslaved with other Timorese, the Japanese soldiers also shot his stallion and raped his mare (Nesi, 2019, p. 37). Aligned with Said (2003), here, Am Siki, representation of the Timorese, was seen as the weak while Japanese soldiers were seen as the strong one.

This situation enraged Am Siki enough that he used the power bestowed upon him by the palm tree, which he thought to be his ancestor, to kill all of the Japanese soldiers.

*...dan ia merasa tubuhnya lebih kuat daripada kuda. Mandor yang datang untuk mencambuknya, ia tampar berkali-kali sebelum ia angkat tinggi-tinggi dan ia pecahkan batok kepalanya di batu karang hitam. Malam itu ia mengamuk. Ia membunuh setiap tentara Jepang dan membakar habis kamp itu (Nesi, 2019, p. 38).*

The resistance that Am Siki did to the Japanese soldiers showed that the oppressed possesses a dual consciousness—complicit with their will, and that which is capable of developing into resistance (Loomba, 2005, p. 29).

The last conflict depicted in the novel was between the Timorese and Indonesian. This conflict was caused by the unstable political condition in Portuguese and the decolonization which happened in East Timor. Due to this condition, Australian, Portuguese, and British tried to flee from East Timor. Moreover, the Timorese also moved to the mountain to find a safe place (Nesi, 2019, p. 22). Indonesia's government also took advantage on this condition to rule this region

by using the issue on communism. This can be seen from Júlio's experience when he was taken by the Indonesian soldiers. Outside his house, Júlio saw many Indonesian soldiers stood by along the road while the others were attacking the city (Nesi, 2019, p. 24). The military force tried to wipe away the communist movement and its followers in East Timor.

This condition also resulted in the external conflict between the Timorese and several parties such as Indonesian soldiers, policemen, politicians, and even the priest church. In this novel, Indonesian soldiers were depicted as those who liked to abuse, taking advantage, and mistreating the Timorese. It was also similar to the policeman and the politicians who liked to trick the Timorese. Moreover, this condition was worsened with some Catholic priests who do sexual abuses to several young women.

Indonesian military soldiers were respected by the Timorese because they were soldiers who came from Java. When the Timorese were gathered to watch the World Cup final, Nesi (2019) illustrates how no one "felt worthy enough to sit next to the soldier though the sofa was quite big for another three people" (p. 4). Conversely, the soldiers treated the Timorese badly and they were also irresponsible to many incidents caused by the Unimog. The soldiers frequently used their power and authority to manipulate the incidents which happened to the citizens.

*...Warga berkerumunan di jalanan, tetapi tidak punya keberanian untuk mendekat. Mereka telah belajar, bahwa kerap kali saksi matalah yang dijebloskan ke dalam penjara. Iring-iringan itu berhenti. Beberapa orang menyumpah-nyumpahi penduduk sipil yang tidak berhati-hati berkendara. Timor Timur sedang memanas. Tentara sedang terburu-buru karena perang. Seharusnya penduduk sipil minggir jika melihat Unimog (Nesi, 2019, p. 149).*

Nesi' crude satire (2019) even shows that this incident happened because of the citizens themselves. They should have cleared the road for the soldiers who would go to the battle

field. The soldiers even mentioned that the citizens who were hit by the Unimog had sacrificed their lives to maintain and protect Indonesia's unity (pp. 148-152).

In line with Said (2003), the Timorese here were seen as the weak and the soldiers as those who were strong. The story on how Wildan and Riko—Maria's husband and son—were hit by the Unimog showed the colonial domination practiced by the Indonesian soldiers (Loomba, 2005, p. 16). The conflict between the soldiers and the Timorese was highlighted when Maria tried to attack the officer who came in her family's funeral. Maria's action symbolised how the colonized tried to stop and fight back the domination of the colonizer. Furthermore, the love-hate relationship between the colonizer and the colonized could be seen when the soldiers came to the funeral. The Timorese looked at them with hatred because they had killed Wildan and Riko. In the same time, they were also awed because they were killed to protect Indonesia (Nesi, 2019, p. 150).

