Perhaps we shall never know the truth about Indonesia’s failed (supposedly Communist) coup of 1965. But the consequences were clear: the fall of President Sukarno and rise to power of General Suharto plus violent suppression of all "Communist" organizations. In the process a half million lives were lost.

Open discussion of these events – especially the killings – was impossible during the period of Suharto’s rule except in one area, Indonesian literature. Here it was possible to portray the events in fictional form at the human level. As a result, a number of Indonesia’s best-known authors wrote on the subject.

This book analyses Indonesian literature produced during the New Order period dealing with the events of 1965–1966 and its consequences. It examines the political coercion that people were subjected to and how the authors deal with the taboo subject of the killings. It also considers how the Communist Party was seen and discusses the underlying reasons for why the fictional characters act as they do. Crucial here is the influence of Javanese culture and the significance of President Sukarno’s political concept of Nasakom.

This is the first book-length study presenting the alternative version found in Indonesian literature of the events of 1965–1966. It also demonstrates that the concerns and perceptions of Indonesian writers differ sharply from those of Westerners.
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Indonesian Literature

vs New Order Orthodoxy

The Aftermath of 1965–1966

Anna-Greta Nilsson Hoadley

NIAS Press
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Preface

Reaction to the political conditions in Indonesia during the New Order led me to write the present book. As a historian I have often wondered how much the Indonesian people know about the 1965–66 upheaval which took the lives of approximately a half million people and led up to a hundred thousand interned for years without trial. For those who knew about the massacres and injustice, how did they deal with it? The questions seem all the more relevant because the events of 1965–66 set the tone for the entire New Order era between 1966 and 1998. Even when those who had been arrested were freed at the end of the 1970s, they were forced to live without the essential rights of citizens. The condition applied to the children of ex-political prisoners and threatened their grandchildren. A de facto pariah group was artificially being created within New Order Indonesian society. The military takeover was never discussed. The massacres were equally a tabu subject. Silence reigned on the fate of former political prisoners. No review of the events of 1965 was undertaken by the country’s historians or political scientists. Textbooks for universities and secondary schools were produced by military historians in line with the official interpretation of GESTAPU — the Indonesian acronym for the “movement of 30 September [1965].”

While reading Ahmad Tohari’s novel Kubah I was struck by his attempt to deal with the hyper-sensitive issue surrounding the events of 1965. After having read other works by him, as well as novels by Umar Kayam, Ajip Rosidi, Yudhistira ANM Massardi, Ashadi Siregar, and Nh. Dini I began see a common theme. The novels’ major figures were not just innocent victims of the 1965 upheavals. They were innocent in a double sense. First they were punished as Communists or fellow-travelers, despite the fact that the Indonesian Communist Party was not only a recognized political party up to September 1965 but also a part of the legitimate government of the Republic of Indonesia. Semantics
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aside as to whether legitimate political activities, can be retroactively punished the major actors were not even members of the party! They were, hence, innocent in a second sense: being punished only because of association with Communists or suspected Communists. To complete the selection I added authors who had actually been imprisoned: namely Putu Oka Sukanta, Hr. Bandaharo and Pramoedya Ananta Toer. The result was the revelation of a widespread discussion among New Order Indonesian authors of many aspects of 1965 and its aftermath.

The present book is a revision of my doctoral dissertation of the same title, defended at Lund University in February of 2002. Considerable support was provided by the critical but sympathetic observations made by the peer reviewer for the NIAS Press. I would also like to thank Professor Robert Cribb for valuable insights and comments. Several individuals at Lund University’s Department of East Asian Languages have contributed to the work’s publication. Among these are Professor Mason C. Hoadley who gave encouragement and support. I am also indebted to Professor Lars Ragvald, Chairman of the Department, for his generosity in providing both computer support and a publication contribution from the department’s Gad Rausing Donation Fund.

The illustrations in this book were made possible by the generosity of several publishers in Indonesia and Yayasan Dokumentasi Sastra H.B. Jassin in Jakarta. Thus I would like to thank Penerbit PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama, PT Pustaka Utama Grafiti and Yayasan Bentang Budaya for permission to reproduce the covers of the books considered in this study. H.B. Jassin Documentation Center has been very helpful in locating contemporaneous photo of the authors as well as given permission to reproduce them.

Last, but certainly not least, I am greatly encouraged by the positive response from many of the Indonesian authors whose works have been used in Indonesian Literature vs New Order Orthodoxy.

Anna-Greta Nilsson Hoadley
Lund, October 2004
**Abbreviations**

- **BTI**  Barisan Tani Indonesia, Indonesian Peasant Front, affiliated with the PKI
- **CGMI**  Concentrasi Gerakan Mahasiswa Indonesia, Indonesian Student Movement Center
- **DPR-GR**  Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat - Gotong Royong, Mutual Assistance People’s Representative Assembly
- **G30S**  Gerakan 30 September, the Thirtieth of September Movement also known as Gestapu (from Gerakan September Tiga Puluh)
- **Gerwani**  Gerakan Wanita Indonesia, Indonesian Women’s Movement, close to PKI
- **Gestapu**  Gerakan September Tiga Puluh, Thirtieth of September Movement
- **GBHN**  Garis Besar Haluan Negara, Broad Outlines of State Policy
- **HANSIP**  Pertahanan Sipil, Civil Defense
- **HSI**  Himpunan Sarjana Indonesia, Indonesian Socialist Scholars’ Association
- **KODIM**  Komando Distrik Militer, Regional Military Command
- **KORAMIL**  Komando Rayon Militer, Rayon Military Command
- **KOTI**  Komando Operasi Tertinggi, Supreme Operations Command
- **LEKRA**  Lembaga Kebudajaan Rakjat, Institute for People’s Culture, affiliated with the PKI
Indonesian Literature vs. New Order Orthodoxy

Masjumi
Majlis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia, Consultative Council of Indonesian Muslims, a modernist Muslim organization

MPRS
Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara, Provisional People’s Consultative Assembly

NASAKOM
Nasionalisme, Agama, Komunisme, Nationalism, Religion, Communism

NU
Nahdlatul Ulama, the Awakening of Muslim Scholars, a conservative Muslim organization, the largest in Indonesia

Partindo
Partai Indonesia, Indonesia Party

Permesta
Piagam Perjuangan Semesta Alam, Charter of Universal Struggle

PGRI Non-Vaksentral
Persatuun Guru Republik Indonesia Non-Vaksentral, Teachers' Union of the Republic of Indonesia, unaffiliated

PKI
Partai Komunis Indonesia, Indonesian Communist Party

PNI
Partai Nasional Indonesia, Indonesian Nationalist Party

PRRI
Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia, Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia

PSI
Partai Sosialis Indonesia, Indonesian Socialist Party

RPKAD
Resimen Para Komando Angkatan Darat, Army Paracommando Regiment

SMA
Sekolah Menengah Atas, Upper Secondary School

Super Semar
Surat Perintah Sebelas Maret, Letter of Instruction, 11 March

TAP 25
Ketetapan MPRS No. XXV/1966, decree of the Provisional People’s Consultative Assembly No. 25, 1966

TAPOL
Tahanan Politik, political prisoner
Glossary

abangan  nominal Muslims influenced by pre-Islamic Javanese traditions

aliran  current or stream, a horizontal social group based on communal or religious identification

ansor  from al-ansar, ‘the helpers’ who supported the Prophet in Medina, a Muslim youth organization affiliated to Nahdlatul Ulama

aksi sepihak  unilateral action 1963–64 taken by Communist Party and affiliated organizations to implement the land reform of 1960

bung  brother, affectionate title for popular Nationalist leaders such as Bung Karno (President Sukarno)

bupati  regent, administrative head of Regency

camat  subdistrict; Pak Camat means head of subdistrict

dalang  puppeteer and narrator in wayang shadow play

Darul Islam  ‘House of Islam’ rebellion in West Java 1948 to mid-1960s with the goal of establishing an Islamic state

gamelan  traditional Javanese musical ensemble

gotong royong  mutual self-help

‘Guided Democracy’  political regime decreed by President Sukarno 1959–65
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haji pilgrim, returned from Mecca; title and term of address for such a pilgrim

Harian Rakjat People’s Daily, Indonesian Communist Party newspaper

ikhlas sincere; with all one’s heart and soul

ketoprak popular dramatic entertainment inspired by wayang

kolot conservative santri or orthodox Muslim

Korawa evil clan in the Mahabharata epic

Lubang Buaya ‘Crocodile Hole,’ a well on Halim Air Force base where the bodies of the murdered generals were found

ludruk Javanese folk theater in which all roles are played by men

lurah village chief

magang volunteer; apprentice

Mahabharata ancient Indian epic popular in Java

Manifesto Kebudajaan manifesto for the freedom of art, 1964

marhaen Sukarno’s concept of a struggle for the haves

musyawarah mufakat collective deliberation – mutual consensus

nrimo pandum acquiescent to one’s fate

Nyonya Madame

padi unhusked rice

Pak (Bapak) form of address to an older or respected man

Pancasila ‘Five Principles,’ the philosophical foundation of the Indonesian state

Pandawa good clan in the Mahabharata epic (the five Pandawa brothers are of semidivine origin)

pemuda youth

Pemuda Rakjat People’s Youth
Glossary

priyayi  Javanese aristocracy; ruling literati; higher officialdom
Ramayana  Indian epic
Ratu Adil  the 'Righteous King,' a Messiah figure predicted by King Jayabaya in the twelfth century
ronggeng  paid dancing and singing girl, implicitly available for sexual services
santri  orthodox Muslim
sawah  wet rice field
takdir  divine decree; fate
tembang  sung or recited Javanese poetry
trima dengan ikhlas  accept wholeheartedly
ulama  Islamic religious leader
wayang kulit  shadow play with leather puppets often dramatizing themes from the Hindu epics
wahyu  divine royal radiance; sign of royalty
warung  food stall; small shop
wedana  lower-level district officer under the bupati
1

Introduction

PURPOSE, METHOD, AND THE LITERATURE

The 1965–66 period constitutes a watershed in Indonesia’s modern political history. Forced transfer of political power to General Soeharto effectively reversed President Sukarno’s policy of bringing about a compromise between three major currents within Indonesian society: nationalism, Islam, and communism. Instead, as a result of the army’s ascendancy to supreme power the country’s political life was depoliticized and de-ideologized. The Communist Party was outlawed, Islamic parties restricted to religious and social activities, and the Nationalist Party marginalized. The army’s rise to power in 1965 was followed by massacre of Communists and those thought to be sympathizers, a massacre claiming around 500,000 lives. Another 100,000 persons were interned for up to a decade, some for as long as 30 years without due process of law. Others were summarily executed. As late as the 1990s death sentences were still being carried out.

Even though most of the political prisoners were released in the late 1970s, they returned to a society in which they were no longer full members. They were not allowed to hold public office or administrative positions. This prohibition on engaging in certain professions severely affected prisoners who had formerly been teachers, civil servants, officers, etc. Nor were they allowed to engage in professions which could influence public opinion. The way was thereby closed for them to become writers, journalists, or even hold positions of trust within organizations. Possibilities of earning a living were thus exceedingly limited. In addition, the former prisoners were deprived of any exercise of political rights. They no longer had the right to vote and could not be elected to public office. In short, they had very little or no possibility
of influencing public opinion in order to bring about an improvement in their situation. They became a pariah class in Indonesian society. Even their children were relegated to this pariah status as an inheritance from the alleged deeds of their parents. The regime’s extreme policies rested on the claim that the Communist Party had attempted to seize power and that only the army had prevented its realization. The army’s version of the change of regime in 1965–66 has been maintained and provides the basis of the official national history, Sejarah Nasional Indonesia (National History of Indonesia) that dominates the nation’s school textbooks. Despite blatant historical falsification and suppression of the facts this politically correct orthodoxy has not been questioned by the country’s historians or its political scientists; nor has it been the subject of press debate. Especially sensitive is the massacre following the coup attempt which became a taboo subject in Indonesia.

It has not been generally recognized that there have been attempts to scrutinize the country’s recent past. However it is not to Indonesia’s historians or political scientists that we must look, but to writers of literary works. A surprising number of Indonesia’s most distinguished authors have written about the victims of the terror of 1965–66 in spite of the risks this has entailed for their own careers and even personal safety. They have not been content with merely describing the unpleasant facts but have also made a critical examination of the country’s past and the outrages to which its citizens were subjected. As pointed out by Keith Foulcher, creative literature concerning the events of 1965 and its aftermath was virtually silent on the subject until the end of the 1970s. ‘In 1979, however, history began to resurface’ and writers started to deal with and communicate issues of crucial social concern. A number of literary works characterized by realism and observations on society began to appear.1

The present work analyzes Indonesian literature written during the New Order dealing with the 1965–66 shift in political power. It takes up the question of which issues did Indonesian authors address. Its theoretical point of departure flows out of Theodor Adorno’s observations on art as knowledge vis-à-vis empirical reality. The observation is contained in his essay ‘Reconciliation under Duress.’ As a response to Georg Lukács’s criticism of modern art from a Soviet point of view, the essay became a polemic on art in the modern world. Ardono’s point of departure is the inherent contradiction between the essence of reality as revealed in images and immediate or empirical reality. For him art’s basic nature is to be both essence and image. By merely duplicating that
which exists, seemingly a reference to socialist realism, art acts contrary to its own innermost nature. In this manner it also fails to become knowledge. Rather than passing along objects, art can converge with reality only if it crystallizes images out of its own formal laws. In this manner art is true to its aesthetic nature and, more importantly, mediates knowledge. Through the form of an image the object of a piece of art is absorbed into the subject or essence. This contrasts with merely following the bidding of the alienated world and persisting obdurately in a state of reification. The contradiction between the object reconciled in the subject, i.e. spontaneously absorbed into the subject, and the actual unreconciled object in the outside world, confers on the work of art a vantage-point from which it can criticize actuality.

This is what Ardono means with his statement that ‘Art is the negative knowledge of the actual world.’

The present work builds on Adorno’s observations concerning art, reality, and knowledge. In very general terms the works of Indonesian literary writers during the New Order provide both images and essence in their art; the official line of the New Order government provides the empirical reality, at least as experienced under the auspices of President Soeharto. The contradiction between the two is expected to produce a ‘more real’ knowledge than that provided by History and Political Science during the New Order in Indonesia. Indonesian literature is analyzed in relation to the official national history Sejarah Nasional Indonesia, which contains the official prevailing point of view. The question is thereby raised as to whether the literature of the New Order period provides negative knowledge of the actual world of the post-1965–66 era.

The literary works studied are by a number of well-known Indonesian authors, including Ahmad Tohari, Umar Kayam, Ajip Rosidi, Yudhistira ANM Massardi (Yudhistira Ardi Noegraha), Nh. Dini, Putu Wijaya, Ashadi Siregar, Hr. Bandaharo, Putu Oka Sukanta, and Pramoedya Ananta Toer. Their books on the regime shift in 1965–66 and its consequences have gone through many editions. The majority have been published by the large publishing house Gramedia, Pustaka Jaya or the commercial house Bentang Budaya in Yogyakarta. Ahmad Tohari’s novels appeared originally as serials in Kompas, one of the leading national newspapers published in Jakarta. Umar Kayam’s short stories were first published in the literary magazine Horison. The present work builds upon analysis of the following literary works: the
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These works constitute the greater part of literature on the events of 1965 and its aftermath published during the New Order. To them can be added ten short stories published in *Horison* and *Sastra*, 1966–70.5 However these ten lack anything which can be identified as a thesis, even though they contain a number of common themes. One of these is the tragedy the killings brought about for the victims’ families, friends, and acquaintances. Another is how the victims’ families came under the stigma of ‘PKI involvement’ and how dangerous it could be for those who attempted to help such families. A third theme, which is found in two of the stories, is the trauma involved in being present at the executions and participating in them. The lack of a unifying thesis puts these stories outside this study’s framework, which is to consider literary works in relationship to the official version surrounding the events of 1965 and afterwards. This version was put forth only at the end of the 1960s and given official sanction through publication of Indonesia’s National History (*Sejarah Nasional Indonesia*) in 1975.

An approach via the sociology of literature may at first glance seem surprising for the study of modern Indonesian political events, especially ones so far from being settled. Yet the uniqueness of the Indonesian situation is becoming recognized by a growing number of scholars. Keith Foulcher has written about the Communist cultural institute LEKRA, as well as on the literature surrounding the events of 1965–666; Robert Cribb, a recognized expert in modern Indonesian political history, has indicated a need for study of Indonesia’s literature concerning the aftermath of 1965–66.7 Moreover Harold Crouch in his highly respected work, *The Army and Politics in Indonesia*, has referred to
Introduction

literary accounts as showing what the civil population had been subjected to during the army offensive in Central Java in the autumn of 1965. As early as 1972 Satyagraha Hoerip had analyzed the above mentioned short stories published in Horison and Sastra, although publication was delayed until 1984. At that time he was a literary critic for the daily newspaper Sinar Harapan and had received a scholarship to study in the United States at the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa. Himself an author of one of the stories, Satyagraha mentioned that the subject was not popular. More important here is the role he attaches to the authors of such short stories. They had gone into an area which was otherwise the preserve of the press and had taken over 'the role of an interviewer.' 'Editorials and sermons were exchanged for stories and possibly poetry.'

But literature gives us something else and that is what interests us here. Through study of what the authors are saying, we are to some extent able to see how the events of 1965–66 are perceived by Indonesians themselves, their essence of reality. The writers often identify with the victims of political terror. Their viewpoint is from an indigenous perspective not that of Western ideas and concepts. Herein lies the core of Indonesian criticism of the New Order. Its continuation to the present time provides insights into the still unresolved contemporaneous political memory. Before proceeding to the events of 1965, its preludes, and how it is presented in official Indonesian history, it is first necessary to introduce the Sejarah Nasional Indonesia and to summarize the limitations to the freedom of speech during the New Order.

**SEJARAH NASIONAL INDONESIA**

*Sejarah Nasional Indonesia* [The national history of Indonesia] relates Indonesia’s history from the earliest time. It was published by the Department for Culture and Education in 1975, with new editions appearing in 1977, 1981–83 and 1984. In the Preface to the fourth and fifth editions the minister of culture and education stated that the *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia* had become the standard work on the subject and that it should set the norms for instruction in the nation’s history by providing the factual basis for school textbooks on all levels. With regard to teaching about Indonesia’s history during independence, it was specified in the school curriculum of 1985 for Senior Secondary Level (SMA) that the source would be the four volume work *30 Tahun Indonesia Merdeka* [Thirty years of Indonesian Independence] ‘and/or other books which match the content of the
above books', i.e. *30 Tahun Indonesia Merdeka*. This work was written by a group of authors under the leadership of the historian Nugroho Notosusanto, who was also the author of the *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia*. Nugroho Notosusanto was unusual in that he was both a literary author and a military historian. His public career culminated in a term as minister for culture and education in 1983, a post he held until his death a few years later. There thus exists a direct connection between the official version of Indonesia's history as found in the *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia* and the textbooks used for the teaching of modern Indonesia's national history.

**ABSENCE OF FREEDOM OF SPEECH**

Freedom of speech and freedom of the press were limited in New Order Indonesia by two laws in particular. One was the 1963 Law on Anti-Subversion (*Undang-undang tentang subversi*). Breach of its provisions carried a maximum sentence of 20 years’ imprisonment, even lifetime, with the further possibility of capital punishment. ‘Subversion’ was specified in an appendix in 1969 as: (1) engage in activities which might distort, undermine, or deviate from the state ideology as contained in the Pancasila and the broad outlines of state policy (Garis-Garis Besar Haluan Negari or GBHN); (2) challenge or undermine the authority of the state, the government, or governmental institutions; and (3) disseminate feelings of or arouse hostility, disturbances, or anxiety among the population or even broad sections of society. The despotic nature of the anti-subversion law lay in the fact that it was the government itself which determined what constituted ‘subversive’ acts and the punishments that should be meted out. Both could be highly arbitrary. The Republic was not a *rechtsstat* in the Weberian sense.

The second law working against freedom of speech consisted of the so-called Hate Sowing Articles from colonial times that had been incorporated into the national criminal code (*KUHP*). Originally issued by the Dutch colonial government, these aptly named articles aimed at preventing any criticism of the government and governmental institutions, including the president and vice-president, through threat of stringent punishments. Actions considered fermenting ‘hate or insult of the government’ could be punished by seven years in prison, criticism of governmental authorities by eighteen months. As late as the 1990s several hundred persons in Indonesia were sent to prison under the Law on Anti-Subversion and even more served sentences for agitation falling under the Hate Sowing Articles.
Freedom of speech in Indonesia was limited in other respects. Since 1966 the Indonesian Communist Party has been illegal. It is thus forbidden to be a Communist or to spread Marxism-Leninism. This has had the consequence that the concept of class cannot be used in Indonesia, neither in a political context nor in scholarly presentations.

