# PART THREE: Sexuality and Nation

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# CHAPTER SEVEN: The Postcolonial State and Gay and Lesbi Subjectivities

## HEGEMONY AND SUBJECTIVITY

Ruling or dominant conceptions of the world [may] not directly prescribe the mental content of … the heads of the dominated classes. But the circle of dominant ideas does accumulate the symbolic power to map or classify the world for others; its classifications do acquire not only the constraining power of dominance over other modes of thought but also the inertial authority of habit and instinct. It becomes the horizon of the taken for granted: what the world is and how it works, for all practical purposes. —Stuart Hall, "The Toad in the Garden"

Part 2 of this book explored what it means to be gay or lesbi in daily life. Building upon these materials and also the discussions of history, mass media, and globalization in part 1, this chapter further theorizes the relationship between sexuality and nation. In the postcolonial Indonesia of the 1970s through the 1990s, when the gay and lesbi subject positions first took form, the authoritarian New Order (Orde Baru) regime of Soeharto had the resources to impose its agenda to a greater degree than the Old Order regime of Sukarno (1945–1969) it replaced, or the colonial regimes of Japan and Holland. Indonesians did—and continue to—resist this state power. What is of interest is that such resistance often takes the form of transformation rather than rejection. The very terms "gay" and "lesbi" might be taken to indicate that gay and lesbi Indonesians identify with a global gay and lesbian movement and thus stand outside national discourse. However, it seems quite clear that they lie deeply within that discourse. They also imagine global linkages despite the fact that gay and lesbi Indonesians rarely travel outside Indonesia or encounter gay or lesbian Westerners.

Stuart Hall notes that "ruling ideas may dominate other conceptions of the social world."1 Theories of ideology tend to view this influence in binary terms: one either believes the ideology and suffers from false consciousness or sees the ideology as such and rejects it. One is hailed, or one turns away (Althusser 1971). Theories of hegemony, which typically

trace their origin to the work of Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937), offer a more nuanced framework for analyzing "stories that find sustenance in pervasive commonsensical, almost unconscious, dominant ways of understanding, experiencing, and acting in the world" (Helmreich 1998:12). In developing his theory of hegemony in the 1930s, Gramsci was concerned with orthodox Marxism’s inability to explain the failure of the peoples of Western Europe to revolt against their states in the manner of the Russian Revolution twenty years earlier. Gramsci located this theoretical failure in an orthodox Marxist "economism" that "asks the question: ‘who profits directly from the initiative under consideration,’ and replies with a line of reasoning which is as simplistic as is it fallacious: the ones who profit directly are a certain fraction of the ruling class" (1971:166).

In response Gramsci refined the notion of hegemony, a term already in use in Marxist analysis at the time. Gramsci did not see most societies as controlled solely through physical coercion; while it could certainly exist (as Gramsci’s imprisonment must have made clear to him), Gramsci saw it as a means of last resort. He believed that most contemporary societies were controlled by a hegemony functioning first and foremost through "leadership"—the winning of consent through cultural means. Such consent is not reducible to false consciousness because it requires real concessions; it is partial and historically unstable, vulnerable to transformation particularly when such transformation does not directly threaten the hegemony itself. For Gramsci, "hegemony was, in effect, the basis for the reformulation of the doctrine of historical materialism to allow room for the influence of ideas and the powerful effect of human will" (Kurtz 1996:108; see also Crehan 2002:104). One way in which hegemonies differ from ideologies is that the former tend to be taken for granted (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991:25). Such naturalization is possible because, in contrast to the specific content of ideologies (Althusser 1971:162), hegemonies "hail" persons to a range of debate. This nonspecificity gives hegemonies their flexibility and dynamism—you can argue as a Republican or Democrat over a variety of issues, but more important is the range of debate such "extremes" define. Hegemony permits, even requires, diversity. If ideology clothes the self from a specific wardrobe, then hegemony is a style—a loose imperative that permits variation within a "horizon of the taken for granted."2

Gay and lesbi Indonesians have received little academic attention not only because they do not fit within an ethnolocalized spatial scale, but because no discourse appears to correlate with their existence. My analysis departs from most of the literature on sexuality and nationalism in that I ask how the state can shape sexual subject positions that it neither incites as normative nor calls into being through oppression, what Foucault termed a reverse discourse (Foucault 1978). In the case of gay and

lesbi Indonesians, sexuality—what might appear to be the most intimate, personal, prepublic domain of life—is configured through state discourse, but not in an intentional manner or as a form of oppositional consciousness (Sandoval 1991). In Indonesia "the state’s powers are manifest less through coercive force or economic interventions than in a quieter percolation through schools, village meeting halls, minor bureaucratic offices, churches, and the like" (Keane 1997:39). It is these indirect "percolations" of national discourse that gay and lesbi Indonesians transform through their sexual subjectivities.

To further illuminate how sexuality and nation intersect in gay and lesbi subjectivities, it is necessary to specify the most relevant elements of national discourse. Though the Pancasila or Five Principles of the state, first set out during Sukarno’s rule, have been central (Morfit 1981; Ramage 1995), these principles are relatively abstract. For the New Order state (and the regimes following it), two of the most significant elements of national discourse that concretize Pancasila’s principles of unity, morality, and justice have been the archipelago concept (wawasan nusantara) and the family principle (azas kekeluargaan).

In previous chapters I foreshadowed the influence of these elements of national discourse—from the notion of "archipelago style" to the dynamics of gay and lesbi "heterosexual" marriages. One could conduct a thought experiment in which the gay and lesbi subject positions had formed under a different set of circumstances. What would these subject positions have looked like had they developed under Sukarno’s Old Order government, which was in power from independence in 1945 until the mid-1960s? During this period Sukarno attempted to build nationalism through a much more antagonistic relationship to the world outside Indonesia. National belonging was articulated not so much in terms of paternalist development but as an oppositional national identity. In such a context Indonesians might have even produced ethnolocalized homosexualities. Yet this did not happen: the gay and lesbi subject positions came into being under the New Order’s hegemony. How has this contingent conjunction shaped what it means to be gay or lesbi?

## THE ARCHIPELAGO CONCEPT

I used [the term "archipelago"] only once, and that was to designate, via the title of Solzhenitsyn’s work, the carceral archipelago: the way in which a form of punitive system is physically dispersed yet at the same time covers the entirety of a society. —Michel Foucault, "Questions on Geography"

Throughout the period of anticolonial nationalism, intellectuals and political leaders struggled to define a social and political entity that would challenge Dutch rule. It was a breathtakingly new idea: "Indonesian nationalism, the European-derived idea that the diverse indigenous people of the territory then called Netherlands India constituted a single nation and had a right to independence and a state of their own, dates as a political movement only from the first or second decade of the twentieth century" (Liddle 1988:4). It was far from certain that the colonial entity the "Dutch East Indies" would be succeeded by an entity with identical boundaries, rather than a number of smaller states. It was a question of similitude and difference: what did the members of this far-flung archipelago share to counterbalance differences in ethnicity, language, religion, wealth, colonial experience, and culture? How was the new nation to integrate an imagined community of "broad, horizontal comradeship" (Anderson 1983), given the regional history of "deploying spatially defined imagery for the legitimacy of systems of political and spiritual authority" (Kuipers 1998:8–9)?3 It is in this sense that the notion of "Indonesia" has been the greatest legacy of the colonial encounter, as territorial boundaries have been to many postcolonial nation-states. By converting the colonial concept of the "East Indies" into something authentic, the state reinterprets denizens of what was known as the "Malay Archipelago" (Wallace 1962) as citizens of an Indonesian archipelago. This is a question of recognition, but whereas national recognition in liberal multicultural democracies is usually assumed to be the recognition of difference (Povinelli 2002:17), from the beginning Indonesian national discourse also framed recognition in terms of similitude. During the final decades of colonial rule, the vision of a nation where difference would be the precondition for similitude—like islands are necessary for an archipelago—became increasingly codified. One important moment was the Kongres Pemuda or "Youth Meeting" of 1928. At this meeting, "an ethnically diverse, Dutch-educated native intelligentsia … renamed Malay (bahasa Melayu) as Indonesian (bahasa Indonesia), language of their nation-tobe. Their famous ‘Oath of the Youth,’ still repeated on its anniversary every year across the country, conferred public, formal recognition on the project of a unified people (satu bangsa), speaking one language (satu bahasa), in a single homeland (satu nusa)" (J. Errington 1998:52).

