Zines and Zones of Desire: Mass-Mediated Love, National Romance, and Sexual Citizenship in *Gay* Indonesia

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IT IS NIGHT; IN THE BACK OF A HOUSE in the city of Surabaya at the eastern end of Java is a room where two *gay* men complete a new edition of the zine *GAYa Nusantara* (*GN*). At a table, Joko, one of the men, bends down over a ledger; with pen and ruler, he extends inked lines horizontally from a list of about 250 subscribers from across Indonesia, tabulating who has paid for the upcoming issue. Indra, the other man, sits before an old computer adding final touches to the new issue of the zine before sending it to a local print shop. He looks down, then up again, entering a handwritten story sent from a *gay* man from a small Sumatran town. All that remains is the short stack of letters from men who wish to be included in the personals section. Next to the letters lies the glossy photograph of a *gay* man from Bali; as this month's cover boy, his smoldering eyes will greet those who take *GAYa Nusantara* into their hands.

On the eastern coast of the island of Borneo, in the city of Samarinda, is a network of *gay* men: some hail from local Dayak and Banjar ethnic groups, and others are migrants from elsewhere in Indonesia. On this day, I am sitting in the windowless, rented room of Haru, a man from Java, when he removes a worn copy of *GAYa Nusantara* from a small locked cupboard. He shares each new edition with *gay* friends, including Awi, an ethnic Banjar from Samarinda who lives with his sister and her husband and children. None of these family members know Awi is *gay*, but Awi tells

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me that when he reads *GAYa Nusantara* he is not alone. He has even contacted *GAYa Nusantara* to volunteer as a cover boy; they replied that cover boys have been selected for the next several issues, but once the backlog is cleared, he too can represent a face of *gay* Indonesia.

These two vignettes, drawn from my fieldwork, hint at how the circulation of texts by *gay* Indonesians shapes notions of subjectivity and community under conditions of significant social marginalization. These texts—a relatively unknown genre of Indonesian print media—are the subject of this article. Since 1982 *gay* Indonesians have been producing what I will call *gay* zines. I use the term *gay* because this is the most common term for the sexuality under consideration here (others include *G*, *homo*, and *hémong*). I aim to demonstrate the connections between the systems of meaning deployed by the producers and consumers of these zines on the one hand and Indonesian national discourse on the other. As a result, I italicize the term *gay* throughout to indicate that it is an Indonesian-language term, not reducible to the English term "gay," despite the clear links between them. *Gay* men differ in many ways from gay men; for instance, they usually marry women and assume that this does not contradict their being *gay*, and they rarely use metaphors of the closet or speak of "coming out" (see Boellstorff 1999). Above all, *gay* sexuality is shaped by discourses of the Indonesian nation-state in a way that gay sexuality is not.

As privately circulated, small-scale publications, *gay* zines challenge definitions of "mass" media, providing unique insights into the relationship among print technologies, sexual subjectivities, and narratives of belonging. In particular, the producers and readers of *gay* zines do not see them as countercultural; they see the zines as part and parcel of the national character of *gay* sexuality, embodying and demonstrating the worthiness of *gay* Indonesians for social inclusion. My goal is to show how zines could hold such meaning. These zines are permeated with two zones, or discourses, of desire—homosexual desire and a desire for national belonging. Zines relate these two zones in the idea that love (*cinta*) can be the ultimate *prestasi*, a word meaning both "good deed" and "performance," indicating to society that *gay* people are worthy of national inclusion. In these zines, *gay* Indonesians assume that *prestasi* must be visible to society to have these effects of inclusion. Since speaking positively of same-sex love in Indonesia is difficult, however, love fails as *prestasi*. Belonging is deferred, and tropes of separation permeate *gay* zines as a result. Thus, although same-gender desire is clearly sexual, I argue that the second zone of desire—national belonging—is sexualized in a manner not exclusive to *gay* Indonesians. *Gay* zines reveal a wide-ranging heterosexist logic of sexual citizenship at the heart of the very real "national culture" of postcolonial Indonesia.

Lesbi Zines

I base my conclusions on an analysis of over seven thousand pages of *gay* zine text, informed by fieldwork among *gay* men.[1] *Lesbi* women, however, have also published zines. (As with *gay*, I italicize *lesbi* to indicate that it is not just a simple derivation from English "lesbian."[2]) I face a certain quandary in addressing these *lesbi*

[1]I have conducted a total of about two years of fieldwork in Indonesia in 1992, 1993, 1995, 1997–98, and 2000, with brief visits in 2001 and 2002.

[2]*Lesbi* is the best-known term for these persons, but *lesbian* appears sometimes in written and spoken Indonesian, as do *lines* and *lésbong* (*gay*-language variants of *lesbi*) or simply *L*.

zines. Only a few have been published (the total corpus numbers around two hundred pages); this imbalance appears to be due not to any lack of desire to publish, but to the difficulty that *lesbi* women face in securing the time, space, and resources to produce the zines. (In the two cases in which *lesbi* women have published outside the capital of Jakarta, their zines appear as inserts within *gay* zines, *gay* men thus sharing with *lesbi* women their relatively greater [but still meager] resources.) Given this imbalance and since my ethnographic work with *lesbi* women is less extensive than with *gay* men, I focus on *gay* zines in this article. Mindful of the feminist insight that "male" and "female" are not homologous (even in Southeast Asia, where conceptions of gender complementary are widely distributed [Errington 1990; Hoskins 1998]), I wish to particularize my discussion and not allow it to be misunderstood as falsely universalizing to the experiences of *lesbi* women. Yet, I also do not wish to "footnote" my *lesbi* material (Braidotti 1997); such a move would be not only methodologically but also politically unsound, given that *lesbi* Indonesians consistently identify silencing as an important issue.

My path of compromise in this article is to focus discussion on how *gay* zines illuminate masculine conceptions of national belonging but to bring in *lesbi* material in a comparative vein where such data exist. In this way, I underscore some differences between *lesbi* and *gay* zines. For instance, *lesbi* zines are more likely to view Indonesia as a better place to live than Euro-America; they are more likely to debate the implications of invisibility; and they are more likely to express frustration with the difficulty in meeting other women, given the limitations on women's mobility and privacy in most parts of the archipelago. Additionally, Indonesian women are affected by the state's family principle (*azas kekeluargaan*) that sets forth an unattainable goal of simultaneous domesticity and career within a heterosexual couple (see, for example, Sen 1998; Suryakusuma 1996). Although men are affected by this state discourse as well, it is easier for them to fulfill the requirements of proper sexual citizenship and still sustain a *gay* life. (An article specifically on *lesbi* zines would explore these issues in more depth and would include in its analysis books published on *lesbi* life [Herlinatiens 2003; Prawirakusumah and Ramadhan 1988; Ratri 2000] as well as the Internet.[3]) While touching upon differences between *lesbi* and *gay* zines, I also note some parallels between *lesbi* and *gay* zines in regard to the relationship between homosexual desire and national belonging.

Production and Consumption

In the United States, zines originated with sci-fi fanzines in the 1930s and 1940s, reappeared in the 1980s with punk counterculture, and became a full-fledged genre in the 1990s (Duncombe 1997, 6–8; Friedman 1997, 9–13). One attempt at a definition describes zines as "noncommercial, nonprofessional, small-circulation magazines which their creators produce, publish, and distribute by themselves" (Duncombe 1997, 6). In many respects, this is an apt characterization for the print media created by *gay* Indonesians, and for this reason, I use "zine" as the best English equivalent for these texts.

[3]The Internet was first mentioned in a *gay* zine in *GAYa Nusantara* (1996, no. 44). Since August 1999, a handful of zines have established Internet websites, as have some individual *gay* and *lesbi* Indonesians. Since the impact of the Internet differs from that of zines, however, I do not discuss it in this article.

My primary data source is a textual analysis of the complete run of nine zines (7,385 pages of text); this represents, to my knowledge and the knowledge of these zines' producers, 100 percent of all *gay* and *lesbi* zines ever produced from the appearance of the first such zine in 1982 up to November 2001. These zines were published in Surabaya, Yogyakarta, Jakarta, Makassar, and Semarang, with reader contributions literally from across the nation; three are *lesbi* zines and the rest are *gay* zines with, in some cases, occasional *lesbi* content (see appendix). I hone in on two elements of these zines: communication between producers and readers (editorials, letters to the zine, and personal ads) and the short stories (*cerita pendek* or *cerpen*) sent in by readers. In this category I also include the genre of true-experience narratives (*pengalaman sejati*), also sent in by readers, which do not differ greatly from short stories.[4] I present images included in *gay* and *lesbi* zines to reinforce my analysis of the textual materials. A secondary source of data stems from my fieldwork—primarily in Surabaya (East Java), Makassar (South Sulawesi), and Bali—which includes interacting with *lesbi* and *gay* Indonesians as they create, read, discuss, and exchange zines. With the exceptions of *K-79* and *New Jaka-Jaka* (*NJJ*), I am personally acquainted with the producers of every *gay* and *lesbi* zine that has appeared up to November 2001.[5]

One should not be surprised to find some general distinctions in this wide spectrum of zines, based on the differing political and cultural sympathies of their editors. For instance, zines published in Yogyakarta, a center of intellectual life and student activism, have tended to address issues of politics more directly than other zines, particularly following a change in editorship in 1999. The editors of *K-79* (published in Semarang) treated homosexuality as a disease in need of curing more than the editors of any other zine. Such distinctions, however, are quite minor and are further mitigated by the relatively high amount of content sent in by readers.

The fairly even tenor among zines extends chronologically as well as geographically. Indeed, the continuity in zine thematics is notable, given that one might see the time period of *gay* zines, 1982 to the present, as a time of great change in Indonesia. I can offer several hypotheses to explain this continuity. First, the sixteen-year period 1982–98 was actually a time of remarkable stability—enforced by an authoritarian government—if compared with similar periods before it, for instance, 1965–81, 1948–64, or 1931–47. Second, 1982–98 was the period during which the *gay* subject position came into its own as a conceivable way of life, if one largely hidden from Indonesian society and rarely claimed as an identity. The *gay* subject position appears to have emerged in the 1970s, becoming a socially self-conscious national network of primarily (but not solely) urban friendship networks and occasionally organizations in the 1980s and 1990s. It originated through transforming conceptions of homosexuality from outside Indonesia, with little input from "traditional" homosexualities and transgenderisms (Boellstorff 2003).

A distinct question of continuity arises in regard to the post-Soeharto period, that is, 1998 to the present. Given the hypothesis developed in this article concerning the relationship between nationalism and sexuality, one might reason that this major shift

[4]One letter to the editors of *Jaka* praised the zine because "the short stories happen to be almost exactly like my own experiences" (1986, 8:2). In a 1996 *GAYa Nusantara* readers' survey, true-experience stories were the favorite genre.

[5]On five occasions, I have contributed articles to *GAYa Nusantara* (nos. 52, 53, 73, 77, and 78). I have also been interviewed by *GAYa Nusantara* on several occasions (nos. 23, 24, and 41).

in the nation-state form would affect *gay* zines (and *gay* sexuality in general). A few examples of post-1998 zine materials cited in this article could be construed as indicating some kind of shift; however, for two reasons—one methodological, one theoretical—I want to caution against an everything-has-changed interpretation. Methodologically, a confounding variable exists in that every *gay* zine, save *GAYa Nusantara* (and all *lesbi* zines), ceased publication by the early 2000s. From conversations with zine producers and others during visits to Indonesia since 1998, I reason that there appears to have been a variety of reasons for this, ranging from a fear of militant Islam in Yogyakarta, to funding problems in Makassar and elsewhere, to group infighting or lack of subscribers. (Even during the 1982–98 period, most zines were published for only a few years.) As the single remaining *gay* zine continues to publish and as new *gay* or *lesbi* zines come into existence, novel linkages and delinkages between nationalism and sexuality may appear. For instance, one could hypothesize that current movements toward regional autonomy (*otonomi daerah*) could lead to efforts to reinterpret *gay* subjectivity in terms of locality and tradition. This seems unlikely, however, since these movements have tended to cast themselves in terms of revitalizing tradition, while the *gay* and *lesbi* subject positions are, if nothing else, clearly understood by those who inhabit them as novel (not originating in local tradition) and linked to national and transnational conceptions of sexuality.