The printed word was regulated by the New Order regime in a number of ways. First, the government defined duties of the press which fell into the categories of working for national unity and stability and for contributing to the country’s development. Second, the state power structure ensured its own continuation by setting up a number of instruments of control. The most controversial of these was the requirement that every publication had to have the government’s permission to be printed. This could be rescinded at any time. Another way of controlling the press was to issue a ban against a publication. The ban could be issued relatively easily by a single authority. A third means of controlling the printed word was via instructions as to what should not be published. These took the form of official briefings, although unofficial contacts by telephone or in conversation were not uncommon. Which subjects should be avoided? Judging from a study made by an international commission of jurists these were expressions of protest of various types against the government, unrest of a political or religious sort in the country, and particularly, the very repressive conditions in those areas where there were active security concerns such as East Timor, Irian Jaya, and Aceh. Other forbidden subjects included scandals surrounding the leadership of the state-owned oil company, Pertamina, as well as the ‘death patrols’ in Jakarta and other parts of Java during 1983. And, finally, the state could intervene in another way against the press through regulating the number of pages in a publication and the volume of advertisements.

During the New Order years many publications were banned temporarily or permanently. As late as 1994 three publications were banned, among others the respected news magazine Tempo. Many journalists were also detained without trial. Others were tried. A magazine which displeased the authorities could also have its editorial board involuntarily replaced on orders of the government.

Exactly what procedure was followed prior to publication of a book is not known. Most likely the state allowed prospective publishers or those responsible for the publication to exercise their own judgment on its contents before publication. Yet this did not guarantee that at a later stage a book would not be recalled if the authorities considered it inappropriate. Import of foreign publications and videotapes required
permission from the government and even foreign publications were examined in advance before they could be sold in the country.21

THE CHANGE OF REGIME, 1965–1966

Assumption of power by the army in 1965 began with an internal power struggle within the armed forces itself. On the night of September 30, 1965 six of Indonesia’s leading generals were kidnapped and subsequently murdered. A group of officers under the leadership of a certain Colonel Untung, a battalion commander in the Cakrabirawa palace guard, claimed responsibility. The group which had roots in the Diponegoro division from Central Java called itself the ‘Thirtieth of September Movement.’ The following morning on October 1, the group announced on Radio Indonesia that a number of generals had been arrested because they had planned a coup against President Sukarno. Nothing was said about their fate. Despite the removal of the top military chiefs, Untung’s attempted coup d’etat was crushed within a few days by other units within the army under the leadership of General Soeharto.22 Things did not stop there. Soeharto accused the Indonesian Communist Party (Partai Komunis Indonesia, PKI) of being the real instigator of the attempted coup and subsequent murder of the six generals. This he did after having been informed that the missing generals had been murdered. The army’s claim that the PKI was actively involved in the affair was based on several indications. First, the kidnapped generals had been taken to Halim air force base, at that time being used as a training grounds for an armed people’s militia, the majority of whose participants came from PKI-affiliated organizations. Second, the chairman of the Communist Party, Aidit, had been at the air base the night in question. And, finally, PKI had taken a positive position with regard to the coup attempt in an editorial in the party newspaper Harian Rakjat [People’s daily] on October 2. In addition, the army maintained that members of the Communist youth organization Pemuda Rakjat [People’s youth] and the Communist women’s organization Gerwani had participated in the murder of the generals. Against this background the army began a purge of the country’s Communists and Communist sympathizers in which approximately half a million were killed, primarily on Java, Bali, and Aceh on Sumatra. Civilians also took part in the massacre and from what little is known, there appears to have been some connection with the Islamic youth organization Ansor, as well as to youth organizations close to the Nationalist Party.23
The killings had more or less ceased by March 1966 when President Sukarno was forced to hand over sweeping powers to General Soeharto. The event is known in Indonesian modern history by the acronym 'Supersemar' which stands for the governmental letter of March 11, 1966 [Surat Perintah sebelas marat]. One of Soeharto's first actions was to declare the Communist Party illegal, as well as the political party Partindo and other left-wing organizations via TAP 25 (1966), which remains valid in contemporary Indonesia. In 1967 he became deputy president and the following year the country's second president.24
Indonesian Literature vs. New Order Orthodoxy

The official version of the 1965 coup attempt and its aftermath is found in the authorized national history *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia*. There the thesis is presented that the coup attempt on the eve of October 1 was actually the work of the Indonesian Communist Party. The PKI had infiltrated the army and had suborned a number of malcontent officers.\(^{25}\) The thesis had been previously promulgated by Nugroho Notosusanto in 1968 when he and Lt. Colonel Ismael Saleh published an interpretation of the events of 1965 which subsequently became the army’s version of the course of events.\(^{26}\) The official
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narrative became omnipresent in Indonesia, not least in the country’s school textbooks. The interpretation in the *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia* differs from the internationally recognized standard work on the subject, namely Harold Crouch’s *The Army and Politics in Indonesia* (1978, 1988). Crouch shows that disgruntled officers had begun to plan an action against the generals that, he maintains, took place long before the Communist Party came into the picture. Only in August 1965 did the PKI began to participate in meetings with these officers. This took place through the mediation of someone named Sjam (Kamarusaman bin Ahmad Mubaidah) who led a Special Bureau within the Communist Party that had the task of infiltrating the armed forces. Thus Crouch points to the existence of many actors within the plot rather than singling out Aidit. He also speculates on President Sukarno’s role in the events. Doubts that the coup attempt was masterminded by the PKI had been advanced earlier by two well-known experts on the Indonesian Communist Party, Donald Hindley and Rex Mortimer. Yet those who rule Indonesia have persisted in maintaining that the PKI was the main actor. It therefore bears the greatest responsibility and thereby blame. This stance was continued as late as 1994 when the Indonesian state published still another book on the Thirtieth of September Movement, which was accused of having acted on the orders of the Communist Party’s Politburo.

With regard to the background to the events of 1965, the *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia* concentrates on what it calls ‘a Communist offensive.’ The Communist Party is seen as having worked systematically to take power in the country and with this in mind infiltrated a number of organizations. A continual theme is that the party had acted traitorously. The army’s increasingly stronger position in the nation’s economic and political life during the 1950s and 1960s is not discussed, or are the conflicts between army leaders and the PKI. The army is first mentioned in the description of 1965 through its role as the savior of the country when it crushed the attempted coup masterminded by the Communist Party.

The extensive massacre which followed is passed over in silence as is the great number of persons who were arrested and subsequently transported to the notorious concentration camp on Buru Island in eastern Indonesia a couple of years later. In keeping with its character the authors of the *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia* also do not mention the release of the political prisoners which began in the mid-1970s and the exceedingly limited civil rights which awaited them.

11
THE ORGANIZATION OF THIS BOOK

The events of 1965 and its aftermath can be divided into two periods. The first encompasses the failed coup attempt in 1965 and the subsequent purge of Communists and left-wing sympathizers; the second covers the release of the political prisoners at the end of the 1970s and the curtailment of their civil rights. As mentioned earlier former political prisoners became in essence pariahs within Indonesian society. The book opens with an analysis of the political coercion people were subjected to by the Indonesian state in the aftermath of the 1965 coup attempt as this is portrayed in Indonesian literary works (Chapter 2). The following chapter examines how those authors deal with the taboo-laden subject of the killings in 1965–66 (Chapter 3). Thereafter an attempt is made to analyze the view of the Communist Party conveyed by that literature (Chapter 4). Next the book discusses the underlying reasons for the literary figures acting as they did. More specifically, the analysis focuses on the influence of Hindu-Javanese culture on the main actors (Chapter 5), as well as on the significance President Sukarno’s political concept of Nasakom had for those actors (Chapter 6). And finally, the book’s conclusions are summarized with a view to determining whether literary works negate the official view concerning the events of 1965 and its aftermath. (Chapter 7).

NOTES


3 Pustaka Jaya was founded in 1971 with the object of publishing and distributing good and but cheap literature. Start-up capital was provided by the governor of Jakarta Raya, Ali Sadikin. Ajip Rosidi became director of Pustaka Jaya. During his tenure Pustaka Jaya developed into the leading publishing house in the field of modern Indonesian literature. See A. Teeuw, Modern Indonesian literature, volume II, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1979, pp. 54–55.

4 A synopsis of the major works used in this work is found in Appendix I.
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9 Satyagraha Hoerip, ‘Pemberontakan Gestapu/PKI dalam Cerpen-cerpen Indonesia.’ His contribution was intended to analyze the authors’ attitude towards the events surrounding 1965 at a point in time in which Indonesian society had generally turned its back on ‘the principles of Pancasila concerning humanism.’


11 Sejarah Nasional Indonesia, VI, pp. VII–VIII.


13 Ibid.


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25  Sejarah Nasional Indonesia, VI, pp. 387–390. See also the 1975 edition of Sejarah Nasional Indonesia, VI, Jaman Jepang dan Jaman Republik Indonesia, pp. 119–123.

26  Crouch, The Army and Politics in Indonesia, p. 112. The publication by Nugroho Notoatmodjo and Ismael Saleh is called The Coup Attempt of the September 30th Movement in Indonesia, Jakarta: Penimbang Masa, 1968.


30  The book is entitled Gerakan 30 September. Pemberontakan Partai Komunis Indonesia. Latar Belakang, Aksi, dan Penumpasannya [The 30 September Movement. The Indonesian Communist Party’s Revolt. Background, activities, and its destruction], Jakarta: Sekretariat Negara Republik Indonesia, 1994. See also A. Vickers, ‘Reopening Old Wounds: Bali and the Indonesian Killings – A Review Article’, Journal of Asian Studies, vol. 57, no. 3, August 1998, p. 783. See also Budiawan, ‘When Memory Challenges History: Public Contestation of the Past in Post-Suharto Indonesia’, p. 49, endnote 1. That the authorities were not willing to investigate completely or openly the question is also shown by their handling of an application for permission to publish a manuscript in 1995. The manuscript in question was an account of what international research had discovered concerning the events of 1965. Printing permission was not given and the courts declared the manuscript illegal. The manuscript has the title Bayang–bayang PKI [Shadows of the PKI] and was published by the Institut Studi Arus Balik. The introduction was written by Goenawan Muhammad, former editor of the subsequently banned magazine Tempo. Publication permission was not granted: see Republika, September 30, 1998, ‘Manipulasi Sejarah’ [Manipulation of history]. A change of the official view has not taken place under the presidencies of either Habibie, Abdurrahman Wahid, or Megawati Soekarno-putri. However a couple of magazines have asked what actually happened the night of September 30–October 1, 1965. Interest has concentrated on
former president Soeharto and whether he knew in advance the action planned against the generals and, if so, why he did not inform his superiors. The magazines raise the question in relation to the fact that had Soeharto informed his superior, General Jani, the tragedy could have been avoided, as well as the massacre that followed. In March 1999 a number of officers involved in the 1965 coup attempt were released. One of the leaders, Abdul Latief, related to the Indonesian magazine Forum that he had informed Soeharto in advance about the coup attempt and that this took place on the evening of September 30, 1965. Latief further related that the action had been planned a long time earlier. On being questioned whether the group had been influenced by the Communist Party, Latief answered that this was not at all the case. It was an internal matter within the armed forces and the orders for the action came from a high military level; see *Forum* April 11, 1999. The following year, in May 2000, Institut Studi Arus Informasi published a book written by Latief on the Thirtieth of September Movement called *Pledoi Kolonel A. Latief: Soeharto Terlibat*, in which he maintains that he informed Soeharto about the coming coup.


32 The authors mention only that during the uprisings in 1968 on Java some 1,050 persons were arrested, plus an unknown number in Purwodadi, see *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia*, VI, 1984, p. 403. This can be compared with the approximately 200,000 persons who, according to the state prosecutor, were arrested in 1965–66: see Crouch, *The Army and Politics in Indonesia*, p. 155. The Indonesian authorities in 1969 gave the figure of political prisoners as 70,000. At the same time Amnesty International estimated that there were 117,000 prisoners in Indonesia which included so-called ethnic insurrections: see B. May, *The Indonesian Tragedy*, Singapore: Graham Brash (PTE) Lts, 1978, p. 28.
INTRODUCTION

Indonesian society has seldom been characterized by the presence of civil rights and civil liberties. Ruled by the Dutch colonial government down to 1942 and the Japanese occupational forces between 1942 and 1945, Indonesians had no right of self determination until 1949 when they finally obtained independence after a pernicious four-year struggle against the recalcitrant Dutch. While the Constitution of 1945 provided for a strong presidency, the more democratic Constitution of 1950 transferred political authority to the parliament that, in turn, gave the government its mandate. Constitutional provisions for adult universal suffrage made possible the first nationwide general election in 1955. Despite the fact that a myriad of citizen and nongovernmental organizations had sprung up, and a number of political parties took part in the election, civil liberties were far from being institutionalized. Nowhere was freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and freedom of association specifically guaranteed. Moreover the so-called Hate Sowing Articles from colonial times had been incorporated as an integral part of the country’s criminal code. As mentioned above the articles were aimed at preventing any criticism of the government and governmental institutions, including the president and vice-president, through threat of stringent punishments.

Although the general election of 1955 constituted an important step towards real democracy, it also contained the seeds of its own destruction. For obvious demographic reasons the newly elected parliament came to be dominated by Java-based parties with disastrous consequences for the Republic’s unity. Java was economically favored over the Outer Islands. They provided the largest source of state
income and were almost the sole earners of foreign exchange, both of which were consumed by Java. This inequality ultimately led to revolts against the central government at Jakarta which quickly escalated. In December 1956 the regional military commanders took direct control over several Sumatran provinces and in March 1957 the commander for East Indonesia proclaimed martial law. Drawing upon these extra-legal powers, a number of actions were taken by the revolting military leaders with the aim of achieving economic autonomy for the Outer Islands. The so-called Permesta (Piagam Perjuangan Semesta Alam) Rebellion had begun. By February 1958 a rebel government was proclaimed in Sumatra, the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia [Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia or PRRI] which was supported by high-ranking military commanders and not a few leading politicians from Masjumi and the Socialist Party [Partai Sosialis Indonesia or PSI]. The PRRI received not only support from the ongoing Permesta Rebellion but also material support from the United States of America.

The regional rebellions in turn provoked President Sukarno into proclaiming martial law over the whole of Indonesia, which he did in March 1957. Although the PRRI was crushed within a few months, martial law continued for six years. During this period the military increased its political authority with a resultant diminishing of civil liberties and civil rights for ordinary citizens. Masjumi and the Socialist Party (PSI) were declared illegal. Freedom of expression was curtailed, an action which adversely affected the press and news media in general. More serious were the instances of arbitrary arrests and detention. These applied initially to persons suspected of participation in the revolts but subsequently were extended to include, among others, members of the Communist Party. Another consequence of the revolt of the Outer Islands was the limitations imposed on political rights. In July 1959 at the behest of President Sukarno the Republic returned to the Constitution of 1945, which gave the office of the president sweeping powers. Parliamentary democracy was abolished and the government became in practice solely answerable to the president who alone could issue governmental decrees. The general election scheduled for 1960 was postponed indefinitely. In 1963 the martial law regulations were codified via presidential decree. The resultant Law on Anti-Subversion [Undang-undang tentang Subversi] provided for a maximum of 20 years’ imprisonment with the additional possibility of capital punishment for breech of its provisions.
Political Violence in the Literature

With the change in regime in the wake of the 1966 ‘Supersemar’ and the establishment of an army-dominated government, Indonesia became a land where civil rights were sharply curtailed and civil liberties absent. To a great extent this was the direct consequence of the Law on Anti-Subversion and the Hate-Sowing Articles, exacerbated by the absence of any institutionalized guarantee of civil liberties for citizens. To this was added the banning of Masjumi and the Socialist Party, as well as the Communist Party (PKI) and other Marxist-Leninist organizations, the latter under the decree TAP 25 from 1966. In retrospect it can be said that the 1945–66 period saw the transformation of Indonesia from a society where various groups conducted armed struggles for political power to one in which the state came to monopolize the exercise of force and coercion, often arbitrarily so. This would continue throughout the New Order period.

This chapter will analyze political violence in Indonesia in the aftermath of the coup attempt in 1965 as portrayed in its own literature. Indonesian literary works deal directly with the consequences of extra-legal state coercion directed against its own citizens. These are rarely even mentioned in the official history, let alone analyzed. The chapter draws upon selected works of Ahmad Tohari, Umar Kayam, Ajip Rosidi, Yudhistira A.N.M. Massardi (Yudhistira Ardi Noegraha), Putu Wijaya, Ashadi Siregar, Nh. Dini, Hr. Bandaharo, Putu Oka Sukanta, and Pramoedya Ananta Toer. All of them deal with the disfunction of civil society, leading to among others political killings, disappearance of persons, cruel and inhuman treatment, arbitrary arrests and detention, as well as selective application of the state’s obligation to protect its citizens. To this could be added the absence of basic civil liberties, the extremely limited possibilities for individuals to change their own government, and the lack of guarantees protecting property from arbitrary expropriation.

ABSENCE OF FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION, ASSEMBLY AND SPEECH

The purge of 1965–66 was not limited to Communists. It also included a number of organizations on the political left. One such organization was the political party Partindo [Partai Indonesia or the Indonesian Party]. Karman, the main figure in Ahmad Tohari’s novel Kubah [Cupola], is someone who for various reasons becomes a member of Partindo. The book clarifies why a person in Indonesia in the 1950s would become active in left-wing politics. The novel emphasizes the
push factor of material impoverishment, the pull factor of cultural norms influencing human behavior, and the far from innocent role of the Communist Party. Karman is a landless peasant whose minimal chances of improving his situation draws him into political activity. His journey goes through two phases. The first takes the form of involuntary contact with Marxism: he is literally seduced into becoming a Marxist, an action made possible by PKI tactics of infiltration. The second phase comes about through participation in the national land reform program. It is seen as a means of getting back the rice fields his family had lost during World War II under dubious circumstances.

Karman’s ‘crime’ is that he was active in Partindo. What separated Partindo from the Nationalist Party were differing interpretations of the concept marhaen [Indonesian proletarian, have-nots]. Partindo followed President Sukarno’s interpretation: namely that marhaen was Marxism adopted to Indonesian conditions. This was why the party cooperated actively with the Communist Party in order to complete the social revolution. In contrast, the majority in the Nationalist Party did not accept the version of marhaen proclaimed by Marxism and consequently refused to cooperate with the PKI.

A longer work by Ahmad Tohari is the Dukuh Paruk trilogy. This consists of Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk, Catatan buat Emak [Dukuh Paruk’s Ronggeng-dancer. Notes for mother], Lintang Kemukus Dini Hari [The comet at dawn], and Jantera Bianglala [The rainbow’s arch]. The events portrayed also take place around 1965, but the theme is different from that of Kubah. The trilogy focuses on impoverished peasants who have almost no chance of improving their lot. Their lives are guided by the ingrained norms of obeying authority and accepting their fate, nrimo pandum. As in Kubah, the trilogy brings out aspects surrounding 1965 that are missing in the official Indonesian history. While Kubah portrays a man who becomes politically active in order to better his situation, the Dukuh Paruk trilogy is concerned with a group of impoverished illiterates who are drawn into political issues without understanding them. They are, in other words, innocents who are victims of the events of 1965 and resultant terror.

