

**WE ARE [TRULY] DIFFERENT:
OTHERING IN INTER-ETNIC RELATION
IN ROYYAN JULIAN’S SHORT STORY**

Oleh

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Abstract

Royyan Julian’s short story entitled “Di Malam Bulan Darah, Mogut Menyantap Jenazah Orang Kafir” [On the Night of the Blood Moon, Mogut Eats the Body of Infidel] (2019) captures the relationship among different ethnic groups, religions and gender in Madura. Set in Madura Island, the story uncovers more than just relation between Chinese and Madurese people and between female and male characters. This paper is focusing on inter-ethnic and inter-religion relation in the short story. This analysis used qualitative method and data collection used close-reading. Drawing theoretical inspiration from Simone de Beauvoir with a particular emphasis on the Other and Richard Jenkins’ theory on Social Identity, this study reveals how different identities bring different treatment, evaluation, and prejudice which led to othering. Through his short story, Royyan Julian discloses binary opposition related to ethnicities, religions, and gender. The hierarchy and power imbalance imposed on male and female characters in the story bring devastated impact on female character just because she has different identity from the majority of Muslims in Madura.

Keywords: Ethnicity, gender, identity, othering, religion

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Abstrak

Cerpen Royyan Julian berjudul *Di Malam Bulan Darah, Mogut Menyantap Jenazah Orang Kafir* (2019) memotret relasi antar etnis, agama, dan gender yang berbeda di Madura. Namun, dengan berlatar di Pulau Madura, cerita ini mengungkap lebih dari sekadar hubungan antara masyarakat Tionghoa dan Madura, serta antar tokoh perempuan dan tokoh laki-laki. Studi ini fokus pada relasi antaretnis dan antaragama dalam cerpen tersebut. Analisis ini menggunakan metode kualitatif. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan teknik membaca teliti dan cermat. Dengan mengaplikasikan teori dari Simone de Beauvoir yang berfokus pada *The Other* dan teori Richard Jenkins tentang Social Identity, penelitian ini mengungkap bagaimana identitas yang berbeda membawa perlakuan, penilaian, dan prasangka yang berbeda sehingga mengarah pada tindakan *othering*. Melalui cerpennya, Royyan Julian mengungkap oposisi biner terkait relasi antar etnis, agama, dan gender. Hierarki dan ketimpangan kekuasaan yang dibebankan pada tokoh laki-laki dan perempuan dalam cerita tersebut membawa dampak buruk terhadap tokoh perempuan hanya karena ia memiliki identitas yang berbeda dengan mayoritas umat Islam di Madura.

Kata kunci: *Agama, etnis, gender, identitas, Othering*

A. INTRODUCTION

Madurese people are renowned for their strong Islamic identity, as evidenced by the pervasive presence of Islamic values and symbols in their daily lives (Al Humaidy et al. 2020, 107; Zubairi 2020, 2). However, not many know that other ethnic groups and religions can also be found among Madurese people (Siddiq 2023, 25) and one of them is Chinese (Siddiq 2023, 33). The relationship between different ethnic groups and religions in Madura is captured by Royyan Julian in his short story “*Di Malam Bulan Darah, Moghut Menyantap Jenazah Orang Kafir*” or “*On the Night of the Blood Moon, Mogut Eats the Body of Infidel*”. This short story is part of the collection in a book entitled *Ludah Nabi di Lidah Syekh Raba* (Julian 2019). Royyan Julian is one of the promising authors from Madura. Born in Pamekasan, he is currently working as a lecturer in Pamekasan. His works are ranging from poems, short stories, and novels. He has published his works in

different media either in electronic or printed form. Royyan Julian has also won many awards. Some of his works are “Tandak” (2015), “Tanjung Kemarau” (2017), “Rumah Jadah” (2019), “Pendosa yang Saleh” (2021).