My theoretical caution against assuming that the end of Soeharto's New Order rule in 1998 might already have had a clear, consistent impact upon zines written since that time concerns the relationship between subject positions and social forces. Researchers have long known that social phenomena bear traces of their period of origin and do not shift in lockstep with broader cultural changes. As Emile Durkheim notes, "there is a close relation between what [a practice or an institution] is now and what it was in the past. Doubtless . . . it has been transformed . . . but these transformations in turn depend on what the point of departure was" (1963, 180). An instance of this from the domain of sexuality can be seen in the case of the Euro-American gay and lesbian subject positions, whose contemporary character (the notion of coming out, experiences of sexual drive and romance, conceptions of liberation, and so on) remain shaped by the late nineteenth-century sexological and psychoanalytic thinking in which they took form (Foucault 1978). Since *gay* zines and subjectivities are shaped by New Order discourse, it is surely significant that these zines (and the contemporary concept of *gay* selfhood) took their current form in the 1980s and 1990s, not in the late 1960s when the New Order first came into being.

While I heuristically term these texts "zines," all rough equivalents are imperfect, and *gay* zines diverge from typical interpretations of Euro-American zines in two primary ways. First, analyses of Euro-American zines often claim that they "for the most part are the expression and the product of an individual" (Duncombe 1997, 12). Some analyses of Euro-American queer zines posit a voluntaristic sexual self who discovers (even while destabilizing) identity through zines (Barnard 1996; Sutton 1999). Although individuals shape the tone and content of *gay* (and *lesbi*) zines, in Indonesia these zines are not only the work of a collective but often also constitute that collective as a group. Second, Indonesian *gay* zines diverge from dominant interpretations of Euro-American zines in that the Indonesian texts rarely present themselves as alternative in the sense of rejecting accepted understandings of propriety and citizenship. Even though producers of *gay* zines occasionally term them *media alternatif*, *media semi-formal*, or even amateur publications (*terbitan amatir*), for the most part their producers and readers simply call them magazines (*majalah*), bulletins (*buletin*), or periodicals (*buku seri*). Although the producers of *gay* zines are aware of

the marginality of *gay* sexualities in modern Indonesia, their rhetoric is not one of alterity but inclusion—a claim that *gay* men are just as Indonesian as general society (*masyarakat umum*). *Gay* zines rarely leave Indonesia (i.e., they do not globalize as such), and they do not evince a strong disjuncture between producer and consumer. This is not only due to their informal circulation but also because readers contribute much of the copy, sending in short stories, poetry, letters, and images. Other readers appear in the personals section found in all *gay* zines, marketing themselves alongside others in search of sex, friendship, and romance.

Gay zines are usually 8.5 inches x 6.5 inches (the size of an A4 piece of paper folded in half) or more rarely the size of a full A4 piece of paper. They are typically twenty to sixty pages long (occasionally only two pages or as many as eighty) and are produced by groups of two to five *gay* men using Windows-compatible desktop-publishing software; in the early 1980s (and occasionally later), they were produced on typewriters, with physical cut-and-paste layout. Producers of *gay* zines are usually in their twenties or early thirties. One reason for this is that heterosexual marriage makes it more difficult to have the free time necessary to produce a zine; another is that because Indonesians did not start calling themselves *gay* in large numbers before the 1990s, there are relatively few older men who consider themselves *gay*. The zines are reproduced at family-run photocopy shops or print houses and distributed by hand and through mail. They rarely carry advertising, in marked contrast to most Indonesian print media since the eighteenth century (Adam 1995, 3–4). *Gay* zines are published without government approval and as a result are almost never sold publicly (no zine has ever had a print run over eight hundred).[6] They are often given away for free or sold for about the same price as a regular magazine (four hundred rupiah for the first zine in 1982; six thousand rupiah for *GAYa Nusantara* today, or about seventy-five cents). Although reports of zine subscribers as well as my own fieldwork clearly indicate that copies of zines are circulated among friends (*Jaka* 1983, 11:3, 1987, 13:3; *GN* 1988, 3:6, 5–6:2), even if (following the estimate of some *gay* zine publishers) one assumes that each exemplar is read by ten persons, this translates to a total readership of at most seven thousand for any one zine and a generous estimate of eight thousand readers of all *gay* and *lesbi* zines at any point in time.[7] To date, all *gay* and *lesbi* zines have been published in cities, but the heavy interchange among rural, semirural, and urban Indonesia means that they have a rural readership as well.

Most Indonesians who produce and read *gay* zines already see themselves as *gay* through encounters with the terms in regular mass media (see Boellstorff 2003). Since zines are published and circulated outside official channels, their consumption is rarely solitary. Most people who read zines were apparently first given the zine by someone else and often continue to exchange zines with friends, even if they become subscribers.

[6]*GAYa Nusantara*, the zine with the largest circulation, has had a print run of six hundred for most of its history (beginning in 1992 with no. 17), with a high of about eight hundred; by 2001 its circulation was down to about four hundred. *GAYa Nusantara* is also the only zine that has carried advertising of any consequence (usually for salons or drag events) and the only zine to have had any kind of public distribution: beginning in the mid-1990s, *GAYa Nusantara* has been sold at a few bookstores in Surabaya.

[7]Many *gay* Indonesians are unaware that *gay* zines exist, even if they live in a city where such a zine is published. The primary relationship between *gay* zines and regular mass media is that occasional coverage of *gay* zines in these media (or even news on homosexuality more generally) can generate a flood of letters to the zines. The first such example was in May 1982, when the women's magazine *Sarinah* ran an article about *G*, the first *gay* zine; as a result, a number of *lesbi* women wrote to the zine seeking contacts and asking to become members of the organization associated with the zine (*G* 1983, 6:3).

The consumption of these zines sustains *gay* networks, rather than alienating the reader from preexisting kinship or community ties. In other words, if and when *gay* Indonesians begin to read zines, this tends not to isolate them but can lead to the creation of new networks through the trading of the zines.[8]

That these zines do not appear to introduce Indonesians to *gay* subjectivities does not mean, however, that they have no influence on the character of these subjectivities. For instance, the longest-running and most widely distributed zine, *GAYa Nusantara*, combines in its name *gaya* (which means "style" but can also mean "gay," with the first three letters capitalized) with *nusantara* (which means both "archipelago" and, colloquially, Indonesia itself). This is meant to recall the archipelago concept (*wawasan nusantara*), a key trope of national ideology analogous to (if more formalized than) the "melting pot" in the United States.[9] Since this zine began publishing in 1987, about one-half of *gay* groups (and several *lesbi* groups) have named themselves with reference to *GAYa Nusantara* by pairing *GAYa* with a "local" term, even if the group does not publish a zine. Groups named in this manner that have published a zine include GAYa Celebes in Sulawesi and GAYa Betawi in Jakarta; zines named in this manner include *GAYa LEStari* (*GL*), a *lesbi* zine from Jakarta; groups without zines include GAYa Siak in Sumatra, GAYa Tepian Samarinda in Kalimantan (Indonesian Borneo), GAYa Semarang in Java, GAYa Dewata in Bali, and GAYa Intim in Ambon (which became defunct in the early 1990s). In 1993 the zine *K-79* changed its name to *GAYa Pandanaran* (*GP*) (after the hero of a local myth) with the following explanation:

> Di tahun ini nampaknya banyak sekali muncul organisasi GAY, semoga dengan munculnya wajah baru dengan beraneka GAYA kita akan menambah persatuan dan kesatuan antara sesama. . . .
>
> This year we see the emergence of very many GAY organizations; we hope that with the emergence of these new faces with diverse STYLES we will add to the unity and integrity between us. . . .
>
> (1993, 3:8)

The tropes apparent in this excerpt are common in zines from the early 1980s to the present. As indicated by the use of set nationalist phrases (*persatuan dan kesatuan* [unity and integrity]; *aneka* [diversity]), as well as the metonymic chain linking *gay* to *gaya* to *nusantara*, the use of *GAYa* is part of a larger pattern of migration, letter writing, and imagining through which *lesbi* and *gay* Indonesians see themselves as "national." This concept underscores how the ultimate impact of *gay* and *lesbi* zines will be certainly greater than the level of readership alone might imply: as is true for mass media generally, their effects on social relations and cultural logics are multilayered and contingent.

Representation and the Crisis of Context

As noted earlier, this article focuses on the intersection of two of the most pervasive discourses or zones in *gay* zines—homosexual desire and a desire for national

[8]Letters to the editor indicate cases of persons who—for fear of discovery or the fact that they live in an area where they do not know any *lesbi* or *gay* persons—obtain a single copy of a zine, then subscribe to the zine and do not share the zines with others. In such cases, the act of subscribing to the zine does not reduce social networks; it simply fails to strengthen them or generate new ones.

[9]In a twelfth-anniversary retrospective, the editors of *GAYa Nusantara* noted that the term *nusantara* "illustrates clearly that this group is national scale (*berskala nasional*), meaning for the Indonesian *gay* people" (1999, 62:23).

belonging. While occasionally the topic of explicit commentary, these discourses (and their intersections) are often implicit. The analytic which I bring to this material parallels that commonly found in ethnography, in which the goal is not simply to report what people say they do but also to interpret the broader cultural grammars within which their invested actions make sense to them, even if, as in the case of language itself, such grammars are not always available for conscious reflection.

A growing debate in media studies, sometimes called the "crisis of context," asks whether one can understand mass media in isolation from the everyday milieu in which they are produced and consumed (Schlecker and Hirsch 2001). Although fieldwork informs my analysis, I do not attempt to show that the cultural logics that I find in *gay* zines are present in other contexts. This is partly due to limitations of space. Additionally, however, I am uneasy with the idea that there is nothing to learn from texts in themselves, as documents that crystallize and comment on culture. The demand that every textual analysis comes paired with fieldwork is indicative of a particular theory of knowledge, which Marilyn Strathern terms "merography":

> Merography (literally *mero* = part, *graphy* = writing) is about the way in which Euro-Americans make sense of things by describing them as part of something else. . . . However, as Euro-American knowledge conventions posit the a priori uniqueness of all given entities (individuals, objects, actions, events, etc.), "nothing is in fact ever simply part of a whole because another view, another perspective or domain, may redescribe [write] it as 'part of something else'" (Strathern, 1992: 73). A priori uniqueness entails that while, for instance, two individuals may be described as part of the same contexts of occupation, religion and age, there will always be another context that will exclude one of them. Every analogy is thus bound to be a partial one.
>
> (Schlecker and Hirsch 2001, 71)

It thus follows that "*the turn to ethnography in media and science studies indicates the ambition of researchers to combine multiple contexts, hoping to garner ever more knowledge*" (Schlecker and Hirsch 2001, 75; emphasis in original). In two respects, my analysis remains merographic: it aims to shed light on *gay* Indonesians more generally, and I bring together two zones of desire into an interzone in which greater understanding can take place. I frame this intersection of discourses, however, not as a whole composed of parts, but as an unstable conjunction. Taking a cue from *gay* Indonesians, I employ the archipelago metaphor as one mitigating strategy, which is why I find the spatial metaphor of zones to be a useful complement to the auditory metaphor of discourse. An archipelago is whole and part: it does not have a clear external boundary marking it off as part of something else, yet it incorporates what appear to be internal wholes in the shape of bounded islands. As Indonesians are keenly aware, archipelagos are not described but delimited; their boundaries are not given. An archipelagic methodology is antimerographic in that it participates in the constitution of the subject of study. It gestures toward an alternate ethnography that can "acknowledge that description and what it describes are not separable. . . . [W]ith this re-envisioned ethnography, each description is understood to contain within itself that which it describes. Here, part and whole collapse into one" (80).