Dukuh Paruk is an isolated settlement lying in the arid western border lands of Central Java. Its inhabitants adhere to an ancestor cult which is both patriarchal and sexist and built around the grave of Ki Secamenggala, a brigand of some renown in the previous century. The novel’s chief actor is a young woman named Srintil who becomes the village’s ronggeng [dancer] when she is 12 years old. In the meantime Dukuh Paruk is being drawn relentlessly into the nation’s turbulent
political life of the 1960s. One day the local authorities ask the settlement elder if Srintil could give a dance performance on Independence Day, August 17, in the nearby town. He cannot promise anything as Srintil had some time earlier given up being a ronggeng; she felt disgusted by her life as a semi-prostitute. Thus the decision is hers to make, but she refuses to commit herself despite repeated admonitions. In the end the official’s patience is exhausted and he leaves, making dire threats. The settlement elder becomes frightened and begs Srintil to give in, which she does. What neither Srintil nor her companions know is that this Independence Day celebration at the town of Dawuan is also the scene of a Communist rally. Hence their performance that day marks the beginnings of participation in the Communist Party’s political rallies. The Party uses Dukuh Paruk’s ronggeng as a drawing card. When the purge of Communists begins after October 1, 1965, Dukuh Paruk comes under fire. The village is burned down and Srintil and several others are arrested and interned. After two years Srintil returns, although marked forever by the prison interlude.10

Another group of people discussed by Indonesian authors are the intellectuals within the political left who became active in the Communist cultural institute Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakjat (Lekra). Umar Kayam’s short story, Musim Gugur Kembali di Connecticut [Autumn returns in Connecticut], deals with a writer, Tono, whose work has been valued by Lekra, thereby enabling him to earn a living by writing. However this improvement in his economic situation goes hand in hand with a spiritual crisis. After a time he can no longer write on command and force himself to stick to social realism. He turns to Western literature, classic as well as modern, and writes what he himself feels is best. The resultant conflict with Lekra causes him to cease contributing to its publications. At the same time Tono attends their meetings less frequently, although he does not resign as a member of Lekra. Similarly he remains a member of the Socialist Scholars’ Association [Himpunan Sarjana Indonesia or HSI]. As a result of these connections with Communist and Socialist organizations, Tono is arrested and interned during the purge of the Communists in 1965–66.11

Umar Kayam also focuses on the activities of Lekra in his novel Para Priyayi [The Priyayi] from 1992. In the work the reader follows a family for three generations. Harimurti, a grandson of the clan’s founder, becomes active in Lekra circles when he participates in ketoprak and ludruk performances, as well as playing in a simplified form of the gamelan orchestra. Harimurti is by nature a sensitive youth who takes pity on his fellow human beings’ misfortunes. At the university he
comes into contact with other students interested in classical culture and through them he is drawn into Lekra. He is influenced by Marxism and becomes intimate with a poetess, a staunch Marxist, with whom he plans a future together. When the persecution of Communists begins in 1965, Harimurti reports himself to the military authorities and is detained for an unspecified time. He does so on the advice of his family who fear that even worse things could befall him.\textsuperscript{12}

The plight of intellectuals in Lekra also comes out in the work of Ajip Rosidi. In \textit{Anak Tanahair, Secercah Kisah} [Son of the fatherland. A story] a definitive stance is taken against the politicizing of art. Such politicizing drives a rising young painter, Ardi, into becoming active in Lekra. Initially Ardi has friends of all political shades. However after he participates in an exhibition with several colleagues on the political left, his social relations become strained. His anti-Communist friends express their displeasure of what they see as a sell-out to Lekra. His signing, albeit with reservations, of a petition supporting President Sukarno’s plan to reinstate the Constitution of 1945 results in his being ostracized by his bourgeois colleagues and friends. They see the petition as a trick of the Communist Party that in reality was aimed at increasing its political influence. As a consequence of his signature Ardi no longer receives commissions from bourgeois circles, causing him considerable financial difficulties. When he subsequently falls ill he is visited by Lekra representatives who offer him commissions. As a result, Ardi becomes active in Lekra. When the conflict over the Cultural Manifesto [Manifes Kebudajaan]\textsuperscript{13} breaks out, Ardi wants to leave Lekra. He is repelled by Lekra’s harsh criticism of the manifesto’s signatories and shocked over their unfair treatment by the Indonesian state. Yet it is difficult to break completely with Lekra. In any event Ardi has nowhere else to turn. When the purge of Communists breaks out in autumn 1965, Ardi has disappeared. The reader is left with the impression that he has been killed.\textsuperscript{14}

Two stories by Umar Kayam portray individuals who are drawn into the political left through close relations. The novelette \textit{Sri Sumarah} deals with a traditional Javanese woman named Sumarah. She is a school inspector’s widow who has a daughter studying in a nearby large town. One day her daughter, Tun, announces that she is pregnant. Sri Sumarah is able to arrange an expensive wedding only by pawning half of her modest holdings of wet rice fields (\textit{sawah}). In the events the expenses far surpass her calculations and she ultimately loses the fields when she cannot repay the loan. She then moves in with her daughter in town and cares for her grandchild. On the advice of her son-in-law,
Yos, she leases out the remaining rice fields and rents out her house. In her daughter’s household she is confronted by a world difficult to understand. Her son-in-law is politically active. He is constantly away at meetings, that is when they are not held at their house, which last long into the night. Her daughter does not continue her schooling but stays home to assist her husband.

Sri Sumarah trusts her son-in-law because he is the most educated. Since in his work he is constantly in contact with the subdistrict chief, Pak Camat, she sees him as part of the local authority. At the wedding Pak Camat does, in fact, assure Sri Sumarah that Yos has good prospects and will undoubtedly become a man of rank. Sri Sumarah thus has no objections when Yos arranges for her rice fields to be leased to the ‘BTI’, as well as her house which was to become its regional headquarters. What exactly Yos’s work entails Sri Sumarah does not know, only that it has something to do with the meetings.15

In reality Yos works for the Communist peasant front Barisan Tani Indonesia (BTI) and participates in the on-going unilateral occupation of land (aksi sepihak). It is also the Barisan Tani which has leased Sri Sumarah’s rice fields and house. After the abortive coup in 1965, Yos and Tun flee. They leave their daughter in Sri Sumarah’s care. Sri Sumarah is dogged by one more piece of misfortune. Since she had leased out her land and house to the Barisan Tani, she is punished by the authorities through confiscation of her property without compensation. She thus loses house and land. When Tun returns Sri Sumarah begs her to report herself to the authorities to avoid being killed. Ultimately Tun follows her mother’s advice and is detained for an unspecified length of time.16

The other story, Bawuk, after the name of the main actor, concerns the wife of a leading Communist. She herself is neither a member of the Communist Party nor of any of its affiliations or mass organizations. She is not even active in the Communist movement. The unfolding of the story centers around the 1965–66 witch-hunt for Communists. Bawuk’s husband has fled to East Java with the aim of building up a resistance movement. Bawuk attempts to contact him and begins to work for the PKI. She and her husband are in grave danger. With the Communist Party being declared illegal in March 1966, they are caught in a revolt against the Indonesian state. After visiting her mother and entrusting the children to her care, Bawuk sets off again to continue the search for her husband. The story ends with the army destroying a party cell in Blitar, resulting in the death of her husband Hassan. At the end of the story Bawuk’s fate is unknown.17
Partial summary

At the time when the main actors became members of organizations or active in a movement, these were completely legal. Moreover, none of the actors were members of the Communist Party, despite the fact that it was not difficult to become one. Unlike other Communist parties, the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) was a mass organization. In some cases the main actors were either members of other organizations such as Partindo or the Socialist Scholars’ Association, or active in the people’s cultural institute Lekra. Only after 1965 were these organizations classified as Communist and hence became illegal retrospectively via the contents of TAP 25, 1966.

Bawuk provides the single exception in that she becomes active in the PKI after the organization has been declared illegal in March 1966. She is married to a Communist and acts in conformity with Javanese conventions of family loyalty.

Several of the leading characters have been confronted with communism, but after a time had become skeptical about its aims and goals. The most striking example of this is Tono, the writer in *Musim Gugur*. Others have been influenced by Marxism without becoming committed to it, as were Karman (*Kubah*), Harimurti (*Para Priyayi*), and Ardi (*Anak Tanahair*). A third group consists of persons who do not recognize that they have become part of a Communist movement, having only conformed to the wishes of the local authorities: such was the case for both the inhabitants of Dukuh Paruk and Sri Sumarah.

ARBITRARY ARREST AND DETENTION

With the exception of Sri Sumarah, all the main characters were victims of arbitrary arrest and detention. They shared a common experience: uncertainty! Would they be killed or allowed to live? They also did not know for how long they would be detained or even if they would some day be freed. From their own experiences as political prisoners, Hr. Bandaharo, Putu Oka Sukanta, and Pramoedya Ananta Toer have shown just how heavy these burdens could be. This is particularly telling in the latter’s autobiography, *Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu* [The mute’s soliloquy]. Like other prisoners, Pramoedya could not understand why he was being held and what was his ‘crime.’ Putu Oka Sukanta called for at least a trial so that he could present his case. Moreover he raised the question of how one could legitimize what had happened.
In Umar Kayam’s short story *Musim Gugur ...* Tono attempts to get classified as a ‘C-prisoner’ in order to shorten the detention and eventually be freed. This was not possible for the former peasant Karman (*Kubah*). He remains in detention a full 12 years. The uncertainty as to whether he would be released, and if so, when, was a
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One day he receives a letter from his wife. She can no longer support the remaining family. After six years of hardship she now begs for a divorce so that she can remarry. Karman is crushed. His wife is not only his sole contact with the outer world but also his only human contact. Losing his wife means he has nothing left. After a time he realizes that divorce is best. It was not right that she should have to suffer. In addition his children needed support and schooling.

The ronggeng Srintil was imprisoned for two years. She did not know why she was there and understood nothing of the situation. She had neither participated in the land reform campaign nor had she been a member of any organization. The only thing she could imagine was that her ‘wrong’ must have been connected with her activities as a ronggeng, as well as that it was wrong to do something that powerful persons did not approve. As a consequence of this she was quite vulnerable.

Mencoba Tidak Menyerah [Try not to surrender] by Yudhistira A.N.M. Massardi (Yudhistira Ardi Noegraha) is a story of a relatively well-off family who fall into poverty through suspicion of being Communists. Their house is destroyed and the resultant stigma of Communism makes it difficult for them to earn a living. Ultimately the head of the family is arrested. The book’s narrator is the youngest son whose activities graphically illustrate their difficulties, not the least of which is just trying to find out where their father is being held. They eventually found out that he has been moved from one place to another: from the district military command, Kodim, to a prison in the nearest town, then to a work-team in the mountains, followed by a return to Kodim, and finally to house arrest on condition of reporting daily to the authorities. During one of these visits the father simply disappears.

Virtually anyone could be arrested. When Mawa in Merajut Harkat is arrested he attempts to contact his relatives. A fellow prisoner provides pen and paper and Mawa writes a letter to his girlfriend. In the letter he asks her to inform a number of friends that he has been arrested. The letter results in his girlfriend and the friends mentioned in the letter being interrogated. Several of them are eventually arrested.

The arbitrariness of arrest and internment was matched by equal amounts of arbitrariness in the releases. Tono (Musim Gugur...) is reclassified as a C-prisoner after intercession by a relative who is also an army officer. This means he is placed under house arrest and can leave the prison. The intermezzo is, however, short-lived. After the disturbances in East Java he is arrested again.

Harimurti (Para Priyayi) is
also allowed to change over to house arrest after his uncle, a high-ranking official in Jakarta, intervenes. A short time later house arrest is altered to city arrest. Harimurti leaves the prison relieved but with a heavy heart because his comrades are still there.27

Even the length of the detention was arbitrary, ranging from a couple of months to many years. A person so interned was also not given the opportunity to have his case tested by law. Seldom were they allowed to contact their next of kin and often their own families did not know where they were.

TORTURE AND OTHER CRUEL AND INHUMAN TREATMENT

A couple of writers recount life in prison and the torture and abuse to which prisoners were subjected. These include Hr. Bandaharo, Putu Oka Sukanta, and Pramoedya Ananta Toer. They were all political prisoners for many years. Hr. Bandaharo writes of death, abuse, suicide, and attempts to escape in his collection of poetry entitled Dosa Apa [What sin?].28 In a similar manner the poet Putu Oka Sukanta vividly portrays the terrible times in his anthologies Selat Bali [Bali straits] and Tembang Jalak Bali, as well as in his novel, Merajut Harkat. Torture and abuse are so appalling that even a prison guard’s eyes fill with tears when once he has to pick up a lacerated body. Psychological abuse also plays an important role. During the first years writers are denied writing materials and opportunities of writing, being forced into hard physical labor in order to survive. They are victims of brain washing. They are to be transformed into citizens who unquestioningly accept the Pancasila, or at least the regime’s interpretation thereof. They are also dehumanized. Even in death they can find no peace as they could not be buried without paying bribes.29 In the face of the threat of being broken completely, Hr. Bandaharo responded with an even stronger will to survive. It became his overriding goal.30 Putu Oka Sukanta answered the abuse with the words:

they gave me a whip
which tightened the muscles at the base of my tongue
what else can you give me
to test my self-respect?31

Pramoedya Ananta Toer has vividly described life on the prison island of Buru in Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu. To overcome the continual lack of provisions prisoners were cynically invited to provide for themselves,
which led to their desperate attempts to cultivate rice and vegetables under great difficulties. Even so, there remained a lack of protein. Sickness was endemic, exacerbated by lack of food and medicine. The little medicine that was available had to be purchased. Many prisoners died of tuberculosis, malaria, and dysentery, among others. Their health was not improved by beatings and torture. Conditions were so miserable that prisoners committed suicide in order to escape this Hell on Earth.  

Indonesian writers who have not been interned generally do not mention torture and abuse. Yet traces are found in the portrayal of the victim’s reactions upon being released. By far the strongest chapter in *Kubah* tells of Karman’s prison experiences, his release, and his thoughts at just that moment. Here the reader encounters a human being in a constant state of fear, marked by a prisoner’s vulnerability,
uncertainty, and arbitrary treatment. He no longer has any self-respect, he has ceased to be an individual, and he seeks to hide himself. Fear is palpable. When he is supposed to leave the army base, he stands hesitant and indecisive at the threshold. He does not know where he should go. The duty officer notices him and orders his adjutant to tell Karman that all the papers are in order and he may leave the base. The adjutant goes up to Karman and touches him lightly on the shoulder. At the sight of the sergeant's face Karman becomes terrified, thinking that he will be dragged back to prison. That he has been freed and carries the papers to testify to this in his hand does not lessen the terror of these thoughts.

The third of the Dukuh Paruk trilogy, *Jantera Biangala*, sketches the release of Srintil. She is dropped off at the path leading to the settlement. She begins to run in the direction of Dukuh Paruk. She falls, gets up and continues to run. She falls several times, but still runs. Away from the jeep and the military. With Srintil there is a similar feeling of terror for the army. When after a year she hears that soldiers are on their way to the settlement she becomes terrified. Another time she is filled with horror when she sees someone dressed as a soldier come to the settlement, even though it turns out to be Rasus, her childhood sweetheart, now in a military uniform.

When long afterwards she is confronted with the threat of being sent back to prison, the shock all but upsets her mental balance. Srintil becomes acquainted with an official, Bajus, who she thinks wants to marry her. However it turns out that Bajus is a fraud. He had worked for a large irrigation project and was now looking for a new project to support himself. His plan is to bribe a high-ranking official from Jakarta who will receive a part of the money from the developmental program plus Srintil. Bajus will get his part. After Srintil has been presented to the official she is alone with Bajus. In stunned silence she hears him say that she should receive this high-ranking official, including providing sexual services to him. She is crushed. She refuses and tries to get away but is dragged inside the room again. Bajus is angry and says:

‘You as a Dukuh Paruk person should remember. You are all former PKI. If you don’t obey me I’ll send you back to prison. Do you doubt that I can?’

The door was slammed and locked from the outside.

Srintil is in a state of shock. Bajus is not going to marry her. She can thus not escape her life as a former ronggeng, a life without social standing. She experiences 'pain and bitterness.' What makes her con-
dition serious is the threat of having to become a prostitute again. In prison she has been the victim of abuse and ever since her return home she has refused to receive clients. Being in the city of Eling-eling makes her condition worse. It was here she has been in prison. Yet what finally makes her lose her reason is Bajus’s threat to return her to prison, a place that for her is ‘Hell on earth.’ Srintil cannot stand this and flees to a world in herself. She ceases to communicate with the outside world.

Another glimpse of the situation in the overcrowded prisons is found in Umar Kayam’s story *Musim Gugur*... Intolerable conditions reigned supreme, conditions which left deep traces on those who had experienced Indonesian jails.

**POLITICAL AND OTHER EXTRA-JUDICIAL KILLINGS**

The widespread killings of Communists and left-wing sympathizers after the coup attempt of 1965 has been allowed to be passed by in silence by Indonesian history writings. The massacre was almost a taboo subject in New Order Indonesia. Yet in the Indonesian literary canon it was mentioned among others by Yudhistira A.N.M. Massardi, Hr. Bandaharo, Umar Kayam, Ahmad Tohari, Ajip Rosidi, and Nh. Dini. The massacre will be dealt with in Chapter 3.

More typical for literary works is concern with the killing of individuals. Common to them is that Communist activists are only minor figures. Examples are found in the agitator Margo (*Kubah*), the Lekra leader Samsu in *Musim Gugur*..., the son-in-law Yos in *Sri Sumarah*, and the husband in *Bawuk*. Margo is killed during the witch-hunt for Communists, Yos and Hassan are killed by the army, while Samsu is executed while imprisoned.

The poet Hr. Bandaharo writes about the extra-judicial killings which took place in prison.

> How many friends have died?
> Grave-stones in the cemetery are impaled on all corners.
> Those who died of disease whipped by their own sufferings,
> those who died struck by lightning or were slain struck by bullets,
> those who died of torture or hanged themselves.

Pramoedya Ananta Toer has listed 325 dead and missing on the prison island Buru, and gives the cause of death. In addition to those dying of ‘natural causes’ were those who were shot after interrogation, those who were killed in relation to escape attempts, and those who were just killed.
DISAPPEARANCE

Disappearance constitutes the complete opposite of civil rights. A person has disappeared under special circumstances without any action being taken by the authorities to find the person in question. The literature takes up two types of disappearance: disappearance while being detained by the authorities and disappearance in connection with mob violence. The first type is found in the novel *Mencoba Tidak Menyerah*. The father has at long last been allowed to return home but must report daily to the local authorities, i.e. the *keluruhian*.

Figure 5. Pramoedya Ananta Toer
Sometimes his visits there are long and he spends the night. One day he simply does not return home. His family come to the office of the keluruhan to ask where he is. They receive the answer that he has been picked up by the Civil Defense (Pertahanan sipil or Hansip). Hansip claims that this has been done on orders of the military commander for Koramil (Komando Rayon Militer or the local military command). The family goes to the Koramil, but the military commander maintains that he has not sent for their father. The man has disappeared. The young son and his family continue to search but never find him.47

The second type of disappearance is dealt with in Anak Tanahair. The main actor Ardi disappears in connection with the hue and cry for Communists which broke out in the autumn of 1965. His fate remains unknown. Some say that he has fled to Central Java where the situation was calmer, although the reader at the same time learns that in Yogyakarta members of Lekra have been attacked and killed by mobs.48 In both Mencoba Tidak Menyerah and Anak Tanahair the reader is given the impression that the missing person has been killed.

SELECTIVE APPLICATION OF THE STATE’S PROTECTION OF ITS CITIZENS

Under this heading are considered the destruction of property which was carried out by a mob without the authorities preventing it or taking any action afterwards. The family house in Mencoba Tidak Menyerah is destroyed and broken apart by a mob while the family is at home. Utensils and furniture are crushed and destroyed so that it was impossible even to prepare food. The father’s tools which he needs in his bicycle repair shop are also destroyed. Moreover, by using violence numerous individuals try to make impossible his engagement as head of the district’s cooperative. They tear up sacks of dried sweet potatoes and rice and strew the contents on the road.49 In other words, the mob attempts to make the family’s chance of surviving as difficult as possible.

The settlement Dukuh Paruk is also set on fire and its rice fields destroyed. The villagers do not know who has done it. The authorities do nothing about it, even though they have been asked for help.50 A similar malicious deed is portrayed in the novel Anak Tanahair. The artist Ardi’s house is attacked and destroyed by a mob which also ruins his art works.51
CONFISCATION OF PROPERTY

The Agrarian Law of Indonesia from 1960 states that land rights cannot be in conflict with the interest of the nation and national unity. In conjunction with the Law on Anti-Subversion this provided the government with a broad legal mandate for land confiscation. Karman in *Kubah*, loses his property through being interned. Sri Sumarah has *sawah* fields and a house confiscated because they have been leased to Barisan Tani Indonesia. The loss of their land adversely affects not only Karman and Sri Sumarah but also their families.

Karman and Sri Sumarah are of necessity forced to accept the loss of their property. Karman’s release is only a conditional one which could be revoked at any time. This provides strong motivation for not questioning the authorities’ action. Similarly when Sri Sumarah is going to visit the family grave in her home village she is pointedly advised by Pak Rukun Tetangga (official head of the neighborhood) to not visit her former home and *sawah* fields. At the graveyard she meets an old man and finds out that initially her house has been taken over by the Muslim youth organization Ansor. Afterwards it becomes the subdistrict office. Then it was going to be occupied by the local military command, Koramil. Who owned Sri Sumarah’s *sawah* the old man did not know, just that it was under cultivation.

DEPENDENTS’ SITUATION

The long period of detention weighed heavily not only on the prisoners themselves but also on their families. Families suffered from economic deprivation because in Indonesia the husband is the breadwinner and by law is head of the family. It could also happen that the family was stigmatized by the remainder of society. Karman (*Kubah*) is for economic reasons forced to grant a divorce to his wife. She can no longer support the family and has to remarry. Her new marriage also means that the family is split even more. Her son goes to live with his father’s sister because his stepfather will not pay for his education. As a result he sees his mother less frequently.