The short story “Di Malam Bulan Darah, Moghut Menyantap Jenazah Orang Kafir” is narrated by an anonymous male character named “aku” in Tanjung Mayang village. The village works as a setting of place where this story happens. The anonymous character works as an outsider who is doing research in the village and befriend with a villager named Walid. Set in Madura Island, overshadowed by Islamic and Christian values, this story covers more than just relation between Chinese and Madurese people and between female and male characters. This paper is focusing on inter-ethnic relation in the short story, particularly revealing how different identities bring different treatment and evaluation. The aim of this study is to examine identity construction of two characters, Tan Gin Nio and Haji Kayim. Later, how Tan Gin Nio experiences othering in this story is also discussed.

Richard Jenkins’ theory of Social Identity and Simone de Beauvoir’s the Absolute and the Other strengthen the notion of Othering happens in the short story are applied to scrutinize those issues. According to Richard Jenkins, identity is not a “thing,” but rather an identifying process (Jenkins 2008, 5). Its concept includes similarity and difference as comparison criterion for people or objects. Identity also acknowledges the distinctions that exist between individuals and collectivities and how those distinctions relate to one another (Jenkins 2008, 17–18). From the statement, it is concluded that identity is a mechanism involving similarity and difference in recognizing persons or groups. In associating with other persons or groups, those two criteria work as a foundation to differentiate certain person or group.

Beauvoir stated that a woman is not regarded as an independent entity in a world that is constituted by men. A woman's presence is sex, pure and simple, to a male. Women are defined and distinguished by males in relation to him, not the other way around. She is incidental, yet what is deemed vital is a part of him. Therefore, woman is the Other and man is the Subject and the Absolute (Beauvoir 1956, 16).

Consequently, females have always been recognized through comparison in human narratives, rather than directly from what they are in themselves (Jiang 2021, 652). Othering of woman happens, from Beauvoir's perspective, because of how woman is paralleled to sex from man's world (Selinger 2014, 5).

Meanwhile, othering refers to a collection of behaviors, processes, and institutions that perpetuate marginalization and inequity throughout the whole spectrum of human differences based on group identity. Othering dimensions include religion, gender, color, ethnicity, socioeconomic (class), disability, sexual orientation, and skin tone, among others. In addition, the term othering offers a unifying framework that exposes a number of shared mechanisms and circumstances that support marginalization and inequality based on group membership (Powell and Menendian 2015, 17).

Chinese and Indonesian characters as well as conflicts occurred between them have been captured by different writers in their studies. The issues have been explored by Sungkowati (2009) who analyzed the relationship between Javanese and Chinese ethnic groups in "Tunggak-Tunggak Jati", a Javanese novel by Esmiet. Meanwhile, a study from Kurnia, Nurgiyantoro, and Fitri (2021) focused on discrimination of minority in two novels by Doris Lessing and Seno Gumira Adjidarma. They analyzed the topic of discrimination of African native community and Indonesian-Chinese community because of the act of othering from a postcolonial lens. Another study about inter-ethnic conflict in a novel entitled "Mei Hwa dan Sang Pelintas Zaman" by Afifah Afra was written by Krismawati, Dewi, dan Bernata (2023). The novel was analyzed using sociology of literature by Alan Swingewood. The results showed there were three inter-ethnic conflicts appeared in the novel and one of the conflicts was Chinese and Indonesian people. Sabillah and Wachidah (2022) also used sociology of literature to analyze Chinese discrimination in Indonesia in Clara NG's "Dimsum Terakhir" and Naning Pranoto's "Miss Lu". Sartika, Susanto, and Wibowo (2021) discussed about Chinese female character experienced racial discrimination and sexual violence as the result of indigenous male characters' domination reflected in Sindhunata's novel "Putri

Cina”. In addition, Chinese discrimination done by the State appears in a novel entitled “Entrok” by Okki Madasari. The novel was analyzed by Cahyaningtiyas and Wijayaputra (2020) using Gramsci’s theory. The last is a study from Qur’ani (2021). She analyzed Chinese women struggle to end the injustice in Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim’s novel “Pecinan: Suara Hati Wanita Tionghoa”. However, this present study also discussed inter-ethnic conflict which more focuses on different identities between a Chinese woman and a Madurese man. Nevertheless, their unequal position leads to othering of the woman character.

