

**REWRITING FREEDOM AND CONTROL IN
PERCIVAL EVERETT'S *JAMES***

THESIS



**UIN SUNAN AMPEL
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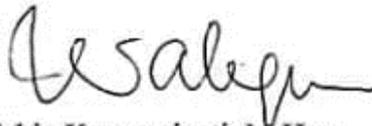
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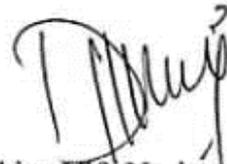
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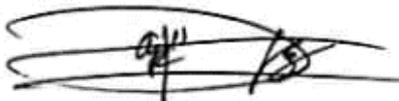
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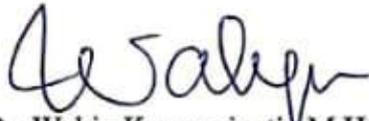
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ABSTRACT

Purnomo, A.J.A (2026). *Rewriting Freedom and Control in Percival Everett's James*. English Literature Department, Faculty of Adab and Humanities, UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. Advisors: (I) Dr. Wahyu Kusumajanti., M.Hum, (II) Ramadhina Ulfa Nuristama, M.A.

This study analyzes Percival Everett's novel *James* (2024) as a counter-discursive rewriting of Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884). While Twain's canonical text focuses on the moral development of Huckleberry Finn, often marginalizing the enslaved character Jim, Everett's novel shifts the narrative center to Jim (James), reclaiming his agency and voice. This study aimed to analyze how Everett retelling the character of Jim to reclaim intellectual agency and control over his own narrative.

This research employs a qualitative method using comparative textual analysis. The primary data are drawn from Percival Everett's *James* (hypertext) and *Mark Twain's Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (hypotext). The analysis is grounded in the theoretical frameworks of Intertextuality by Julia Kristeva, specifically Gérard Genette's concept of hypertextuality, and Post-Colonial Rewriting as defined by Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin.

The study revealed two fundamental strategies of rewriting. First, Everett reshapes Jim's characters by subverting the slave dialect of the original text. He reveals it to be a calculated performance of code-switching that James uses to mask his high literacy and philosophical intellect from white society. Second, Everett reinterprets key iconic scenes, such as the fog incident and the discovery of Pap Finn's body transforming them from moments of superstition or passivity into strategic calculations for survival. The research concludes that *James* functions not merely as a retelling, but as a transvaluation of the American canon, asserting that true freedom for the enslaved subject can only be achieved through the seizure of narrative control.

Keywords: Intertextuality, Rewriting, Reshape, Reinterpretation

ABSTRAK

Purnomo, A.J.A (2026). *Menulis Ulang Kebebasan dan Kontrol dalam James Karya Percival Everett*. Program Studi Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Adab dan Humaniora, UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. Pembimbing: (I) Dr. Wahyu Kusumajanti,, M.Hum, (II) Ramadhina Ulfa Nuristama, M.A.

Studi ini menganalisis novel *James* (2024) karya Percival Everett sebagai penulisan ulang yang bertentangan dengan teks asli dari novel Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884). Sementara teks klasik Twain berfokus pada perkembangan moral Huckleberry Finn, seringkali mengabaikan karakter budak Jim, novel Everett memindahkan pusat narasi ke Jim (James), mengembalikan agensi dan suaranya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bagaimana Everett membentuk ulang karakter Jim untuk mengembalikan agensi intelektual dan kendali atas narasinya sendiri.

Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan analisis teks komparatif. Data utama diambil dari *James* (hypertext) karya Percival Everett dan *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (hypotext) karya Mark Twain. Analisis ini didasarkan pada kerangka teoritis Intertekstualitas oleh Julia Kristeva, khususnya konsep hipertekstualitas Gérard Genette, dan Penulisan Ulang Pasca-Kolonial sebagaimana didefinisikan oleh Ashcroft, Griffiths, dan Tiffin.

Studi ini mengungkap dua strategi dasar dalam penulisan ulang. Pertama, Everett mengubah karakter Jim dengan cara menggoyahkan dialek budak dalam teks asli. Ia mengungkapkan bahwa hal itu merupakan kinerja yang disengaja dalam pergantian kode yang digunakan James untuk menyembunyikan tingkat literasi tinggi dan kecerdasan filosofisnya dari masyarakat kulit putih. Kedua, Everett menafsirkan ulang adegan-adegan ikonik kunci, seperti insiden kabut dan penemuan mayat Pap Finn, mengubahnya dari momen-momen takhayul atau pasif menjadi perhitungan strategis untuk bertahan hidup. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa *James* tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai pengulangan, tetapi sebagai transformasi kanon Amerika, menegaskan bahwa kebebasan sejati bagi subjek yang diperbudak hanya dapat dicapai melalui pengambilalihan kendali naratif.

Kata Kunci: Intertekstualitas, Penulisan Ulang, Pembentukan Ulang, Penafsiran Ulang

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Inside Cover Page	i
Inside Title Page	ii
Approval Sheet	ii
Examiners' Sheet	iii
Declaration	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Abstract	vii
Abstrak	viii
Table of Contents	ix
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Problems of the Study	5
1.3 Significances of the Study	5
1.4 Scope and Delimitations	6
1.5 Definition of Key Terms	6
CHAPTER II REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	
2.1 Intertextuality	8
2.2 Postcolonial Rewriting	11
2.3 Neo Slave Narratives	14
CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHOD	
3.1 Research Design	15
3.2 Data Collection	16
3.2.1 Research Data	16
3.2.2 Data Source	16
3.2.3 Instrument(s)	16
3.2.4 Data Collection Technique	17
3.3 Data Analysis Technique	17
CHAPTER IV FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION	
4.1 The Reshaping of Jim's Character	19

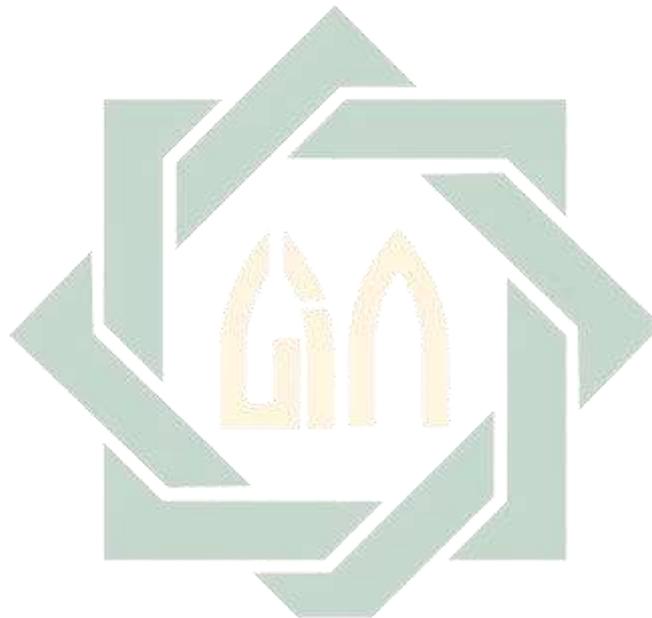
4.2 Narrative Effect of Jim's Retelling 36

CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Conclusions 51

5.2 Suggestions 51

REFERENCES..... 52



UIN SUNAN AMPEL
S U R A B A Y A

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