How difficult this detention could be for the women is emphasized by Umar Kayam’s novelette, *Sri Sumarah*. Sri Sumarah’s daughter is interned for an unspecified length of time and her son-in-law was killed during the upheaval in 1965. This was why Sri Sumarah takes care of her grandchild. At the same time, she has to take on added responsibility for her daughter’s livelihood by seeing that Tun has food and clothing.
and that her guards are supplied with bribes of food. The problem is that Sri Sumarah’s resources cannot cover all these expenses because her rice fields and house have been confiscated. In order to make a living she becomes a masseuse. Since she is good at the trade, her services are greatly in demand. The consequence is, however, a lower position in society. She is occasionally the victim of sexual innuendo. One day she is even mistaken for a prostitute by a client from Jakarta. The novel is, as Umar Kayam writes, the story of how Sri Sumarah, once the wife of an Inspector of Schools, came to be a masseuse.55

The dependents’ situation also figures predominantly in the novel Mencoba Tidak Menyerah. Much of the book is about how a family attempts to survive after the detention of its head. The mother becomes a hawker of small goods. All the children try to bring in money while remaining in school. The youngest boy in the family complains how he is taunted in school, at first because his father is suspected of being a Communist and after his arrest, as the son of a TAPOL (Tahanan Politik or political prisoner). The oldest son lives in Yogyakarta, where he studies at the university. He comes home only for short visits. Apparently afraid to fall under the stigma of his home environment, he does not come to the family’s assistance.56

Ashadi Siregar’s novel Jentera Lepas [Detached wheel] describes how the wife of a trade-union leader is called to an interview to determine whether she was a Communist. The woman is an ordinary person, who does not understand the consequences of her husband’s political activities.57 Another person who falls on hard times because her husband is shown to be a Communist is Muryati, the leading character in Nh. Dini’s novel, Jalan Bandungan [Bandungan Street]. Following her husband’s arrest it takes over two years before Muryati obtains permission to practice her profession again as a teacher. During this time she supports herself and her children by working in her mother’s small shop.58

**OUTCAST STATUS OF FORMER POLITICAL PRISONERS AND THEIR FAMILIES**

As mentioned above, political prisoners were not released until as late as the 1970s. Some had been freed earlier but were still required to report to the authorities at regular intervals. Common to all was the limited freedom which awaited them. They had no voting rights, they could not be elected to any position, they could not be active in politics, and they could not be appointed to any public position which
would give them the opportunity to influence other people. To confirm their pariah status, their identity cards were marked with a large ‘E.T.’ (ex-tahanan = ex-convict). All this was motivated by the vague concept that former political prisoners somehow constituted a threat to the social order.59

Karman (Kubah) loses family and property as a result of his time in prison. Nor does he have any work awaiting him. In other words, he has nothing left. Alternatives remaining to him are limited in the extreme. He goes to live with his mother and prepares to take command over such opportunities as are open to him. He begins to take part in the
village’s religious life. When the village mosque is going to be restored, he joins in the building of the cupola. Having learned welding and blacksmith work in prison, he works diligently to produce a beautiful cupola, a contribution greatly appreciated by his neighbors.60

Srintil, Dukuh Paruk’s ronggeng, is released after two years, but with the usual condition of reporting regularly to the authorities. This means that she can be interned again at any time. Her situation is different from Karman’s in that the entire settlement of Dukuh Paruk has been punished by being burned to the ground. The most difficult thing for Srintil is confrontation with the world outside the settlement. When she visits the market at the nearby town people avoid her, except

Figure 7. Nh. Dini
the Chinese traders. Once she finds herself attacked, but not even then will anyone come to her aid. She has been stigmatized by mere association with Communists.61

In the novel *Jentera Lepas* a schoolteacher, Parmanto, does not wish to participate in political activities. At first he does not even want to join the unaffiliated teachers’ union, but is ultimately encouraged to do so by his boss. After the change of regime in 1965–66 Parmanto falls into trouble and is interned. The novel opens with the main actor, the reporter Budiman, meeting the schoolteacher many years later. They had become acquainted when Budiman was a student and they used to play chess together. It turns out that Parmanto is no longer a teacher, but is earning his livelihood as a tire repairman, a lowering of social status that greatly upsets Budiman. The latter, in fact, is relatively well off in contrast with the time of President Sukarno when he had been in conflict with the regime for not accepting its cultural policies.62

Harimurti (*Para Priyayi*) is released after a short time and even his house arrest is transformed into city arrest. He lives at home with his parents. After a period he opens a children’s library and begins to teach children the English language. His relatives have to guarantee that this was not a matter of engaging in ‘subversive activities.’63

The families of the ex-convicts also became outcasts. Stigmatization was, so to speak, becoming institutionalized. After many years a suggestion was made that people should not only demonstrate that they had not worked against the Pancasila, i.e. against the Indonesian state, but also that they came from a ‘pure’ (*bersih*) social environment. This meant that the children of Communists and left-wing sympathizers would be affected. In the short story ‘Darah’ Putu Wijaya portrays with poignancy how a young girl with such a background attempts to obtain acceptance in her surroundings. Mirah lives with a distant relative in a miserable condition as a cook. One day she happens to cut her finger and discovers that her blood is white. White as Yudhistira’s! This causes a tumult in the neighborhood. Her adopted parents are proud. A child from the group that had lost in 1965 had white blood like Yudhistira, the most revered of the Pandawa brothers in the *Mahabharata* epic. The adoptive parents’ joy, however, is changed to shame when the civil guard Hansip accuses Mirah of inciting unrest. Mirah is exiled back to the kitchen. She cuts herself another time. This time the blood is blue, blue as that of kings and aristocrats. After a certain amount of indecision she relates her discovery to others at the market but is not believed and is mocked. She fetches an axe, goes to the market, raises the axe, and shouts, ‘See for yourselves!’64
Ahmad Tohari has also written on this theme in an anthology of his newspaper contributions published under the title *Mas Mantri Gugat* [Mas Mantri accuses]. Tohari makes his readers aware of where such a suggestion – one requiring that a person originates from a ‘pure’ environment – could lead. One day Mas Mantri receives a visit from a woman in the village, Mbak Nyus. She is a charming woman in her thirties, diligent, careful with money who earns a living through running a small business. Despite this she has remained unmarried. As a baby she had been raised by an older relative who belonged to the political left. When he disappeared in connection with the disturbances of 1965 she was only two years old. Even so, she is considered a security
risk. She has now tired of her unmarried status and wants to have a family. She thinks about moving to a place where no one knows about her past, either to Sulawesi or possibly Jakarta in order to become a factory worker. Both possibilities mean a lowering of her living standard. She asks Mas Mantri’s opinion. For the first and only time the reader meets a Mas Mantri unable to reply. He can only say that she should remain in the village. Mbak Nyus leaves and Mas Mantri turns to his friend saying,

Amazing, why are we not yet able to show compassion to innocent children as Mbak Nyus? ... Terrible, we still acknowledge that we have
an heirloom, a spirit of humanity which is righteous and cultivated. Yes, we are not a stunted, uncivilized nation. Why then this?

Umar Kayam also takes up this theme in the second half of his novel series concerning the so-called nobility or priyayi, under the title Jalan Menikung. Para Priyayi 2. Harimurti, who had been involved with Lekra in his student days, has since married and has a son attending college in America. One day Harimurti is called in by his boss and is gently but firmly informed that he must quit his position as a journalist. His past as a member of Lekra during the 1960s is the cause of concern. From this moment Harimurti has problems earning a living. Afraid that the same fate will befall his son, he counsels him to stay abroad. The result is that the son stays in America where he eventually finds employment in a large publishing house.

CONCLUSION

Graphically illustrated by the above-named works of literature, a recurrent theme is the effect of the state’s exercise of coercion, including arbitrary powers of collective punishment, on innocent individuals. People were detained without trial; they were subjected to torture and other inhumane treatment; they were even objects of political and extra-judicial killings. Moreover, people disappeared without any efforts being taken by the authorities to find them. The state’s duty to protect its citizens was applied selectively. And, finally, political prisoners and their families were relegated to the status of outcasts, resulting in both the victims and their families suffering economic deprivation.

NOTES

1 This chapter has been published in a slightly different version in I. Wessel and G. Wimhöfer (eds), Violence in Indonesia, Hamburg: Abera, 2001, pp. 254–269.
2 Concerning the Hate Sowing Articles, see Chapter 1, section ‘Absence of freedom of speech.’
3 The revolt in the eastern part of the Outer Islands is dealt with by B. Harvey, Peresta. Half a Rebellion, Ithaca: Cornell University, Monograph Series, Modern Indonesia Project, 1977. J.R.V. Smail analyzes the first phase of the revolt on Sumatra in ‘The Military Politics of North Sumatra: December 1956 – October 1957’, Indonesia, 6, 1968, pp. 128–187. The PRRI-


5 For the Law on Anti-Subversion, see Chapter 1, section ‘Absence of freedom of speech.’

6 TAP 25 is an abbreviation of ‘Ketetajakan MPRS (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara) No. XXV/1966’, a decree of the Provisional People’s Consultative Assembly with the number 25 from the year 1966 on the banning of Communism and Marxism-Leninism. It is still valid today.

7 Ahmad Tohari, *Kubah*.


9 A ronggeng is a paid dancing or singing girl who implicitly is also available for sexual services.


13 Manifes Kebudajaan (Manikebu) from October 19, 1963 was a manifesto for cultural pluralism and as such a critique of social realism and of the increasing militancy shown by the Communist cultural institute Lekra. In the beginning Lekra paid little attention to the manifesto. This changed half a year later when the signatories of the manifesto planned a follow up by an all-Indonesian conference. The organizer of the conference was the literary magazine *Sastra*. A lack of funds caused *Sastra* to accept an offer by General Nasution for the army to finance the conference. Such a conference was in fact in line with Nasution’s policy of building up anti-
Indonesian Literature vs. New Order Orthodoxy

Communist sentiment in the country. With the help of the army the organizers planned for a large conference with participants from all parts of Indonesia. The conference would have undoubtedly become a manifestation for cultural pluralism and probably for the idea of art for art’s sake, i.e. the opposite of Lekra’s view. Facing this offensive from their adversaries among writers in particular and the army in general, coupled with the fact that they were not invited, Lekra fiercely attacked the manifesto and its signatories. The increasingly acrimonious conflict within the nation’s cultural life, which the army had now joined, resulted in President Sukarno issuing a presidential decree on May 8, 1964 where Manifes Kebudajaan was declared illegal. This decree sealed the fate of Manikebu. Sastera was banned and the signatories of the manifesto were subjected to persecution, which lasted until October 1965. See Teeuw, Modern Indonesian Literature, II, pp. 33–38 and Foulcher, Social Commitment in Literature and the Arts. The Indonesian Institute of People’s Culture 1950–1965, pp. 124–127.

15 Umar Kayam, ‘Sri Sumarah’, Sri Sumarah dan cerita pendek lainnya, pp. 7–42.
18 Hr. Bandaharo, Dosa Apa; Putu Oka Sukanta, Tembang Jalak Bali. The Son of the Starling, particularly pp. 6, 32, 38, 44, 48 and 58; Putu Oka Sukanta, Merajut Harkat; Pramoedya Ananta Toer, Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu, pp. 6–12, 63, 72–73, 162–202.
22 Ahmad Tohari, Kubah, pp. 13–25.
Political Violence in the Literature

31 Putu Oka Sukanta, Tembang Jalak Bali, p. 43.
33 Ahmad Tohari, Kubah, pp. 7–12.
34 Ahmad Tohari, Jantera Bianglala, pp. 38, 84, 138.
36 Ibid. p. 199. Author’s translation.
38 Ibid. p. 200.
39 Ibid. p. 171.
40 Ibid. p. 168.
41 Ibid. p. 200. The original manuscript of the novel contained a couple of sections which the publisher omitted for fear of reprisals from the authorities. These have recently been published in an American anthology, Silenced Voices. One of these sections relates Srintil’s time in prison. She is broken and is sexually used and abused by the soldiers. Rasus visits her there but is treated coldly by the guards who try to intimidate him so that he would not make another visit. Ahmad Tohari, ‘Village Dancer’, Silenced Voices. New Writing from Indonesia, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000, pp. 19–23.
42 Ibid. pp. 200–201, 203–205. The dramatic climax in the trilogy about the settlement Dukuh Paruk has been taken up by Tineke Hellwig in her book on women in Indonesian literature. There, another explanation is given as to why Srintil became mentally disturbed. Hellwig maintains that the reason for Srintil’s losing mental balance was simply that Bajus did not want to marry her and that she must return to a life of (semi) prostitution (Tineke Hellwig, In the Shadow of Change. Images of Women in Indonesian Literature. Centers for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of California at Berkeley, 1994, pp. 155–156). Hellwig seems to have missed the third and decisive factor for Srintil’s mental collapse, namely Bajus’s threat to send her back to prison. The narrator relates in the story that when it became clear to Srintil that Bajus would not marry her she experiences ‘pain and bitterness.’ Then, Srintil’s condition began to become serious when she is confronted with Bajus’s threat to go back to her earlier life as a prostitute. ‘The grounds for her consciousness began to sway.’ Finally, the narrator in the book relates that what caused the ground to sway beneath her feet is Bajus calling her a PKI and his threat to send her
back to prison, a place which for her is a ‘Hell on earth’ (Jantera Bianglala, p. 200). By brushing aside this determining factor in Srintil’s mental distress, Hellwig also brushes aside the terror Srintil harbors for the army and the violence she is subjected to in prison. In Hellwig’s eyes the entire blame is to be sought in men’s handling of women, not in the army’s oppression of human beings in New Order Indonesia.

47 Yudhistira ANM Massardi, Mencoba Tidak Menyerah, pp. 127–158.
48 Ajip Rosidi, Anak Tanahair, pp. 311–312.
49 Yudhistira ANM Massardi, Mencoba Tidak Menyerah, pp. 28–33.
50 Ahmad Tohari, Lintang Kemukus Dini Hari, pp. 206–207.
51 Ajip Rosidi, Anak Tanahair, p. 312.
54 Ahmad Tohari, Kubah, pp. 27–30.
59 Power and Impunity. Human Rights under the New Order, p. 94.
61 Ahmad Tohari, Jantera Bianglala, pp. 42–45, 66–82.
62 Ashadi Siregar, Jentera Lepas, pp. 4–6, 26–28, 43–45.
63 Umar Kayam, Para Priyayi, pp. 300–301.
65 Ahmad Tohari, Mas Mantri Gugat, pp. 133–137. Quote p. 137. Author’s translation.
The Killings, 1965–66

INTRODUCTION

The coup attempt in Jakarta on the eve of October 1, 1965 and the murder of the six generals sparked off a massacre of Communists and left-wing sympathizers throughout Indonesia. How many victims the massacre actually claimed is not known, but the number has been estimated at around 500,000 persons. The Communist Party was accused of murdering the six generals. Initially the army tried to get the PKI declared illegal, but President Sukarno refused to go along with this plan. Under the circumstances the military increased political pressure by allowing mass actions against the Communist Party. On October 8 the party headquarters in Jakarta were the object of massive demonstrations which led to its being stormed and burned to the ground. For the first time an active cooperation came about between the army and the anti-Communist groups in which the army recruited members of anti-Communist civilian organizations and provided them with weapons and rudimentary training. Parallel with this the army purged its own ranks of Communists and left-wing sympathizers.

The killings began in Aceh and spread to other parts of North Sumatra. Subsequently they spread to Java and Bali where they reached their culmination. Fertile ground for violent conflict was to be found in the residue of the harsh political and social conflicts in the countryside over issues such as land reform. However the extent of the massacre was possible only with the army’s tacit approval, if not active support. Central Java was particularly affected by army purges of Communists and fellow travelers. The Thirtieth of September Movement had taken control over Central Java on October 1 and Revolutionary Councils had been established in Semarang, Solo, and Yogyakarta. After the failure of
the coup attempt in Jakarta officers from the Diponegoro Division fled from divisional headquarters to the mountains south of Semarang. Its commander, Brigadier General Surjosumpeno returned from Jakarta the following day, i.e. October 2, and resumed command. When the purge of Communists began in earnest, a number of Diponegoro battalions were considered to be unreliable for deployment against the Communists. Particularly suspected of Communist sympathy were three battalions stationed near Solo and Yogyakarta which were transferred to Sumatra, Kalimantan and Sulawesi. Instead, units of the army’s para-commando regiment, Resimen Para Komando Angkatan Darat (RPKAD) under the command of Colonel Sarwo Edhie were sent to Central Java with orders to ‘restore security and order.’ A two-month-long intensive campaign followed which was both brutal and ruthless. The Communist Party was very strong in Central Java and controlled Solo and its environs. As a result, the civilian population was drawn into the armed conflict. It also became targets for RPKAD action. Sarwo Edhie quickly obtained control over Solo, but pacifying the surrounding rural districts was another matter. At this point he asked permission to arm and train youth groups within the Islamic and nationalist organizations. Permission was given by Jakarta and these young men received a few days’ training before being dispatched to the villages, led by RPKAD, with the aim of breaking the back of PKI resistance. In the rural districts those considered as having been active in Communist organizations were singled out and summarily executed, while passive members and sympathizers were detained in camps or prisons. In some areas such as Banyumas, the decision about whether villagers had been active or passive members was delegated to civilian vigilantes. According to reports this resulted in many thousands being executed who otherwise would have been arrested. Two months later, in December 1965, RPKAD left Central Java and proceeded to Bali where a similar, if not more widespread, massacre was set into motion. Sarwo Edhie described the situation on Bali as follows.

The civil population which fell victim to this terror throughout Indonesia had not been involved in the murder of the generals in Jakarta;
they were killed because they were Communists or were thought to be so. Their involvement was never established in a court of law. The scope and brutality of the massacre is unique in Indonesia’s history. Yet it is passed over in silence in the country’s history books. This applies to both the official work, *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia*, and all other presentations of history, a phenomenon which is then reflected in the school books used to teach the nation’s history. Despite the clearly defined official line, Indonesian authors have attempted to deal with the massacre in their works of art. What do they write concerning this bloodbath? How to they approach this taboo subject? In the following the literature will be analyzed with regard to who carried out the killings and who are the victims.

**LITERATURE: THE ARMY KILLS CIVILIANS**

Umar Kayam brings out the army’s role in the killings whose victims included both Communists and ‘innocent’ bystanders. The short story *Bawuk* portrays the fighting somewhere in Central Java between the armed forces and the civil population in which a quarter of the population died. Bawuk’s husband Hassan had organized armed resistance among the peasants. The Communist villages built up strongholds and sought to protect themselves in various ways. The army arrives and fighting breaks out with the peasants who defend themselves with ‘Molotov cocktails, with bamboo spears, and with anything they could lay hands on. They fought as they had been taught to fight.’

The consequences were horrifying. Untrained peasants fought like madmen. ... The peasants burnt their own houses and rice-barns. Those who did not surrender were mercilessly crushed. Corpses were left in the rice-fields, on the banks of the rivers, and in the lanes of the small hamlets. A quarter of the population died. Almost half of the men were captured. After the prisoners had gathered the corpses of their comrades and buried them in communal graves, they were herded together and driven into the compound of the local government offices.

In the novelette *Sri Sumrah* the victim of the killings is a young man who had worked for the Communist peasant front Barisan Tani Indonesia. He had participated enthusiastically in workers’ actions to raise the wages received for harvesting. Through the characterization of this naive young man, almost as a schoolboy on a lark, the
narrative raises the question of whether the amount of force applied by the army was really necessary.

In another short story, ‘Musim Gugur Kembali di Connecticut’, written earlier in 1967, it is implied that the army killed civilians. The story’s leading character, the writer Tono, is first arrested in connection with the upheavals in 1965–66, but this is subsequently converted to house arrest at the intervention of a relative. The house arrest, however, is dramatically ended after the Communist Party’s armed resistance in East Java and Tono is picked up again by the military. He is put in a jeep and driven off. They approach a road crossing. Tono knows that the way
The sun was beginning to set and the sky was turning reddish purple. Unconsciously he turned his collar up to meet the cold wind. He saw neither the grey of the familiar prison walls nor the rubber trees which were coming increasingly closer.

He saw the maple trees of Connecticut. The leaves were yellow, red, dark brown and purple. Squirrels leapt among the scattered leaves. He knew that it was Fall again in Connecticut. The most beautiful of trees in America, the maples in the autumn, become an allegory for all the human beings who, like the leaves, have ‘fallen’ and met their fate on rubber plantations or in forests. The squirrels who hop among the dead leaves make the reader think of the earth in Indonesia, under which lie many, many human beings.

The killings play an important role in Ahmad Tohari’s Dukuh Paruk trilogy. This is fitting as Dukuh Paruk is located in the Banyumas region, one of the areas most cruelly ravaged by the troops of Sarwo Edhie. Like Umar Kayam, Ahmad Tohari portrays human beings who are completely defenseless against the violence to which they are subjected. That it was the army which used violence is implied through the description of how the settlement was set on fire and its inhabitants were killed. The fire is so intensive and spreads so fast that it must have been set by a professional with considerable resources at his disposal. The book’s narrator relates that the settlement was as if struck by a comet early at dawn. The fire is so intense that the roof of Kartareja’s house rises in the sky together with a thick column of smoke like a gigantic tree. Other houses are swallowed by the fire in a few minutes. The rice fields are set ablaze and thus became unusable; food and household necessities are destroyed, along with all domestic animals. The whole settlement burns down almost completely. The significance of this catastrophe is evident from the fact that it constitutes the book’s title _Lintang Kemukus Dini Hari_ [Comet at dawn].