This research design used a descriptive approach with the close reading method. Close reading is carried out to understand the core meaning of the story. The data were collected in the form of words related to the actions and speech of the characters in the research corpus, Royyan Julian’s short story “Di Malam Bulan Darah, Mogut Menyantap Jenazah Orang Kafir”. After the data were collected, the researchers verified and eliminated the data which did not correlate with the issues of the study. The analysis of the data was done by interpreting the collected data using theories of social identity, the other and othering.

B. IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION OF TWO CHARACTERS

In this section, the discussion is focused on the two characters, Tan Gin Nio and Haji Kayim as the former represents the minority and the latter represents the majority people in the village. In this story, the stark comparison between the two characters’ identity is clearly visible, thus, ultimately, causing othering. In order to get thorough understanding of their identity, each character’s identity will be discussed.

1. Tan Gin Nio’s Identity Construction

This short story is opened with the death of a protagonist in Royyan Julian’s short story. The protagonist is a female character named Tan Gin Nio. Her death posture is similar with a dead man in a famous oil painting by Jacques-Louis David, the Death of Marat. Royyan Julian stated,

“Pada hari keempat puluh aku tinggal di Tanjung Mayang, Tan Gin Nio mati. Ia ditemukan terkapar di atas ranjangnya. Kepala dan kedua tangan perempuan itu tergantung di sisi ambin. Mengingatanku apada pose jasad yang dirundung ajal dalam lukisan Jacques-Lois David: *Kematian Marat*.” (Julian 2019, 16)

“On the fortieth day of my stay in Tanjung Mayang, Tan Gin Nio died. She was found lying on her bed. The woman's head and hands were hanging over the side of the cabin. [It] reminds me of the pose of the dying body in Jacques-Lois David's painting: *The Death of Marat*.” (The researcher translation)

The painting depicts Marat in the final moments of his life, shortly after being stabbed. *The Death of Marat* immortalized Marat as a martyr and hero of the people and rapidly became an iconic image of the French Revolution (Encyclopedia of Art Education, n.d.). Tan Gin Nio's death posture contributes a lot to her identification process. As Marat's death symbolizes a hero of the people, the protagonist of this short story is also constructed as a hero of people in Tanjung Mayang as well as villagers' savior.

Royyan Julian writes, “For the villagers, Gin is an angel...She has done things that the rich people in the village have not done. That answer was enough to convince me that Gin was indeed like a savior” (Julian 2019, 19–20). The diction “angel” and “angelic person” in the short story have been emphasized by the author to indicate Gin's identity as a holy person. She herself delivers the reason behind her good deeds to the villagers, “I want to imitate the Christ,” she answered. Both of her eyes stared into the sky. “He is living water.” (Julian 2019, 19). These evidences reveal what Richard Jenkins proposes that individuals identify themselves and are identified by others (Jenkins 2008, 102). In this context, Gin identifies herself as a true Christian. As the Christ's follower, she imitates His teachings and way of life to put more attention to the other. Because of her constantly good deeds to the villagers, people identify her not only as an angelic person, but also as a hero, a role model, and a savior of many villagers.

Tan Gin Nio and her family have been living in Madura for ten years. Her husband died and her son is staying in another place outside

Madura, therefore she lives alone in the village. Royyan portrays stereotypes of Chinese people in his short story.

“Kata Walid, Gin bermukim di Tanjung Mayang sejak sepuluh tahun yang lalu. Ia istri seorang direktur perusahaan garam di perbatasan barat desa. Setelah tiga tahun tinggal di sini, suaminya meninggal karena penyakit gula. Ia terpaksa menggantikan posisi suaminya.

Di rumah itu, Ia tinggal sebatang kara. Anak jaka semata wayangnya, Sinyo, sudah bermukim di pulau seberang, kota tempat ia kuliah dan bekerja. Meski sendirian, Gin tidak merasa kesepian, sebab saban hari tetangga-tetangganya menyambangnya.” (Julian 2019, 18)

“Walid said, Gin had lived in Tanjung Mayang for ten years. She is the wife of a director of a salt company on the western border of the village. After three years living here, her husband died of diabetes. She was forced to replace her husband.