I also attempt to resist a merographic framework by questioning the distinction between text and context. Such a division takes for granted what should be the target of analysis: the entextualizing processes by which things or ideas come to be seen as set apart from any particular context (Silverstein and Urban 1996, 10; see also Silverstein 1992). For many *gay* Indonesians, zines are not just texts but also a primary

context through which they understand their desires for homosex and membership in a national *gay* reading public: "Where else are we free to be open (*terbuka*) if not in *GAYa Nusantara?*" (*GN* 1991, 15:8).[10] I thus treat these zines not as artifacts but as socially situated processes that concretize, comment upon, and communicate key aspects of the *gay* subject position. I do not imply that all *gay* Indonesians think exactly in line with the cultural logics found in zines but, rather, that they find such logics intelligible even if they disagree with them. Zines provide a window into broader systems of meaning. Many Indonesianist anthropologists have had great success in examining texts from an ethnographic perspective (Rodgers 1995; Siegel 1997; Watson 2000). Although such work often has a historical emphasis, Akhil Gupta's admonition regarding the use of newspapers is pertinent to zines:

> Obviously, perceiving them as having a privileged relation to the truth of social life is naive; they have much to offer us, however, when seen as a major discursive form through which daily life is narrativized and collectivities imagined. . . . Treated with benign neglect by students of contemporary life, they mysteriously metamorphize into invaluable "field data" once they have yellowed around the edges and fallen apart at the creases. And yet it is not entirely clear by what alchemy time turns the "secondary" data of the anthropologists into the "primary" data of the historian.
>
> (Gupta 1995, 385)

Of course, although *gay* zines present many dimensions of the *gay* world and affect its character, the zines are not isomorphic with that world and their producers are not necessarily representative. Even though lower-class groups have created zines, in general producers of zines—like producers of mass media in general—are better educated (but not necessarily wealthier) than readers.[11] One founding member of *Jaka* cited among others Friedrich Nietzsche, Albert Camus, and Jean-Paul Sartre in his editorials (1985, 4:2, 5:2, and 1986, 6:2, respectively). This issue of social status is a point of commonality between *gay* and *lesbi* zines: the form for entering oneself into the personals section of *MitraS* provides three options (in English) for "last education completed": high school, academy, and university. In 1997 the editors of *New Jaka-Jaka* (a more recent *gay* zine published in Yogyakarta) apologized for the lateness of the July edition by noting that "a large number of our members have been busy with their end-of-semester exams" (1997, 2:3).

Perhaps the most salient consequence of this disjuncture is that producers tend to be better informed than readers about lesbian and gay communities and movements outside Indonesia. *Lesbi* producers of zines, in comparison with the predominantly working class *lesbi* women whom I have met through my fieldwork, are better linked to Indonesian and transnational feminist movements (including the Indonesian

[10]Many letters to *gay* and *lesbi* zines express this sentiment. As one woman said with reference to the *lesbi* zine *MitraS*, "Through this bulletin I pour out my feelings" (*MitraS* 1998, 2:13); as a *gay* man from the troubled region of Aceh phrased it, "since I got to know *GAYa Nusantara*, I've started to feel calm in my heart" (*GN* 2000, 76:11). One man from Surabaya wrote that "since I've married, I've had to reduce my *gay* activities greatly, . . . but I can still observe my world through *GN*" (*GN* 2000, 76:8).

[11]For an example, Dédé Oetomo, who has played a major role in two of the most influential *gay* zines, *G: Gaya Hidup Ceria* and *GAYa Nusantara*, is a professor of anthropology and linguistics at Airlangga University, a recipient of a PhD from Cornell University, and well known to Indonesia scholars (through academic publications, political work, and participation in language-study programs) as well as the Indonesian public (he is one of a handful of *gay* Indonesians willing to be identified in the general mass media as such).

Women's Coalition[12] and the Asian Lesbian Network) (*Swara* 2000, 1:6). Similarly, *gay* producers of zines are better linked to Indonesian and transnational HIV/AIDS prevention networks than the average *gay* man.[13] A second disjuncture, linked to the first, is that the producers of zines tend to be more politicized than other *gay* or *lesbi* Indonesians. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in the 1993 imaginary interview (*wawancara imaginer*) in *Jaka-Jaka* (*JJ*) between a "member of the editorial staff" and "an imaginary *gay* character" (1993, 4:15–17). When asked why the number of *gay* men seems to be increasing, the imaginary character replied that, "in my opinion, what's increasing isn't the total number of *gay* people but that more *gay* people are brave enough to open themselves" (15). When the interviewers pointed out that *gay* Indonesians are not well accepted by society, the imaginary character counters that "there will always be colonialism (*penjajahan*) of all forms. The remaining problem is whether those who are colonized will accept that or not. . . . If our freedom fighters had thought ahead of time whether they had the military strength to expel the Dutch, we certainly would not yet be free" (16–17). In Indonesia imaginary interviews can be used to caricature public figures (see Sulistyo 2002). This presents a difficulty in the case of *gay* men, however, since very few *gay* Indonesians think of their sexualities in such explicitly politicized and public terms (only a literal handful are willing to be identified as *gay* by the general mass media). Perhaps for this reason, the producers of *Jaka-Jaka* were compelled to fabricate an interviewee, a circumstance that makes the ties between the *gay* subject position and national discourse all the more intriguing.

In this imagined interview, the producers of *Jaka-Jaka* forge a corollary to the imagined national community—the imagined *gay* national subject. Although the politicized dimension of this imagined subject diverges from many *gay* Indonesians' self-understandings, it shares with them a desire for national belonging. This idealized political *gay* subject speaks of opening oneself (*membuka diri*) to the world in general—a rough analog to the notion of coming out in many Euro-American queer communities. In the Indonesian context, this is an unusual use of the "opening oneself" metaphor, which usually refers only to participation in the *gay* world (*dunia gay*) to the extent that heterosexual marriage is not seen as incompatible with *gay* subjectivity (see Boellstorff 1999). For instance, a *gay* man will refer to a city as *terbuka*, implying not that *gay* men in that city are open to the public, but that they are open to each other and meet in parks, discos, and other locales in large numbers.

The hegemony of national discourse appears in the linkage of nationalism to this unusual notion of coming out to society in general. For instance, those relatively small number of *gay* Indonesians who know of the English term "coming out" usually translate the phrase not as *membuka diri*, but *memproklamirkan diri* (to proclaim oneself, a reference to Sukarno's 1945 *proklamasi* of an independent Indonesian state), *17 Augustan alias proklamasi* (referencing Indonesia's Independence Day), or *merdeka* (freedom, a key term of the anticolonial struggle) (*GAYa Betawi* 1993, 6:14, 7:17, and 1994, 12:16, respectively; see also the discussion of the English term "coming out" in *GAYa Nusantara* [2001, 86:17]). There are even phrases such as *merdeka atau mati* (freedom or death, also from the anticolonial struggle [*GAYa Betawi* 1994,

[12]This group is incorporated into the coalition under the Sexual Orientation Minority Sector.

[13]In one case, such networks help fund the zine *Media KIE GAYa Celebes* in Makassar on the island of Sulawesi, which focuses on *gay* men, although *lesbi* women and especially *waria* (male-to-female transvestites) are often addressed as well.

13:3]). *Gay* zines often oscillate between this notion of opening oneself to the whole world and the more common sense that the *gay* world need not intersect with the regular world. A *gay* man once wrote to an advice column in *New Jaka-Jaka* with the problem that he also wanted to marry a woman and was not sure which world he should choose. The publishers recommended that the person "just take up both of them, live in two worlds" but also emphasized that in the *gay* world he should "struggle against the injustice and colonialism against yourself as a *gay* person" and "free (*memerdekakan*) yourself" (*NJJ* 1997, 4:13–14). This exchange, in which contrasting views of heterosexual marriage are juxtaposed without comment, illustrates a broader point: the disjuncture between producers and readers is less complete than it might first seem. This is mainly due to *gay* zines' extensive use of materials mailed in by readers (often 75 percent of an issue's contents originate in this way). Subscriber surveys conducted by *GAYa Nusantara* indicated that, while some readers are certainly well educated, others are of average schooling, often from small villages outside the political, economic, and cultural hegemony of Java.

Love and Nation in Indonesian Print Media

> Personal narratives have deep public resonance in twentieth-century Indonesia, where the process of growing to adulthood and traversing a life is often recalled in terms similar to those used to think about society and the past in a more general sense. . . . In other words, Indonesian historical memory and personal memory are both animated by certain closely related key scenarios and social images, and societal histories and personal narratives interpenetrate.
>
> (Rodgers 1995, 3)

Gay zines link personal narrative, love, and national consciousness in a manner consistent with tropes of Indonesian literature. Late colonial literature brought together nation, people, and language through the power of love (*cinta*, less often *kasih sayang* or *kasih*), particularly around the conflict over "arranged" marriages (associated with tradition) versus "love" marriages (associated with modernity and nationalism). Such conflicts figure centrally in nationalist literature, condensing debates over tradition, modernity, choice, and collective identity (see Alisjahbana 1966, 30–31). This literature frames love as selfless when directed toward the nation or hoped-for spouse: "[N]ationalism and love are linked because through it, peoples are mixed and a new authority is created" (Siegel 1998, 16). This is a love that "demands recognition" and is "inseparable from the struggle for progress" (Siegel 1997, 140); by definition, it breaks from ethnolocalized custom (*adat*). This national love reproduces the nation over time through heterosexualized procreation, but its force inheres more directly in its ability to fashion a proper citizen-subject. Proper love makes you a proper citizen. For this reason, the failure of national love is not barrenness, but sickness (*sakit*)—an unnational love that can kill:

> What would the cure for love sickness be if not proper recognition, that is, recognizing cinta for what it is: *the power to compel recognition*. More precisely, it is the power to compel recognition of desire transformed into idealism. That idealism is directed towards the advancement of the Indonesian people. At that time [in the 1920s and 1930s], this meant not independence and not equality. It meant rather *the possibility of having a certain identity*. One which marked one as progressive. A progressive person was in touch with the modern world outside the Indies.
>
> (Siegel 1997, 146; emphasis added)

Thanks to a love that operates through choice rather than arrangement, Indonesian national literature enacts the "twin approach to constructing a modern self and imagining a modern society," whereby "in gaining a modern self, [Indonesians] gain a modern vision of the world, and vice versa. Selfhood becomes permeated with political meaning" (Rodgers 1995, 44). In the decades before independence, love, modernity, and national belonging became interlinked. This pattern's legacy continues to shape Indonesian literature and society, where arranged marriages are now quite rare and both women and men are typically assumed to play an active role in choosing their future spouses (Hatley 1997; Hull 2002; see also Brenner 1998; Tiwon 1996; Watson 2000). This is a love that does not just happen to a person through arrangement but is also performed through choice.

Performatives depend on cultural context: only an umpire can declare "strike!" and only a judge or jury can pronounce someone "not guilty" in a court of law. The ability of love to compel national recognition in Indonesia depends on a modern conception of heterosexual desire (*normal* or *hetero*). *Gay* love does not give one national belonging: heteronormativity lies at the heart of national *cinta*.[14] When marriage is arranged, sexual orientation is secondary. However, when marriage hinges on choice—on a relational, choosing self animated by love—that self and that love fail, are sick, if not heterosexual. Choice, to be national and modern, must be heterosexual choice; through heterosexuality, self and nation articulate.

While being lovesick (*sakit cinta*) is, as James T. Siegel notes, a powerful theme in Indonesian nationalist literature, "sick person" (*orang sakit*) is ironically now a term that some *gay* Indonesians use to refer to themselves. How can a sick love complete its circuit of recognition? This is the crucial question addressed implicitly and explicitly in *gay* zines, the question for which *prestasi* will be the answer. Love for *gay* Indonesians is also a desire for sexual citizenship. A key point in this regard is that although gender and sexuality obviously intersect and are mutually constitutive, they are also analytically distinct and one should not conflate them. Even though *gay* Indonesians address a sense of failure (to belong) in *gay* zines, they do not experience this in terms of gender per se. They do not feel that they are failures as men; they do not feel, for instance, that they are male-to-female transvestites (*waria* or *banci*). Although *waria*, who are acknowledged if often ridiculed members of Indonesian society, have never published zines despite having the educational skills to do so, zines have proven to be an important and enduring means by which *gay* men reflect upon and make claims for a national belonging that feels beyond their grasp.