Similarly, the conflict between the Timorese and Indonesian police was also caused because the policeman liked to manipulate and abuse the Timorese. Represented by the character of Sersan Ipi, the corrupt policeman was described as the one who could be easily bribed by money and even confiscate the property of the citizens. Siprianus Portakes Oetimu, known as Sersan Ipi, was Laura's son. She was pregnant because she was raped by the Indonesian soldiers when the chaos took place. Though a policeman was usually depicted as a hero who was faithful, strong, and always defended the weak citizens, Sersan Ipi did not have those traits. He liked to harm, take advantage, and mistreat the Timorese. He even used violence to oppress and scare the civilians so that they would do anything he wanted.

*...Jika Sersan Ipi muncul ke tengah kampung dengan sepeda motornya, para tukang ojek di pangkalan itu akan berdoa, semoga sedang baik hari polisi itu. Sebab jika tidak, ia akan mulai mencari-cari kesalahan dan memukuli mereka tanpa ampun. ...Terkadang juga ia menghadang*



*truk pasir milik Baba Ong dan meminta uang kepada sopirnya (Nesi, 2019, p. 58)*

If Sersan Ipi did not find any mistakes on the Timorese, he would find one so that he could beat them. In addition, as a policeman who should protect the civilians, Sersan Ipi used his power to threaten and beat the Timorese. Ironically, the Timorese were afraid to fight back because they might be suspected as communist followers who were against the state apparatus (Nesi, 2019, p. 59). Despite that problem, a policeman should be a guardian for the civilians and help the country to eradicate the crime.

In addition, the corrupt politicians also took advantage of the weakness, helplessness, and poverty of the Timorese. We argued that the officials were robbers who used their position to make them and their groups richer. These problems were found by Maria and her discussion group when they were still studying in the University (Nesi, 2019, p. 152). The conflict between the Timorese and the politicians was getting worse because the Javanese politicians had stolen their lands and turn the savannah into their private teak plantation.

*“...Pejabat-pejabat korup mengambil tanah adat masyarakat dan membikin sertifikat atas namanya sendiri. Berhektar-hektar sabana tempat penggembalaan sapi diubah menjadi Hutan Tanaman Industri dan ditanami jati yang akan dipanen sendiri (Nesi, 2019, p. 153).*

The quotation above showed how the politicians had deceived the Timorese to get their lands and money. By using their authority, the corrupt officials even protected each other so that the laws would not able to touch them (p. 153).

On the other hand, the government's officials were not only taken everything the Timorese had but also the aid for the refugees. When the condition in East Timor was getting worse, many sent the aid and fund for the refugees. Nevertheless, the officials even took and cut them off. Nesi (2019) also reminded his readers that Soeharto and people from Java were liars and likes to fabricate stories so they

have to be careful (p. 216). Moreover, they would also maintain the corrupt system which might benefit them in the future. The soldier even exploited a foolish young man named Linus as the military spy.

*“...Linus mencatat siapa-siapa saja yang berpengaruh di dalam pergerakan dan merekam apa saja yang mereka bicarakan. Catatan itu kemudian ia berikan kepada tentara-tentara di Komando Distrik Militer. Berkat catatan itu, mahasiswa-mahasiswi pemberontak dan musuh negara itu hilang satu persatu.” (Nesi, 2019, p. 136).*

Linus himself was the representative of Indonesia's military organization that was corrupt and liked to manipulate the citizens. However, no one was suspicious on Linus because he was brainless and was too foolish to be the military spy. In addition, Linus always fooled his father and asked for money by saying that there were extra curriculums that he had to join. Moreover, it was surprising that he also liked to have sex with the prostitutes (Nesi, 2019, pp. 136-140).