In her house, she lived alone. His only child, Sinyo, has settled down on the opposite island, the city where he studies and works. Even though she is alone, Gin does not feel alone, because every day her neighbors visit her.” (The researcher translation)

The evidences reveal the stereotypes of Chinese people in Indonesia. Chinese people in Indonesia are stereotyped as people whose main jobs are related to industry or as merchant (Kuntjara and Hoon 2020, 12; Setijadi 2017, 5; Al Humaidy et al. 2020, 4) or “economically privileged” (Setijadi 2017, 4). They are considered as non-Indonesian people who live exclusively “and unwilling to mix with non-Chinese, especially in their area of residence” (Copel in Kuntjara and Hoon 2020, 3). Although they have been living in Indonesia since decades ago, Indonesian people, still, regard them as immigrant (Hidayat and Farid 2021, 20). Nevertheless, they are adapting themselves to the local cultures where they live. Chinese people in Indonesia successfully adapt using various ways in order to establish and build their lives harmoniously with local people.

Many researches showed that changing names becomes one of the factors for Chinese people in successfully adapting themselves to the local people and culture. Another factor is converting religion to Islam as Islam is the religion of most people in Madura beside using local language in their daily conversation and practicing cultural tradition of Madurese people (Hidayat and Farid 2021, 20; Al Humaidy et al. 2020, 94). However, Royyan Julian’s female protagonist does not

fit to those factors. Royyan Julian constructs his female protagonist in this story slightly different from the portrayal of Chinese descendants who live in Indonesia. She is described as having her Chinese name, Tan Gin Nio, and she is Christian. Siddiq mentioned that the majority of Christians in Madura currently come from non-Madurese ethnicities. They may be Chinese, Javanese, Maluku, or other ethnicities (Siddiq 2023, 33). Royyan Julian states,

“Di pulau ini aku kerap melihat orang-orang Cina tidak terlalu terbuka, susah bergaul. Gin pengecualian. Ia tidak eksklusif. Ia berbaur dengan orang-orang tanpa rasa canggung.” (Julian 2019, 18)

“On this island I often see Chinese people who are not very open, difficult to get along with. Gin is an exception. She is not very exclusive. She mingles with people without feeling awkward.” (The researcher translation)

From the statements above, the author deliberately emphasizes the stereotypes belong to the Chinese people, which is exclusive. They do not often interact with their neighbors and people around where they live. However, Royyan Julian chooses to construct his female protagonist in different identity. Gin is portrayed as a person who is easily to socialize and mingle with her neighbors, Madurese people. Although she is described by the author as the only Chinese person living in the village and has different religion, her identity as a minority does not hinder her to mingle with other people.

2. Haji Kayim's Identity Construction

Haji Kayim, in this short story, is a supporting character whose identity is compared to Tan Gin Nio. Royyan Julian constructs Kayim identity through his name and his title. From his name, the reader will identify his gender as a male character. The Hajj title attached to his name reveals himself as a Muslim. In addition, the Hajj title is considered as having symbolic capital and status among Muslim people (Rahim 2022, 138). Jenkins argues identity signifies the ways in which individuals and collectivities are distinguished in their relations with other individuals and collectivities (Jenkins 2008, 18). It means the title

Haji itself is an identity that exposes how a person is trying to distinguish himself in associating with another person.

This short story tells us that Haji Kayim runs for village chief election in Tanjung Mayang and is known as the only candidate. Therefore, he has great chance to be the sole winner. Nevertheless, Haji Kayim's followers considered Gin's popularity among villagers is a threat to Haji Kayim's victory. Hence, Haji Kayim changes his strategy in order to gain people's sympathy and voices.