First Zone: Homosex and Homolove

One zone of desire in *gay* zines is homosex: the representation, discussion, and celebration of sexuality between men (or between women in the case of *lesbi* zines). Positive discussion of homosexuality appears in virtually no other Indonesian mass

[14]Heteronormativity, of course, has been a key element of nationalist discourse since its beginnings (Eder, Hall, and Hekma 1999; Liu 1999; Mosse 1985) and has played a role in debates over definitions of proper citizenship in Euro-America (Beriss 1996; Berlant 1997; Duggan and Hunter 1995; A. Parker et al. 1992; Warner 1993). In contemporary postcolonial societies, debates over national belonging can take forms that incorporate, in various ways, these European origins of heteronormative nationalist ideology (Heng and Devan 1995; Lumsden 1996; Mankekar 1999; Murray 1996; R. Parker 1999; Schein 1996).

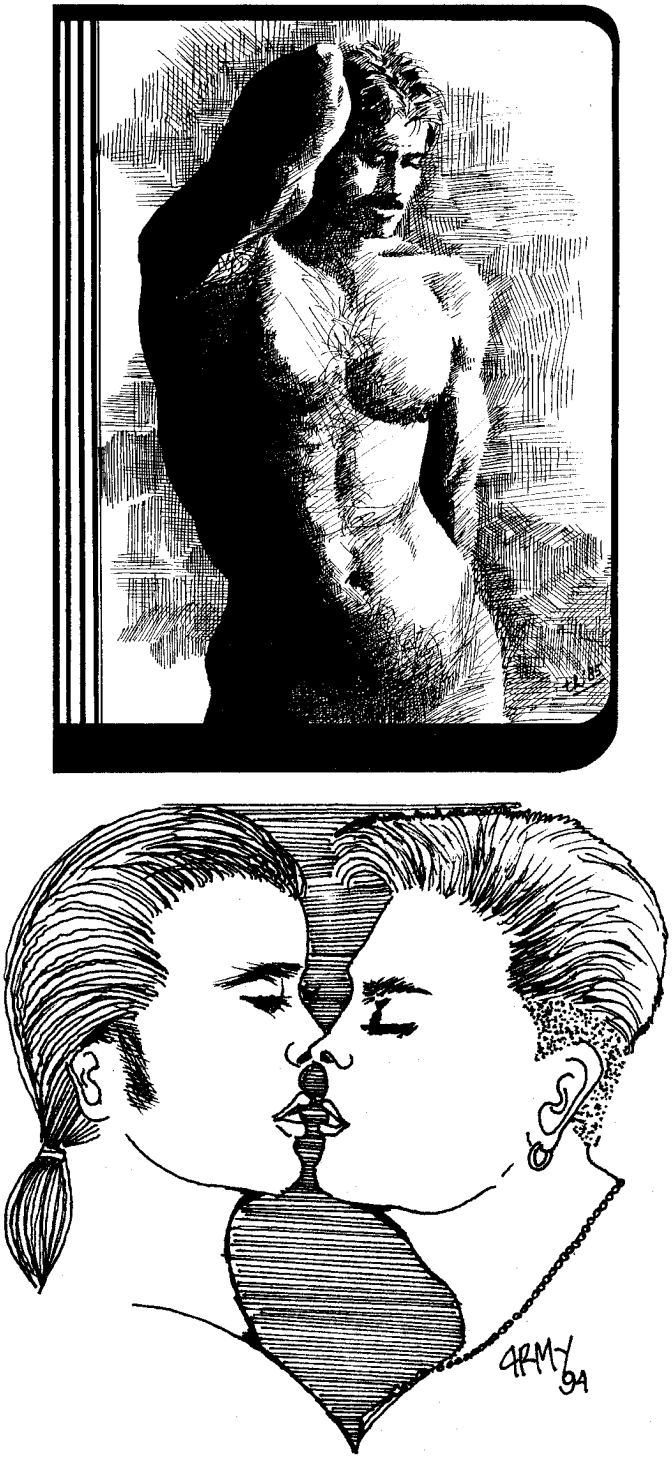
media beyond these zines, in which such discussions are a constant theme of personals, editorials, dictionaries of *gay* language, guides to outdoor meeting areas (*tempat ngeber*), and images (see figs. 1–4).[15] Moreover, homosexuality is a guiding force in the narratives that make up the bulk of *gay* zines.

Rarely do these images and narratives of homosexuality present explicit sex (see figs. 3–4 for exceptions). Obviously this is not because *gay* Indonesians are uninterested in eroticism, nor is this simply to avoid censorship, since zines are not published through legal channels anyway. When publishers of *gay* zines politely reject requests for sexually explicit stories or images, they cite not a fear of censorship, but the possible foreclosing of recognition, of acceptance by society (*diterima oleh masyarakat*). The zine should be proper (*sopan*), a wish expressed not only by publishers but by readers who send in letters complaining of explicit representations of sex. The most striking example of this took place in 1993, when *GAYa Betawi* (*GB*) published two fifth issues. The first fifth issue contained explicit representations of sex between men (both line drawings and reproductions of Euro-American gay pornography). The editorial in the following issue noted that the first had been found invalid (*tidak sah*) because it had "gone against the ethical codes of journalism and society" (*GB* 1993, 5:3). This is the only case of any *gay* zine republishing an issue. The following issue noted that the general magazine *Jakarta-Jakarta* had covered the zine (and the organization that produced it) for the first time but had unfortunately focused on the sexually explicit issue, giving the impression that *gay* men were only interested in sex, when in fact the goal of the zine and organization was to create unity (*persatuan*, a nationalist term) among *gay* men and to motivate them to do positive things for society (*GB* 1993, 6:24–25).

Despite this deemphasis on sex, erotics remains present in zines, appearing in stories that speak of sexual acts (often in veiled terms) as well as imagery that emphasizes the face (and often the partially clothed body). One difference between *gay* and *lesbi* zines is that there have been very few images of *lesbi* women and none in any state of undress. Images of *lesbi* women are typically in the form of drawings, while images of *gay* men are fairly evenly divided between photographs and drawings. This does not seem linked to the admonitions against showing the female body in Islam, since eroticized images of Indonesian women are common in contemporary Indonesian advertising and entertainment. The absence of photographs of *lesbi* women seems instead to flag questions of visibility (see figs. 5–6). While few *gay* men wish to appear in electronic or print media, even with a false name, a surprising number are eager to appear in zines as cover boys, providing photographs and even home addresses. The number of *gay* men willing to be photographed is still small in absolute terms, but even fewer *lesbi* women are willing to be photographed; a greater tendency to be dependent on either a husband or family members for financial support—or if higher class to be in a career in which female propriety is emphasized—makes such visibility an even greater risk.

What *gay* and *lesbi* zines emphasize is not sex but love. Reading over seven thousand pages of zine text, I did not find a single issue of any *gay* zine in which the topic of love does not appear; often two or three articles will have *cinta* in their titles. A first clue to this discourse of love is a particular semiotic chain: sexual acts (kissing,

[15]Although homosexuality is increasingly a topic of discussion in mainstream Indonesian mass media, such coverage is overwhelmingly negative and the few textual or visual representations of homosexual desire are usually of Euro-Americans.



Figures 1 and 2. Objects of male and female homosexual desire (*Jaka* 1985, 5:1; *GL* 1994, 3:16 [inside *GN* 31]). The erotics involved can concern desire for bodies (fig. 1) or sexual acts (fig. 2).

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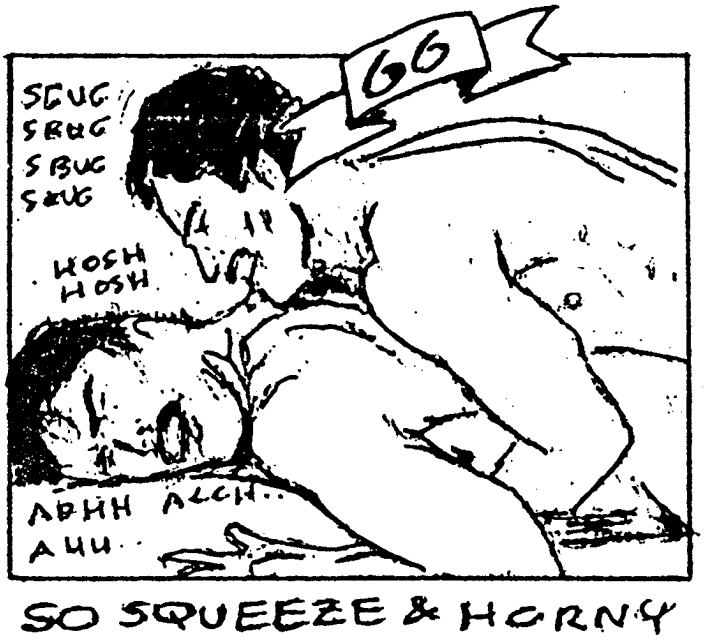

Figures 3 and 4. Explicit homosex and sex with Euro-Americans (*K-79* 1993, 16; *GN* 1988, 4:31).

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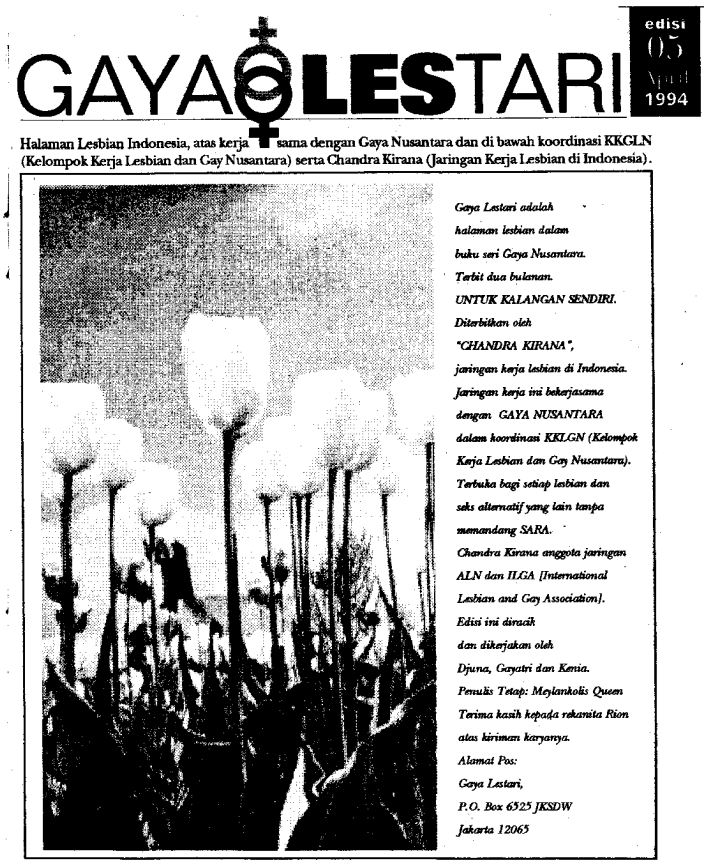
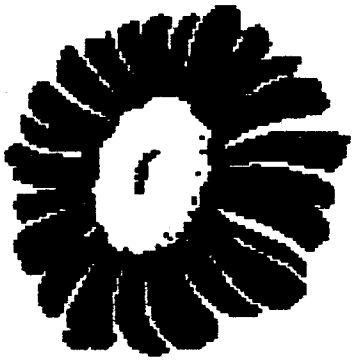

GAYA LESTARI

edisi 05 April 1994

Halaman Lesbian Indonesia, atas kerja sama dengan Gaya Nusantara dan di bawah koordinasi KKGLN (Kelompok Kerja Lesbian dan Gay Nusantara) serta Chandra Kirana (Jaringan Kerja Lesbian di Indonesia).