**LITERATURE: MASSACRES BY ARMY UNITS IN COOPERATION WITH CIVILIANS**

The first author who wrote on the comprehensive massacres carried out by the army and civilians together was Yudhistira ANM Massardi.
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(Yudhistira Ardi Noegraha). This was in the novel *Mencoba Tidak Menyerah* published in 1979. At that time the political prisoners were being released from Buru. The book’s narrator is a small boy who tells how October 1965 became a month of retaliation and revenge. Communists are annihilated wherever they are found. If they attempt to flee they are ‘slaughtered directly’ and their bodies thrown in the river. The boy has also heard that many, many Communists have been taken to the military authority, Kodim, where they disappeared. Further along in the narrative he looks for his father who has disappeared. He is convinced that his father is dead and therefore goes to the nearby rubber plantation and begins to search. A pile of leaves catches his attention as it looks like someone has raked the ground after having filled a hole with dirt. The boy pokes at the pile of leaves but finds nothing and quickly leaves the place. Then he sees a mound of earth in the form of a grave and becomes terrified. Paralyzed with fear he hurries home. The boy’s elder brothers and sisters also search for their father. An elder brother finds a well covered with stones and banana leaves. The brother leaves the place filled with fear. Another older brother sees something sticking out of the mud in a hole, something which looks like a human hand. Terrified he runs from the spot. A third brother passes an unused well on the outskirts of the city from which comes the smell of a corpse. When he looks down in the well his gaze meets a grimacing human head. He screams and flees.15 This attempt by Yudhistira Ardi Noegraha to initiate discussion of a crucial problem in Indonesian society proved to be in vain. The ‘released’ prisoners were forced to live with severely limited civil rights and a debate on the massacre never came into being. Yudhistira Ardi Noegraha would never raise the issue again, turning instead to the more existential problems of the youth of Jakarta’s elite.

In 1981 former political prisoner Hr. Bandaharo published an anthology containing poems written in December 1965 concerning the massacres in an attempt to come to grips with what they were all about.

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stories come
of the young sons and daughters of our land dying
corpses sprawled across the roads
or swept away in the rivers.
why does all this death
have to strike our land?
those who die do not know.16
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Only in the middle of the 1980s did a novelist take up the subject. This was Ajip Rosidi, who through *Anak Tanahair* [*Son of the fatherland*] called for a reconciliation within Indonesian society. The former prisoners were still stigmatized and their families continued to occupy pariah status almost two decades after the coup attempt. The Indonesian state had just sponsored a film on the coup attempt of 1965 in which the Communists’ leading role was emphasized. The state also sponsored the distribution of the film, that, among other things, featured Umar Kayam playing the part of President Sukarno. *Anak Tanahair* is about civil society’s role in the massacre, particularly the Muslim groups in East Java. The novel points to the unremitting
conflict between Islamic groups and the Communists in Indonesia during the early 1960s. Under those tense and uncertain circumstances Islamic groups responded to the threat against them via the PKI. The book’s normative character Hasan finds this understandable. Yet he does not see the actions of mass killing as defensible. He says that instead one should attempt to root out the conditions for Communist growth by creating a society where political justice prevails, where the fruits of society are divided among all.18

Hasan, however, doubts that civilians alone could have carried out this massacre, thus implying that the army’s role in the massacre must
The Killings, 1965–66

have been crucial. The large number of persons who were killed during a very short time certainly suggests a war.

I heard that in East Java thousands of Communists were butchered by angry mobs. The rivers Brantas, Solo, and the smaller ones were filled with corpses which piled up ... I cannot imagine that my people who are so graceful during a three week period could kill more people than were killed in the Vietnam war, a war which continued year after year. But this seems to be the reality which cannot be denied.19

Ajip Rosidi’s attempt to see the naked truth with regard to civil society’s role in the massacre found no follower until 1992 and the publication of Umar Kayam’s novel, Para Priyayi. One of this novel’s chief characters, Harimurti, sees the violence of 1965–66 as being organized by forces with access to considerable resources. He raises the issue of why the brutality to which the six generals were subjected at Lubang Buaya, Halim Air Force base was returned by even greater and more comprehensive violence, which ‘rolled as a wave everywhere.’ He also asks himself how can it happen that civil society becomes as if ‘accursed’ and is transformed to a stone statue which can do nothing to stop the killings.20

NOTES


4 Crouch, The Army and Politics in Indonesia, p. 151. Crouch’s information is based on J. Hughes, The End of Sukarno, London: Angus & Robertson, 1968, Chapter 13 and on a report made available to him by the journalist Frank Palmos.

5 Robinson, The Dark Side of Paradise, p. 296. ‘Gestapu’ is an acronym for ‘Gerakan September Tiga Puluh’ [The Thirtieth of September Movement].

6 The historian Robert Cribb has recently argued that the mass killings in Indonesia 1965–66 should be considered as a genocide. This is also in
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line with the original resolution on genocide by the UN General Assembly of 1946, which defines genocide as an international crime whether it ‘is committed on religious, racial, political or any other grounds.’ In the UN Convention on Genocide from 1948, however, ‘political’ genocide was omitted. See R. Cribb, ‘Genocide in the Non-Western World’, IIAS Newsletter No. 25, July 2001, p. 6.

7 Besides being silent on the subject, Sejarah Nasional Indonesia also contains disinformation on the massacres. For example it mentions that a ‘Fact Finding Commission KOTT’ was created with the task of collecting facts and explanations, as well as evidence on the 30 September Movement/PKI and its consequences. Furthermore it is stated that members of the commission were sent out to different parts of Indonesia during the period December 25, 1965 – January 6, 1966 and that their conclusion was that they had found a strong desire among the people that President Sukarno should see to it that the politics of the Thirtieth of September Movement/PKI were terminated, Sejarah Nasional Indonesia, pp. 405–406. In actual fact the above mentioned Fact-Finding Commission was created to ascertain how many people had died in the massacre during the autumn of 1965. The commission was appointed by President Sukarno at the end of December 1965. See Crouch, The Army and Politics in Indonesia, p. 155.


9 Ibid. p. 105. The translation is by Aveling, From Surabaya to Armageddon. pp. 150–151.


14 In the original manuscript of Ahmad Tohari’s previously mentioned Dukuh Paruk trilogy there are two sections which his publisher had removed and which many years later were published in Ahmad Tohari, ‘Village Dancer’, in Silenced Voices. New Writing from Indonesia, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000, pp. 13–23. One is a description of the mass killings in Central Java and the close cooperation between armed military units and paramilitary groups. The other is a description of the arbitrariness in the internment of human beings.

15 Yudhistira ANM Massardi, Mencoba Tidak Menyerah, pp. 147–152.
The Killings, 1965–66

19 Ibid. p. 311–312.
20 Umar Kayam, Para Priyayi, p. 288.
This chapter discusses how the Indonesian Communist Party is portrayed in the literary works considered here. Particularly important are their views of the party’s twin strategies of building a national united front and exploiting class conflict.

THE INDONESIAN COMMUNIST PARTY
(PARTAI KOMUNIS INDONESIA, PKI)

The Indonesian Communist Party was Asia’s oldest Communist party. It was also one whose history was full of extremes in fortune. Although founded in 1920, for many decades its existence was marginal in the politics of the Dutch East Indies, which would eventually become Indonesia. After an inopportune, ill-timed, and ill-prepared (thus disastrous) revolt in 1926, the party ceased to exist as a result of reprisals by the Dutch colonial government. It reestablished itself only 20 years later during Indonesia’s struggle for independence. However, during a crucial phase in the fight to throw off the yoke of Dutch colonial rule, the PKI turned against the Republican cause and set up a commune in the city of Madiun, East Java, in 1948. This revolt fared no better than the one two decades earlier. Within a month the revolt was crushed by the revolutionary army after President Sukarno had called for national unity.1

As a result of the Madiun revolt the Communist Party was thoroughly discredited in the eyes of most Indonesians. In 1950 the PKI was again resuscitated under new leadership. For obvious reasons a new strategy was formulated at that time. Drawing partially on the model of the Communist ‘people’s democratic fronts’ and partially on practical
realities in Indonesia, the PKI adapted a broad national united-front strategy with the emphasis on ‘national.’ The intention was to establish working relations with the country’s nonreligious parties with the aim of obtaining a say in Indonesian politics. In practice this meant cooperation with the nationalists in Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI), Partai Indonesia (Partindo), and President Sukarno. One consequence of adopting the national united-front strategy was that the concept of class conflict was de-emphasized. Another was the intentional build up of a large organization. In contrast to other Communist parties in the world the Indonesian Communist Party became a mass party.2

The general election of 1955, the first of this kind in Indonesia, showed that the Communist Party’s reorganization had been successful. The PKI received 16 percent of the votes. With its base on Java it would come to constitute one of the nation’s four largest political parties. In the elections for provincial councils held two years later the PKI increased its position through winning some 27 percent of the votes on Java. It had thereby become the largest party in Central Java. It shared first place with the Islamic Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in East Java and was the second largest party in West Java after the Islamic party Masjumi. Had these trends continued, the coming parliamentary election would have most likely carried the Communist Party to power as a legitimate part of the government. Reactions to these prospects were not slow in coming. At the suggestion of several other parties, the parliamentary election was postponed first to 1960 and subsequently indefinitely.3

Another setback for the PKI was the abolishment of parliamentary democracy in 1959 and its substitution by a strong presidential power. Opportunities for obtaining political influence via parliament were thereby decreased, and the party’s dependence upon President Sukarno was increased. During the years 1957–60 the Communist Party’s room for maneuver in general became successively narrower.

Diminished possibilities of obtaining political influence via seats in parliament lead to a modification of party strategy. The class conflict issue was revived and the Communist Party turned to extra-parliamentary actions. Here it met with hindrances of another type. These took the form of the prevailing conditions of martial law, which gave the military increased authority over the nation’s politics. At the end of 1959 and the beginning of 1960 the PKI organized a series of demonstrations throughout Indonesia against the ever-increasing costs of living. These were called off after General Nasution, the army chief-of-staff, intervened. That the PKI followed Nasution’s appeal for order was partially due to the prevalence of martial law and partially to the

View of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI)
new law for political parties passed on January 12, 1960. The latter
demanded that political parties work only through peaceful and
democratic means and that they accept the Constitution of 1945 and
the Pancasila, the five basic state principles. For the PKI the most
important aspect was that it henceforth had to work in unity with other
groups in a truly *musyawara mufakat* style, and not in conflict with
them.  

Behind the limitations imposed upon the nation’s political life lay,
among other things, President Sukarno’s ambition to replace Western
parliamentary democracy with a presidential governance. In March
1960 Sukarno dissolved the sitting parliament and appointed a new
people’s assembly, Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (DPR) that had only
advisory functions. A new doctrine was proclaimed which in principle
meant that the country would henceforth be governed in a partnership
of the largest parties. The doctrine in question was NASAKOM, an
acronym taken from the abbreviation of *nasionalisme* [nationalism],
*agama* [religion], and *komunisme* [communism]. The Communist Party
was rewarded for having backed the president by being granted, along
with its affiliated organizations, approximately one-quarter of the
mandates in the new consultative People’s Assembly (DPR). The PKI
was also represented in the regional and local councils. Its influence
reached out even to the nation’s administrative apparatus. Individuals
supported by the PKI were appointed as deputy governors in Jakarta
Raya (Greater Jakarta), West Java, and Central Java. Members of the
Communist Party became mayors in Semarang, Surabaya, Cirebon, and
Surakarta. In 1962 the PKI finally obtained direct access to the
government when party chairmen Aidit and Lukman were appointed
advisory ministers without portfolio. These were, however, subordinate
positions and the PKI was still excluded from cabinet posts carrying
executive authority. This was somewhat changed in 1964 when Njoto, a
member of the PKI Politburo, was included in the cabinet with
responsibility for the on-going national land reform program.

It was just this land reform issue which led the PKI to actively take
up the strategy of exploiting class conflict and return to extra-
parliamentary methods. By the late 1950s the Communist Party had
turned to the villages and launched a drive to organize the peasantry.
The PKI became engaged in the staggering social problems con-
fronting the small farmers and the landless proletariat. Two issues in
particular were taken up by the PKI and pursued for a number of years:
namely, limits on the amount of the landowners’ crop payment under
sharing-cropping agreements and the transfer of excess land to landless
peasants. The campaign was successful to the extent that parliament passed a land reform law in 1960 directing rural landowners with medium-sized plots to transfer the excess to the peasants with small holdings or to the landless. In Indonesia at that time there were virtually no large holdings in private hands because the former Dutch plantations had been nationalized and were therefore owned by the Indonesian state. Not surprisingly, great difficulties were encountered in implementing the land reform. Not the least of these was the passive resistance on the part of regional and local officials under the influence of the landowners who effectively undermined the program. After some years of what it considered as official foot-dragging, the PKI went over to extra-parliamentary methods to enforce the land reform laws. In this context it launched a campaign of unilateral actions – *aksi sepihak* – of occupying excess lands which should have been redistributed. These campaigns were led by the peasant front Barisan Tani Indonesia causing conflict and clashes with the landowners, especially in East and Central Java. As this political conflict threatened President Sukarno’s doctrine of NASAKOM, he appealed directly to Aidit to discontinue the *aksi sepihak*. Although his wishes were respected, clashes between the PKI and landowners continued unabated.6

Thus at the same time that the Communist Party continually lost ground for maneuvering between 1957 and 1964, it came to constitute an important part of political power in Indonesia. It was included in the government, it was represented in the country’s administrative apparatus, and it constituted one of the three largest political groups comprising President Sukarno’s concept of NASAKOM.

**LITERATURE AND PKI STRATEGIES OF THE NATIONAL UNITED FRONT**

As mentioned above, the Communist Party’s strategy of a national united front was based upon cooperation with the nonreligious parties and the backing of President Sukarno. For the PKI one of the instruments belonging to this type of forced cooperation was infiltration of the other organizations.

**Infiltration of other organizations**

A number of Indonesian literary works focus on the Communist Party’s infiltration activities. Even more important are the consequences for those persons who had been in contact with organizations infiltrated by the Communists; they were drawn into an un-
known world because the organization in question turned out to be something very different from what it was supposed to be. Moreover, recruitment-infiltration in the organization went through various stages, such as involvement through deceptive actions, political influences, and finally the resultant isolation of the named persons from their earlier environment.

Ahmad Tohari’s novel *Kubah* describes the devastating consequences of such infiltration for the main character Karman. Through the narrative the reader follows Karman being brought step-by-step into the Communist movement, although he himself remains unaware of the fateful journey. Here it should be recognized that as part of these activities the PKI did not only infiltrate other political parties but also augmented its own organization through infiltration. A prime example here was the left-wing nationalist party Partindo. It appeared to be a nationalist party, yet its leading members were in point of fact, sympathizers of the Communist Party. The novel describes how Partindo utilizes its position as a part of the country’s authorities and the fact that it is close to President Sukarno to advance the Communist cause. Triman, chairman of the local branch of Partindo, has through this position and Partindo’s governmental connections become a high-ranking official in the regional administration. About this time a schoolteacher, Margo, moves to the Pegaten region where the novel takes place. He is a member of the Communist Party charged with building up a cadre. In this capacity he finds a responsive recruit in Karman. Karman is an intelligent, but poor young man who comes from a family which has previously owned land but has lost it, a fate shared by many other families on Java. A not inconsiderable hindrance to Margo’s plans for recruiting Karman is the latter’s cultural background. On the one hand, Karman’s deceased father had seen himself as a *priyayi*; on the other hand his uncle, now de facto head of the family, belonged to the Islamic wing of the independence movement. A plan is hatched through which Karman will become an official within the subdistrict’s administration – he will thereby become a figure of authority for the people – while simultaneously being exposed to Marxism. With this in mind Triman turns to Karman’s uncle with the suggestion that Karman becomes a volunteer in the local administration. The uncle regards Triman as belonging to the nationalist movement because he is chairman of the local section of Partindo. As Triman also works in close cooperation with the subdistrict chief, Karman’s uncle has no objections. On the contrary, Karman will be given the opportunity of breaking into society’s upper level, the educated one.
As a result, Karman becomes a volunteer in the local administration and studies hard in order to pass the entrance examination for further education. Triman guides him and gives him the necessary textbooks, among which he includes Marxian literature.9

The plan exceeds expectations. Karman’s political studies make him a changed man. He stops observing his religious duties and begins to question the prevailing system. The ultimate result is that he comes into conflict with those closest to him.

Important in this connection are the sawah fields previously owned by Karman’s family but which had been defaulted to Haji Bakir. During the war Karman’s father, who refused to eat the wartime diet of sweet potatoes, had purchased one ton of padi [unhusked rice] from Haji Bakir for one and a half hectares of sawah. Karman considers the transaction unjust, for among other things the rice price was usurious. In addition Karman feels that he had done so much work for Haji Bakir as a child that this would have several times repaid the debt even without the transferred rice fields. When confronted by Karman’s newly found arguments, his uncle becomes irritated. Even though there is something in what Karman says, his uncle wonders ‘what devil is it that dictates your words?’ He further appeals to Karman to return to Allah, but in vain.10

Karman has been influenced by Western (i.e. Marxist) ideas and begins to look at the world with critical eyes. He wants justice. Against this stands the Javanese world represented by his uncle, a world dominated by the following of authority, working within the system, and turning to Allah for the soothing of pain.

After the break with his uncle Karman is increasingly influenced by Margo and his colleagues. This in turn leads to even greater separation from his earlier contacts. He passes his examinations and becomes secretary in the local branch of Partindo. Through Partindo’s working together with the Communist Party on the issue of land reform and the resultant land reform campaign, Karman becomes actively engaged in these burning political issues.11

Another author, Ajip Rosidi, also shows the fateful consequences for the individual resulting from the PKI’s cooperation with other organizations. Like Ahmad Tohari, he describes this as a three-stage process; becoming unconsciously drawn into Communist circles, being influenced politically by them, and experiencing the resultant isolation. In Anak Tanahair the artist Ardi through a series of more or less fortuitous circumstances, becomes a part of a group of artists and politicians with connections with the Communist cultural institute
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Lekra. That Ardi becomes interested in the group at all is due to the fact that it includes the famous painter Hendra Gunawan, the artist Ardi admired most after Affandi. One day Ardi is sought out by one of the group, Suryo, who is also a childhood friend. Suryo asks him to sign an appeal for President Sukarno, the Konsepsi Presiden. In the beginning Ardi is hesitant, not so much for political reasons but because he wants to keep out of politics.¹²

The appeal for the president was an act of political declaration. As a means of stemming the continual changes of government, President Sukarno had launched the idea of abolishing parliamentary democracy and returning to the Constitution of 1945 with its strong presidential rule. The suggestion had received increased weight because the rebellion on the Outer Islands had escalated and seemed to threaten the unity of the Republic. In concrete terms it was felt that the government should consist of a balanced group of representatives from all parties, including the Communist Party. As we have seen, the PKI would thus be able to enter the government for the first time. It therefore actively campaigned for a change in governmental form. In contrast, the other parties, the Islamic parties and the Socialist Party in particular, wished to keep the Communists out of the government at all costs and thus opposed Presidents Sukarno’s suggestion.

Yet when Suryo presents the issue to Ardi, he provides another interpretation. According to him the appeal is in response to the rebellion in the Outer Islands, which could lead to the disintegration of the country. Under these circumstances it was the artists’ duty to defend the young Republic. Ardi remains skeptical. At this point Suryo shows him a list of the names of all those who have signed. Among them were well-known authors, artists, and musicians. Ardi yields and signs. He feels that it would not really be right to refuse.¹³

Ardi’s signature on the appeal for President Sukarno will become his death warrant. In the beginning he is ostracized by his non-Communist friends. Applications for economic support for an exhibition are rejected on the grounds that he belonged to the Communist group. His sketches are returned by newspapers and he no longer receives orders. The result is that he has increasing problems in making a living. Subsequently he falls ill, and in that situation he is sought out by Lekra which offers to arrange for an exhibition of his paintings. He himself can choose the paintings with the stipulation that they should be ‘progressive in the sense that they take a position for the People.’ Ardi agrees. He realizes that this means he would be even more estranged from his friends. He also realizes that he has no choice. He wants to
earn a living as an artist and Lekra has offered him a position as a magazine illustrator.  

The art exhibition is Ardi’s ticket into Lekra. He not only gets a job as an illustrator but is increasingly asked to make posters for Lekra circles to the extent that he has less and less time for his own painting. He is sent on study tours to countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America and lives for half a year in East Germany.

Both Ardi and Karman had ambitions but lacked the financial resources to realize them. Ardi wanted to be a practicing artist, Karman wanted to be a state official. These ambitions were used by Lekra and Partindo. Their vulnerability also made it impossible for either to break with their respective organizations but become all the more deeply involved in them.

**Patronage relationships**

The Communist Party’s strategy of a national united front was given a great boost through proclamation of President Sukarno’s NASAKOM doctrine. The party’s spectacular increase in stature applied mostly to political institutions but also to the country’s public administration. Communists and Communist sympathizers were appointed to high administrative positions, thereby giving the PKI access even to administration at the regional and local levels. Taken together this meant that PKI became a part of the nation’s authority within both political and administrative spheres.