“Katanya, Haji Kayim hanya menjadi baik saat mau nyalon. Tiba-tiba penampilannya berubah agamis, rajin ke masjid dan pengajian, suka menyumbang sana-sini, menyambangi rakyat kecil, serta bermanis-manis mulut. Padahal sebelumnya orang-orang mengenalnya sebagai sosok yang tidak religius, suka main dukun, tak becus mendidik anak-anaknya yang gemar berjudi, mabuk-mabukan, dan sering menggauli sundal pasar.” (Julian 2019, 23-24)

“They said Haji Kayim only became good when he wanted to run for village chief. Suddenly, his appearance changed to being religious, he diligently went to the mosque and recitation event, liked to donate, visited poor people, and had a sweet mouth. Even though previously people knew him as a figure that was not religious, liked to visit dukun, was incapable of educating his children who liked to gamble, drank, and often had sex with market prostitutes.” (The researcher translation)

Haji Kayim's strategy to change his identity from a non-religious person to a religious person supports Jenkins statement that identity involves two criteria of comparison between persons or things: *similarity* and *difference* (Jenkins 2008, 17). Haji Kayim, by doing good deeds, associates his position or his identity with religious people. He wants to make himself more similar to what is considered as good and religious people for this identity will benefit him. However, at the same time, he also differentiates himself from people who are not religious and not good since the identity brings disadvantage for him. Hopefully, by connecting himself to religious identity, Haji Kayim will get more support from the villagers of Tanjung Mayang. He, hence, will have bigger opportunities to be village chief. The position itself brings myriad possibilities because of power and access gained by a village chief. As Rahmawati et.al stated that access to power and control over social spaces has made village chiefs highly respected in their respective communities. In the economic field, the village chief

can manage resource allocation and finances within the village. In the political field, village chiefs can cultivate favorable relations with political figures such as party members and prospective electoral candidates when political events and regional elections are held (2021, 88–89).

The strategy changing applied by Haji Kayim is a response toward Gin's increasing popularity due to her good personality. She becomes the talks of the villagers.

"Di sini tak ada orang kaya sedermawan dia."

"Betul. Orang-orang kaya di sini kikir."

"Menurutku dia lebih islami daripada haji-haji itu."

"Bagaimana bisa?"

"Menyantuni fakir miskin dan anak yatim, apakah itu bukan ajaran islam? Bersedekah *jariyah*, apakah itu bukan ajaran Islam? Sedangkan orang-orang kaya itu? Hanya menumpuk kekayaan, naik haji berkali-kali tanpa peduli rumah tetangganya yang nyaris roboh, tidak mencium bau kelaparan, dan tak punya sedikit pun rasa iba melihat anak-anak putus sekolah. Sekarang aku tanya lagi, kalau sudah begitu, kira-kira siapa pengkhianat agama?" (Julian 2019, 22)

"There are no rich people here as generous as she [Tan Gin Nio] is."

"That's right. The rich people here are miserly."

"I think she is more Islamic than those Hajjis."

"How come?"

"Supporting the poor and orphans, is that not an Islamic teaching? Giving charity, is that not an Islamic teaching? Meanwhile, how about those rich people? [They are] just accumulating wealth, going on the Hajj many times without caring about his neighbor's nearly-collapsed-house, ignoring the smell of hunger, and not having the slightest pity for seeing children dropping out of school. Now I ask again, if that's the case, who are the religious traitors?" (The researcher translation)

The above evidence reveals that Gin is the favorite of many villagers. Thus, rumor spreads that she also runs for village chief election, which she neither confirms nor denies. The words "more Islamic" refers to the benevolence done by a person to others in the context of Islam, for example supporting the poor and giving charity. Thus, "more Islamic" expresses significant matters in the context of village chief election. Therefore, it relates to the image a person that should present in order to be accepted by the other person or group.

The villagers of Tanjung Mayang undeniably respect and welcome to a village chief who is willingly to help and advance their life. Jenkins stated that this is the internal moment of the dialectic of identification with respect to public image. The external moment is the reception by others of that presentation: they can accept it or not (Jenkins 2008, 93).