Gaya Lestari adalah halaman lesbian dalam buku seri Gaya Nusantara. Terbit dua bulanan. UNTUK KALANGAN SENDIRI. Diterbitkan oleh "CHANDRA KIRANA", jaringan kerja lesbian di Indonesia. Jaringan kerja ini bekarjasama dengan GAYA NUSANTARA dalam koordinasi KKLGN (Kelompok Kerja Lesbian dan Gay Nusantara). Terbuka bagi setiap lesbian dan seks alternatif yang lain tanpa memandang SARA. Chandra Kirana anggota jaringan ALN dan ILGA [International Lesbian and Gay Association]. Edisi ini diasah dan dikerjakan oleh Djuna, Gayatri dan Kenia. Penulis Tetap: Meylankolis Queen Terima kasih kepada rekanita Rion atas kiriman karyanya. Alamat Pos: Gaya Lestari, P.O. Box 6525 JKSDW Jakarta 12065



Kembangkanlah dirimu.

Figures 5 and 6. Women as flowers: a symbol of *lesbi* community and social invisibility (*GL* 1994, 5:1 [inside *GN* 28]). The text identifies the zine as part of the "Archipelago Lesbian and Gay Network" and open to all ethnicities. On the back cover, a flower with the caption "develop yourself."

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anal penetration, rubbing genitals together, and so on) are distinguished from generalized sexual lust (*nafsu* or *birahi*), which in turn is distinguished from love. One reader of *GAYa Nusantara* complained of sexually suggestive images by invoking this chain: "I don't want to be a hypocrite because even I have a million sexual desires. But, what is more valuable than all that, friends, is *Cinta*. Love is what's given me the strength to live this long. . . . What will happen if we continue to allow lust to hold the reins of this life, which is already set apart?" (*GN* 1988, 3:6–7). In a short story from 1991, Andre confronts his *gay* friend Yuzo, who seems interested only in sex. Andre confesses his love to Yuzo, who asks, "Why have you been avoiding me?" Andre replies: "Because you just think of me as a sexual object! I can't live like you, switching partners and forgetting them. I desire a proper and *normal* life like *hetero* people, to meet someone and fall in love with them so as to live together. I can't live prioritizing sex over love" (*GN* 1991, 15:29–30). In one installment of a comic strip that ran in *Jaka* from August 1985 to December 1986, the protagonist (named Jaka, or "bachelor") becomes promiscuous after his lover, Tomo, marries a woman. Tomo learns of Jaka's behavior, and in the final two panels (fig. 7, bottom right corner), he confronts Jaka at the gym: "This is the image of '*gay*' that you present to me! Apparently it's true that you're just chasing satisfaction of your lusts!" In the following issue, Jaka runs away to Europe and with the help of a white boyfriend—whom he does not love—sets up a salon business. Sitting alone at night, he confesses to himself: "Now I can buy anything I want with my money, but what I need now is 'love'! Where I can share good and bad times, serve his needs. That has no price. . . . Oh, how beautiful it would be!" (1986, 6:14). When a man who saw himself as *normal* had sex with another man and wanted to know whether he might be *gay*, the editors of *GAYa Betawi* responded: "To become *gay* is not just proven with same-gender sex but other factors like the feeling of love. . . . If after that event you continue to have same-sex relations with the addition of feelings of love, . . . it could then be said that you are *gay*" (1997, 16:24). Employing nationalist language, an article sent to *K-79* in 1993 noted that "love unites (*mempersatukan*) us. . . . Without love we are nothing, creatures without connection. . . . When will it be that we can find a pure love that is not based on lust and selfishness?" (4:7–8).

The pattern is clear: sex is displaced onto desire and then onto love, with each term more valorized than its predecessor.[16] Desire is presented as unidirectional, while love is framed as inherently relational and thus social, proper to a citizen-subject who gives and receives. In Foucauldian terms, this is not repression but an incitement that beckons sex and desire into the service of love. This incitement takes the form of discovery that the desired Other reciprocates love; that is, the desired Other recognizes a person as *gay*. Even when self-knowledge is the theme, recognition usually figures prominently. In the short story "I Reach for My Love," the protagonist, Koko, is in high school and attracted to Yogi, a young man one class ahead of him. Yogi has been following Koko around, but Yogi's motivations remain obscure to Koko while he is *masih bodoh*, or "still stupid" (a phrase often used in nationalist literature to refer to premodern ways of thinking). One day, however, "as we were walking home, Yogi

[16]The only context in which sex consistently appears in *gay* zines is in articles on preventing HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. Such articles are fairly common in *gay* zines (and rare in *lesbi* zines) because many are funded directly or indirectly through HIV-prevention programs, in most cases international development agencies. One result of this funding is that these articles usually consist of dry lists of sexual practices and discussions of risk and risk reduction shaped by public-health discourse.

Figure 7. The valorization of love over desire (*Jaka* 1985, 5:12).

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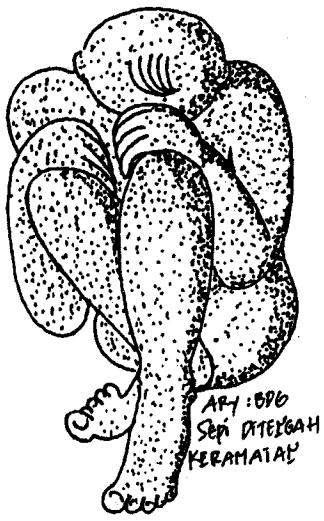

Figure 8. "Lonely in the midst of the bustle" (*GN* 1994, 27:7).

explained the contents of his heart to me. Before he had spoken very long, it was clear that the path of his life was almost identical to my own autobiography (*otobiografi*). My feelings at that point were like a fish splashing into the water, or a bowl meeting its lid" (*Jaka* 1985, 1:11–14).

There is joy in discovery, and discovery in these narratives is the discovery of recognition; it is a climactic, almost orgasmic, moment, as when fish meets water or bowl meets lid. For some *gay* men but especially for *lesbi* women, the period prior to discovery is marked by isolation, a sense of being an island alone in a sea of heteronormativity (see fig. 8). Since it is self-evident to *gay* Indonesians (and other Indonesians) the concept that *gay* originates neither in locality nor tradition, the moment of discovery—when one is recognized, when the desired Other becomes a desiring Other—replaces feelings of isolation with a sense of belonging to a national homosexual community. This founding in the nation shapes the sense of an imagined archipelagic communion with lesbian and gay persons across the national archipelago and outside Indonesia as well (see fig. 9). These implicit cultural linkages among zines, isolation, and an archipelagic imaginary occasionally become the topic of commentary (see fig. 10). In an archipelagic twist on the trope of the deserted island, a man dreaming of food finds a zine parachuted to him as a source of sustenance. Behind the image (meant for an Indonesian readership where everyone lives on an island) is an archipelagic zone of homosexual desire, with zines connecting "islands" of persons and communities.

Separation

In the short story "A Thought," the protagonist, Iwan, falls in love with a *normal* friend, Soni. He decides that he must be honest about his self (*jati dirinya*) and asks Soni, "if you had a friend who turned out to be *gay*, what would be your reaction?" Soni replies that he would feel "just as usual," and a surprised Iwan tells Soni that he is *gay* and loves him. Soni then admits that he has a "secret" of his own: he is *gay* and

Figure 9. Translocal community: the hangout (*tempat ngeber*) "Kalifornia," located on a bridge near a major shopping mall in central Surabaya (*GN* 1994, 29:28).

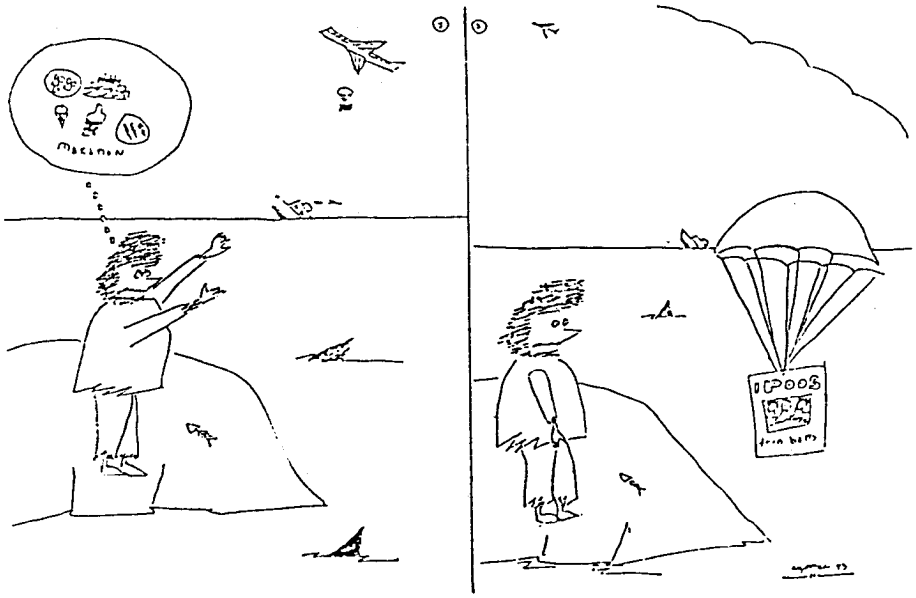

Figure 10. Zines linking persons beyond their "islands" (*GB* 1993, 6:30).

reciprocates Iwan's love. Iwan is shocked by the dual discovery: "Soni, who's always being chased by women, who's handsome, who's smart, who has so many achievements (*prestasi*), is *gay* too!" Iwan is full of happiness but the following week learns that Soni has moved to Australia without leaving word (*GN* 1997, 51:35). Iwan, and the zine reader, are left in the dark.

If discovery involves recognition by the now-desiring Other, in *gay* zines this circuit usually leads to separation. "Happily ever after" stories in which two *gay* men

share a household or sustain an ongoing relationship are rare. *Gay* zines portray separation as the inevitable complement to discovery: one recounting of a *gay* man's life in Yogyakarta concluded that, "like the classic *gay* story, he had to be separated from his boyfriend" when the boyfriend left town to continue his schooling (*NJJ* 1997, 3:26). Sometimes a general sense of social rejection leads to separation. In the true-experiences story "Separation" ("Perpisahan"), the *gay* protagonist tells his lover that they must separate after two years because the protagonist's mother has discovered the relationship: "You forget that we live in society, we cannot live apart from it, and we can't just do anything we want. Sometimes society can be more cruel than we suspect" (*GN* 1994, 30:20).

Lesbi and *gay* zines often portray some force as causing separation by coming "between" love. In the true-experiences story "Between Love and Greed," Rion, a *lesbi* woman, falls in love with Mira—glamorous, beautiful, and married to Franz. Franz thinks that Rion is just Mira's friend and allows them to spend time together. Rion and Mira discover love for each other, and Mira leaves Franz; but because Rion cannot keep Mira in the glamorous lifestyle to which she is accustomed, "Mira decided to return to Franz's embraces" (*GL* 1994, 5:8–9 [in *GN* 28]). In another true-experiences story, "Between Duty and Love," the *gay* protagonist falls in love with a civil servant temporarily filling a position in a small Central Sulawesi town. Once his two-week shift is completed, the civil servant's duty is to return to Manado (North Sulawesi). On their final night together, the civil servant begs for forgiveness in national terms: "We both serve the needs of our country and people" (*GN* 1993, 22:20). In a third such story, "Between Love, Parents, and Studies," Edo, a *gay* man from Biak, a small island near the island of New Guinea, encounters problems when his boyfriend's former lover calls Edo's parents to tell them that Edo is having sex with a man. Edo's fanatically Christian parents beat him and forbid him to see his lover. Here, the boyfriend's former lover commits a kind of anti-*prestasi* that separates Edo from both *gay* community and family (*GN* 1997, 48:23–25).[17]

The overall dynamic of *gay* zine narratives, then, is one of discovery followed by separation from a beloved Other. *Gay* Indonesians discover recognition, but the person who makes this recognition possible—the *gay* lover—is placed beyond reach. This narrative structure predominates despite the fact that it is not a simple reflection of *gay* experience. While their lives can be hard, many *gay* men do continue same-sex romances after heterosexual marriage. The attraction of these narratives lies in how they narrativize and concretize a belief that to be *gay* involves a profound sense of separation. What gives this separation its special sting in *gay* zines, a sense not just of desire thwarted but also of selfhood called into question? The answer lies in the nexus between love and nation.