The use of nusa (island) for the unitary nation demonstrates the recursivity of what would become the archipelago concept: islands make up a national archipelago, but on a metalevel the nation is a single island in a global archipelago of nation-states. The term nusantara (archipelago) (which can be used as a colloquial term for Indonesia itself) combines nusa with antara, which means "between" in Indonesian but in the original Sanskrit means "other" (R. Jones 1973:93). It has been dated to copper

inscriptions from 1305 (Avé 1989:230) but was not central to the anticolonial movement. The term nusantara appears to have been first used in its modern sense in the 1920s by several Dutch figures, including Brandes and E. F. Douwes Dekker (R. Jones 1973:94). It was then taken up by Ki Hadjar Dewantara, an important nationalist figure and founder of the Taman Siswa schools (Avé 1989:231), but appears nowhere in the 1945 constitution.4 The archipelago concept become elaborated and implemented as a central element of state discourse only during the postcolonial era, in the context of an international dispute over maritime boundaries. At the First International Conference of the Law of the Sea, held in Geneva in December 1957, the Indonesian state argued that its borders were not limited to a certain distance from the coast of each island, as was the international norm (and as Indonesia had inherited from the colonial state), but should include all of the waters "within" the archipelago (see figs. 7–1 and 7–2).5 Indonesia’s request was granted, and the Second International Conference in 1960 recognized the notion of an "archipelagic state" and with it the archipelago concept. The archipelago concept took its final form only in March 1973,6 and the map of the nation showing the archipelago concept was formally introduced on May 2, 1984, at the height of the New Order.7

Since the 1970s the archipelago concept has been promulgated by the state—particularly the military—as a cultural concept wherein similitude encompasses difference. It is a way to think of oneself in simultaneously ethnolocalized and national terms—for instance, as both Makassarese and Indonesian, or both Sundanese and Indonesian. A core element of this project has been to extend the archipelago concept backward in time and claim it as "indigenous." In so doing, this discourse attempts to forge a citizen-subject whose selfhood is keyed to national culture as much as ethnolocalized culture. Thus Mochtar Kusumaatmadja, foreign affairs minister from 1978 to 1988, claimed "it would not be exaggerating to say that it is [through the archipelago concept] … that the effort or the journey of the Indonesian nation towards rediscovering its own subjectivity has been carried out" (1982:25, emphasis added). General Benny Moerdani, one of the most powerful figures of the New Order, claimed that the archipelago concept could be found not only in the 686 oath of King Syailendra of the Sumatra-based Sriwiyayan empire, but in the fifteenth-century "palapa oath" of Gajah Mada, a renowned chief minister of the Java-based Majapahit empire (Moerdani 1986:35–36). It is unclear to which islands Gajah Mada referred. The relevant line of this oath is as follows (in Javanese): Lamun huwus kalah Nusantara/Insun amukti palapa, lamun kalah (Once I have subdued the Nusantara, only then will I rest) (Sudibyo 1991; see also Avé 1989:230; R. Jones 1973:93–94).



 Figure 7–1. Indonesia’s borders before the invention of the archipelago concept, as inherited from a 1939 colonial law. From Lembaga Ketahanan Nasional (1995:16).

 

Figure 7–2. Indonesia’s borders after the invention of the archipelago concept in December 1957. Lembaga Ketahanan Nasional (1995:17).

Through the efforts of state bureaucracies and officials, including not only Kusumaatmadja and Moerdani but Lieutenant General Ali Moertopo, one of the most powerful figures of the New Order, "the notion of archipelagic culture (kebudayaan nusantara) has served as a central attribute of the unified nation, as one of the pivotal notions that has enabled the positing of the national subject’s continuity across History" (Acciaioli 2001:12). In this understanding, negara (state) and nusantara (archipelago) come together to define Indonesian uniqueness—what Sukarno had in 1959 already identified as the "national personality" (kepribadian bangsa; Bourchier 1997:157). Within what the national anthem terms "our lands and waters" (tanah air kita), Indonesians supposedly inherit a "single vision" (pandangan satu) from their ancestors (Moerdani 1986:36); Indonesia is understood to be a single culture in which similitude trumps difference, a unified culture that will allow Indonesians to selectively accept or reject global influences. Thus Indonesia’s postcolonial future, where the archipelago concept will be the "bridge" incorporating the global within the national, can be described as the zaman nusantara (archipelagic era) (Rustam 1986:78). Frequently, official writings on the archipelago concept conclude it is a cara pandang bangsa Indonesia; literally, a national style of seeing (Sudibyo 1991:2).

Foucault (1978) identified the concept of an archipelago in repressive terms. Yet his understanding of power as productive and "capillary"—distributed in mundane practices as much as official ideologies—suggests that the notion of archipelagic culture can be vulnerable to transformation. Troubling notions of similitude and difference, the archipelago concept can also be used to problematize received understandings of exterior and interior. State ideology is never without its contradictions. The archipelago concept implies that all regions have equal status, but the obvious political and economic superiority of Java (indeed, of Jakarta, the capital) recalls colonial and precolonial modes of sovereignty, when the ruler’s palace was the "axis of the world" (Anderson 1990:41). However, one of the best-known models for sovereignty and national belonging in postcolonial Indonesia does not invoke a core and periphery. It is Taman Mini, the "Beautiful Indonesian Park in Miniature," brainchild of Soeharto’s wife following a visit to Disneyland, with its cultural pavilions for each province, surrounding a central lake with tiny islands mapping the archipelago. This park has attracted attention (e.g., Pemberton 1994) because it demonstrates how the state deploys difference. The archipelago concept not only tolerates but demands difference as the raw material the nation incorporates into "unity." By ethnolocalizing this difference, the state claims it as authentic, asli, prior to the colonial encounter and the postcolonial state.

 

Figure 7–3. The nation subsumes the ethnolocal. Abas (1987:149).

The archipelago concept is easily visualized as a conceptual line drawn around Indonesia’s islands. It also appears in schematic representations such as the "identity diagram," which appears in a work on language policy with the explanation that "The rectangle ABCD encloses all features that comprise national as well as ethnic identities and identifies them as a socio-cultural and political unity" (Abas 1987:149; fig. 7–3). By refracting difference through the archipelago concept, the state acquires legitimacy. The state can be taken to represent the similitude that difference needs to be legible as such: the "wawasan nusantara envisages, in both abstract and material form, the unification of the archipelagic nation-state as a total organism … stressing unity above decentralization" (van Langenberg 1990:124; see also Fletcher 1994). As the national motto states, Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, unity in diversity, one over many. Similitude has been the modality of the postcolonial state’s authoritarianism, but also of a distinct and, for many Indonesians, deeply felt sense of nationalism. While Indonesians are no more likely to accept uncritically the archipelago concept than all U.S. citizens accept the idea of the melting pot, the archipelago concept is hegemonic: backed by state power, it dominates "common sense" and helps define the bounds of acceptable discussion. For instance, it shapes notions of "tradition" and "local autonomy" characterizing contemporary politics of indigenous rights in Indonesia, with their focus on recognition (Li 2003). That the Indonesian state’s hegemony

is never stable or complete does not nullify its power: it creates space for improvisation and transformation—for dubbing—of which the gay and lesbi subject positions are signal examples.