The Indonesian literature considered here contains several examples of how the Communist Party utilized this new situation in order to build up its own organization and to work for the long-term realization of its program. The PKI’s following was built upon the use of patronage relationships. More specifically the Communists drew upon the widespread, traditional Javanese respect for authority and obedience to bind and reward its followers. We have seen how Triman (Kubah) used his high position as an administrative official in order to build up Communist cadres in Pegaten. The same types of activities are encountered in the Dukuh Paruk trilogy. The settlement was drawn into the country’s political life through a Communist administrative official using his position as part of governmental authority to all but command the settlement’s ronggeng to work for the Communist Party’s propaganda activities, which she finally did. Srintil became acquainted with Bakar, one of the party’s agitators, an older ‘grey haired man but who had enthusiasm without compare.’ Bakar was an unusual person and in him Srintil found the father she had never had.
Because he rewarded her richly and Dukuh Paruk received a part of these presents, the village saw him as an experienced person who could lead and protect them. Thus they welcomed him with open arms. Shortly thereafter the whole village was decorated with Communist emblems.  

The novel *Jentera Lepas* by Ashadi Siregar also takes up the theme of PKI directly, using its position in order to further its own movement regardless of the fact that its followers/clients were placed in a dangerous situation. The book tells the story of a school teacher, Parmanto, who wishes to keep out of politics for fear of coming to a bad end. He thus avoids joining a breakaway group from the teachers’ union called Persatuan Guru Republik Indonesia Non-Vaksentral (PGRI). One day he is even exhorted by the school’s headmaster to become a member of the new union, which he did. After the coup attempt in 1965 Parmanto loses his job. Many years later it turns out that he has subsequently earned a living as a bicycle mechanic.  

Both Srintil and the teacher Parmanto had no choice other than to do what they had been told. The threats or intimidation were clear enough. In Srintil’s case it was a question of the whole settlement being endangered had she persisted in her refusal to cooperate by not dancing at the Communist meetings. In Parmanto’s case he ran the risk of losing his job if he had not followed the principal’s urging that he join the splinter union. After 1966 PGRI Non-Vaksentral was declared illegal, along with other organizations within the political left.  

**Conscious (mis)use of symbols associated with nationalism and national unity**  
An integral part in the national united-front strategy was the use of symbols for nationalism and national unity. After 1957 these came in particular to mean support for President Sukarno and what he represented. This was a ‘no’ to the Western parliamentary democracy and freelfight capitalism in preference for a more Indonesian manner of rule. In Indonesian society decisions were made by consensus, something Sukarno claimed had characterized the Javanese village since the beginning of time. The PKI support of President Sukarno and his concept was subordinated, however, to the party’s goal of realizing its own program. As we have seen, Suryo’s urging Ardi (*Anak Tanahair*) to sign the appeal for President Sukarno was made under the pretence that it was a question of the nation’s continued existence. The novel *Mencoba Tidak Menyerah* illustrates how the Communists exploited Sukarno’s strong position for its own goals. A group of demonstrating youth chant ‘Crush imperialism!’ ‘Crush colonialism!’
View of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI)

– all in good Sukarno style – only a short time afterwards to shout ‘God is dead! God is dead!’ when they pass mosques.21 In order to attract people to its meetings the literature describes how the PKI made use of the popular forms of Javanese culture, such as the shadow play, wayang kulit, the people’s theater, ketoprak, dancers as ronggeng and ledek. Yet the contents differed from the traditional ones.22 Communist-sponsored performances of wayang kulit and ketoprak tended to emphasize class perspectives and class conflict. The class concept was diametrically opposed to the basis of Javanese social thought that had earlier created the art form in which the literature of the Mahabharata and Ramayana was used to portray a world of vertical loyalties and horizontal harmony. In this context the novelette Sri Sumarah raises the question of whether the Communist Party’s propaganda actually had any effect. We meet a thoughtful Sumarah who has seen these theatrical performances. She finds it strange that folk other than Javanese took the roles, that the king of Demak was played by a person from Sumatra and that another Sumatran took the role of the military commander of the Hindu realm of Blambangan in East Java. Not the least she is confused and a bit insulted when she sees Javanese kings being abused and made the butt of jokes. To a traditional woman such as Sri Sumarah a king should be esteemed and honored. If he ordered the people to war or extracted taxes from them that was because it was his duty; a king’s most important duty was to defend the realm from downfall.23

Hasan (Anak Tanahair) is very critical about the way the Communist Party exploited the wayang kulit and ketoprak. He writes to his friend that the PKI carried out inflammatory propaganda against Islam and against the Islamic parties which drove the Muslim groups into resistance.24 Karman (Kubah) was also critical. His criticism of the PKI centered on inserting ronggeng and ledek into party propaganda where the most important thing was sexuality rather than beauty.25 The book’s sharpest criticism, however, is directed at the Communist propaganda being set within a traditional context in which the PKI is presented as the messenger for the Ratu Adil, the long-awaited messiah figure,26 who arrives in times of trouble when the realm is on the brink of going under and builds up a new realm where justice (adil) prevails.27
Parallel to the strategy of the national united front was that of class conflict and the creation of class consciousness. On two occasions the PKI turned to class conflict: the first during the wave of general strikes and extra-parliamentary actions in 1959, the second during the unilateral land occupation campaign in 1963–65.

**Class conflict**

PKI strategy of class conflict is depicted in the literary works through the issue of the unilateral land occupation. Their critical attitude toward the land occupation campaign stems primarily from the Communist Party’s use of people for its own purposes. Furthermore it drew those people into a violent, face-to-face policy of confrontation with those powerful in society with attendant dangers for them personally. In the Dukuh Paruk trilogy, the PKI campaign in the rural districts revolves about the agitator Bakar. Drawing upon Javanese tradition he sets the land reform in the context of the Ratu Adil or the righteous king whose predicted coming will bring about righteousness and justice for all. As a result, people see the PKI as a messenger of the Ratu Adil just prior to the beginning of the land occupation action. Bakar’s emotional harangue glides over the dangers inherent in a situation where his impoverished listeners come into conflict with the powerful landowners. Bakar will himself not realize this danger. That the end justifies the means comes out clearly in Bakar’s contacts with Dukuh Paruk. After the start of the land occupation campaign the villagers want to break off cooperation with the PKI. They feel used. The meetings where Srintil dances end with land occupation actions provoking violent clashes with landowners in which the police intervene. The settlement elder, Sakarya, and Srintil confront Bakar and make it clear that Dukuh Paruk does not want to continue. Specific motivation comes from the fact that its founder and spiritual father, Ki Secamenggala, had forbidden them to destroy anything for other people. Srintil will no longer participate in PKI arrangements and the Communist posters and emblems in the village should be taken down. Bakar answers with threats. The placards should remain as they are, arguing that otherwise the Communist youth will become angry. ‘You don’t want a commotion do you?’ One morning the villagers discover that Ki Secamenggala’s grave has been desecrated. They assume that this is Bakar’s revenge for Dukuh Paruk having
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Figure 13. Ahmad Tohari: *Lintang Kemukus Dini Hari*. Cover illustration by Ady Permadi
broken off collaboration with the PKI. Sakarya then orders that PKI billboards and emblems should be taken down. But before the order has been carried out someone discovers a green cone-shaped hat made from woven bamboo lying in a thicket. All assume that the owner was one of those who desecrated the grave. From the green color of the hat they draw the conclusion that the culprit must have been a Muslim, and therefore not from the PKI. Confronted by this blatant attack on the settlement’s spiritual father, seen as threatening its continued existence, Dukuh Paruk choose to renew contact with Bakar. Srintil again dances at the Communist Party meetings and the village remains a PKI stronghold. When the disturbances break out in Jakarta on October 1, 1965 and the witch-hunt for Communists begins, Dukuh Paruk is attacked and burns to the ground. Srintil and others are interned. What they do not know is that Bakar has tricked them. It is he who had ordered the desecration of Ki Secamenggala’s grave which was to be done in such a way as to cause the villagers to draw the conclusion that an Islamic group was responsible.

Even people who were politically active as Karman (Kubah) did not fully realize the dangers inherent in joining the unilateral land occupation campaign. Only in autumn 1965 does it become clear to him how deep the social conflict has become and that he now belonged to the losing side. The Communist agitator Margo has been killed, Karman’s protector Triman has been taken away, and Karman himself has fled to the forest. In his hiding place he tries to understand how he has come into this situation. He had wanted to get back his family’s land, but now he is hated by his fellow villagers and as a result could be killed. Karman’s confusion seems logical against the political background. The land reform was based on a law issued by the president and had the support of Parliament. Those who had obstructed the law were the landowners, not the landless. It had been the landowners who had gone against governmental authority, yet those attempting to see to the law’s enforcement were dead, interned, or, like himself at that moment, fleeing.

In Umar Kayam’s stories the Communist Party is also tinged by fanaticism and criticized for unnecessarily putting people’s lives into jeopardy. This applies specially for the time following the attempted coup. Army troops were on their way to Central Java with the sole intention of crushing the revolting officers and the PKI. In Solo the Communists had joined the Revolutionary Council founded by the revolting officers and arranged a victory parade. This provides the background for the short story Bawuk. Bawuk and her husband Hassan
Figure 14. Umar Kayam, *Jalan Menikung*. Cover illustration by S. Malela.
find themselves in the city when the armed forces are nearing it. Hassan tells Bawuk that the army and right-wing students are preparing a campaign of terror, and orders her to prepare for flight. Bawuk becomes confused and points out that they have friends in the army. Did not the military help in organizing the parade in Solo and even provide trucks for the demonstrators? Those watching the parade were truly amazed over this cooperation between the army and the PKI. Hassan makes it clear to Bawuk what really happened:

> People are confused everywhere. Don’t you remember why the solidarity parade was organized? To increase even more the confusion! At the present time our strength in the cities is no match for those of the reactionary groups. Among the military there are many more who doubt than follow us.\(^{31}\)

Hassan and Bawuk flee to the countryside where Hassan builds up an armed resistance among the peasants. These are told that the coming fight will be over their own land. Naturally the peasants fight to the death against the oncoming army.\(^{32}\)

The novel *Para Priyayi* illustrates the consequences for left-wing intellectuals brought about by Communist support of the Revolutionary Council. Harimurti and his girlfriend Gadis are approached by two friends from Lekra who request them to be present in Lekra’s office that evening. They are told that the country’s generals have instigated a coup and that the political situation is serious. At the meeting they are instructed to arrange a parade together with other ‘progressive’ forces for the support of the Revolutionary Council. Harimurti and Gadis are somewhat disoriented and feel that they do not have enough information, but realizing that the situation is indeed serious, they have no objections. Thus they participate in the parade and shout their support for the Revolutionary Council. After the parade they learn that the army is on its way to the city and that it is preparing mopping-up operations against the Communist Party and its affiliated organizations. Harimurti leaves Yogyakarta for his grandparents’ house in Madiun; Gadis returns to her parents’ home outside of Yogyakarta.\(^{33}\) The aggressive struggle of the Communist Party had opened the door for a violent reaction from the party’s political opponents. This is what befell PKI followers and associates.

There is another aspect of the class conflict strategy that provoked a negative reaction: namely, its incompatibility with Javanese tradition. The short story ‘Bawuk’ shows the reaction from people in general to the unilateral land occupations. In doing so the story underlines the
great distance separating the Communist Party’s class conflict strategy from Javanese society’s status relations. Javanese society can generally be described as authoritarian with bands of loyalty decided by the aliran [stream, level] to which a person belonged, and where consensus and harmony were valued and striven after. Bawuk (Bawuh) comments to her sisters and brothers on the lack of results of the progressive movement. Her Communist husband is fleeing and she is looking back on her life.

I married a mad dreamer. I was not so fortunate as sis Mi and sis Syul who were able to marry highly regarded priyayi. I met a person who had not even finished SMA. A person who dreamed that without a single degree, without an official position, one could be highly regarded in society. What a fool! He thought he understood our society. But truly he did not understand anything at all.34

The incompatibility between Javanese society’s values of harmony and the Communist Party’s class conflict is also a theme in the novelette Sri Sumarah. It is particularly evident in the discussion between Sri Sumarah and her son-in-law Yos, who worked for Barisan Tani. Sri Sumarah has pawned half of her sawah to her neighbor Pak Mohammad for a loan she had taken to pay for her daughter’s wedding. It is now unclear whether she can pay back the loan. Yos promises help, but not with money. He tells Sumarah that Pak Mohammad is building up a fortune through giving loans to persons in dire economic circumstances with land as surety; it is now Sumarah’s turn to become caught in Pak Mohammad’s ‘trap.’ Sumarah rejects this interpretation as completely wrong. The fault is her own. She had taken too large a loan; if she cannot pay it back, then Pak Mohammad has the legal right to take over her land. Yos dismisses her objections by saying that the law was only for the landlords. He adds that if things should go so badly that she cannot repay the loan then, ‘we shall crush’ Pak Mohammad. Sri Sumarah is shocked and interrupts: ‘What is this, crush? Your words are really frightening.’ She will remember this conversation for a long time and how frightened she became when she saw his eyes glittering.35

Things turned out as Sri Sumarah has feared. She is unable to repay the loan and the land passes to Pak Mohammad. She moves to her daughter in town. One day she hears Yos telling his friends about an action against Pak Mohammad and other landowners. Small farmers led by teachers and students have confronted the landowners, demanding higher payment for the harvest work in accordance with the new land reform policies. The head of the subdistrict, Pak Camat,
was present. At risk of losing their land the landowners concede and accept the demands. Sri Sumarah listens to the conversation with a beating heart. In her mind’s eye she can see Pak Mohammad confronted by dozens of agitated peasants. She sighs, ‘Poor Pak Mohammad, a good human being such as he, to be afflicted in this manner.’ She wonders continually how that good and God-fearing person can be described by Yos and his friends as being so evil. They have called him a paper tiger who had unlawfully taken land from small farmers.36

Creation of class consciousness – politicizing of culture

The Communist Party’s strategy of creating class consciousness as a precondition to class conflict is dealt with in the literature via portraits of the party’s cultural organ, Lekra (Lembaga Kebudajaan Rakjat). Lekra was established in the beginning of the 1950s with social realism highest on the agenda. It criticized Western ‘individualism’ and attacked hard against Indonesia’s leading authors, all of whom were influenced by the West in one way or another. Lekra’s program and actions led to a politicizing of art with sharp conceptual conflicts between and among artists and writers. Umar Kayam’s short story *Musim Gugur Kembali di Connecticut* and Ajip Rosidi’s novel *Anak Tanahair* are products of this perspective. They defend the freedom of art, ‘art for art’s sake.’

Rosidi’s novel has a normative character in the figure of Ardi’s friend Hasan, a poor artist who has kept his distance from every form of art influenced by politics. He wishes to keep his freedom as an artist. Furthermore he sees that a consequence of politicizing is the separation of artists belonging to different political camps, a situation describing a society in which respect is lacking for different political opinions. In other words politicizing has led to conflict and, in the worst case, to violence. For Hasan this situation is problematic in many respects. He is a person who respects others’ political points of view. He is, therefore, very skeptical about limited political rights which follow as a result of the turn to Guided Democracy. Rejecting social realism does not mean that he is insensitive to the situation of the poor. On the contrary, he maintains that if one wants to counter Communism, this can only take place through a just society where people are guaranteed a sufficient standard of living. His negative judgment of art’s politicizing comes mostly from the fact that the resulting conflicts are counterproductive; they do not give the peace and quiet needed to practice art but waste time in unnecessary conflicts with one’s fellow human beings. This Hasan will avoid at all costs.37
CONCLUSION

As a group these literary works subscribe to a thesis emphasizing the innocence of victims of the terror of 1965. They were, so to say, tricked into becoming involved with the Communist Party’s affiliated organizations or other left-wing organizations. However, the authors are not content with this conclusion, maintaining that what had placed the actors in this situation was not the Communist Party pero se but traditional norms. The actors behaved in fact in a consistent manner. This is what we see in the following chapters.

NOTES

5 Ibid. p. 924; Mortimer, Indonesian Communism under Sukarno, p. 126; Cribb and Brown, Modern Indonesia. A History since 1945, pp. 82–84.
6 Mortimer, Indonesian Communism under Sukarno, pp. 276–328.
7 Priyayi are Javanese society’s upper class and in some respects can be termed an ‘administrative nobility.’
9 Ahmad Tohari, Kubah, pp. 70–83.
12 Ajip Rosidi, Anak Tanahair, pp. 159–164, 219–221.
17 Ibid. p. 184.
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18 Ibid. pp. 184–186.
29 Ibid. pp. 175–208.
34 Umar Kayam, ‘Bawuk’, p. 118. SMA is an abbreviation for Sekolah Menengah Atas that means upper secondary school.
36 Ibid. pp. 43–44. Quote on p. 44.
37 Ajip Rosidi, *Anak Tanahair*, pp. 228–229, 240–241, 265–275, 285–301, 312–313. See esp. pp. 298–301 where Hasan explains why he does not want to be among the signatories of the Cultural Manifesto. His point of view is that the manifesto is a political action, not withstanding that the manifesto is a protest against the politicizing of art.
Actors and Hindu-Javanese Culture

Submission to authority, acceptance of fate, and the attraction to centers of power

INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the literary works of Ahmad Tohari and Umar Kayam with emphasis on the literary figures’ relationship to the prevailing mores of Hindu-Javanese culture. A fundamental principle of Hindu philosophy is the progressive cosmic decline of the universe in the material as well as the spiritual sense. History is seen as a cycle of ages moving from the Golden Age through successively less happy epochs to the Evil Age, before the wheel turns again to create a new Golden Age. After this the cosmic decline will recommence and so on. Since 3012 BCE we have been in the last phase or Evil Age. The end of this epoch is marked by disorder and chaos, after which the world will be destroyed. These abstract principles have important consequences for how someone acts politically within the bounds of Javanese culture. To prevent fulfillment of the cycles and to delay the coming of the destruction one holds fast to the present order. Under such circumstances it is the king’s foremost duty to see that this social stability is maintained. Of necessity his subjects are forced to follow his lead. Thus there comes about a relationship of mutual dependence between the sovereign and subjects; the prince protects his underlings and they submit to his will. The implication is that a subordinate’s duty is to obey his superior, whether an older member of the family, an elder relation, or a person in a position of authority. In other words, obedience is a characteristic feature of Hindu-Javanese culture. A
complementary element is *trima*, which means to accept or receive. One accepts the inevitable without protest. One also accepts it without reservations, i.e. with *ikhlas*. By accepting the inevitable wholeheartedly, *trima dengan ikhlas*, one comes to the stage expressed by the phrase ‘If you accept unhappiness, it will totally disappear.’

Even in the individual’s own life there is a striving for order and harmony with the goal of obtaining peace within oneself. This is achieved through controlling one’s feelings and emotions. Otherwise one becomes a victim of the outer forces with the attendant risk of uncontrolled aggression that can lead to disorder and chaos or even depression. All are equally destructive for a human being.

At the same time that people are trained to obey authority and accept their fate, they are confronted with another characteristic feature in the Javanese culture, namely, a strong attraction to power. This orientation to power has been analyzed by Benedict Anderson in his essay ‘The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture.’ Anderson maintains that power is concrete and homogenous; the quantum of power in the universe is constant, even though it may be unevenly distributed. Consequently the concentration of power in one place or in one person brings about a proportional diminution elsewhere. This in turn means that more than one center of power cannot exist simultaneously, one must succeed another.

In times of stability the norm of obeying authorities is compatible with an orientation to power. However in time of disintegration the two do not necessarily coincide because a new center of power is in the process of arising and this takes place at the cost of the previous one. Between the norms of accepting one’s fate and the orientation to power there is interjected an oppositional situation, one which can be used by those not satisfied with their present living conditions. A society which originally created these aspects of culture was consequently authoritarian.

Although Indonesia became independent in 1949, by the mid-1960s the society many had hoped for had not materialized. Western institutions had been established but served more to legitimize political power than to limit it. The country’s administration was characterized by a political steering from above. Administrative officials were not appointed on merit and could not be criticized or even questioned with any safety. Individuals’ dependence upon the authorities with whom they came into daily contact only increased. This was also a consequence of the lack of functioning legislative and judicial systems. The country was not built upon law.
The following discussion analyzes literary figures’ behavior within the contexts of partially competing and overlapping norms of submission to authority, the acceptance of fate, and being drawn to centers of power.

**KUBAH – A PERSON WHO ORIENTATES HIMSELF TO POWER**

Ahmad Tohari’s novel *Kubah* depicts someone who is confronted by two conflicting aspects of Javanese culture: namely, to accept his fate and an orientation to power. The main actor Karman cannot accept that the family land has been lost to the village’s richest man, Haji Bakir, and that he has become a landless peasant. According to his way of thinking, the transaction between his father and Haji Bakir has not been just.

Many years later Karman is confronted again with the behavioral notion of *trima*, to accept one’s fate. The persecution of Communists has begun and Karman has fled to the forest. There he catches sight of a poor man by the name of Kastagetek who is cooking his evening meal. Karman is cold and hungry. The smell of cooking food becomes too much for him and he leaves his hiding place. Kastagetek scratches out a living by selling bamboo. He cuts down bamboo, makes a raft of the stalks, and poles it downriver to a village where it is broken up and the bamboo poles sold to a merchant. The profits are not large. The trip home takes three days because he must wander on foot along the river. During the dry season he usually fishes. He is a good man who believes in the goodness of his fellow human beings. He is satisfied with life despite grinding poverty. He is a traditional Muslim who completely believes in predestination.