From the analysis above, this short story strongly reveals binary opposition between Tan Gin Nio and Haji Kayim based on their position, gender, ethnicity, and religion which is presented in the Table 1.

Table 1: Binary opposition between Haji Kayim and Tan Gin Nio.

Features of Binary Opposition	Haji Kayim	Tan Gin Nio
Position	the Subject	the Other
Gender	Man	Woman
Ethnicity	Indonesian (native)	Chinese (non-native)
Religion	Muslim	Christian

The table discloses the imbalance of characteristics between both characters. In addition, the differences of the characters bring unequal power between the majority and the minority. The first is depicted as having immense power to oppress, therefore, put the latter in the powerless and marginal position. From the binary opposition in table above, the othering practices in the short story will be explained as follows.

3. The Absolute, The Other and Othering

This part discloses analysis on how Tan Gin Nio experiences othering from the majority in terms of gender, ethnicity, and religion. The setting of situation in Royyan Julian's short story is village chief election. The villagers of Tanjung Mayang are divided into two groups, those who want Tan Gin Nio to be their village chief and the other who support Haji Kayim. This situation, undoubtedly, creates tension between those supporters. Tan Gin Nio's supporters attempt to find

justification in order to achieve their goal. However, the opposed-group refuses. It is shown in the evidence below:

“Gin tidak pantas jadi kades.”
“Kenapa begitu?”
“Ia Cina, bukan pribumi, dan tidak lama pindah ke sini.”
“Ia tak tahu apa-apa tentang desa ini.”
“*Tapi* ia peduli.”
“Perempuan dan orang kafir tidak boleh jadi pemimpin.”
“Kata Ra Mahfud, syarat utama calon pemimpin adalah adil.”
“Adil saja tidak cukup. Ia harus laki-laki dan muslim.”
“Ra, apakah menurut *sampean* Gin cocok jadi pemimpin?”
“Gin itu orang baik.” (Julian 2019, 23)

“Gin does not deserve to be a village chief.”
“Why is that?”
“She is Chinese, not native, and move here not long ago.”
“She did not know anything about this village.”
“But she cares.”
“Women and infidel are not allowed to be leaders.”
“Ra Mahfud said, the main requirement for a prospective leader is to be fair.”
“Just being fair is not enough. He [a leader] must be male and Muslim.”
“Ra, do you think Gin is suitable to be a leader?”
“Gin is a good person.” (The researcher translation)

Those conversations above indicate Gin as a woman who is having lack quality compared to a man, Haji Kayim. This is in line with Beauvoir who argues that in men’s perspective, woman is the Other, while man is the Subject or the Absolute (Beauvoir 1956, 16). Gin is framed as someone who does not have “desirable characteristic” (Brons 2015, 70) to be a leader in Tanjung Mayang as she is a woman, non-native, and non-Muslim, thus, she is the Other. Haji Kayim, conversely, possesses those characteristics, hence, puts him in the position of the Subject or the Absolute. This happened because according to Beauvoir, men identify women as part of the environment they move in, as objects, as not-men, as a negatively-defined absence of maleness, as a deviation and an auxiliary feature of humanity, whereas men are both the positive presence and the neutral standard. (Selinger 2014, 4). In addition, Beauvoir’s description of how woman is equated with sex in this male-dominated worldview is among the

most widely known aspects of the Othering of woman (Selinger 2014, 5). In this context Gin is powerless; therefore, she is susceptible to be victim of violence. She is denied for her rights to be a leader because of her identities as a part of minority group. Hikmawati (2017, 339) stated that women are a vulnerable demographic who are frequently victims of institutional violence, particularly those from minority groups. This is because their identities, such as gender, ethnicity, class, religion, and so on, intersect, making them more vulnerable.

