

## Call for Participants

### Conference on Reviving Benedict Anderson Imagined (Cosmopolitan) Communities

January 13-14, 2017, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

In his necrology (*The Jakarta Post & The New York Times*), James Siegel – Ben Anderson’s close friend at Cornell – said that careful readers of Anderson’s works will find themselves revived, living members of an organization without a form, joined in unimagined solidarity with others unknown to themselves. Interviewed by Cynthia Foo in 2008, Ben endorsed a colonial cosmopolitanism or cosmopolitanism from below. Based on *Indonesia dalem Api dan Bara* (Indonesia Aflame and on the Coals), a novel by Kwee Thiam Tjing, Ben said that “Cosmopolitanism does not mean that you have to spend more time in airports than in your own bed. You don’t need to travel at all.” The interviewer noted that a cosmopolitan, strictly speaking, as someone who’s worldly, not because of world travel, but because of their exposure to other cultures.

May 25, 2011, in Stavanger, University of Oslo, interviewed by Lorenz Khazaleh, Ben said that he wrote *Imagined Communities* in his 45 years old. Nowadays, as if I have a relationship to that book as to a daughter who has grown up and run off with a bus driver: I see her occasionally but, really, she has gone her own merry way. I can wish her good luck, but now she belongs with someone else. What would I change in the book? Well, should I try to change my daughter?

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#### ***Suggested questions, among others:***

1. What factors encourage or inhibit the development of cosmopolitan national communities? And how or under what circumstances are the communities formed? (*Faktor-faktor apa yang mendorong atau menghambat perkembangan komunitas-komunitas nasionalis kosmopolitan? Bagaimana atau dalam kondisi apa komunitas-komunitas itu dapat dibentuk?*)
2. How are these communities expressed or demonstrated? And how do they interface or conflict with one another? (*Bagaimana komunitas-komunitas itu dapat diungkapkan atau ditampilkan? Bagaimana mereka saling berhadapan atau berselisih satu sama lain?*)
3. Where and how does the State come in in the construction of communities at the national level? What about the impact of cosmopolitanism on the formation of nationalism? (*Dalam konteks apa dan bagaimana Negara hadir dalam pembentukan komunitas-komunitas itu di tingkat nasional? Apa dampak dari kosmopolitanisme itu dalam pembentukan nasionalisme?*)

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The conference will invite key-note speakers from: the Phillipines, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

The conference may also to discuss, among others, the following Ben's words or statements required, in thinking and imagining cosmopolitan communities – beyond his worldly presence. Here are the citations of Ben's ideas:

1. On *Language and Power*, 1990, p.199. (*Kuasa-Kata. Jelajah Budaya-budaya Politik di Indonesia*, Yogya: MataBangsa, 2000, hal. 419)  
Regarding the 1928 Soempah Pemoeda, Ben wrote, "It was less nationalism that created a common language than that a common language helped create nationalism."
2. *Imagined Communities*, 2006. p.228 (*Imagined Communities. Komunitas-komunitas Terbayang*, Yogya: Insist & Pustaka Pelajar, 2001)  
What is clear is that Verso made no special effort to encourage translations, and that those done by former students of mine (Japanese, Indonesian, and Thai) were done on their initiative, not mine.
3. *The Spectre of Comparisons*, 1998, p.58. (*Hantu Komparasi. Nasionalisme, Asia Tenggara, dan Dunia*, Yogya: Qalam, 2002, hal. 103)  
In 1860s, a liberal Catholic historian, Lord Acton warned that three powerful and subversive ideas were threatening the civilization of that time. The three ideas were egalitarianism, aimed at the principle of aristocracy; communism (he was thinking of Baboeuf rather than Marx) aimed at the principle of property; and nationalism, or nationality, aimed at the principle of legitimacy.
4. *Under The Three Flags*, 2005. pp.164 -165. (*Di Bawah Tiga Bendera. Anarkisme Global dan Imajinasi Antikolonial*, Jakarta: Marjin Kiri, 2015, hal. 252-253)  
After reflecting on Jose Rizal (1861-1896) first two books – the *Noli* and *El Filibusterismo* – Ben was a bit disappointed, perhaps, and wrote "in four years this enormously gifted writer wrote practically nothing beyond a few censor-shadowed letters. The projected third "beautiful" and "artistic" novel came to nothing ... Possibly, another great novel was beyond him." Ben referred to his last book, on anarchists, as "my novel". An appropriate form for a study of global connections between people who come into relation with each other through politics.
5. *A Life Beyond Boundaries*, 2016, p.49. (*Hidup di Luar Tempurung*, Jakarta: Marjin Kiri, 2015, hal. 48-49)  
This is why fieldwork is also so useful when you return home. You will have developed habits of observation and comparison that encourage or force you to start noticing that your own culture is just as strange - provided you look carefully, ceaselessly compare, and keep your anthropological distance. In my case, I began to get interested in America, everyday America, for the first time.

### **Publications:**

In the course of the discussion, the Conference Committee expects to explore related collaborative research projects leading to a publication collaborated with Sanata Dharma University Press, for which the committee will seek funding.

### ***Who may apply and attend the Conference:***

The conference is open to members of the academe, civil society, and non-governmental organizations in Southeast Asia who have done work on the subject of the conference.

### ***Application procedure - Interested applicants must submit:***

1. Curriculum vitae (no more than two pages) that includes the following: full name, institutional affiliation, email address, gender, age, etc.
2. One page “think piece” on ideas and interpretation or perspective on the subject, responding to the conference subject matters. Applications must be written in English or Indonesian, and submitted by email no later than December 20, 2016 to Lembaga Studi Realino: *realino@mail.usd.ac.id*
3. The Committee will review the applications only in order to have a better schedule arrangement of the forum.

### ***Conference Logistics:***

Travel cost, accommodation, meals, etc. have to be arranged by each participant.

Travel Arrangement: Several direct international flight to and from Yogyakarta International Airport (i.e. Air Asia, Silk Air, MAS, Garuda, etc).

Accommodation located at walking distance from the conference site:

- Jogjakarta Plaza Hotel, 3 minutes, price range at USD 46
- Yellow Star Gejayan Hotel, 5 minutes, price range at USD 28
- Puri Chorus Hotel, 10 minutes, price range at USD 21
- EMBE ENEM Homestay, 5 minutes, price range at USD 21
- Midtown Xpress Demangan Jogja Hotel, 10 minutes, price range at USD 27
- The Edelweiss Hotel Yogyakarta, 10 minutes, price range at USD 22

Free Accommodation available at Realino Student Dorm (16 rooms, double beds, available for 32 persons).

Meals: Restaurants and affordable foodcourts (price range from USD 1 – USD 5 per meal) located at walking distance from the University.

### ***Inquiries:***

Lembaga Studi Realino – Universitas Sanata Dharma

Jalan Affandi, Gejayan-Mrican, Tromolpos 29, Yogyakarta 55002

Telephone No. : +62-274-565751

Mobile phone : +6281575161314

WA : +6281575161314

Facebook : Lembaga Studi Realino

Facsimile : +62-274-632-7090891

E-mail : *realino@mail.usd.ac.id*

Website : *http://www.realino.usd.ac.id* or *http://www.usd.ac.id*

### ***Steering Committee:***

Melani Budianta, Kamala Soedjatmoko, Hendro Sangkoyo, Ronny Agustinus, Budi Susanto, S.J., P.M. Laksono, Anton Haryono.