## THE FAMILY PRINCIPLE

The history of political ideas begins, in fact, with the assumption that kinship in blood is the sole possible ground of community in political functions … but the family here spoken of is not exactly the family as understood by a modern. —Henry Maine, Ancient Law

Postcolonial states typically justify their sovereignty by claiming an organic link to their citizenry that the colonial power did not possess, even as they take up virtually unchanged the physical boundaries of that regime. Foucault was speaking of Europe when he claimed that historically "[the family] disappears as the model of government, except for a certain number of residual themes of a religious or moral nature" (1991:99); the trope of the family remains central to many modern governmentalities. Nationalism has been a "normalizing process that imagined modern collectivities as ethnically homogeneous and inherently masculinist entities [and] depended on the foundational construction of constitutive outsides" (Bunzl 2004:13). In the Austrian context Bunzl analyzes, "homosexuals thus became central players in the social drama of modernity. Constituted as always already outside the margins of respectability, their abjection gave coherence to the fiction of German nationness" (13). In the Indonesian case we do not find homophile movements going back a hundred years, nor do we find an explicit focus upon homosexuality as a social ill. Yet while gay and lesbi Indonesians were not "constituted" per se by the Indonesian state, they are very much a "constitutive outside," the implicit if rarely acknowledged failure of kinship and thus the nation itself.

Just as postcolonial states take up colonial boundaries, so this trope of the family typically indigenizes a notion of the middle-class nuclear family characteristic of colonial sensibilities (Chatterjee 1993; Stoler 2002b). Historically, marriage and family life in what is now called "Indonesia" involved relations between social groups, not just a bride and groom; as a result "the rhetoric of emotions and personal experience associated with marital and sexual relations can be a potent idiom for talking about the self in the context of social groups, categories and relations" (Kuipers 1998:44). The idea that "familyness" (kekeluargaan; derived from keluarga, "family") is fundamental to being Indonesian dates back to the early

period of nationalism (Bourchier 1997) and "found its first institutional expression in the 1920s in the establishment of the Taman Siswa national educational movement [founded by Ki Hadjar Dewantara, which set] forth for the first time the idea that the internal order of an organization should be sustained by familial bonds, [providing] a clear model for the form of future Indonesian organizations" (Shiraishi 1997:82; see also K. Dewantara 1959:10–16). Thus Ki Hadjar Dewantara played an important role in establishing both the archipelago concept and the family principle. Alongside Dewantara, other key early nationalist figures such as Sukarno, Hatta, and Supomo helped articulate the family principle as central to what being "Indonesian" meant (Reeve 1985). Like the archipelago concept, the family principle came into its own as a postcolonial trope: "After Indonesian independence, the family ideology was used in educational practice in a different way: all Indonesians became part of a family in which the Indonesian government was the parent and the student-citizens were the children" (Kuipers 1998:137).

By the Old Order’s end, "sexuality had become, in multiple ways, a primary idiom through which national identity was articulated, intra-national divisions were stated or smoothed, and international conflicts were defined and waged" (Dwyer 2000:38). However, it was during the New Order that the family principle (azas kekeluargaan) came to the fore as a principle of governance: "There is no question that the remarkable staying power of [the New Order] … depended in large measure on its ability to insert itself deep within the domestic sphere throughout Indonesian society" (S. Brenner 1998:226; see also Chapman 1996). This concept "has a powerful and pervasive ideological presence in modern Indonesia. It is enshrined in the 1945 constitution, and the family language is inseparable from the political language of Indonesia’s New Order" (Shiraishi 1997:81). It was during the New Order that the idea of Indonesia as a familial state (negara kekeluargaan) was first articulated by state officials (Bourchier 1997:170). The family principle was inculcated through the public education system, where "school lessons linguistically construct a single model of the family" (Shiraishi 1997:131). As a result, "the traditional family is now merely customary while the Indonesian family is an effect of the nation, deriving its legitimacy and its form from outside itself" (Siegel 1998:87). At issue is thus not just state paternalism (bapakisme) or the "state momism" discussed in chapter 4, but the heteronormativity that links these together to produce the modern family as foundational unit of the nation.

Family planning has been central to the promulgation of this heteronormative family principle. In June 1970, at the outset of his rule, Soeharto established the National Family Planning Coordinating Board (Badan Koodinasi Keluarga Berencana Nasional, BKKBN). From its beginnings

family planning was used to distinguish the New Order from its predecessor: it "signaled the reversal of the strong pro-natal policy it had inherited from the previous government, which had regarded contraception almost as criminal" (BKKBN 1999:5). In contrast to the pronatalist stance of the Old Order (Dwyer 2000:36), now interpreted as irresponsible, the New Order would control and manage families, and it would be the modernity and prosperity of these families, not their mere number, that would constitute progress. As Soeharto declared in 1993, "Indonesian families should be the place for nation-building" (BKKBN 1999:26). Thus, "The family planning program can be seen as part of a project of redefinition of Indonesian political culture, where the mass of the people are becoming receptive to the right claimed by the state to intervene in civil society, as well as in political life. This is an important part of forging the new society embodied in the New Order’s vision of kekeluargaan, with the state embodying paternalistic authority" (Robinson 1989:30–31).

Key to the success of family planning has been disseminating the notion of normative (normal) sexuality. Persons who comply with the Family Planning program are known as "acceptors" (akseptor); accepting the "transfer of responsibility" for family planning from the state to individual helps make them normal (Warwick 1986:455). It is primarily through defining the normal, rather than the deviant, that the Indonesian state has linked sexuality and nation (Dwyer 2000:28). Sexuality and nation are to come together in a particular kind of heteronormative family: male head of household, wife who might work but always puts her role as wife and mother first, and two children. This family came to symbolize the stability and integrity of the social order.

As discussed in chapter 4, this is a sexuality formed through notions of choice and love. It can be shaped by globalizing discourses—Valentine’s Day, for instance, has become a popular celebration of normal sexuality—but is seen as originating in Indonesia. While literally clothed in the language of tradition (see fig. 7–6), its authenticity comes from its link to the nation: "The goal of preserving national unity, fought and won by the youth of the 1920s, continues to this day as the overarching goal of the country’s life as a nation—an end anchored on the nurturing of the family as the strong foundation of society" (BKKBN 1999:20).

This is the paradox of Indonesian postcoloniality: "Authenticity does not accrue but, on the contrary, must be built in as a unique quality that will survive through time, in spite of time" (Pemberton 1994:159). To not follow Family Planning is tantamount to disavowing national belonging; marginalized social groups, such as ethnic Chinese, can thus be presented as resistant to Family Planning (Departemen Dalam Negeri 1974:37; see also Butt 2001). When, for instance, a gay man in Makassar said one reason he married a woman was "because in Indonesian culture (budaya

Indonesia) the family is a joy of its own," the notion of "Indonesian culture" he deployed is not outside state discourse. Through the "spectacle" of Family Planning, "the Indonesian state at once offers a compelling version of nationalism and sexuality and positions itself as the primary author of national representation. By staging these spectacles, the state works to instill a regime where people monitor themselves and their sexual practices to accommodate to public displays of sexual ‘normalcy’" (Dwyer 2000:41).