To Karman’s question as to whether he is not uneasy at leaving his wife alone during his trips he laughs. Afterwards he explains that it has been predestined that he will live the life he does, just as it has been predestined that he will always be poor.

Therefore I must accept wholeheartedly that which does not make me happy. On the contrary, with this whole-hearted acceptance [keikhlasan] I become calm and am not disturbed by feelings which are not satisfied.

Kastagetek’s words make a deep impression on Karman. He observes that Kastagetek is actually fortunate. In this manner Karman is confronted with a solution to the problem of poverty totally different
Figure 15. Ahmad Tohari, Kubah. Cover illustration by A. Wakidjan
from that found in his study of Marxism. In any event he doubts the efficacy of Marx’s panacea via the creation of a dictatorship of the proletariat. Kastagetek’s solution is a mixture of orthodox Islam and Hindu-Javanese ideas: namely, that universal justice will come about first in the hereafter following this earthly existence. Karman was at first skeptical. Subsequently he realizes that Kastagetek is happy in this world just through accepting his fate.

The inner strength a person obtains from wholehearted acceptance of the inevitable, *trima dengan ikhlas*, confronts Karman again a couple of years later. He is now in the notorious Buru prison camp. One day he receives a letter from his wife. She asks for a divorce. After six years of privations because of his indefinite absence, she has yielded to her family’s and relatives’ urges that she remarry. Karman is crushed. His wife is his only human contact with the outer world. If Marni leaves him he has nothing. In his desperation he turns to his comrades in the camp. However in the bitterness they share through having suffered the same fate, they only laugh at him. Nor can a former party functionary give him support. He can only stress duty to the party. After eight days Karman decides it is best to give up Marni. It is not right that her life should be difficult. Besides, his children need a good upbringing. He cannot, however, accept this and therefore does nothing in the affair.

He is in inner conflict and has lost his lust for life, ultimately falling ill. In this condition he is sought out by one of the camp commanders, Captain Somad, who taught the prisoners religion. Somad was an educated person, a learned man. He shows sympathy for Karman and suggests a way out of his dilemma: ‘We shall together seek the best attitude to counter that which is disturbing you. What is certain is that to lose hope is never the right answer, never!’ He makes Karman aware that he has a duty to fulfill. One day he will be set free and Karman’s children will see their father again. ‘If you can lay aside the thought of losing hope, then you will come to the best way.’ Captain Somad’s visit impresses Karman. He has met something unusual in prison life: human kindness. The captain has shown him concern and sympathy. ‘Can I be certain that I have found a friend in this world?’ he asks himself. The visit gives him the strength to continue. He is now determined to give Marni the divorce. It is inevitable. The conversation with Somad has given him the strength to meet reality without being broken by it. Somad has said that there was a way out and Karman waits for it. After some time the captain comes back. He finds the prisoner in better form. Karman sits up in bed and smokes a cigarette which he has probably made from a leaf and a butt the captain has left behind. He
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feels better but has difficulties in sleeping. What he needs is a ‘medicine against disappointment’ (that Marni has left him). He ‘would have a medicine against emptiness’ in his soul. Somad gives him a lesson in trima. That which is left to Karman is very limited. He can do nothing about the hard time he must now go through. What he can do is to orientate himself to retake control over that part of his condition he can influence. Not to lose control over his feelings is one step on the way to peace and harmony. Karman makes it clear to Somad that he can accept the difficulties he is now going through. He can meet reality without breaking down. He can accept it. He is in possession of trima. What he needs, however, is a remedy for the emptiness in his soul. The problem is that Karman cannot accept wholeheartedly what has happened. How can he do that? Somad shows him a way. Turn to Allah. Through turning to the Lord one receives peace. ‘With Him all suffering becomes small or does not even exist.’

It was thus only during his internment in a prison camp that Karman begins to dedicate himself to trima. The reason is that he was in the process of going under. By coming into the possession of trima he receives inner strength. This is, however, not a wholehearted acceptance of his situation. It is not trima dengan ikhlas. Karman accepts his situation to the extent that he does not allow it to become a barrier for him in his striving after a more bearable life. This he also shows in his behavior after being released. In this respect he differed from Kastagetek. We can now turn to an analysis of Karman’s actions in relation to the second characteristic feature of Javanese culture, an orientation towards power. It was pointed out earlier that Karman did not obey his uncle in accepting his situation within the prevailing order. He could not live in peace with the fact that the family’s sawah had been lost. He was driven by the necessity to create a good living for himself and his family. Does this mean that he thereby did not accept the prevailing order? To answer this, an attempt is made to ascertain the social group to which Karman saw himself belonging. In this we draw upon the typology of priyayi, santri, and abangan popularized by Clifford Geertz. The division was based not only upon Geertz’s own observations of behavior in East Java but also countless interviews with the local population. This is therefore not an ‘armchair’ construction but one derived from acceptable participant-observation methods.

‘Priyayi’ was a term used for upper-class, hereditary Javanese officials during colonial times. The group can be seen as an ‘administrative nobility.’ In practice they were state officials on both the highest and lowest levels. After independence in 1949 the term ‘priyayi’ con-
The other categories in the classification were santri and abangan. The differences between them were that a santri was an orthodox Muslim, whereas abangan were more nominal Muslims for whom animism and Hinduism remained a very real part of their conceptual world. However, between abangan and priyayi there was a common world of ideas: namely, those of Hindu-Javanese culture. The difference between them was partially in official service and partially in class and status, inasmuch as the priyayi were an upper class and thereby refined.

The stratum of society to which Karman aspired was that of the priyayi. Hence he gladly accepted the offer to become a volunteer in the village administration and began to plan for the future. He would take the entrance examination and become an official within the subdistrict administration. After a while he would become a chief. In view of the fact that he had received an education he could advance further and become assistant to the subdistrict chief and one day even become chief for the subdistrict. These dreams were also in line with the traditional manner through which a person became a priyayi. For a man of the people the way to priyayi-ship was via performance and loyalty towards the authorities. The first step in this journey from ignorance to knowledge was to live in a priyayi family and learn their codes and life patterns. The second step was to study and be admitted as a volunteer in the administration, thus becoming a magang. The third step was to complete the examination and become an administrative official. Karman was not given the opportunity to live in a priyayi family but was invited to live in Haji Bakir’s house and therefore could go to school. When the way became closed for further education, Triman’s offer to become a volunteer in the subdistrict’s administration became a continuation of his on-going social advancement. It will be recalled that Triman was chief of the information office at the subdistrict level. Thus it was as if a priyayi had taken on Karman. Karman becomes a volunteer and behaves in conformity to what is expected of him. He attends to his studies and obeys his superiors. He passes his exam and becomes a lower official at the administrative office. Subsequently he becomes secretary of a branch office of the political party Partindo. He is seen by his fellows as having become a priyayi.

Karman’s position as a priyayi does not hinder him from working to realize land reform. In the long run this could mean that his family will
get back their land. As mentioned earlier, behind his actions lies a demand for justice, a demand fully in line with Islamic teachings. A parcel of sawah had been traded for rice, whose price had been set absurdly high, albeit under wartime conditions. A good Muslim is not allowed to earn an unfair profit from his fellow Muslims, especially in times of misfortune. Moreover, Karman’s actions are totally in agreement with his position as a priyayi because the nation’s president had issued a regulation on land reform. Behind the land reform lay the Communist Party, but it had the president’s complete support and had been passed by the Peoples Representative Council with the support particularly of the Nationalist Party. For many in Javanese society it seemed as though power was beginning to shift in favor of the Communist Party. These were times of unrest and the PKI had strengthened its political and official position. As the largest party in Central Java, where Karman lived, its struggle on behalf of the landless peasants had been crowned with success through the land reform law. Power – limited according to Javanese concepts – began to flow from the landowners and people began to gather around the coming center, namely the Communists and Nationalists. For many the holy rays signifying the presence of a sovereign began to shift, the sure sign of the end of a dynasty and the beginning of a new one.24 According to the Old Javanese prophecy of Jayabaya, the new ruler would be of humble origin. This messiah figure of the Ratu Adil, ‘the righteous king’, would ensure justice for all, even material justice.25

Karman as a member of Partindo becomes engaged in working together with the Communist Party, at least on the land reform issue. Seen through Javanese eyes, this was hardly an act of revolt. No less a person than President Sukarno himself had exhorted his fellow countrymen to work together with the Communist Party. Thus under the prevailing power constellation, especially within the perceived shift, Karman tries to better his standard of living.

Karman’s orientation toward power is also clear in the book’s final scene: namely, the story of the building of the cupola. The village mosque, which Haji Bakir had earlier permitted to be built, is well on the way to decay and collapse. The cupola is in particularly bad shape. The village assembly is in agreement that the mosque should be restored and begin to carry out the work in the best gotong royong tradition. Each person takes upon himself a particular task. Karman wishes to build a new cupola. The others have no objection as he had learned to weld while in prison. Materials and tools are provided by his uncle Hasyim who sells several goats to raise the money. Karman carries
out his task scrupulously and a very beautiful cupola is the result.\textsuperscript{26} Why did he participate in the restoration of the mosque and why did he invest such great effort on the cupola? Was this to be able to pray to God in a beautiful holy place? This does not seem to have been the case. Ever since his return to Pegaten Karman has in his innermost soul felt that there is something he has lost: his fellow human beings’ trust. He wants to get that back again. He reasons that if he could give the inhabitants of Pegaten a beautiful cupola, he will have regained their trust. At very least he will be able to show that an ex-con of a political prisoner can contribute something. It will also be a proof that he is steering a way that is nearer to his Maker.\textsuperscript{27} His thoughts show that the primary object of making the cupola was to obtain his fellow humans’ respect and esteem.

By the time Karman returns to Pegaten great changes have taken place. The Communist Party and Partindo no longer exist. More and more of the villagers have become santri. A long time ago it was only Haji Bakir who was able to build a mosque. Now many are helping with the restoration work. Much earlier Karman had drawn a political poster with the hammer-and-sickle motif and declared to his wife that he was a revolutionary.\textsuperscript{28} Through the building of the mosque, he now creates another symbol, but this time it was not on paper; Karman builds a cupola. The rebuilding of the mosque is a sign of Islam’s stronger position in the village.

Another change is that Haji Bakir returns the 1.5 ha of sawah which Karman’s father pawned during the war and which Karman has tried to get back for many years. The sawah is given to Karman’s daughter Tini on the eve of her wedding to Haji Bakir's grandson, Jabir. It thus becomes Tini’s inalienable personal property. With it she can assure that her father and her grandmother will not want for material needs.\textsuperscript{29} Through illuminating two conflicting sets of arrangements in Javanese culture – to accept one’s fate and to orientate oneself to power – the novel raises the question of whether individuals such as Karman should have been punished. Karman had attempted to better his own and his family’s life but failed because of the change of regime in 1965–66. If that shift in power had not taken place Karman would have still been a part of the political power structure through his position as a secretary in Partindo. It is not through \textit{nrimo pandum} – accepting one’s fate – that people become powerful.
In the Dukuh Paruk trilogy Ahmad Tohari focuses on the norms directing people to obey the authorities and accept their fate. The book reveals some of the factors involved in subordinates’ relationships to their superiors and the strategy they adopt for survival. Dukuh Paruk’s relationships to authority were set by the rules created by the village’s founder, Ki Secamenggala. These in turn reflected the overriding concern with harmony in the Hindu-Javanese cultural tradition. Ki Secamenggala has taught the settlement’s inhabitants that harmony and adaption to their fullest extent lead to greater calmness than the use of force. He has forbidden them to destroy anything for other people. As the settlement elder Sakarya makes clear to his grandchild, they were subordinates and should therefore obey the authorities.

Since prevailing powers can shift, there is always the risk that the settlement can come into difficulties. Therefore Sakarya has a number of rules. Dukuh Paruk should strive for balance. More concretely, it should find the middle way between the extremes. It should follow that which is most natural, that which is usual. Otherwise there is the risk that life will take its revenge. Sakarya commonly uses the parable of the coconut palm and the wind. When the wind blows from the north, the palm bends to the south. When the wind ceases, the palm takes its normal position but only after having bent itself before the north wind. Balance is restored only then. Do not diverge from the normal; otherwise things can go badly.

Sakarya therefore becomes apprehensive when Dukuh Paruk is dragged into the Communist Party’s arrangements. Sakarya’s uneasiness increases when the PKI forbade him to make an offering before the ronggeng performance. The Communist posters and emblems decorating the settlement are also something new. His uneasiness is further increased in witnessing the Communist meetings in the region with their cries of ‘hurray’, their speeches and parades everywhere. He knows that something departing from the norm as much as this did must be followed by a backlash before the balance will be restored. ‘Laugh not too hard because thereafter follow tears of regret’, he usually says. He turns to his neighbor Kartareja with his concerns. Kartareja shares Sakarya’s anxiety over the lack of an offering. On the other hand offerings were not so common anymore. With regard to the
Figure 16. Ahmad Tohari, *Jantera Bianglala*. Cover illustration by Ipong Purnama Sidhi
Communist posters and emblems these were also found in other villages in the region. In other words, according to Kartareja, there does not seem to be any reason for worry. Sakarya’s uneasiness is not stilled.36

Dukuh Paruk’s static conception of authority means that it cannot initiate changes, much less work for overturning the system. In view of their extreme poverty, how can the villagers give their assent to the revolutionary concepts they must have learnt from PKI representatives? The answer lies in the concept of trima. People should accept their situation in cases where it was inevitable. Dukuh Paruk taught its inhabitants that life’s bitterness was something to be endured, and one should thus accept it.37 This comes out in a conversation between Sakarya and a Communist agitator. The latter points out to Sakarya that Dukuh Paruk and other equally impoverished villages were oppressed:

This is the way it is. You don’t understand the ways in which they carry out oppression of the people. Since the time of your ancestors the groups of oppressors have carried out their evil. The manner is already historical.

Look at the results of their evil here. Everyone has too little to eat. Everyone is dumb and sick. Children have worms and scabs. Your children live virtually without hope.

What do you mean by the groups of oppressors?

The imperialists, capitalists, colonialists and their lackeys. Unmistakable.

We are confused, Mas. We have never met them. Your story sounds silly. Basically it is like this, Mas. Since the beginning this is how it has been at Dukuh Paruk. We are contented living here because this is just the certainty we have accepted. We do not believe that there is anything better than this. And it is a great mistake if you expect to hear complaints from us.

It can be that we are dumb, poor, and sick. But that is our home. Don’t bother becoming dizzy thinking about it. Funny, no? We ourselves see this as normal. Why should outsiders bother themselves.

. . .

He who has the most power is the Almighty, Mas, who has already determined forever that we shall live in Dukuh Paruk and He has made our life such as it is.38

Tradition as a hinderance to change can hardly be expressed more clearly. Sakarya defends the unwillingness to change by reference to the settlement’s sacred bond with its ancestor, Ki Secamenggala. The
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Communist agitator, for his part, considers himself enlightened through having obtained knowledge and now seeks to convince those who remain ignorant, who ‘still are dumb.’ Dukuh Paruk’s relationship to authority is thus characterized by authoritarian submission. The settlement behaves as if it were in a subordinate position and a change can only be initiated from above. That Dukuh Paruk collaborates with the Communist Party’s political actions is explained by the fact that the PKI used its position as part of the social/political authority in its initial contacts with the settlement, and long afterwards continued to reward the village. As far as Dukuh Paruk is concerned its actions originated completely from the norm of accepting its fate and obeying the authorities.

SRI SUMARAH — A PERSON WHO OBEYS AUTHORITIES AND ACCEPTS HER FATE

Umar Kayam’s novelette Sri Sumarah is the story of a woman who has been brought up to accept her fate. She comes from a lower priyayi milieu in Central Java.

Sri Sumarah grew up with her grandmother and has been schooled to be like Sembadra, Arjuna’s wife in the wayang story based on the Mahabharata. A good wife obeys her husband, is patient, and has understanding for his small shortcomings. She admires his strength. She is loyal to her husband, minds her home, and takes care of her appearance. Her grandmother makes her aware that her name Sumarah means ‘accept’ in the sense of being understanding, being open, and not objecting. Sri sits quietly and listens, as was expected of a Javanese girl. She is brought up to seek answers herself and not to question. When she is eighteen years old it is time for marriage. It is arranged by her grandmother. Sri Sumarah has fallen in love with her future husband at their first meeting. He came riding a ‘Simplex’ bicycle equipped with a bicycle lamp, an object associated with high status during the Japanese occupation. Mas Sumarto is a teacher by trade and carries himself as befits a priyayi. He sits down with the gesture ngapu–rancang: both hands crossed and placed on his knees. He is dressed in a long-sleeved white shirt and wears newly pressed trousers of white material. His attire is completed by a long black tie. His hair is neatly clipped and is perfumed with hair cream that can only be purchased in the city. Sri Sumarah gladly becomes his wife. The marriage is a happy one and the pair is blessed with a daughter. Sri Sumarah follows the advice she was given by her grandmother and her
Figure 17. Umar Kayam, *Sri Sumarah* (the full title is *Sri Sumarah dan cerita pendek lainnya*). Cover illustration by Rusli
husband is glad to have such a beautiful and conscientious wife. After a few years he becomes a school inspector and takes the name Martokusumo, a name which can only be born by a person of rank. This priyayi ideal was maintained even though Mas Martokusumo unexpectedly dies of a fever. Since his pension is modest, Sri Sumarah takes in sewing from the neighbors in order to be able to pay for her daughter’s education in the city.40

For Sri Sumarah, social status is important. With the death of her husband her economic situation has become decidedly worse. Thus when after a time she receives an offer of marriage from a prosperous villager, her friends and neighbors expect her to accept. But she turns it down. She feels that it was not in keeping with her status as a widow of a school inspector to enter into a marriage with Pak Carik. As the village official he had usage rights to many hectares of sawah, but this still does not make him a priyayi. He has only completed elementary school. He is uneducated and rough, his profile is not noble and his lips are too thick. He reminds her of Burisrawa in the Mahabharata, short and violent and the most prominent of the evil Kurawa. In contrast, Mas Martokusumo was as refined and noble as Arjuna, the most famous of the god-gifted Pandava brothers.41

Status is so important for Sri Sumarah that she at times acts against her own best interests. Her daughter Tun has become pregnant. This is a catastrophe for Sri Sumarah because her husband’s last words to her had been: “Take care of Tun.”42 Now she tries to save her child and herself while at the same time fulfilling her grandmother’s and husband’s expectations through holding a magnificent wedding. Tun’s wedding was on such a scale that Sumarah is forced to take a loan by pawning half of her sawah. The refreshments which are served are excellent, the likes of which had never before been seen in the subdistrict. ‘The feast is tremendous, very satisfying’, complements Pak Camat, chief for the subdistrict.43 Wives of the teachers praise the good food. The spectators express their appreciation of the fine wayang performances. Sri Sumarah also hires a house for the newly-weds. Her generosity makes her son-in-law Yos blush, but she brushes off his thankfulness. She is convinced that her son-in-law has a future before him. He has taken a university degree and is active in the Indonesian Student’s Movement, CGMI. He is also in close contact with the chief for the subdistrict, Pak Camat, who has assured Sri Sumarah that Yos has good future prospects and will become a man of rank.44

Besides being orientated toward status, Sri Sumarah always obeyed the wishes of her superiors, whether those of her husband (i.e. his last
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words) or, as we shall see, Pak Rukun Tetangga, head of the neighborhood association. As a result of the purge of Communists in 1965–66, Sri Sumarah is struck by misfortune. Her house and sawah fields are confiscated, her son-in-law is killed and her daughter is hunted by the military authorities. She follows the urging of Pak Rukun Tetangga to surrender her daughter to the army in exchange for a promise that Tun will be allowed to live. When at a much later date she visits the family grave in her home village, she is advised by Pak Rukun Tetangga not to visit her house, a piece of advice she also follows. Sri Sumarah also takes upon herself the economic responsibility for her grandchild and her daughter. The question is how she can earn money for this. She performs a tirakat – a nocturnal vigil intended to bring about divine inspiration – and sleeps in the garden overnight. The tirakat is successful in that she has a vision of meeting her husband, who suggests that her talent for massage might be the solution. Consequently she begins to give massages to her neighbors. She becomes a masseuse, but at the same time she is respected. Now she can ensure that her daughter receive food regularly in prison.45

The drastic changes in her life have been accepted by Sri Sumarah with equanimity. After becoming a widow she chose to take in sewing rather than enter into a new marriage with someone below her rank. In order to arrange an elaborate wedding for Tun she began to sell homemade food to school teachers and administrative personnel without feeling shame over loss in status because the action served a greater and, for her, a more important cause. Sumarah accepted also the loss of her rice fields when she could not repay the loan she had taken to pay for her daughter’s wedding. She vehemently rejected her son-in-law’s proposal to block by force the transfer of the rice fields to Pak Mohammad. Similarly she accepted the loss of her remaining sawah and house when they were confiscated by the authorities because she had leased them to Barisan Tani Indonesia. On her visit to her earlier home and family grave she not only followed Pak Rukun Tetangga’s advice not to visit the house and sawah but also accepted it. On arrival at the village she suddenly felt homesick and in the beginning had a strong longing to at least go by the house and rice fields. But an inner voice held her back. She was afraid to become emotionally upset or, even worse, heartbroken on seeing these things she had lost.46

And finally Sri Sumarah accepts becoming a masseuse after receiving counsel from the spirit of her dead husband. Occasionally she receives sexual advances, but despite this she retains the respect of the
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district’s population. One day, however, she is mistaken for a prostitute by a client from Jakarta. Returning home she begins to have doubts as to whether this type of work is appropriate. This is the first time Sri Sumarah questions her fate. Her client is prosperous and handsome and needs her. Sri Sumarah is lonely and attracted to the handsome youngster. When she comes home that evening she sits on the bench outside the house. Doubts began to arise as to whether she should continue to be a masseuse. She wonders whether she should sleep outside again and try to renew contact with her dead husband. ‘There is perhaps a new Divine inspiration’, she says to herself. The previous revelation had been given a couple of years earlier. On the other hand, Sumarah would not be Sumarah if she now revolted. She tells herself that if she can continue to support herself, her daughter, and her grandchild then she does not need another revelation. She gets up and walks into the house. In the mirror she sees a tired woman with her hair in disorder, the woman is almost old but she can still smile a little. Sri Sumarah stares at the woman. Is that really a smile she sees? She does not bother to answer the question but bows to herself and accepts her fate.