Madura is portrayed as identical with Islam and its majority of people is Muslim (Siddiq 2023, 25; Zubairi 2020, 2; Idris 2018, 68). Nevertheless, undeniably, there are also Madurese people who are Christians (Siddiq 2023, 33). Related to ethnicity, Prihartanti, Taufik, & Thoyibi contend that Indonesian society can be classified into two categories, natives and non-natives (as cited in Al Humaidy et al. 2020, 1). Chinese ethnicity is included in non-native (Al Humaidy et al. 2020, 1) or “stranger” (Hidayat and Farid 2021, 19). Gin’s position, as someone who has different identity as non-native and non-Muslim, leads to her being marginalized and eventually experiencing othering. The act of putting someone or certain group into an unequal relation by the other group based on specific identity is considered as Othering (Brons 2015; Powell and Menendian 2015). Those quotations strongly disclose unequal identity as well as unequal relationship between Tan Gin Nio and Haji Kayim. Haji Kayim’s supporters try in every possible ways to discard Gin and “diminish her character” (Julian 2019, 23).

The othering practices by Haji Kayim’s men prove that, as the subject, they do not want to be the object. It is because they think for being the object is insignificant and meaningless or what Beauvoir said “the inessential” (Beauvoir 1956, 17). Tan Gin Nio is treated in such a way by Haji Kayim and his supporters to show that they are the One and she is the Other. Moreover, Haji Kayim’s supporter said “Women and infidel are not allowed to be leaders.” (Julian 2019, 23). Infidel, in this short story, experiences injustice and mischief conduct even after she dies. On the seventh day after Gin passes away, one of the villagers saw Mogut carried a body between the mangrove tress at the south of cemetery. Royyan Julian states,

“Itu pasti jenazah Gin.”

“Tak ada jenazah baru selain dia.”

“Lagian dia kafir. Mogut hanya memakan jenazah orang syirik dan jahat.”
(Julian 2019, 25)

"That must be Gin's body."

"There are no new bodies besides her."

"Besides, she is an infidel. Mogut only eats the bodies of shirk and evil people."
(The researcher translation)

In certain areas of Madura, people believe that Mogut is a corpse thief who has the form of a monster as a consequence of his practice in dealing with the evil in order to be wealthy (*pesugihan*). Some villages call this creature as 'Mogut'. His body is described as resembling a goat standing upright on two legs like a human—reminiscent of satanic figures in Western tradition. Mogut does not need a hoe or shovel to dig a grave. By exerting magical power, the corpse protrudes itself from the grave without damaging the grave. In other areas of Madura, this corpse-stealing demon is known as 'gogor' with different posture. Gogor does not eat corpse (Julian 2021; 2022, 164).

The quotation above portrays the disadvantageous position toward Gin as a minority person who has different religion from the majority Muslim in Madura. The religious difference leads to prejudice toward Gin as she is described as someone who is *shirk*, which means someone who associates God with other deities and becomes legally equivalent to unbelief or *kufir* (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2023). She is hence, considered as immoral and evil just because she is not Muslim. Malicious and immoral person must be demolished; therefore, it is natural for Mogut to eat her body.

C. CONCLUSION

Royyan Julian's story captures relation between different ethnic groups, religions and gender in Madura, particularly in a time of politic in Tanjung Mayang village. Represented by two characters, Tan Gin Nio and Haji Kayim, the story illustrates blatant comparison of identity and unequal position as well as imbalance power between Tan Gin Nio and Haji Kayim. Tan Gin Nio is depicted as a woman, Chinese, and

Christian. Meanwhile Haji Kayim is portrayed as a man, Madurese, and Muslim.

Those identity differences lead to different treatment, evaluation, and also prejudice as the first is the Other and the latter is the Absolute. The unequal power between both characters puts the minority and powerless character, Tan Gin Nio, encounters othering. In order to gain ultimate position and power, Haji Kayim and his followers as majority people exercise variety ways to achieve it. Thus, this short story highlights how differences in cultural identity often leads to conflict that ultimately situates the minority in an unpleasant position until the end of life. In addition, the content of this short story adds to a long list of literary works that depict injustice as well as unhealthy and unequal relations between ethnicities, especially Chinese and Indonesian people in Indonesia. Through his work, Royyan Julian successfully portrays one of the long standing phenomenon in Indonesia that identity is really crucial in interpersonal relationship.

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