By the 1980s the family principle had become a primary mode through which the New Order state articulated its notion of development: the nuclear family, not the citizen in isolation, was construed as the smallest unit of the nation (Suryakusuma 1996:95–97). The ideal citizen response to everything from regional separatism to HIV education was secara kekeluargaan, "family style" (among other things, this implies settling disputes without resorting to the law): "The family … bears a heavy burden in the transformation of Indonesia’s population into ‘modern’ citizens of the nation-state" (S. Brenner 1998:228). This concept of the family is not representational but normative; it has been "aimed not at accurately representing the diverse social entities that we call families but at presenting a model that all families are supposed to emulate, directed toward the furthering of goals that always exceed the boundaries of the family itself" (S. Brenner 1998:228).

When the Indonesian state declares that the family is the smallest unit of the nation, it has a specific kind of family in mind, with particular gender and class characteristics: the ideal citizen family is not a "traditional" extended family but the modern, heterosexual, paternalistic nuclear family (figs. 7–4, 7–5), the middle-class family of consumerism (see chapter 4). In many understandings worldwide, the middle class "occupies a precarious position along two continua" (Liechty 2003:7)—between poor and rich, on the one hand, and tradition and modernity, on the other. For the Indonesian case I would add a third continuum: the middle class occupies a national space, between local and global. Gay and lesbi Indonesians lie at the intersection of these three continua and are shaped by the notions of choice found in dominant ideologies of the middle class.

The family principle has a strong temporal element. Families are actively built through the efforts of their members and the state; they are cause and product of national development. They are both foundational element and microcosm of the nation, a domestic Taman Mini: like that theme park, the ideal nuclear family is to be a "perfectly cultural representation" of Indonesia (Pemberton 1994:153): "In the ideologies of the New Order, the family/household is not considered to be autonomous in any way; it is merely a fraction of a national whole, a unit that has no independent meaning or existence apart from the nation-state" (S. Brenner 1998:238). Heterosexuality animates the family principle; in postcolonial Indonesia, men and women are to choose heterosexual marriage based on love.8 Through this choice they make the families that are the building blocks of the nation, and through this choice they also make themselves into proper, authentic citizens who will be recognized by the nation: "[In Indonesia] sexuality and gender may be reified as essential, non-negotiable attributes of national identity" (Dwyer 2000:27).

 

Figure 7–4. The "traditional" family. BKKBN (1988:24).

 

Figure 7–5. The "modern" family. BKKBN (1988:5).

## THE ARCHIPELAGO CHILD

On February 4, 1997, a healthy baby … was born in a small village in the province of West Nusa Tenggara. His birth marked him as the 200 millionth Indonesian citizen and was celebrated as a special occasion…. The President awarded him a special name, Wahyu Nusantaraaji, which literally means "a valuable revelation to [the archipelago]." —National Family Planning Coordinating Board

Little Wahyu Nusantaraaji was certainly unaware of his name’s significance on that fateful day in 1997, but the naming of this archipelago child reveals how an articulation between the archipelago concept and the family principle is built into, indeed is defining of, Indonesian postcolonial governmentality. The intersection of the archipelago concept and the family principle is illustrated by the well-known map of Indonesia in which each province is essentialized in terms of a single "tradition," signified through clothing on a heterosexual couple (fig. 7–6; see also Rutherford 1996:584). Heterosexuality, usually placed at the bottom of such maps, constitutes ethnolocalized "diversity"; the archipelago concept (typically at the top), "unity." Together they literally bracket the national motto of "unity in diversity."



Figure 7–6. Heterosexual and ethnolocalized couples constituting the nation. Courtesy of Danilyn Rutherford.

The archipelago concept and the family principle intersect even in lower-level official discourse. I recall attending an evening neighborhood Independence Day celebration in 2000 in Makassar; as is typical, a residential street was blocked off and filled with chairs, with a stage at one end. A banner behind the stage read "different but always one" (beda tetap satu). On this evening a local official spoke to the crowd, emphasizing that "if you have a problem, go to a local leader; don’t go to the mass media or to outsiders. We should solve our problems family style (secara kekeluargaan). Even though we were from different ethnicities (suku) and religions, we are all one people (bangsa)."

The archipelago concept and the family principle are aesthetic forms and political structures—indeed, they aestheticize the political—and crucially, their intersection is predicated upon the conflation of "heterosexuality" and "choice." The growth of the individuals within the family—and the growth of the family as a unit—is national development, not just a metaphor for it. Since the New Order, development has been central to Indonesian governmentality; Soeharto termed himself the "father of development" (bapak pembangunan). It was under this discourse of heterosexualized

development that the gay and lesbi subject positions took form, and while this discourse has been partially discredited in the wake of Soeharto’s fall, no pretender to the throne—reform, civil society, human rights, or regional autonomy—has completely dissociated itself from its assumptions. Development has been linked to the archipelago concept since 1973, when Decree No. IV of the People’s Consultative Assembly (MPR) stated that the archipelago concept was to be "the concept that forms the basis of Indonesia’s national development," one that "gives life to national development in all its aspects—political, educational, social, cultural, and that of defense" (Kusumaatmadja 1982:12, 25). Another example of the archipelago concept and family principle’s intersection can be seen in that

in each provincial museum [there is] an area set aside as the Ruang Nusantara—the nusantara (archipelago) room, or gallery—where visual comparisons are made between local artifacts and those from elsewhere in Indonesia. The nusantara room might contain, for example, swords or wedding costumes from each province in the archipelago … with the implication that, for all its variations, Indonesia is one…. One of the most widely used kinds of nusantara gallery displays [is] sets of male and female dolls dressed in wedding garments of each province—a custom also seen in places like Jakarta’s Taman Mini amusement park. (Taylor 1994:79–80; emphasis added)

These archipelago rooms illustrate how the archipelago concept and the family principle intersect in national discourse: heterosexuality brings together ethnolocalized "tradition" and modern choice; it turns diversity into unity, reproducing national belonging. Throughout its career, the concept of the Indonesian nation has been constructed in terms of a "collective ethical agent" which, through instrumental rationality, creates forms of organization that make the modern Indonesian nation-state possible (Cheah 2003:256). What has largely escaped scholarly attention is how this collective ethical agent, and its form of organization, are founded in heteronormativity.

## ARCHIPELAGIC SELFHOOD

To my knowledge Wahyu Nusantaraaji is the only acknowledged archipelago child. Yet gay and lesbi Indonesians are also children of the archipelago—dubbing elements of national discourse with global discourses of homosexual desire. Without the archipelago concept and the family principle, the gay and lesbi subject positions would not have taken the forms they have. For example, as the archipelago concept shapes a sense of national subjectivity, the family principle shapes a sense that "heterosexual"

marriage is the precondition to being a successful citizen. The choice most gay and lesbi Indonesians make to marry illustrates how the gay and lesbi subject positions are archipelagic—not predicated on a singular selfhood that coheres across time and space, but capable of movement through different "islands" of life that do not need to resolve into one. The archipelago concept thus shares some elements with notions of "double consciousness" like the "Black Atlantic" that "call the very desire to be centered into question" (Gilroy 1993b:190). When in 1987 the magazine Tempo inadvertently termed the then-new gay zine GAYa Nusantara "gaya hidup nusantara," not "archipelago style" but "archipelago lifestyle," this mishearing reflected how the archipelago concept was understood to apply to individual citizen lives.9

The choice to marry indicates how the state’s archipelago concept and family principle are "dubbed" in gay and lesbi life. For most gay and lesbi Indonesians "heterosexual" marriage is assumed, and the beliefs of those who do not wish to marry make no sense, nor did my own claims that I would never marry a woman: why would you want to hurt your parents by not marrying? How will you think of yourself as an adult, as complete? For most gay and lesbi Indonesians, a multiply narrativized gay self or lesbi self can be a married, procreating self, even when marriage is to some extent a dreaded event. When a gay man turns to his lover in bed and tells him to marry, he is not confused about who he "really" is, nor is he internalizing homophobia or denying reality. He is expressing and perpetuating a subjectivity best thought of as archipelagic, rather than cosmopolitan, diasporic, or hybrid. The idea of a gay man and lesbi woman marrying each other is so rare because of the way these subjectivities straddle a contradiction—not between "tradition" and "modernity," but between two contradictory state rhetorics, the archipelago concept and the family principle. The first makes possible a subjectivity where the self does not have to be the same in all contexts. This renders thinkable a gay or lesbi self who is also "heterosexually" married. But the family principle constructs marriage as not only an alliance between families, but a totalizing conjugal relationship providing love, meaning, and purpose as well as sex, children, and a household—uniting the multifarious domains of modern life and engendering national recognition.