Second Zone: National Sexualities

While the first zone of desire is concerned with homosex and homolove, the second relates to the sense that the *gay* subject position has a national scale. Three factors sustain this linkage to national culture: language, a deemphasis of the local and ethnic (which are often conceptually conflated [Boellstorff 2002]), and a deemphasis of Euro-

[17]For other narratives of separation, see *NJJ* 1997, 2:17–21; *GN* 1988, 2:13–21; *GN* 1997, 49:23–28.

America. All *gay* (and *lesbi*) zines ever published have used Indonesian, never an ethnolocalized language such as Javanese, Balinese, or Batak, except for occasional terms suggesting local color.[18] Since zines are published informally, this use of Indonesian is not simply kowtowing to state policy. My fieldwork indicates that publishing a zine in any other language has simply never occurred to these Indonesians. Why make zines inaccessible to so many potential readers—the "we" referenced so often in zine writing?

In line with foregrounding the national tongue, *gay* zines invoke an Indonesian personhood. While those calling themselves *gay* may think of themselves in ethnolocalized terms—as Bugis, Javanese, and so on—in some aspects of their lives, in regard to their sexualities, they think of themselves as *Indonesians.* One motivation for this is that the term *gay* appears to be understood universally not to be an indigenous concept—I know of no cases in which one learns the meaning of *gay* from one's family or tradition. Such distancing from ethnolocality is encapsulated in names such as *GAYa Betawi* and *GAYa Celebes*, in which terms indexing ethnolocality are subsumed in the pattern *GAYa X*. Since adjectives follow nouns in Indonesian, this pattern ontologizes the national; the "local" term appears as modifier and *GAYa* (based on *GAYa Nusantara*) as the subject. To my knowledge, almost every appearance of ethnolocality in *gay* zines has occurred when Dédé Oetomo has published articles on so-called traditional homosexualities and transgenderisms (collected in Oetomo 2001). These articles appear under the rubric *adat nusantara* (customs of the archipelago). The articles also frame the persons involved as outside the imagined readership of *gay* zines. Their customs are presented as interesting, but never to my knowledge are they set forth as providing an autochthonous pedigree for *gay* subjectivities (and never for *lesbi* subjectivities, since such traditional homosexualities and transgenderisms are almost exclusively associated with men).

The world beyond Indonesia plays a relatively minor role in *gay* zines. Although they occasionally reprint news clips or lengthier articles on gay or lesbian life in the non-Euro-American world (e.g., the Philippines or Brazil), such reportage is intermittent, appearing only sporadically in short stories, poetry, or letters sent in by readers. Euro-America itself (which for most Indonesians includes Australia and New Zealand) does appear in these zines but is not emphasized. Although *gay* Indonesians clearly understand *gay* to be derived in part from the Euro-American concept of gay, it is portrayed in national terms. This does not mean that linkages to Euro-American homosexualities are erased or denied: an archipelagic relationship pertains in which *gay* Indonesians are one island in an openly acknowledged, even celebrated, global archipelago of homosexuality. Such a sense of global belonging with regard to sexuality in no way precludes anti-American or antiglobalization views with regard to political and economic issues. *Gay* zines sustain this archipelagic relationship by referencing Euro-America, but these references are intermittent, in keeping with the fact that most *gay* Indonesians do not speak English or any Euro-American language, have never traveled outside Indonesia, and have met lesbian or gay Euro-Americans rarely, if at all. *Gay* zines have incorporated Euro-Americans since the early 1980s in the form of drawings (see fig. 4) or characters in short stories; recall the white boyfriend

[18]The only language other than Indonesian that ever appears in *gay* and *lesbi* zines is English. Short stories and personals sometimes contain English words or short phrases. *GAYa Nusantara* ran a one-page "Summary in English" from 1994 to 1997 (nos. 25–47), and *lesbi* zines have occasionally included entire articles in English (reflecting the high educational status of most of their producers).

of Jaka (see fig. 7). Euro-Americans also appear in stories as tourists falling in love with Indonesian men, and Euro-American gay men have sent in personals to *gay* zines since their beginnings. In 1998 *GAYa Nusantara* even ran what was jokingly termed the "white-guy edition" (*edisi bule*) (no. 54) which included tips on how to respond to personals from white men.

Despite these varied ways in which Euro-America figures in *gay* and *lesbi* zines, however, its footprint is quite small. Like nationalism, which originated in Euro-America but is now seen by Indonesians as authentically Indonesian, these sexualities are considered to be founded in the archipelago.

Invoking the Nation

Beyond these implicit references, the nation figures as a zone of desire explicitly, as the background against which *gay* selfhood and community play themselves out. This appears most succinctly in terms such as "*Indo*G**sian* people" (*bangsa Indo*G**sia*) (*GN* 1994, 25:40), in which *G* (*gay*) is literally implanted into the core of "Indonesia." More extended references to the nation are common in editorials. In the first issue of *GAYa Nusantara*, the publishers justified the incorporation of *nusantara* in the zine's name as a reminder of "the special national/archipelagic (*khas nusantara*) lives of *lesbi* and *gay* people, which we hope will be reflected and supported by this bulletin" (1987, 1:6). When a reader complained that early *GAYa Nusantara* zine covers had too many images of shadow-puppet theater, the publishers replied, "there has been an effort to give *GAYa Nusantara*'s covers themes of the archipelago's culture" (*GN* 1988, 3:6). Six years later, the zine commemorated Independence Day (August 17) with a cover featuring two men standing side by side; one held the red-and-white Indonesian flag, and the other held the gay rainbow flag originating in San Francisco, modified with two vertical red-and-white stripes recalling the national flag. That month's editorial explained:

> This August we remember an important event, the proclamation of Indonesian independence 49 years ago. This event could take place . . . because of a surge of new thinking from the beginning of the twentieth century that resulted in nationalism. . . . The *lesbi* and *gay* movement can be compared with this national movement. . . . It's clear that in the communities of the archipelago there have always been homosexual relations, . . . and with the coming of modern civilization there have appeared comprehensive homosexual identities. But, only in the 1980s did homosexual identities become a foundation for a struggle for emancipation and self-empowerment among us. Particularly in the 1990s, we see clearly the development of *gay* groups in our network that gain attention of observers within and outside the country.
>
> (*GN* 1994, 32:3–4)

Such framing of homosexuality in activist terms by *GAYa Nusantara*'s editors is one of the clearest discrepancies between these zines and the everyday lives of *gay* men, for whom such understandings are rare. What is shared by even the most blatantly political zine writing and everyday *gay* life, however, is a sense of desiring recognition by the nation. This dynamic can be found in other *gay* and *lesbi* zines. The premiere issue of *MitraS* noted that "there is definitely no place for the *gay* and *lesbi* to act as freely as those who live on the western half of the globe, . . . but that doesn't mean that *gay* and *lesbi* in the western countries are always more lucky than

we who live quietly in Indonesia" (1997, 1:8). Invoking the nationalist trope of land and water, the editor of *K-79* noted that through the zine "we can meet with friends of the same fate throughout our lands and waters (*tanah air*) without any barriers" (1993, 2:6). The editors of *GAYa Betawi* noted from early on that their zine was for *gay* men from the "whole archipelago" (*diseluruh nusantara*) (1992, 2:1). The editors of *Jaka-Jaka* once noted that the goal of the zine (and the organization connected to it) was to "build" *gay* people full of skills and self-esteem, so that they could give their best to the "people and nation" (*bangsa dan negara*) (1993, 5:15).

Readers also draw on national imagery in *gay* zines. The cover boy interviewed in the issue of *K-79* noted above implored readers to "support the unity and integrity between us" (1993, 2:7). Such phrases are common in letters to zines: one reader sent "greetings to the brotherhood of the Indonesian lands and waters" (*persaudaraan setanah air Indonesia*) (*GB* 1997, 15:4); another exclaimed "how beautiful it is to have *gay* friends from the whole archipelago. . . . We must be united in line with the third of the Pancasila [the unity of Indonesia]" (*GN* 1995, 37:15). Often the appeals found in personal ads are for "friendship with people like me from across the archipelago." They sometimes have an explicitly nationalist referent, as in the case of a Sumatran man who wrote that "with a foundation in democracy we struggle for freedom for *gay* people, like other normal human beings" (*G* 1982, 1:13). The emphasis is on a national community, and never to my knowledge has a personal ad requested someone from a particular ethnicity or region—in contrast to heterosexual personal ads in Indonesian magazines, which usually specify a desired ethnicity.[19] The desire is for persons from the whole archipelago (*se-Nusantara*, *setanah air*, or *se-Indonesia*). As one person put it, "after I appeared in the personal ads, I got many letters from friends of the same fate as myself from every corner of the archipelago. My perspective (*wawasan*) broadened concerning the *gay* world so full of joys and sorrows" (*GN* 1993, 24:11; see also *GL* 1994, 3:6 [in *GN* 31]).

Prestasi

In the quiet of my days, / Even at night there is no song.
My heart barren, / My soul fed up,
You come like a lamp, / Lighting up my heart,
Bathing my soul, / Humming the rhythm of love.
Let the periodical *GN* / Continue victorious and free.
Come friends! Let us make merry / This environment, this place,
Full of peace and joy / For the sake of the *GN* periodical's mission.

(*GN* 1990, 12:16–17)

These invocations of the nation as place occur simultaneously with the invocation of a complementary practice; *gay* zines construe citizenship as an active process, not as a static category of membership. Such practices are called *prestasi* in *gay* zines. This term bears colonial traces; it derives from the Dutch *prestatie*, a noun meaning "achievement" or "feat"; the verbal form can mean "achieve" and "perform." In standard Indonesian, *prestasi* also means both to achieve and to perform. Like any performance, *prestasi* requires observers: "hidden *prestasi*" is an oxymoron. As a result, when *gay* Indonesians refer to *prestasi*, it is always with an audience in mind, and with one exception noted below, the national or general society (*masyarakat umum*) is that

[19]My thanks to Leena Avonius for reminding me of this point.

audience, not the *gay* community. *Prestasi* can be helping directly, such as adopting a child or caring for a sick relative, or it can be a personal achievement that reflects favorably on one's community, such as going on the hajj to Mecca if Muslim or succeeding in one's career. The distinguishing characteristic is that it is positive and fosters social connectivity, in contrast to selfish actions with destructive or centripetal consequences. *Prestasi* is often described as leading to success (*sukses*), a key New Order state term for the exercise of proper citizenship (Pemberton 1994, 9). The editor of *K-79* once set forth a *Gay* Seven Charm Program (*sapta pesona gay*), including closeness (*keakraban*) and social solidarity (*kesatyakawanan sosial*). This concept transforms the Seven Charms devised by the New Order government as principles for encouraging tourism in the early 1990s (e.g., safety and cleanliness), but this *gay prestasi* is conceptualized with reference to national society.