Nesi wrote this novel to deconstruct the issues happened in East Timor from the lenses of the Timorese. He wanted to unveil how their agenda to save the Timorese from communism was only one way to steal their land and natural resources. Moreover, the Nesi also criticised and scolded the Javanese oppressors who visited Oetimu to meet Am Siki. Am Siki raised his eye brows towards the government's officers because they did not understand even the simplest metaphor and poem (Nesi, 2019, pp. 84-85). Furthermore, the Timorese also laughed at the middle-aged woman from Java who did not wear the traditional woven fabric correctly (Nesi, 2019, p. 82). More importantly, the Timorese were also alienated by the government's officials because their culture was totally different from most culture in Indonesia. As a result, this later caused a resistance from certain groups in Oetimu.

Lastly, the conflict described in this part was the conflict between the Timorese and the Catholic priests that could be seen from Maria's action towards them. Maria was very

angry because most of the Catholic priests in Oetimu liked to seduce the young women.

### ***The Effects of Colonialism towards the Timorese***

Discussing the effects of colonialism to the Timorese is essential to scrutinize the destructive effect and hidden colonial power which still existed in the Timorese society. In this literary work, the researchers found the destructive effects caused by the Portuguese, Japanese, and Indonesia colonization on both cultural and social aspects in the Timorese society. Moreover, this also has altered the social structure and the relations among the Timorese.

The arrival of Portuguese brought influence as well as change amongst the Timorese. Culturally Timorese natives' social structure was based on traditional tribes. Catholicism and church brought some changes. Catholic pastors played important roles in social relation and structure for Timorese, especially for the people of Oetimu. In Timorese society, pastors, called as "fathers". They were considered as spiritual leaders, religious counsellors, or sometimes social figures. Tribe leadership and its traditional belief at times were disordered. Portuguese colonialism was associated with Catholic church as it was the Portuguese who brought the Catholicism in Timor island, including in Oetimu. One of the traditional beliefs that was deconstructed was *sifon*, a traditional rite for a man after being circumcised who was ordered to have sexual relationship with women (Nesi, 2019, pp. 202-204).

The other effect of Portuguese colonialism was also in the form of Western spirit, especially materialism and capitalism. Portuguese colonial administration also changed the social structure in the way that a colonial territory should adopt the administrative system as it was applied in the mother land. Police as security institute, public servants as the administrators, pastors as the spiritual leaders, tax collectors, teachers, traders and service business providers became prominent social position. The traditional leadership faded away so that the social structure was built by these classes.

Oetimu young people were not willing to cultivate their productive lands. Instead of planting various crops or vegetables, they abandoned them and running service business, such as motor-cycle taxi driver (Nesi, 2019, pp. 57-58).

Religion, especially Catholicism, and education from Portuguese played very important roles in East Timor. Gaining education represented social status. The dichotomy of the educated and uneducated or the civilized and uncivilized was built and reproduced from time to time. This view was practiced when parents sent their sons or daughters in international school, such as SMA Santa Helena. Going to that school was associated with progress, modernism, and high prestige (Nesi, 2019, p. 99). On the other side of the country, there were many children, boys, and girls who could not afford to go to that school. The social gap was growing wider and wider. The core of this phenomenon was the arrival of new civilization, that was Portuguese.

Power relation between spiritual and social leaders, such as pastors or teachers and Timorese people convey the trace of Portuguese colonialism. Church which was viewed as the civilized belief had bargaining and powerful position in that country. Pastors automatically was attached with this kind of power. The abuse of power of spiritual leader was practiced to dominate and oppress the Timorese people. This could be represented by the relation between Pastor Yosef and Maria.

The Timorese came to recognize the characters of their colonizer. Am Siki saw Japanese as people who loved to kill and rape "*...Kalau Nippon bukan pedagang. Mereka hanya suka membangun jalan, membunuh dan memerkosa.*" (p. 47). Local parents were also aware of the fact that Japanese people were short, "*tidak ada Nippon yang memerkosa kuda. Mereka terlalu pendek.*" (p. 43). These acts are in line with the theory of mimicry that the issue with colonial discourse is that it seeks to create compliant subjects who will replicate or 'mimic' the colonizer's assumptions, habits, and ideals (Ashcroft et al., 2007, p. 10).