My discussion of gay and lesbi sociality in earlier chapters demonstrates how these Indonesians are the truest children of the archipelago: their senses of sexual selfhood are irreducible to ethnolocality. While those calling themselves gay or lesbi may think of themselves in ethnolocalized terms—as Bugis, Javanese, and so on—with regard to any number of domains of life, from kinship to religion to illness and health, in regard to their sexualities they think of themselves as gay and lesbi Indonesians. In some cases this link to national discourse is explicit, as when gay men

speak of gay identity cards or of working together as gotong royong, a term for mutual help promulgated by the state (Bowen 1986), lesbi women speak of having "no place" in Indonesia, or both name groups with terms derived from GAYa. For an entertainment event, gay men will sometimes create a "welcoming line of multi-ethnic ‘women’ of Indonesia in native costumes" (Howard 1996:297). The link to national discourse is also implicit in the sense that the gay and lesbi worlds are distributed across Indonesia, and that gayness and lesbiness are never learned from "tradition" or local knowledge. In the shadow of rhetorics of national belonging, gay men and lesbi women engage in dubbing culture, troubling the borders between similitude and difference, East and West, asli and dubbing, living apparently foreign subjectivities through reconfiguring state discourse and transforming Western concepts of homosexuality.

As noted in chapter 2, persons inhabit multiple subject positions, and those subject positions need not have isomorphic spatial scales. Persons modify subject positions as they inhabit them—subjectivities always exceed the bounds of the subject positions they instantiate—but within horizons of intelligibility. A gay man in the United States can be gay in different ways, but it is unlikely he believes the concept "gay" is unique to Iowa, or to Boston: improvisation usually takes place within the subject position’s spatial scale. Since subject positions can be structured by multiple spatial scales, there is no reason that gay and lesbi could not be ethnolocalized. Thus it is all the more astounding that the ethnographic materials presented in this book offer not a single unambiguous case of someone understanding themselves as, say, gay Javanese or lesbi Balinese. For over thirty years persons of the archipelago have been inhabiting these subject positions across multiple lines of difference: class, generation, region, urban versus rural, religion. Yet a powerful similitude, a sense of national subjectivity, links these persons, making all the more salient the failure to attain national belonging, authenticity, and recognition.

The dominant logic of the Western gay and lesbian subject positions originates in "confessional" metaphors, taken up by sexology and psychology since the mid-nineteenth century, that assume an interior self is the origin of subjectivity (Foucault 1978). This self’s authenticity is contingent upon similitude: one is to be the same sexual person in all domains of life. One is to "come out," first by coming out to oneself, then to one’s parents, workplace, and so on. This sense of expansion through time was codified in the mid-twentieth century by psychologists like Erik Erikson—whose fifth stage of self-development, "subjectivity versus role diffusion," valorizes a unitary subjectivity that does not vary with social context—and specifically by psychological models of "Homosexual Identity Formation," sometimes known as "HIF" models. One review of HIF models emphasized that "although ‘coming out’ begins when individuals define

themselves to themselves as homosexual, lesbians and gay males typically report an increased desire over time to disclose their homosexual identity to at least some members of an expanding series of audiences. Thus, coming out, or identity disclosure, takes place at a number of levels: to self, to other homosexuals, to heterosexual friends and family, to co-workers, and to the public at large" (Troiden 1988:36).

The origin of this "desire over time to disclose" is treated as a presocial, universal need: "to the extent that people routinely present themselves as homosexual in most or all social settings, their homosexual identities are realized" (Troiden 1988:41). In this interpretation, to say one is gay or lesbian only to certain people, in certain places, or at certain times, means one’s self-development is incomplete. Millions of gay and lesbian Westerners live their lives through this dominant ontology of selfhood. This is not a totalizing discourse; there are, for instance, many men and women in the West who have same-gender sex but do not term themselves gay or lesbian, and there are many men and women in the West who term themselves gay or lesbian yet engage in "heterosexual" sex. But in terms of the dominant discourse, such persons are seen as atypical, self-denying ("they’re really bisexual"), even abnormal. This is the power of the confessional discourse of homosexuality, which not only appears in social scientific literature but is produced by gay men and lesbians themselves, as in the following excerpt from a self-help text:

Coming out essentially means letting other people know that we are gay…. It takes a lot of effort to hide who you are … in the long run staying in the closet makes you feel guilty, ashamed, and unhappy. If you have to hide facets of your life, you will never be able to live freely. (Ford 1996:67–68)

These models of Western homosexual subjectivity share a lack of attention to the implicit theory of selfhood that undergirds them:

The Western conception of the person as a bounded, unique, more or less integrated motivational and cognitive universe, a dynamic center of awareness, emotion, judgment, and action organized into a distinctive whole and set contrastively both against other such wholes and against its social and natural background, is, however incorrigible it may seem to us, a rather peculiar idea within the context of the world’s cultures. (C. Geertz 1983:59)

One of the central projects of queer theory has been to denaturalize and destabilize this dominant discourse (e.g., Butler 1990; Sedgwick 1991), but often without reference to sexuality outside the West. Indeed, much of the concern with non-Westerners terming themselves "gay" or "lesbian" originates in a fear that such nomenclature inevitably brings the dominant Western discourse of homosexuality in its wake. Through concepts like "dubbing culture," I hope to indicate how such Western discourses of

homosexuality are reworked in the Indonesian context, not through "tradition" but through rhetorics of national belonging. Gay and lesbi subjectivities tend to be "archipelagic"—a more ethnographically and theoretically precise specification of multiplicity than the rather obfuscating term "fluidity." To Westerners the most striking example of this archipelagic self might be that many gay men and lesbi women marry "heterosexually," do not see this as inconsistent with their subjectivities, and assume that Western gay men and lesbians do the same. When, for instance, gay men imagine a better future, it usually takes the form of a gay world that is more socially accepted, with more places, bigger events, and more gay men in it. Yet few gay men outside of activist organizations desire a gay world in which gay men do not normatively marry women.

This is not a schizophrenic or split subjectivity in the Western sense; a closer analogue would be the metaphor of the self as actor playing different roles (a metaphor gay men and lesbi women sometimes use). In the West it is easy to imagine how someone could be a teacher and an administrator, a soccer coach and office worker, or a mother and a mountain-climber. It is more difficult for a Westerner to imagine someone being "homosexual" and "heterosexual" at the same time. However, most gay men and lesbi women consider themselves "open" in reference to the gay or lesbi world, with no necessary relation to other aspects of life. As one gay man put it: "I read the situation first. If it’s open (buka), I’m open. If it’s closed (tutup), I’m closed. What’s good is: don’t be open right away." Another gay man once mused that "in most cases I don’t think it’s right to say ‘closed’ (tertutup; the most common term); it’s more correct to say ‘closing oneself’ (menutup diri). Tertutup means anywhere at all they’re closed, like they can’t accept their situation or they are closed to everyone without exception. Menutup diri means that it depends on the location or environment." This grammatical distinction highlights a pervasive sense that what makes gay or lesbi subjectivity authentic is not uniformity over all domains of life, but participation in the gay or lesbi world—an island of life that does not necessarily have implications for other islands of life.