The idea that *gay* persons can do *prestasi* just as well as other Indonesians is a frequent theme in zine editorials. The publishers of *Jaka-Jaka* once wrote:

> We all know and perhaps already feel the attitudes and behaviors of most *hetero* people toward *gay* people. . . . Is it right that we be "goat-class" citizens who only have sex? Of course not! There are many *gay* people who have reached the heights of status. . . . *Gay* people have qualities and abilities equal to anyone else. . . . To have meaning and respect, one must have a high level of self-worth and self-respect. For that, one must have *prestasi*.
>
> (1993, 4:11)

Another Yogyakarta zine mused that "*Prestasi* . . . will become a fortress strong enough to repel those minor tones [of social disapproval]" (*NJJ* 1997, 4:6). In 1998, during the worst period of Indonesia's currency crisis, an editor of *GAYa Nusantara* congratulated *gay* Indonesians for continuing their activities, noting that these activities "have an extra value for Indonesian *gay* people in the eyes of *hetero* society, [showing] that we continue to exist and carry out positive activities" (1998, 55:5). Zine readers also care about *prestasi*, as illustrated by an article entitled "What Can *Homos* Do?" written by a reader of *GAYa Nusantara* from Malang in East Java:

> We are becoming aware that although we are fated to be *gay* there are still many things that we can do for ourselves, our families, society, our beloved country and people, the Indonesian people. . . . We must "go public" with our activities . . . and mix with regular society, for instance with social activities that serve society, like rehabilitation centers for handicapped children, the insane, beggars, the homeless, and so on. . . . What's most important is that these efforts have a humanistic character (beyond the goal of helping our own people, but rather aiding humanity in general).
>
> (1995, 39:33–35)

As a reader of *GAYa Nusantara* from the town of Kisaran explained in an essay to the zine, "our *gay* friends who are elites and celebrities with influence must have the courage to open themselves, to show the Indonesian government that *gay* people have *prestasi* and *sukses* in all matters and compare to *hetero* people. In this way, it's hoped that the opinion of society and the Indonesian government will change of its own accord" (2000, 65:33). A cover boy from the town of Mojokerto, when asked his opinion about Indonesian society's view of *gay* men as only interested in sex, replied that "the reality is indeed that *gay* people are always equated with sex. It's up to how we as *gay* people change that judgment. We can do it with showing our positive attitudes. We can show our *prestasi*, so that maybe that judgment will eventually go away, and society can accept our existence to the fullest" (*GN* 1999, 59:13–14). The

short story appearing in the final issue of *Jaka* closes with a scene in which the protagonist, a young man, reveals himself to his parents. With tears in his eyes, his father says "you are still our only son, and you make us proud. No matter what choices you make in your life, what's important is that you become a person who takes care of himself and is useful to society" (*Jaka* 1988, 18:15). Nine years later, a *gay* man's confessions in the successor zine to *Jaka* echoes this theme: "My mother would be sad if I engaged in *free sex* [English in the original] or other frivolous things without reigning myself in. Even if my *gay*-ness (*kegayan*) is seen as a shortcoming, I just keep working to be a good child who's devoted to his parents, a good Muslim who prays regularly, a good student with good *prestasi*. In short, I want my mother to be proud of me. Even though I'm *gay*, I prove that I'm much better than those who are *hetero*" (*NJJ* 1997, 4:12). Such statements consistently emphasize that sex does not qualify as *prestasi*.

Given this performative model of citizenship, the act of publishing zines could itself be framed as *prestasi*, the only *prestasi* not directly oriented toward the general public. The editorial in the premiere issue of *GAYa Nusantara*, reflecting on the activities that the zine was to undertake, declared that "all of it has one goal, the acceptance of *gay* and *lesbi* people as a group with the same rights and responsibilities in Indonesian society" (1987, 1:2). This sensibility is shared by *lesbi* zines. As one editorial in a *lesbi* zine proclaimed, "*Swara* will become our pages that give voice to us" (*Swara* 2000, 1:7). In the premiere issue of the *lesbi* zine *MitraS*, the editors expressed frustration that "there isn't a bit of media that can become a forum for information and communication for us in Indonesia, like what's been carried out by *gay* men with their '*GAYa Nusantara*,' . . . so we found the courage to try publishing this 'special' bulletin after consulting with brother Dédé Oetomo" (1997, 1:3). Thus, "beginning from a feeling of concern about the fate of *lesbi* media that are always appearing and then disappearing to unknown places, four *lesbi* women in Jakarta met to discuss the possibility of publishing a newsletter. From this discussion came a serious agreement. 'There must be *lesbi* media!'" (*Swara* 2000, 1:6). In 1985 a zine reader from Medan (North Sumatra) wrote: "As a *gay* who could be called a veteran [because of his age], I am very proud and touched by your efforts and creativity. In the life of *gay* people, whom almost all people think of as just interested in satisfaction and not to be taken seriously, you emerge bringing a mission that is fundamental for the whole *gay* society (*masyarakat gay*). Through these media, we can open our eyes clearly" (*Jaka* 1985, 5:3).

I have encountered this sense of zines as *prestasi* in my fieldwork. One afternoon in Surabaya, I received a phone call from a *gay* man who said he was part of a group that had been involved in entertainment but now wanted to engage in more "serious activities," in particular a new zine (which he termed a *buletin*). The group knew of my work and wanted to know if I would be willing to provide an exclusive interview. I agreed and met them at a boarding house where several *gay* men and a *lesbi* woman rented rooms. The interview was one of many occasions of reverse ethnography in my fieldwork, where my thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors became the fodder for *gay* or *lesbi* theorizing about homosexuality in Euro-America. Once finished with a series of questions—beginning with my height, weight, favorite foods, and hobbies and ranging from my life in the United States to my impressions of Indonesia—I was asked not to tell any other zine-publishing groups of the interview (interview November 15, 1997). The explanation was that "we don't want people to hear about the zine before it is published, in case it isn't a *sukses*"—in other words, if it failed to be *prestasi*. On another occasion in a different city, I remember speaking with a *gay*

Table 1: Zines and Zones of Desire

	Desire for	Justified through	Unfulfilled desire construed as
First Zone	*gay* partner	*gay* love	separation from *gay* partner
Second Zone	national belonging	*prestasi*	nation withholds recognition
Interzone	*gay* national belonging	*gay* love as a *prestasi*	nation withholds love from the *gay* person

man who was one of only two people with editorial responsibility for a zine that once had a much larger volunteer staff. When I asked why he persisted in publishing the zine, he replied, "I feel a responsibility to make sure the zine doesn't die because many mass media in this country (*negara*), especially *gay* media, do die out" (interview August 19, 1997). For *gay* Indonesians, then, *prestasi* is a good deed that sets in motion a cycle of moral exchange whereby society, in repayment for the *prestasi* of *gay* Indonesians, will accept and receive (*terima*) them. Through *prestasi*, *gay* Indonesians express a desire to overcome separation and be reunited with the nation.

The Interzone: *Cinta* and Sexual Citizenship

PGY Yogyakarta	Yogyakarta *Gay* Brotherhood Yogyakarta
Datang dengan cinta,	Comes with love,
Berjuang dan berupaya / Demi hak sesama.	Struggles and labors / For the sake of equal rights.
Dengan semboyannya, / Gaya hidup ceria,	With our slogan, / The style of a happy life,
Giat berkarya demi negara dan nusa bangsa.	Working energetically for the state and island nation.
Ayo kawan semua, / Gulung lengan baju,	Come all friends, / Roll up your sleeves,
Mari bahu membahu, / Jangan ragu-ragu,	Let us stand shoulder to shoulder, / Don't hesitate.
Tunjukkan pada dunia / Gahwa kita sedia.	Show the world / That we are ready.
Baktikan jiwa membangun bangsa Indonesia.	Devote your soul to building the Indonesian people.

(*Jaka* 1987, 14:3)

In the first zone of desire, zines portray *gay* sexuality as moving on a continuum away from sex; its endpoint is a relational self formed through the discovery of, but separation from, love. In the second zone of desire, zines portray *gay* Indonesians as desiring national belonging—a trope of overcoming separation, a trope of recognition depending on *prestasi*. A crucial cultural logic animating *gay* zines—and, I would argue, *gay* subjectivities—emerges in the intersection of these two zones of desire. (With the critique of merography in mind, I do not interpret this interzone as a deep structure or organic whole; I see it as a contingent but consequential effect of these zones of desire's copresence.)

In this interzone, love itself emerges as the implicit *prestasi* qualifying *gay* Indonesians for sexual citizenship (see table 1). The paradox, as well as the source of the particular sting of exclusion and separation found in *gay* zines, is that *gay* love remains almost completely hidden from society. *Gay* love fails as *prestasi* because the postcolonial nation rejects homosexuality; it will not act as an audience authorizing

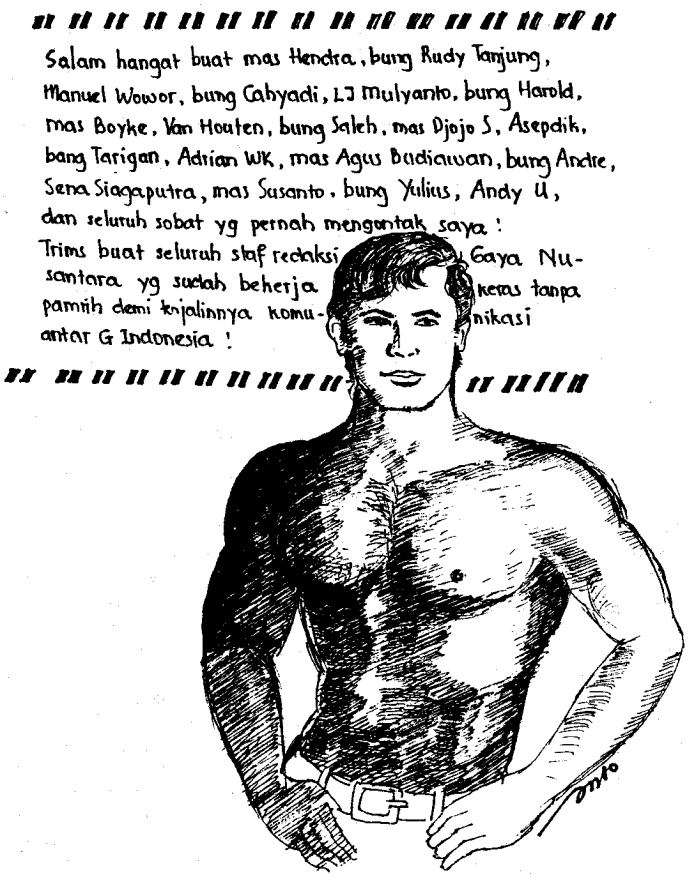

Figure 11. The interzone: male beauty juxtaposed with greetings to penpals from across the nation and thanks to the publishers of *GAYa Nusantara* for their *prestasi* of "working so hard without reward for communication among 'G' Indonesians!" (*GN* 1995, 36:7).

it. Recall the key position of love versus arranged marriages in debates over modernity in Indonesian literature. *Gay* Indonesians presume that heterosexual Indonesians are citizens by default; they may choose a spouse, but their relation to the nation is "arranged." *Gay* Indonesians, however, lack this relationship to the nation: the implication of the cultural logics of *gay* zines is that *gay* Indonesians must secure national belonging through active choice. Choosing the nation as the object of *gay* love stands as the *prestasi* that could in theory lead the nation to end its disavowal (see fig. 11). *Gay* desire for national belonging fails to overcome separation: it is a sick love.

Zines thus present love as the ultimate *prestasi*, proving *gay* Indonesians are equivalent to *normal* Indonesians (see fig. 12). As the publishers of *Jaka* once noted, "our differences with *hetero* people don't need to be blown out of proportion. In fact, if we respect each other, we can stand shoulder to shoulder and build this beloved nation and people. . . . As a minority that's 'put down,' we have to show that our patriotism and nationalism don't fail to compare!" (*Jaka* 1988, 17:2). An article sent to *GAYa Nusantara*, "Between Love and Lust," uses the trope of between-ness to set forth love as *prestasi*:

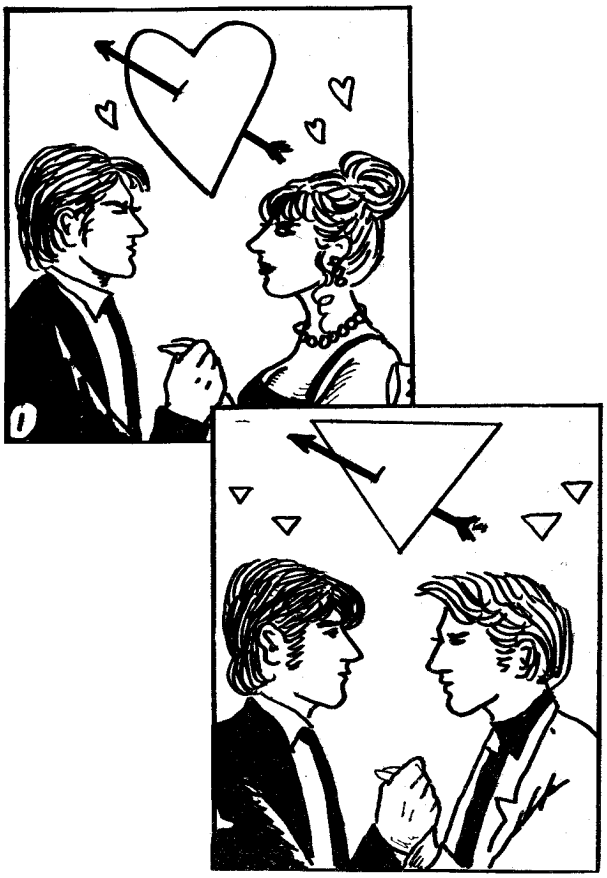

Figure 12. Love makes *gay* Indonesians equivalent to *normal* ones (*GN* 1999, 59:36).

