

Kang Cep

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November 14, 2016 - 10:43

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For some, separation is a sad blessing or a sad sadness favors, especially for officials who hold "farewell" events because they go up position. Separation is the most dramatic part of life, especially when there is a rushing water eye. Farewells are made because people graduate and leave school, continuing study abroad, go on pilgrimage, separate from a lover because of not having a match, or divorce with a life partner. So, after meeting Kang Cep in Stockholm, Sweden, we parted on that draining night. Kang Cep and his wife drove my wife and I to hotel. We don't know when we will meet again. It was a gloomy evening due to the drizzle and the cloudy, misty sky had long passed.

Kang Cep's face is similar to that of his younger sibling, my best friend since high school, that connect us. Kang Cep is originally from Bandung who left Indonesia since 1979 and has lived in Sweden since 1981 without ever returning to his hometown. Me called him Kang Cep, as my best friend suggested, as he called him. I doubt if I ever met him in Bandung. To be sure, me already heard of his activity in student organizations during the New Order regime triumphant.

Dusk was still floating in that fall, when my wife and I arrived at a hotel in the area Sodermalm. Kang Cep who works as a lecturer with his future son-in-law, Erik, Swedish Muslim and informatics expert, picked us up and invited us to have dinner at an Indian restaurant. "There's been no sunshine for a month," said Kang Cep. Wife Kang Cep from Medan and his only daughter, a doctor of physics who was born in Sweden, has been waiting for us at that restaurant. The famous "Nordic Salmon" in Scandinavian, though with Indian flavors, I eat it with passion.

It's hard to imagine the feelings of Kang Cep, who has long wandered a foreign land without ever returning home, even after his birth mother died. There must be a special reason why did Kang Cep act like that. I understand, even though I didn't ask him because he was sensitive, the reason Kang Cep never came home was mainly political. "Insha Allah, I will return to Indonesia later," he said. His wife and daughter had come to Indonesia. To my wife, Kang Cep's wife said that they actually miss going home to gather with relatives back home. I believe Kang Cep is still in love Indonesia even though he has settled in Sweden. For him, the concept of "Homeland" may no longer be like our concept. As one Indonesian settler in Melbourne argued, Australia: "It doesn't matter to me where we live and die. What's more important is that we die by faith. "

Based on what my best friend said, his brother left his homeland when he was the New Order regime hunted down and arrested its opponents, including para college student. Kang Cep was a psychology student at a private college at Bandung, and a militant campus activist. "I sometimes cry when I see the photos," said my friend. Kang Cep himself told, in 1979 he went to Egypt, met and married his wife, and in 1981 moved to Sweden. Using a female pseudonym, Kang Cep wrote in a language magazine Sunda Mangle, tells of his experiences in Egypt. "Mangle is still there now," I said.

During our meeting, Kang Cep and I used more Sundanese, such as in our e-mail exchange, even though the Sundanese are not as fluent as Swedish when he talked to Erik, which I certainly didn't understand. The encounter with Kang Cep reminds me of Saeful, a sailor from Jakarta whom I met the other day Jakarta-Istanbul flights. He will continue his trip to Lisbon, Portugal, while I went to

Frankfurt. For twenty years Saeful worked as a sailor on a ship cruise, returning only two months each year to see his wife and children. "My Filipino friend committed suicide by throwing himself into the sea when we were sailed near Iceland. He was stressed because he felt isolated and harbored deep homesickness Very much to the family," said Saeful.

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For Kang Cep, life in Sweden has become normal. I think Kang Cep lives in Sweden partly because of Swedish culture which is egalitarian without losing manners. Kang Cep said that in Germany alone there is still stratification. People are called by Prof. Dr. or Herr, but here people are addressed by the first name, including by fellow lecturers. However, that doesn't mean that Swedes don't have heroes. According to Erik, Sweden's most recent idol is Zlatan Ibrahimovic, famous soccer player, and Bjorn Borg and Stefan Edberg, both former world-class tennis players.

Borrowing the concept of Geert Hofstede (1991), Swedish culture is a feminine culture embracing gender equality and friendly to foreigners. "I've seen Victoria, the crown princess of Sweden, was alone in a park without a single bodyguard even. Office relationships are very egalitarian. We speak in soft and gentle language the same, there is no soft language or harsh language, calling each other by first names. The boss doesn't command the subordinates much. On weekdays, it was customary for the men to babysit while his wife works," said Erik, who is used to cycling to his office.

Gender equality is also indicated by the availability of toilets that can be entered by men and women, like in Stockholm Central Station (which made me gasp when I was white women coming out of the toilet that I will enter), in our "Indian Garden" dinner, and at the hotel where we stayed. Because of the friendly native attitude towards immigrants, in Stockholm, I see quite a lot of Muslims. Countless There were not as many women wearing hijab as we did in Budapest, Hungary visit before.

Two nights in Stockholm was enough. My wife and I went on a trip with train to Gothenburg to visit an old friend and his family at a village called Fjaras, prior to the Netherlands via Copenhagen, Denmark, to did an academic presentation at Leiden University. At the Stockholm train station, me I met Devie Rahmawati, a lecturer at UI, my doctoral student, yang currently researching at the University of Swansea, UK. Devie stopped off in Stockholm for consulted about his research and presentations, on the way to attend the event the same in the Netherlands. After that brief meeting, we were then separated.

Like the clouds in the sky, meeting and separating, life is a series of encounters and farewells, with people we know and don't know. The end of our life is goodbye when our loved ones die or when we die leave them. The problem is, are we ready?

(<http://www.pikiran-rakyat.com/kolom/2016/11/14/kang-cep-384702>)