Such subjectivities are the kind of homosexuality that dominant Western frameworks see as immature or inauthentic. They are often labeled "situational," as if sexuality (like all domains of life) is not always contextual; the expectation is that sexuality be confessed everywhere. But gay and lesbi subjectivities are archipelagic in that their authenticity does not require renouncing other subjectivities. One gay man noted that since marrying "my perspective [wawasan] has grown, and I’ve been able to compare things with my married gay friends about what our lives will be like in the future, how to get ready for that, to find a solution for living in this Indonesia" [hidup di Indonesia ini]. To be gay and lesbi, one opens oneself to the gay or lesbi world, but for most gay and lesbi Indonesians there is no sense that one should ideally open oneself to the world in general. This is why for so many gay and lesbi Indonesians the desire to marry "heterosexually" does not contradict a sense of being gay or lesbi and is not understood as bisexuality. The idea of multiple, fractal, or "dividual" subjectivities can be shaped by "traditional" discourses as well as those of the nation-state, and exists in many parts of the Asia/Pacific region (e.g., Strathern 1988:268–274; 1992:125; Shore 1982:41, 133–141). However, the ethnographic data support the conclusion that the particular form of multiplicity in gay and lesbi lives has been formed by dubbing Western notions of homosexual selfhood with national discourse, as exemplified by the archipelago concept (fig. 7–7).

 

Figure 7–7. Confessional self, archipelagic self.

It appears that in gay and lesbi lives the archipelago concept is triply recursive: "worlds" of life make up the self, which is one "island" in a national gay or lesbi archipelago, which is one "island" in a global gay and lesbian archipelago. On all these levels the archipelago concept permits a nuanced grid of similitude and difference in comparison to confessional and continental discourses, which tend toward binarism. For instance, gay and lesbi Indonesians consistently insist that they are "the same" as gay and lesbian Westerners, yet they are also quite cognizant of difference—they do not see themselves as derivative of Western homosexuality, even though it is frequently images and narratives of Western homosexuality that they "dub" from the first time they begin to occupy the gay or lesbi subject position. They believe that gay and lesbian Westerners (and gay men and lesbians elsewhere in the "Third World," such as Latin America) share a set of desires and practices and inhabit analogous places. Frequently during fieldwork I would ask my gay and lesbi interlocutors if they had questions about the West. I received queries ranging from "Do gay bars really exist?" to "Have you met Leonardo DiCaprio?," but just as often they responded politely that "I feel I already know everything about your life." One gay man phrased this as "We’re the same [sama], just separated; there is no difference" (perbedaan): another said, "It’s the

same style, gay men here and there" (sama aja gayanya, gay-gay di sini dengan sana).

Gay and lesbi Indonesians are, in my experience, always aware that the terms gay and lesbi have analogues outside Indonesia, though the degree to which they feel they have knowledge about these analogues varies. For gay and lesbi Indonesians, the West tends to be an unknown and strange place, both attractive and threatening. "California," for instance, is someplace (a region? a town?) in or near America: "Is it bigger than the city of Surabaya?" I was once asked; "Is it near Hollywood?" Yet with regard to being gay or lesbi the West is, at a fundamental level, familiar. When gay Indonesians talk about possible differences between the lives of gay Westerners and their own, comparisons are almost always drawn along an axis of openness and closedness. To wit, it is a sense that the West is more opened (terbuka), which denotes social acceptance and political rights. It is imagined in utopian terms: there must be lots of tempat ngebers that are busy all night long, ubiquitous gay discos and cafes, and a general ease in finding sexual and romantic partners. It is usually assumed that these gay Westerners have relationships with other men marked by romance and sexual variety.

Nevertheless, gay men tend to assume that gay Westerners marry women. A few have learned from tourists (or, more rarely, mass media) that this is not so, but even such reports may not sway their minds. For instance, Ikbal’s discovery that I did not plan on marrying was a source of unending consternation. One night at Texas he informed me that "I may be living in the big city, but at heart I’m still a village boy. I know I’m influenced by a lot of foreign concepts, but what I do is receive those things that are good and the other things I just ignore." When I asked: "What do you take and what do you reject?" he replied: "I’ll use you as an example. You are very friendly and good. So excuse me for saying so, but what I reject is you saying that you’re never going to marry. I reject this Western thing where you say something is not possible when you haven’t even made an effort. I reject the idea that gay people don’t marry and have children. How can you say it’s not possible for you when you haven’t tried?"

One difference between gay men and lesbi women is that lesbi women more often believe that the West is a worse place than Indonesia. This appears to be a product of the violence (domestic and otherwise) experienced by Indonesian women, combined with Hollywood images of the West as a place of unbridled violence, and occasional mass media reportage on homophobic violence. As one lesbi woman put it: "It’s better here than in America, right? Because there the antigay people are stronger than here." In its November 1997 premiere issue, the lesbi zine MitraS ran the following commentary:

There is definitely no place for G [gay] & L [lesbi] people to act as freely as those who live on the Western half of the globe. Go ahead and dream about it! But that doesn’t mean that G & L people in the Western nations are always more lucky than we who are quiet in Indonesia. "Anti" groups appear along with the increased activities of G & L groups…. What’s more, the actions of who are "anti" can even take the form of violence towards a person who has made themselves known as G or L…. We in Indonesia feel like were are emasculated, that our freedom to move is very limited; however, the reaction from groups in society is not yet too harsh; it’s still at the degree of a "phobia." So which is better? It depends on the opinion of each [lesbi].

Yet none of these speculations about the West implies a radical alterity—it is a matter of degree not kind, "opened" or "closed," not Other. A gay man from Surabaya once emphasized that "here people are less open. Well, in here [di sini] they are opened, but out there [di luar] they are not." This gay man was speaking to me in a disco, wearing women’s clothes and makeup for a playback competition. Yet we were having a conversation about the United States and Indonesia, and the deictic terms "in here" and "out there" referred not just to the walls of the disco, but to the boundaries of a gay world understood as an archipelago of places within the Indonesian nation.

For my gay and lesbi interlocutors, gay and lesbian Westerners are distant but present, conceptually near even if they had never met one before myself. The structure of imagination is analogous to the way an Indonesian at one end of the archipelago imagines Indonesians at the other end of the archipelago. I have never heard anyone speak of the possibility that an ETP like bissu or warok might be found in the West, but it is self-evident that gay and lesbian Westerners exist and are linked to gay and lesbi Indonesians in a grid of similitude and difference for which I can think of no better moniker than "archipelagic."

The relationship between gay and lesbi Indonesians and national discourse is one of resonances, borrowings, and transformations: as noted earlier, only occasionally does it become the topic of direct commentary. It is thus quite different from the "Queer Nation" movement in the United States, an ironic, camp-inflected mimicry of nationalism (Berlant and Freeman 1993). That gay and lesbi subjectivities are complexly imbricated with state discourse does not make them experience-distant: they are deeply felt senses of selfhood, founded in rhetorics of the nation, that do not supplant ethnolocalized subjectivities but interact with them in an additive manner (after all, the valorization of pluralism is central to the state’s self-presentation as an archipelagic container of diversity). The state stands as inadvertent idiom for gay or lesbi subjectivities. For this reason the proper parallel is not Queer Nation, but how Western gay,

lesbian, bisexual, and transgender subject positions are normatively structured by the idea that sexuality is a core element of self-identity that must be confessed and integrated into all domains of life to be ontologically valid—but this indebtedness to nineteenth-century psychoanalytic thought does not mean that such Westerners support or even know of psychoanalysis.