In addition, Am Siki also told the younger generations about his battles with the Japanese soldiers as a lesson in not doing ill to the enemies, even if they were wicked, "*Tidak boleh dibunuh, sekalipun itu orang jahat. Ingat? Tidak boleh diperkosa, sekalipun itu kuda. Ulangi!*" (p. 85). As a result, such words were quite effective. They were even better at memorizing the words than *Pancasila*. Furthermore, they were compelled to understand Japanese, "*Selalu saja orang-orang Timor yang dipaksa untuk mempelajari arti dan bunyi-bunyi aneh yang keluar dari mulutnya, mulai dari Portugis, Belanda, Jepang, sampai Indonesia*" (Nesi, 2019, p. 39). Those acts are in line with Loomba (2005), colonialism reshapes social terrains as well as human identities and the experience is a continuous psychic experience that must be dealt with and will continue to be dealt with long after the colonial situation has technically "over". The Timorese had to inspire one another, construct new and powerful identities for colonized peoples and confront colonialism on an emotional level as well as a political or intellectual level.

After the Japanese left East Timor, the New Order, which one-sidedly claimed East Timor's territory caused many people died and live in a despair. The authoritarian Republic was a "new colonizer" in East Timor which greatly affected the life of the Timorese and even caused the genocide. Furthermore, Indonesian invasion to East Timor has caused many changes in various aspects. Said (2003) highlights that Orientalism is the result of European political forces to maintain its domination and hegemony towards the Orient (p. 203). This discourse is closely related to Postcolonialism since it is problematized the binary between the west and the east, self and other, modern and traditional, and Java and Oetimu. The case for this context is pretty special because Indonesia was once colonized by the Dutch for 365 years and now it is trying to occupy East Timor after Portuguese left the island.

Oetimu has become the most recurring image of the other and it helps to define Indonesia as a superior country under the New Order. In order to maintain the domination, Indonesia tries to conduct a civilization or

modernization project. Indonesia that is the new colonizer in East Timor tries to change or even erase things in Oetimu that are considered as traditional. The project is used in order to maintain the binary as well as to show that Indonesia has a good mission to save the Timorese after the decolonization. Moreover, the researchers found that there are at least three sectors that are affected, such as the administrative system, socio-economic sector, and Oetimu's culture (Khapoya, 2012, p. 125). Furthermore, the modernization project is also implanted through the religious sector by the Catholic priests in Oetimu. It is in line with Said (2003) who stresses that the modernization project is used to maintain the image of the Javanese people who are highly educated compared to the Timorese people who are always seen as uneducated.

The first sector of the modernization project that affects the life of the Oetimu's is the adaptation of administrative system. The village which was Timu Un Kingdom in past had been taken by Indonesia. It can be seen when Am Siki stopped by in a village after he came back from burning out the Japanese military camp and killing all the Japanese soldiers. He was surprised because he saw the Indonesian flag instead of the Japanese flag (Nesi, 2019, p. 38).

*"Lalu bendera siapakah yang tergantung itu? Apakah bendera aneh itu panji kerajaan kalian?" ia bertanya lagi. "Itu bendera Indonesia," jawab orang-orang kepadanya. "Sekarang ini kita adalah Timor Indonesia." (Nesi, 2019, p. 39)*

Am Siki's visit to Oetimu indicated that the village had been under the Dutch and Japanese colonialism. In addition, there is also a shift in the name of the village. The village was Timu Un Kingdom or Oetimu and the name had become Kecamatan Makmur Sentosa. They changed the name of the village so that it was similar to most of the name of the regions in Java island. Moreover, every 17<sup>th</sup> August people would celebrate the Independence Day and decorate their house just like typical Indonesian in general. Furthermore, the government officials also gave a medal to Am Siki because he was seen as a national hero

who fight for the Japanese soldiers (Nesi, 2019, p. 40).