> The lives of *gay* people are scrutinized and marginalized by *hetero* people, above all in regard to love. They accuse *gay* people of not having feelings of love, but only lust and desire. As one of many *gay* people in this country, I feel very apprehensive about this accusation. . . . [If *gay* men love each other,] we *gay* people will still be scrutinized, but the comments will change: "Wow, look at the example that *gay* couple is setting!" In that way, *hetero* people will slowly become impressed with the model of *gay* love. I have a friend who is a *lesbi* woman and who lives in peace, having built a household with her lover. They sail their prosperous ship of life and have even adopted a child. It's the same with a *gay* couple who works as lowly trash collectors. . . . Although they live in a simple home, their strong love shocks *hetero* people. . . . If *gay* people form lasting relationships, society itself will be taken aback and not reject us. . . . Let us hope that *gay* people are aware that we do not live only to fulfill our lusts, but that love is the ultimate thing.
>
> (1989, 11:31–32)

Despite this optimism, separation haunts the interzone: *gay* zines voice a clear awareness that *gay* love for the nation is not reciprocated. This dynamic is illustrated by fantastical short stories, two examples of which are given below. In these parables, *gay* love magically produces the *prestasi* that should make it worthy of recognition,

but the *prestasi* leads to separation—dooming the love to a nonsexual plane and exiling the beloved from the nation.

In one such story by a *GAYa Nusantara* reader from Jakarta, the married protagonist works as a geologist at a remote oil field in Sumatra. Soon after his unhappy wife leaves for Java, he meets a handsome young man, Nana, along the road near a forest. Nana follows the geologist to the oil-field camp, where he sits next to the geologist as the geologist ponders a map. "Nana, watching over my shoulder, with a smile said that from this place to this place there would certainly be oil. When I asked him how he knew he only smiled." They become lovers and Nana's test wells are rich in oil. The boss is elated with this *prestasi*, for which the geologist takes credit. Nana continues to find oil on behalf of his beloved geologist and even heals the boss's fever. Eventually the boss gives the geologist a promotion to Jakarta, but Nana is silent. "When I asked if it was because I had a wife in Java, he said no. . . . Finally he just said that he wanted to return to the area where I first found him." Nana disappears into the forest; suddenly, an old gray civet cat approaches the geologist. The cat kisses his feet and, "strangely, appears to be crying," then leaves. The geologist then sees an old man who says the forest is inhabited only by a 230-year old civet cat that can take human form. "Now I live alone, my wife left me because I didn't pay attention to her. . . . Oh Nana, I love you so much" (1996, 44:17–21).

In another story by a reader from the city of Solo, the protagonist, Calvin, falls in love with a fellow college student, Harold. One day Calvin sees a brilliantly written thesis with the same title as his own in Harold's room. There is a note: "I will leave after I find what I'm looking for." Harold explains that he has been expelled for having sex with a professor and that Calvin can use his thesis. That night they have sex; the next morning, Harold is gone. When Calvin finds Harold's grandmother and asks where Harold might be, the shocked woman replies that Harold died a year previously, "before he could graduate. He was disappointed with his schooling and killed himself. He left a message that he would leave if he found what he was looking for, but I didn't understand. Maybe you are what he was looking for. I beg of you, stay here with me, so that Harold can be at peace" (*GN* 2000, 74:35–36).

In these stories, fantastical *gay* men perform *prestasi* for their beloved, bringing them success in national society, but the love recognition that should ensue does not come to pass. Both end in separation. Even short stories without fantastic elements often present this same dynamic, as in "A Red Orchid for Kresna," sent to *GAYa Nusantara* by a *gay* man from Purworejo. In this story, Kresna is the childhood friend of Har, the protagonist, but as they grow older, Har's feelings become stronger: "What is this feeling? Is it love? . . . Does that mean . . . I'm a *gay* person?" (2001, 82:32). Eventually Kresna tells Har that he reciprocates his love, but in fear Har runs away and marries a woman. This separation is set to end when Har, realizing that he is *gay*, divorces his wife and returns to Yogyakarta to find Kresna.[20] He arrives at Kresna's house to find the family in an uproar: Kresna, whose parents rejected him after learning that he was *gay*, went to work at an orphanage and recently donated a kidney to a young orphan—the orphan was saved, but Kresna died from complications. Har, filled with the pain of separation, writes to Kresna in his diary: "I have found the true meaning of love. . . . Today, you are no longer a *gay* person who dies without honor, but a knight who has fallen in shining armor" (34).

[20]In other words, Har does not appear to believe that he can be *gay* and married to a woman at the same time; as noted above, such attitudes, while present among *gay* men for years, are still the minority view (see Boellstorff 1999).

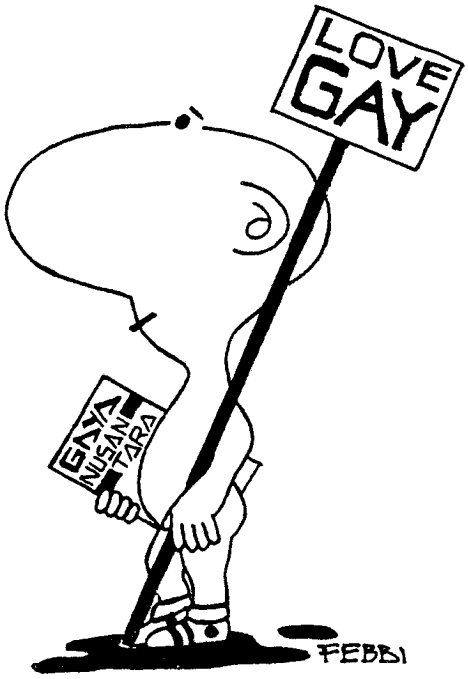

Figure 13. A figure in *GAYa Nusantara*, holding the zine in one hand and a sign reading "*gay* love" in the other (1993, 21:30).

If *gay* zines bring together homosexual desire and a desire for national belonging under the sign of love as *prestasi*, it is only logical that *gay* zines could be construed not only as *prestasi* but also as something loved (see fig. 13). Professions of love to zines have been frequent since the zines' beginnings, sometimes mixed with fears of separation: "I've fallen in love with *Jaka*; what's more, if I can get to know other lovers (*pencinta*) of *Jaka*, the feelings will be a million times greater" (*Jaka* 1986, 7:3); "it's like *Jaka* has become the heart of our people (*jantungnya kaum kita*)"; "I fell in love with *Jaka* at first sight, and it grows deeper and deeper. I feel fearful and sad when I imagine *Jaka* disappearing" (*Jaka* 1986, 8:2; see also *GN* 2001, 81:47).

Zines sometimes even appear as agents of love. Toward the end of the story "A Million Lamps of the Heart," the author-protagonist, Ar, is in his last year of high school and has met another student, Budi. One day Budi invites Ar to his house while Budi's parents are still at work:

> In the bedroom, Budi straightaway took off his shirt and pants. Wearing nothing but his underwear, he opened a bookcase, took out a magazine (*majalah*) and gave it to me. I started to read the magazine; its black-and-white cover just had a big *G* surrounded by *gaya hidup ceria* and the edition's number. Seeing me read the magazine, Budi smiled shyly and approached me.
>
> "What about it, Ar? . . ."
> "Sure, Budi," I replied. "Now?"
> "Yes, now." Immediately I took off my clothes. . . . Suddenly we were kissing. . . .
>
> "If I'd just known before, Ar—" he said.
> "What would you have done?" I interrupted.
> "I would have done like this!"

> And right away he moved on top of me. . . . Now I feel that I'm not alone anymore. Now I have a friend of the same world as me, in other words who also likes those of the same sex. Not just that. There is still something else. What? That magazine! Yes, that *G* bulletin. Now I feel that with the publication of that magazine I can get many friends who have the same feelings and joys as myself. Before I found that *G*, I felt my world was dark. Now that I've found that *G* I feel it's not so dark anymore. Now my world is bright and clear because a million lamps of the heart shine together.
>
> (*G* 1983, 5:7–9)

This zine within a zine flags the interzone in which homosexual desire and a desire for national belonging come together: the "million lamps of the heart" is the *gay* archipelago itself, the national network of *gay* men whose sexual desires find form through the prism of national discourse. The links between zines, love, and nation appears even more explicitly in the short story "Selingkuh," a term which means "dishonest" or "corrupt" in standard Indonesian but among *gay* men refers to having sex with a man other than one's boyfriend (I have never heard *gay* men refer to sex with a wife or girlfriend as *selingkuh*). In this story, Adam and Sam are lovers who each, unbeknownst to the other, takes out a personal ad in *GAYa Nusantara* to find a new sex partner (the very zine in which the story appears) (2001, 83:27–32). When Sam receives a reply, he is excited:

> Yess! Sekali lagi Sam bersorak-sorak bergembira, bergembira semua, sudah bebas negri kita, untuk s'lama-lamanya. . . . Aduh, sampe keterusan nyanyi-nyanyi lagu perjuangan. . . .
>
> 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 inadvertently sing a song of the struggle. . . .
>
> (28–29)

When Sam's joy leads him to sing a song from the anticolonial struggle, he breaks character (as in the "million lamps of the heart" story above) 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*)" (*GN* 2001, 83:29). *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 which, 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 originated, yet there is no mention of this tradition; *gay* love and *gay* belonging are national matters.

In the interzone, then, homosexuality and national belonging come together under the sign of love. As zines are produced in the interstices of everyday life and read in stolen moments on a bed or in a friend's room, *gay* men imagine a new Indonesia. Through this national romance, they desire recognition from a nation lover where now there is only separation. This is the story behind the story, so to speak, of *gay* zines. How might I leave the reader with an appreciation for the raw emotional sensibility of this implicit, unattainable interzone? It would be to construe Indonesia, the nation itself, as returning the gaze coming from the faces of *gay* men on zine

covers. A nation that at long last turns to the *gay* Indonesian and looks you right in the eye, that accepts your *prestasi* and closes distance. An Indonesia that beckons you and in that impossible moment is consumed by homosexual desire. An Indonesia that gathers you, finally, into the warmest of embraces and whispers in your ear—"you are loved." And you are home.

Appendix: Background Data on *Gay* and *Lesbi* Zines

Zine	Abbreviation used in this article for this zine	Years published	Published in	Notes
G: Gaya Hidup Ceria	*G*	1982–84	Semarang	first *gay* zine
Jaka		1985–88	Yogyakarta	second *gay* zine
GAYa Nusantara	*GN*	1987–present	Surabaya	some former staff from *G*; *gay* zine (with some *lesbi* content)
GAYa Lestari	*GL*	1994	Jakarta	first *lesbi* zine; published inside *GN*
MitraS		1997–98	Jakarta	*lesbi* zine
Swara Srikandi		2000	Jakarta	*lesbi* zine; some former staff from *MitraS*
Jaka-Jaka	*JJ*	1992–94?	Yogyakarta	some former staff from *Jaka*; *gay* zine
New Jaka-Jaka	*NJJ*	1997–99?	Yogyakarta	some former staff from *Jaka-Jaka*; *gay* zine
Gaya Betawi (Buku Seri IPOOS)	*GB*	1994–98	Jakarta	*gay* zine
K-79/GAYa Pandanaran		1993	Semarang	*gay* zine

List of References

Abbreviated Sources

G: Gaya Hidup Ceria (*G*)
GAYa Betawi (*GB*)
GAYa Lestari (*GL*)
GAYa Nusantara (*GN*)
Jaka-Jaka (*JJ*)
New Jaka Jaka (*NJJ*)

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