Just as a minority of gay and lesbi Indonesians plan on never marrying, so there are those who see archipelagic selfhood as painful, undesirable, or inauthentic. Donny was a relatively wealthy gay man living in Surabaya. When I asked him if gay men could become normal, he replied, "It depends on your wishes. I choose the middle road. Not biseks [i.e., thinking of himself as bisexual], but the road of moderation between sex and my career." For Donny, "my career is proof that I’m normal" (karir saya bukti bahwa saya orang normal). He felt that his career was "an escape to forget … sex? No, not sex. Scratch that from your notes. It’s to forget a beautiful dream … that cannot be achieved. This is our life here."

I will take seriously Donny’s request to scratch the idea of "escape" from my notes. His discomfort with archipelagic selfhood is not a simple function of class; persons with similar sentiments can be found among working class gay men and lesbi women, and many wealthy Indonesians see no conflict between their subjectivities and "heterosexual" marriage. However, the view of the world expressed by Donny and others shares a key feature with the majority of gay and lesbi Indonesians who embrace archipelagic subjectivities: a concern with the performance of good and successful deeds—from one’s "career" to everyday acts of kindness. These deeds, known as prestasi, are crucial to gay and lesbi subjectivities. The importance of prestasi indicates how, as Donny intimates, being normal is about more than heterosexuality: it is about a kind of personhood-as-career where "success" carries momentous implications for recognition and belonging.

## SEXUALITY AND NATION

I am a regular Indonesian Who works for the Indonesian people In an Indonesian style [dengan cara Indonesia] —Ki Hajar Dewantara

The "style" of gay and lesbi life demonstrates how sexual citizenship (see Evans 1993) is key to the economic and political workings of the postcolonial Indonesian state. Gay and lesbi Indonesians reconfigure state hegemony in a manner the state never intended. Gay and lesbi are the clearest

cases of truly national subject positions, irreducible to ethnolocality, and moreover synthesizing East and West in a manner consistent with longstanding tropes of the "modern Indonesian" (Frederick 1997).

Yet this very irreducibility to ethnolocality marks the gay and lesbi subject positions as failures: exceeding the state’s own discourse of national belonging, they can never have the "traditional" diversity that represents the raw material to be unified by the archipelago concept. However, while gay and lesbi Indonesians are marginal to the body politic, in one sense their subject positions are a kind of distillation of national discourse, an ultimate achievement of the national project. In another sense, their presence challenges the state’s own mode of governmentality. The gay and lesbi subject positions do not participate in the ethnolocalized logic of territoriality: they do not hope one day to have an island of their own because they belong to the archipelago. These subject positions are places where the state’s own tactics of recognition and belonging are revealed by their absence; they symptomatize the contradictions of the postcolonial state. These national subject positions reveal the mechanics of how the state requires the production of ethnolocalized identities. The gay and lesbi subject positions are supreme but unanticipated examples of the postcolonial state’s efforts to carry out the five consequential words of Article 32 of the 1945 Constitution, still in effect—"The government shall advance Indonesian national culture" (Pemerintah memajukan kebudayaan nasional Indonesia)—a goal that for the state is "a crucial aspect of its nation building" (Acciaioli 1997:289; see also F. Ali 1997; Hooker and Dick 1993). At the same time, they implicitly critique the postcolonial state’s self-representation as arbiter of tradition, authenticity, modernity, and belonging.

In the Dutch East Indies, racial categories defined a colonial governmentality "concerned above all with disabling old forms of life by systematically breaking down their conditions, and with constructing in their place new conditions so as to enable—indeed, so as to oblige—new forms of life to come into being" (Scott 1995:193). The mixed-race person blurred the boundary between colonizer and native, raising the specter of a "metamorphosis" that would destabilize the racial logic of colonial rule (Stoler 2002b:6). Because Dutch colonial discourse assumed that reproduction (and thus miscegenation) was heterosexual, homosexuality received little attention: while not desirable, it was assumed not to produce mixed-race children (Stoler 1995:96). Like the borders of the nation, this understanding of sexuality was taken from colonial into postcolonial discourse. Proper sexuality is central to acting in what Dewantara—the person credited with bringing the term nusantara into nationalist discourse—terms an "Indonesian style." It is the substitution of choice and love for

arrangement. Choice implies the possibility of failed choice; with this substitution, homosexuality becomes thinkable as something that constitutes persons and reflects on them (rather than on the bad arrangements of a family whose child divorces the spouse selected for them). This postcolonial context shapes how gay and lesbi Indonesians think of their subjectivities as modern: clearly not passed down through tradition, dubbing transnational discourses of homosexuality, and having a national scope, but in a failed way. They are not recognized. They are "of" the archipelago, yet their style does not belong. Lyotard notes:

In the Introduction to [Kant’s] third Critique, the dispersion of the genres of discourse is … dramatized to the point that the problem posed is that of finding "passages" (Uebergange) between these heterogeneous genres…. This object could only be a symbol. Let’s say, an archipelago. Each genre of discourse would be like an island; the faculty of judgment would be, at least in part, like an admiral or like a provisioner of ships who would launch expeditions from one island to the next…. This interventionist force has no object, and does not have its own island, but it requires a milieu—this would be the sea. (1988:130–131)

For the Indonesian state, the archipelago metaphor addresses the problem of dispersion within the nation—difference—in a world where globalization appears ubiquitous, even banal. Gay and lesbi Indonesians rework this archipelago metaphor and in so doing forge "genres," styles, that invoke the national and transnational. The dominant imagining of the Western life course is as a race course; either "each man is an island" or not being able to stand alone makes you a "dependent." You start at one place and move forward in time and space to the finish line. For gay and lesbi Indonesians, we could say figuratively that the course is more like a sailing course, tacking back and forth among landing points widely dispersed in space-time, and the self is an archipelago. But even this is insufficient. For gay and lesbi Indonesians, the self is not that which moves from island to island; it is the water itself, lapping up on multiple shores at the same time. After all, the etymology of both "archipelago" and "nusantara" refers not to a set of islands, but to the water between them. It is this sense of the self as the thing between the "islands," the water lapping on the shore, that explains how gay and lesbi Indonesians feel linked to distant but familiar Others across the globe. It is a style of selfhood forged through dubbing the discursive resources at hand within a horizon of power.

Nikolas Rose has noted how "Third Way" political theory in the West increasingly understands the politics of behavior in terms of "the values, beliefs, and sentiments thought to underpin the techniques of responsible

self-government and the management of one’s obligations to others" (2000:1399). The postcolonial Indonesian state appears to have anticipated the West in this regard. Ever since the New Order’s rise, national belonging has been defined in terms of not just status but the performance of good deeds. What the state terms "national discipline" is an ethical practice, a development-in-miniature where the citizen prospers through good deeds (prestasi), of which the nuclear family is one of the most significant. As one married gay man put it: "It’s a prestasi if we’re married; it means we have responsibilities. We are no longer like a child, but an adult…. People who have a family are listened to, they receive a greater share [of respect] compared to a child."

Throughout my fieldwork, discussions of good deeds were a common theme among gay and lesbi Indonesians (and also warias). Again and again gay and lesbi Indonesians would speak about the possibility for social acceptance by saying "it comes back to us." It was assumed that if they behaved well and contributed to the social good, they would be more recognized. One of the most ubiquitous phrases I encountered in all three of my primary field sites was that of wanting to be "accepted by society" (diterima oleh masyarakat). As one gay man put it, "We have to do better than society."