In line with Nandy (1983), Indonesia as the modern colonizers insist to modernize and bring civilization into Oetimu that is seen as the uncivilized. The mastery and the usage of Bahasa Indonesia had become the indicator that someone who use it is educated and civilized. After Indonesia conquered the land and the culture, now the Timorese were forced to learn Indonesian language. In the beginning of the month, the teacher will come to teach Bahasa Indonesia to the people in Oetimu.

*"...sekarang kita mempunyai bahasa yang baru, Bahasa Indonesia namanya. Jika kau ingin tahu, setiap awal bulan mereka selalu mengajarkannya." (Nesi, 2019, p. 39)*

According to Shakib (2011), language has always been a central issue in a postcolonial context. During colonialization, the colonized is prohibited to speak in their native language or their mother tongue. They will be humiliated or even punished for not using the language of the colonizer (p. 117).

In line with Am Siki's story, this condition happened since the Dutch came to Timor island. The colonizer was reluctant to learn the local language thus they forced the locals to learn their language and create their own government system in Timor. The Dutch even called the locals as primitives because they could not understand the language of their master.

*"Sebab tidak ingin bersusah dan membuang waktunya untuk mempelajari hal yang tidak mereka pahami, Belanda menyebut orang-orang itu primitif, dan mulai membikin sebuah sistem pemerintahan seperti yang mereka punyai di Eropa." (Nesi, 2019, p. 35)*

Similar to the Indonesian officers who came to Oetimu, they did not understand the local language and even the simplest poem that were recited by Am Siki. The government elites from the big city forced the Timorese to use Bahasa Indonesia so that they could communicate well with them. On the other hand, the Timorese would also be the

interpreters to the officials because the felt guilty for using the local language (Nesi, 2019, p. 84). Referring to this problem, the author of the novel presented some local terms and provided a glossary which may assist the readers to understand the local language and the story better. By presenting the local terms, the researchers argue that the author wants to show that language is actually "the product of a culture and also a symbol of mother's culture independence" (Shakib, 2011, p. 118).

The love-hate relationship between the colonized and the colonizer had encouraged the colonized to mimic and to be more similar to the colonizer. From the socio-economic sector, the job like police, soldier, or government elites were seen as the noble jobs compared to farmers and palm tree tappers in Oetimu. Am Siki did not want Ipi became a palm tree tapper just like him.

*"Bawalah dia, Tuan-tuan. Jadikanlah ia seorang kase, seperti kalian." (Nesi, 2019, p. 85)*

From the excerpt above, the researchers argue that the Timorese who lived in ambivalence had been encouraged to imitate and feed their desire to be like the colonizer. Am Siki who disliked the government officials now was expecting their help to take care of his grandchild education. He wanted Ipi, his grandchild, to be an educated man with a high social status. Therefore, he asked the government officials to take Ipi to the city to get a proper education in the police academy. Moreover, the Timorese also helped to maintain the domination and hegemony of the colonizer (Said, 2003). The parents in Oetimu also stressed that they need to send their children to the university because they were stupid and they did not want their children became stupid like them (Nesi, 2019, p. 139).

The third sector is the enforcement to imitate the colonizer's culture. In this case, the researchers found that the Indonesian officials had encouraged the Timorese to imitate their culture in a form of food and medicine. The consumption of local foods such as casavas and sweet potatoes were seen as primitive and backward. The occupation of the mind and culture towards the Timorese (Nandy, 1983)

can be seen when the government conducted various civilization campaigns by using Western discourse and religious doctrine. By using an announcement car, the officials convinced the Timorese that the ancestors were stupid because they consumed corns and cassavas.