By implication, the social nonrecognition of gay and lesbi sexuality indexes a failing on the part of gay and lesbi Indonesians themselves. One gay man in Bali described how happy he was to have learned where gay men hung out at night: "But I still wasn’t satisfied, in the sense that I thought ‘Is this all?’ Just going to Puputan and hanging out, it didn’t seem to have any meaning. I thought that gay people could have some positive contributions too, some ‘value plus’ [nilai plus]." Sex is never counted as a prestasi, and both my gay and lesbi interlocutors often expressed frustration that society, to the degree it was aware of them at all, saw them as interested "only" in sex. Even if unsure what this acceptance would entail, it was a deeply and consistently expressed aspiration. The notion of "society" invoked here and elsewhere by gay and lesbi Indonesians never in my fieldwork referred to ethnolocalized groupings. It always indexed a public culture (masyarakat luas, masyarakat umum) understood in national terms. One gay man defined society as "a group living together, needing each other, building a single life, helping each other [saling tolong menolong]." Prestasi bring meaning to sociality: "What’s important," a gay man once explained, "is that our activities are good and don’t shame our families." Gay and lesbi Indonesians would castigate each other for only caring about throwing parties, or stealing each other’s girlfriends or boyfriends, or gossiping, rather than doing something "positive" (positip).

One of the clearest illustrations of the importance gay and lesbi Indonesians place on the dialectic between good deeds and belonging can be found in the informally produced magazines or "zines" that they have been creating since 1982 (Boellstorff 2004c). In these zines we find a recurrent trope: the idea that love can be the ultimate good deed demonstrating that gay and lesbi Indonesians are worthy of national inclusion. In these zines, gay Indonesians assume that prestasi must be visible to society to have these effects of inclusion. However, since it is difficult to speak positively of same-sex love in Indonesia, love fails as a prestasi. Belonging is deferred, and tropes of separation permeate gay zines as a result.

The link between love and nation often appears explicitly in zines; one of many examples is the short story "Selingkuh," a term that among gay men refers to having sex with a man other than one’s boyfriend (see chapter 4). The story appears in the zine GAYa Nusantara ("archipelago style," the same name as the group in Surabaya that has published this zine since 1987). In this story Adam and Sam are lovers who each, unbeknownst to the other, take out a personal ad in GAYa Nusantara to find a new sex partner. When Sam gets a reply he is excited:

Yess! Sekali lagi Sam bersorak-sorak bergembira, bergembira semua, sudah bebas negri kita, untuk s’ lamaamanya…. Aduh, sampe keterusan nyanyi-nyanyi lagu perjuangan … 10

Yess! Once again Sam shouted with happiness, everything was happy, our nation is now free, for all time…. Oh my, to the point that I accidentally sing a song of the struggle …

When Sam’s joy leads him to sing a song from the anticolonial struggle, he breaks character to address the zine reader directly. When Adam receives his reply and is preparing for his blind date, he showers and dresses himself "carefully and in the shortest possible time (like the Proclamation) [kayak proklamasi aja]."11 Proklamasi refers to the famously short (two-sentence) Declaration of Independence read by Sukarno on August 17, 1945, Indonesia’s Independence Day. These are ironic and joking references to the nation, but the joke’s bite comes from their appearance in a zine that, like all zines, regularly contains writing that employs nationalist discourse. Of course, it turns out that Adam and Sam have unknowingly chosen each other’s personal ads; when they learn this, they celebrate their renewed love with a night of raucous sex. This story’s author is from Ponorogo, the region of Java where "traditional" homosexual relations between warok actors and their gemblak understudies originate (see chapter 2), yet there is no mention of this "tradition"; gay love and gay belonging are national matters.

Heterosexist logics of national recognition can make nonnormative sexualities and genders into not only perversions but subversions, threats to national authenticity (Bunzl 2004). As Peter Jackson notes in the case of Thailand, homosexuality can be seen to represent more of a danger to national society than transgenderism, since transgenderism can be made to fit within a heterosexist logic where those who desire men must be effeminate and those who desire women must be masculine (Jackson 1999b:238). Homosexuality can also be seen as more threatening than transgenderism due to the widespread Southeast Asian assumption that inner states should match exterior bodily presentations (S. Errington 1989:76). Warias, who identify themselves as men with women’s souls, properly display this inner mismatch in their cross-dressing, as do the lesser-known tombois. In contrast, gay men and ceweks have a "desire for the same," but this is not clearly exteriorized; they can appear normal. The cultural expectation that exterior presentation should match inner state or belief has been politicized before; during the Soeharto years one of the most successful ways to create fear of a by-then nonexistent communist movement was to describe it as an "organization without shape" (organisasi tanpa bentuk); that is, a collectivity whose exterior did not match its interior, just as it was supposed that individual communists were failing to exteriorize their political beliefs. With their difficult-to-read sexualities, gay men and effeminate lesbi women can be interpreted as possessing desire "without shape." Such a desire without shape appears inauthentic. As noted in earlier chapters, the concept of asli (authenticity) has been important to how the Indonesian state defines its legitimacy. It is the ultimate criterion for belonging; what belongs to Indonesia and is deserving of recognition is that which is authentic. It is a filter for responding to forces of globalization; through authenticity it will be possible to know what is compatible with being Indonesian. In 1952 Mohammad Hatta, first vice-president of Indonesia, emphasized that "the location of our homeland as an archipelago … has always led us to mix a lot with the foreigners calling here…. We can enrich our culture by making use of foreign cultures without forgetting the basis of our own" (Hatta 1970:287–288).

Gay and lesbi Indonesians talk about notions of authenticity quite frequently, as when joking about gender. They also talk in negative terms about people who are hypocrites, using terms like munafik, hipokrit, or palsu. In so doing they reflect how "the growing popularity of words to describe hypocrisy … is … significant. All these words imply betrayal of a single Real reality" (Anderson 1990:151). I have often encountered gay men using terms like munafik in everyday speech to speak about sexual duplicity—gay men who have a boyfriend but then also carry on affairs with other men. In more reflective contexts like interviews, gay men

speak not only in terms of relationships, but of desire, as in the case of the gay man from Surabaya who said in chapter 4 that "We can’t be hypocrites: if a man likes a man that means he’s gay." A third use of terms like munafik in more reflective contexts indexes movement between the gay and normal worlds, as when a gay man in Bali spoke of gay men who would make fun of effeminacy at work to keep themselves above suspicion as "hypocrites." In a discussion with a group of gay men in Surabaya, one man noted how "I feel I’m munafik, that I’m sinning, because in the everyday world [dunia umum] it’s like I’m a regular man, but in my [gay] world my asli self is totally visible." A gay interlocutor from Makassar also explicitly brought together hypocrisy and authenticity when he said that "some people say I’m a hypocrite because I’m married, but that’s not true. I know who I am; I’m clear about myself. And even though I’m married, I identify [mengidentifikasi diri] as an authentic gay [gay asli]."

Indonesian postcolonial discourse takes ethnolocalized aspects of subjectivity like "Javanese" as self-evidently authentic, the diversity that is both precondition for national belonging and its product. In contrast, gay and lesbi subjectivities are a dub for which there is no authentic original. They are self-evidently not ethnolocalized, a distinction they share, uncomfortably, with the postcolonial state. In state discourse it is the archipelago concept that mediates ethnolocalized authenticity and the danger of national hypocrisy; it is through this self-same concept, as well as the family principle, that gay and lesbi Indonesians reconfigure ostensibly Western concepts of sexuality. Gay men and lesbi women dub nationalist discourse and in so doing dub the foreign "gay" and "lesbian" into gay and lesbi, into a set of identifications, sexual practices, and social contexts they feel to be authentically Indonesian. They give lie to the "common misperception" that "whatever is not recognizably local or is obviously borrowed—the institution of the Presidency, say, or Garuda Indonesia Airways—is foreign, specifically Western, and therefore by definition not part of Indonesian culture" (Liddle 1988:6). On the margins of local, national, and transnational rhetorics of selfhood, gay and lesbi Indonesians live their lives archipelago style.