*“...Bapak dan Ibu sekalian, jangan biarkan kita mewarisi kebiasaan yang salah dan keliru itu. Mari, mari kita mulai makan nasi. Kita harus makan nasi, agar kita dan anak-anak kita menjadi manusia yang lebih berbudaya, lebih beradab, dan senantiasa beriman kepada Tuhan Yang Maha Esa, sesuai sila pertama Pancasila.”* (Nesi, 2019, p. 55).

From the quotation above, the researchers try to illustrate the modernization project conducted by the government. Even though the farming products of the Timorese were corns and cassavas, their staple food is rice. Rice was seen as the food that might help the Timorese to be more civilized and modern. On the contrary, the ancestors' food did not have any nutrition and could weaken the brain. Thus, the Timorese would feel embarrassed if they did not eat the rice.

The second cultural enforcement was the use of religious doctrine to abandon their traditional medication and believes. The usage of the leaves and roots to cure the disease was seen as an uncivilized practice which contradicted Catholic teaching. Loomba (2005, p. 16) also underlines that it was actually the practice of postcolonialism which took over the colonial domination and its legacy. The Catholic missionary was the religious arms of the government to control and force the Timorese as well as to exploit the locals.

*“Makanya, Bapak dan Ibu,” kata Romo Laurensius. “Jika kalian sakit, berdoalah dan bersabarlah dalam kasih Tuhan. Janganlah kalian pergi ke dukun-dukun, atau menempelkan mamahan daun, batang, akar, dan tumbuhan-tumbuhan tidak berguna di tubuh kalian. ...Apalagi jika ditambahkan mantra-mantra... wah, itu berhala namanya. Itu melanggar perintah Allah. ...Tuhan melihat semuanya,*

*dan pastilah ia akan menghukum orang-orang berdosa.”* (Nesi, 2019, p. 57).

The quotation above is a campaign which was conducted by Father Laurensius from Saint Mary Chapel. He employed the bible and Catholic teaching to encourage the Timorese to use modern medication instead of using traditional herbs.

### **Postcolonial Discourse Proposed in the Novel**

This novel can be perceived as a literary work voicing postcolonial discourse, in a way that colonial traces and impacts are still can be identified in a country which had been decolonized. Colonial ideology, precisely orientalism, is still pervading the people. Justification of domination in the name of civilizing through religion, education, and medication was still practiced. Reproduction and imitation of colonial attitude and perspective are also accentuated, especially those are from Portuguese. Besides, the legacy of violence and coercion force inherited from Japan was also used in solving the problems.

The appropriation of what is called as modern culture in Oetimu was brought by the Javanese people. In fact, the centre of Indonesia is in Java and Indonesia is Java (Nesi, 2019, p. 215). Even though the colonizers have left Oetimu, there are various sign and long last effects of colonialism that can be found in the literary texts (Foulcher and Day, 2008, p. 3). The effects of colonialism are also illustrated by an East Nusa Tenggara writer, Felix K. Nesi, in his *Orang-Orang Oetimu* (2019). Nesi highlights the complexities and the problems experienced by the Timorese in a simple language and through their daily life events. In line with Gandhi (1998, p. 4), Nesi also tries to unveil the effects of colonialism which mostly neglected and forgotten though actually still exist around us and dominate our lives. Thus, in this part, the researchers present the hidden colonial power that still overshadows the Timorese society.

During the process of decolonization from the Japanese colony, some aspects of East Timorese life, such as practices, attitudes, and ideologies, were unavoidably influenced by

colonial influences. This is in line with the statement stated by Gandhi (1998) that colonial domination stays even though the colonial occupation ends. In the novel, this was shown through the character of Sersan Ipi. He was a police officer with the rank of sergeant and lived in Oetimu village, who was also in charge of protecting the village. Sersan Ipi, in his day-to-day work as a security officer, frequently used violence to fight against the people he encountered, both at the police station and elsewhere.

*Saking kesal dan lapar, ia mampir ke pangkalan ojek dan memukuli dua anak yang sedang bermain catur. "Kenapa saya dipukuli, Pak?" seorang dari mereka bertanya sambil memegang bibirnya yang nyonyor. "Karena begitu saya parker, lu lihat saya. Lu pu maksud apa, hah? Lu mau nantang? Lu berani lawan aparat?" (Nesi, 2019, p. 62).*

These arbitrary practices represented the colonists' attitude, particularly the Japanese soldiers' attitude, toward the indigenous peoples. During the occupation, the Japanese army forced and abused the Timorese to build roads, without being given any food or wages.

*...siang dan malam mereka dipaksa untuk mengerjakan jalan menuju pantai selatan. Hanya cambuk yang menjadi makanan mereka. Mereka bisa mendapatkan makanan bila ada pekerja baru yang datang dengan jagung. Jika tidak, mereka kelaparan, dan jika ada yang lapar sampai hampir mati, ia dicambuki sampai benar-benar mati (Nesi, 2019, p. 37)*

The colonized had been urged to copy the colonizer's habits, attitudes, and ideologies. The practices, attitudes, and theories of Japanese soldiers also reflected in the character of Linus. Linus was a Timorese student who aspires to be a soldier willing to die in the service of his nation. In his daily life, apart from being an army informant, Linus also liked to hang out with women on his campus. Every day he would have different women for him to sleep with. In addition, he raped numerous women with anaesthetics.

*Berkat ramuan ajaib itu, dalam satu bulan, Linus bisa meniduri empat sampai tujuh orang perempuan yang berbeda. Meskipun mengutuknya, tak ada perempuan yang berani melaporkan perbuatan Linus itu ke polisi (Nesi, 2019, p. 142).*

The habit of Japanese soldiers who like to rape was reflected in Linus' action who liked to do sexual abuse to many women he met though he was a student.

In addition, the researchers also found that corruption was the first hidden colonial power that is still flourished in Oetimu. The practice had caused many people lived in poverty but no one might overcome this problem. In line with Faruk (2007), corruption was a form of marginality that was caused by capitalism. The government officials and their network tried to get more money from the illegitimate private gain. Maria and her friends had found the documents that showed the abused of power done by the politicians (Nesi, 2019, p. 153). Nevertheless, the corrupt system in East Nusa Tenggara was not easy to be diminished because it had become the culture in the government's organisation. As part of the corrupt network, Ipi did not take action against the corruptors because he had been bribed to close the case (Nesi, 2019, p. 63). Furthermore, the government would arrest the group that revealed or report the practice of corruption because they might disturb the unity of the country. This condition was similar to the condition when Oetimu was still under the Dutch colonialism that was seen as the robber by the Timorese (Nesi, 2019, p. 36).

## Conclusion

*Orang-orang Oetimu* is such an ethnographic novel voicing the long-lasting and destructive impact of colonialism. The invading arrival of Portuguese, Japanese, and Indonesian people brought about socio-cultural conflicts. Socio-cultural structure and relation of Timorese people is shifted by the new system of colonial social system. Horizontal friction amongst party groups, corrupt, violence, and abuse of power escalates as cultures of the colonialist and natives collide. Colonialism brought both new

perspectives of civilization and domination so that resistance from the native Timorese is unavoidable.

Colonialism of Portuguese, Japan, and Indonesia spread the spirit of modernism, capitalism, materialism, and oppression. Language, traditional rites and habits, and economic system of the Timorese are vanished. New religion, medication, democracy, and education overcome the natives' traditional way of life. However, they do not bring Timorese people prosperous and peaceful.

This novel actually proposes postcolonial discourse in the way that the hidden ideology of colonialism, such as orientalism, domination, binary opposition of the civilized and uncivilized, and justification of vanishing the traditional culture under civilization justification are still practiced. Reproduction of the colonial attitude also still exists. That is why horizontal friction amongst the Timorese became the continuous legacy of colonialism.

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