BAWUK – A GOOD JAVANESE WIFE

The short story Bawuk discusses the detainment of those many women who followed the Communist women’s organization Gerwani or other left-wing organizations which continued their activities after the PKI had been declared illegal in March 1966. They were arrested, maltreated, and tortured. Whole families were affected in that the children in this manner lost both parents. What the story says is that the ‘guilt’ of these women was only in following their (Communist) husbands. They had acted in accordance with what they had been taught, namely to be loyal to their husband and to follow him.

Bawuk, the story’s main figure, has grown up in a higher priyayi milieu on Java. Although her parents have been influenced by the European way of life, Bawuk has always been interested in Javanese culture as this is communicated in the tales of the servants. She marries an idealist who works for the Communist Party. Yet Bawuk always considers her husband’s political activities as being separate from him as a person and thus having nothing to do with their conjugal life. She herself is not politically active. After the coup attempt in 1965 her husband Hassan organizes demonstrations for the support of the Revolutionary Council, but the situation changes quickly as the
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vengeful army approaches the city. The family flees to the countryside where Hassan begins to organize a resistance movement. Only now does it become clear to Bawuk how deeply involved her husband is in the country’s political life. One day the military forces invade the region and actual fighting breaks out. Bawuk succeeds in escaping with her children, but her husband disappears. Bawuk begins to search for him, which ultimately leads to her working for the resistance movement. She returns to the city and comes into contact with a man named Jogo who is the center of a network of persons sharing sympathetic political views, i.e. leftist. Through him she hopes to find out the whereabouts of her husband. However Jogo asks her to spy on students, saying that she is perfect for the job. She has never been politically active and thus is not known as Hassan’s wife. Bawuk agrees and collects information while at the same time continuing to search for her husband. At length the army breaks through and Bawuk flees to East Java. There she finds out that Hassan is in the southern part and is active in the resistance movement.

Bawuk’s young children have fared badly from the continual moving so she turns to her mother and asks to leave them in her care. The meeting with her mother and her brothers and sisters reveals how strongly Bawuk has been marked by her upbringing; a wife shall be loyal to her husband and follow him no matter where. Her family attempts to convince her to stay with her mother. A brother-in-law, a brigadier general, declares that he can arrange the necessary documents for this. Bawuk is tempted but declines the offer. She will once and for all live together with Hassan. Her decision has no political overtones such as, for example, that the Communist Party was not guilty of the murder of the generals in Jakarta and therefore it was right for her to work for the resistance movement. When she is berated by her brother-in-law that through her action she is putting the whole family into danger she does not refute him. Although she becomes irritated, she does not change her mind. When asked by her brother whether she is a member of the Communist Party, she answers in the negative but adds simply: ‘I am Hassan’s wife.’ When her sister criticizes her for working for the PKI she becomes confused. Bawuk says that she does not know why she is doing this and that it is hard for her to understand what her tie is to the PKI. ‘The only thing I understand is my connection with Hassan.’ This dialogue shows that Bawuk was acting in conformity with what was fitting for a Javanese woman, namely to be loyal to her husband and support him. This is also clearly expressed in the final monologue in which Bawuk talks about her husband and her relationship with him.
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He should have finished high school, gone to university at home or abroad, tried for a good position in the government, worked his way up to section head, hoped to be a manager or director-general. Instead he left school, became a Marxist, studied politics, plotted, dreamed and then plotted again, dreamed and then finally revolted. But I chose his world, the world of the common people, a restless, anxious world, full of sometimes-beautiful illusions.

She explains that it would therefore be wrong of her to stay with her mother.

Hassan’s reality is somewhere else, out there. His world and his dreams are full of gunpowder and bodies, full of vengeance and pursuit.

And I am still a part of that world of gunpowder and bodies, vengeance and pursuit.

The only one who understands her is her mother, a traditional aristocrat from Surakarta who has always remained loyal to her husband no matter what. She supports Bawuk’s decision to leave and says, ‘Go and find your husband.’

The story ends with Nyonya Suryo sitting on the veranda and listening to her grandchildren who are learning to recite the Koran under the disciple of a teacher. She herself knows nothing of these things but realizes that new times had come and that it is necessary for children to learn such things. In front of her is an open newspaper. Her glance falls upon an article which tells of a Communist coup attempt which has been put down at Blitar. Many people have been taken prisoner, others had been killed. Among the less well known was a man with the name of Hassan. Nyonya Suryo shuts her eyes. Hassan is dead.

What about Bawuk? She no longer hears the children’s recitations. They have come to the end of the lesson, finishing with:

‘Ihdinash shiraathal mustaqiim. Shiraathalladziina an’ amta’alaithim ghairil maghdhuubi ‘alaithim wo ladh dhaallim. Amin...’
[Show us the straight path, the path of those whom Thou hast favoured; Not the path of those who earn Thy anger nor of those who go astray, amen]

PARA PRIYAYI – THE WESTERN-EDUCATED ELITE

While Umar Kayam’s works concerning the affair of 1965 are characterized by the theme of the innocent’s sufferings, there are differ-
ences with regard to their distance from the Communist Party. Furthest away from the PKI is the leading character in Sri Sumarah. She has a son-in-law who worked within the Barisan Tani Indonesia and it is on his advice that she leases out her house and sawah to it for which she is later punished by the military authorities. The main actor in Bawuk comes into contact with the Communist Party through her husband and begins to work for the party only when her husband’s life is in danger. The writer Tono in ‘Musim Gugur Kembali di Connecticut’ once becomes a member of Lekra but ceases to go to the meetings because his concept of culture collides with that of Lekra, but he does not leave Lekra and this lead to his fall in 1965.

When many years later Umar Kayam returned to the events of 1965, it was in the novel Para Priyayi in 1992. For the first time a person active in Lekra is one of the main characters in Umar Kayam’s works. Harimurti, grandson of the clan’s founder, becomes active in Lekra and plays in its ketoprak theater, a popular folksy theater whose contents are inspired by the wayang. Harimurti is a sympathetic person who has grown up in Solo, where his father is a teacher in the Mankunegara court. Subsequently the family moves to Yogyakarta which is more liberal. Through his father Harimurti has come into contact with traditional Javanese music and dance, especially the classic artistic form of the wayang. It is, however, not the court culture which forms Harimurti. He is influenced most by the bond that his clan has with the poverty-stricken peasants. This bond was personified by Lantip, a distant relation of a modest background who has grown up in the house of Harimurti’s grandfather as a member of the family. Through his modest way of life, his honesty and forthrightness Lantip becomes a model for Harimurti. Via his stories about his childhood and family, Lantip becomes the link to the world of the Javanese peasant. When Harimurti later follows his father on his travels within the Principalities, he encounters the very world Lantip has talked so much about and is deeply impressed by the on-going attempts to better standards of living, among others by teaching people to read.

Another person who throughout his life exercises strong influence on Harimurti is his paternal grandfather, Sastrodarsono, the clan’s founder. He had come from a modest background but had received education thanks to a village patron. Sastrodarsono became a teacher in service of the Dutch state and made thereby the crucial social advancement in becoming a priyayi. He married a girl from a priyayi background, changed his name to Sastrodarsono, and together with his bride built up a home which corresponded to his rank. Sastrodarsono,
Figure 18. Umar Kayam, *Para Priyayi*. Cover illustration by Edi R. M.
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however, never forgets his origins. He founds a school in the village of
his birth and takes in the children of his poorer relatives. Even after one
of them has brought shame and ignominy to the clan, the son, Lantip,
is taken in and given a priyayi upbringing. Harimurti visits his grand-
parents many times. Their home and life style make a lasting im-
pression on him. He remembers in particular the reproductions
hanging on the walls. When many years later he visits the home of his
intended for the first time, it strikes him how similar it is to that of his
grandparents. Her family has also taken in and cared for a less fortunate
relative, albeit on a more modest scale.61

In his quest for identity Harimurti oscillates between the two worlds
of priyayi and peasant. He is attracted to both. He feels sympathy and
solidarity with the poverty-stricken peasants who have been sub-
ordinated to the whims of the powerful. He feels sympathy and
solidarity with the priyayi who have raised themselves from their
peasant surrounding and have attempted to draw their whole family
into a new world of education and culture and who ultimately become
a part of the cultural bearers. These inner swings between seemingly
irreconcilable opposites, according to Harimurti, can only be united by
a single organization, Lekra.62

Harimurti is, in fact, a child of a new type of priyayi which originated
in the twentieth-century Dutch East Indies. Parallel with the traditional
pyramid of a Hindu-Javanese court culture there arose a hierarchy
which rested on Western education and to a high degree was in-
fluenced by Western values. An intelligentsia grew up on the side of the
educated. Attempts were made to improve the population’s living
conditions through literacy campaigns, through teaching them rural
economics and hygiene, and through participating in projects which
aimed at an increased access to food, as for example diking, new
planting, and better seed.63 Harimurti’s grandfather is an example of
this noblesse oblige, as is his own father, Hardojo. When Hardojo is
offered a teaching job at the Mankunegaran he accepts it, despite the
fact that the salary is lower than if he had worked in one of the schools
run by the colonial government. The position is, in fact, coupled with
high status. Even so, Hardojo brings with him those norms he had
picked up in the Dutch educational system. His first action for example
is to begin a literacy campaign among the subjects of the Mankune-
garan.64 His son Harimurti is a product of this social environment and
he continues his father’s work in his own way. He seeks to bring
spirituality to people through giving them or reinforcing those cultural
values which are part of Javanese life. This he can do only within Lekra.
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Harimurti is portrayed sympathetically by Umar Kayam and as a result his punishment in 1965–66 is by any measure very light. He is allowed to go free, but placed under house arrest which afterwards is altered to ‘city arrest’ with his family as guarantors of his good behavior.65 This is, however, hardly convincing in light of the realities of the period. Umar Kayam seems to be challenging Indonesian society to accept the victims of 1965–66 as full members of the community instead of treating them as outcasts. The attempt at conciliation becomes even clearer at the novel’s close. The clan’s founder, Sastrodarsono, has passed away and after the burial the family assembles in order to name a new head of the family. This was not to be one of the children but Lantip, who has won everyone’s trust. He has become the disciplined priyayi in Sastrodarsono’s image. Lantip is deeply touched over this mark of honor shown to him by the family and he gladly accepts Harimurti’s offer to join him and his wife on an excursion to his place of birth. Together they set off toward the simple house in which Lantip lived his first years.66

NOTES


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5 Ahmad Tohari, *Kubah*, pp. 144–156. For traditional Islam, see Geertz, *The Religion of Java*, pp. 160–161. For the closeness between traditional Islam and the Hindu-Javanese world that is found in the *abangan* and *priyayi*, see pp. 160–161. For predestination, see pp. 150–152.


21 For how one becomes a *priyayi*, see Sartono Kartodirdjo, A. Sudewo and Suhardjo Hatmosuprobo, *Perkembangan Peradaban Priyayi*, pp. 6–8.

22 The term ‘*magang*’ is used expressly in the text: see *Kubah*, p. 77.

23 When Karman meets Kastagetek in the forest he is called ‘*priyayi*’ by Kastagetek: see *Kubah*, pp. 152, 157.


39 For the importance of knowledge as an indication of possession of power, see Anderson, ‘The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture’, pp. 54–58.
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49 H. Shri Ahimsa–Putra has made a sloppy reading of ‘Bawuk.’ He writes that having entered into marriage with Hassan, Bawuk became politically active in the Communist Party’s activities, even though she was never a member of the Party or GERWANI. See H. Shri Ahimsa–Putra, ‘Levi–Strauss, Orang-Orang PKI, Nalar Jawa, dan Sosok Umar Kayam – Telaah Struktural-Hermeneutik Dongeng Etnografis dari Umar Kayam’, in Umar Kayam dan Jaring Semiotik, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1998, p. 57. In point of fact, Bawuk’s political activity begins only after her husband’s life is in danger and this comes after October 1, 1965, that is after Bawuk and Hassan have taken flight and her husband builds up a resistance movement in the countryside.


51 Ibid. pp. 112–119.


53 Ibid. p. 113.

54 Ibid. p. 114.


57 Ibid. pp. 87–93, 120–121, quotation on p. 120. The last even includes unfaithfulness in public. Aveling’s translation, p. 161.


59 For ketoprak and the Communist Party’s use of the wayang, see McVey, ‘The Controversy in Indonesian Communism’, pp. 32–33.


63 For this type of priyayi, see Geertz, The Religion of Java, p. 236. See also Frederick, Visions and Heat, pp. 34–41.

64 Umar Kayam, Para Priyayi, pp. 154–164.


66 Ibid. pp. 305–308.
INTRODUCTION

In his essay ‘The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture’, Benedict Anderson observes that the urge to oneness is central to Javanese political attitudes. He almost goes as far as characterizing political life in Indonesia as an obsessive concern with oneness. Parliamentary democracy was seen as a sign of the diffusion of power rather than its cause. Anderson argues that the traditional Javanese concept of power requires a center, usually concretely expressed in terms of a ruler. How could then this oneness be created and maintained against the social realities of conflicts and clashing interests? The answer is that the center is syncretic and absorptive in character. Important elements in a leader’s claim to power contain both opposites and an ability to absorb his adversaries.1

During the latter part of the 1950s Indonesian political life came to be increasingly characterized by President Sukarno’s striving after unity. This was a period during which he attempted to take the initiative and transform the political system to one dominated by the president, i.e. himself as a way of resolving the perpetual governmental crises. Moreover the revolts which had broken out in the Outer Islands culminated in 1958 when a revolutionary government was proclaimed on Sumatra. With the escalation of centrifugal tendencies, coupled with continually changing cabinets, President Sukarno was all the more convinced that the country should be governed through cooperation between the four largest parties regardless of their relative strength in parliament. The latter’s performance only confirmed his long-standing doubts concerning parliamentary democracy as a suitable political system for Indonesia. He was concerned lest it lead to one group
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oppressing another. This would be tantamount to institutionalizing social injustice. As a counterweight to the dysfunctional features of parliamentary democracy Sukarno became the spokesman for consensus under a wise leader, thereby emphasizing the oneness existing between leader and people; the leader’s role was to bring about mutual agreement between the people’s representatives. Decisions should be unanimous and should be arrived at through mutual deliberations among representatives by a democratically elected assembly. According to President Sukarno this governmental form had characterized the Javanese village since time immemorial. Thus the third principle in the Pancasila – musyawarah mufakat – was given new life by the president in 1957, in the wake of the revolt in the Outer Islands and the continuing political paralysis in the country.3

In Sukarno’s view all parties in parliament which had ‘obtained a certain quotient of the votes’ in the election should form a cabinet and this should include the Communist Party.4 Through this scheme one could take into account the message of the election results while simultaneously ensuring that the Outer Islands were represented through Masjumi. As noted above, Sukarno’s suggestion meant that the PKI would for the first time be represented in the cabinet. It had heretofore been refused a place through the opposition of the Islamic parties. The Communists had, therefore, every reason to support the president’s suggestion for changing the form of government in favor of a stronger presidential role. Critics of the proposal were found in Nahdlatul Ulama, Masjumi, and the Socialist Party. Masjumi had its base in West Java, where it was the largest party, and the Outer Islands which accounted for half of the party’s votes. A government of the Sukarno type would be dominated by the Java-based parties, meaning that Java’s interests would go before all others. In addition the Communists would have an influence in the country’s politics. This particularly disturbed Masjumi, all the more so since they tended to represent the interests of the landowners. As a result, Masjumi wanted to continue parliamentary democracy in order to insure a stronger position for the Outer Islands and landowners, as well as to deny the Communists a place in the government. Another party which similarly wished to hold the PKI at arm’s length was the Indonesian Socialist Party (PSI). This party represented the Western-educated elite and intellectuals. The PSI worked for the establishment of a welfare state without, however, necessarily entailing nationalization of private property. In addition the Socialist Party had made itself the spokesman for Western parliamentary democracy. That it came to make common
cause with Masjumi originated from their shared attitude of suspicion and distrust of the Communists.

By 1959 President Sukarno had driven through a return to the Constitution of 1945 and a resultant presidential-steered government. Opposition was swept away by the prohibition of Masjumi and the Socialist Party on the grounds that leading persons in these parties had participated in the proclamation of the revolutionary government on Sumatra in 1958. At the same time, President Sukarno proclaimed a doctrine for his government, namely NASAKOM. As an abbreviation of nasionalisme (nationalism), agama (religion) and komunisme (Communism), the NASAKOM doctrine meant that the country’s governmental structure would henceforth be characterized by a blending of these three most important currents (aliran) in Indonesian society. The day-to-day government would also reflect this through inclusion of representatives for the Nationalist Party, the Muslim and Christian parties, and the Communist Party, in addition to representatives for the armed forces. In this manner the cabinet contained the opposites and conflicts characteristic of Indonesian society as a whole. Sukarno also saw to it that potential sources of opposition to him were disarmed. By appointing Aidit and Lukman advisory ministers he created a counter-weight to both the army’s increasingly stronger political position in the country and to the Muslim parties. By requiring the political parties by law to accept the 1945 Constitution and the Pancasila they were forced to cooperate with one another in the true musyawarah-mufakat spirit. This was be made easier by the fact that the general election of 1959 was postponed to 1960 and thereafter indefinitely. The Communist Party accepted all these things since its current strategy was a commitment to the national united front.

This chapter focuses on Ajip Rosidi’s novel Anak Tanahair and Yudhistira ANM Massardi’s Mencoba Tidak Menyerah with the purpose of analyzing the main actors’ behavior in relation to the country’s center, namely President Sukarno and his concept of NASAKOM.

**ANAK TANAHAIR**

Ajip Rosidi’s novel Anak Tanahair [Son of the fatherland] is set in that transitional period in Indonesia’s modern history during which Bung Karno attempted to create a unified nation. The main actor, Ardi, finds himself in the midst of a political conflict between Sukarno and the Communist Party on one side and Masjumi and the Socialist Party on the other. The book traces Ardi’s deliberations, his actions, and the
Figure 19. Ajip Rosidi, *Anak Tanahair*. Cover illustration by Rahardjo S.
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results. Through a series of coincidences Ardi comes to work for the Communist cultural institute Lekra. This begins with the deceitful actions of Lekra described in Chapter 4. Yet later on it is Ardi who voluntarily accepts Lekra’s offer to arrange an exhibition of his paintings. He feels that his view of society is in line with what he understands is Lekra’s viewpoint: the goal of a prosperous society in which the artist’s role is to participate in the building up of a country characterized by social justice.7 Several years later we learn of Ardi’s intention to leave Lekra. Only politics are discussed at its meetings and artists have no opportunity to air their views on art.8 Ardi’s action does not stem from changed political views or inconsistency in his actions. On the contrary, Ardi is entirely consistent in his political commitment. It is, however, not Lekra *per se* which he supports and it is not Lekra he follows. The guiding principle for Ardi is President Sukarno and what he stands for: a unified, independent country where people will have an acceptable standard of living. The subsequent analysis of Ardi’s political action is based upon his being a follower of President Sukarno and the latter’s twin roles as head of state and ideologue.

Ardi has come from modest circumstances in the countryside. He has grown up in the region of Cirebon, West Java. As a young man he moves to Jakarta where he is enrolled in a Taman Siswa school.9 Even during his school years he supports himself as an illustrator and receives commissions from several newspapers. His goal is to become a professional artist and he knows that the way to achieve it is by exhibitions of his paintings. His contacts reflect the different social environments experienced during his short life. There are relatives in Jakarta with a very modest life style; school comrades from Taman Siswa who are increasingly drawn into the country’s political life, even becoming active in Muslim or Communist organizations; his poverty-stricken artist comrades, especially his friend Hasan; and finally his girlfriend Hermine who is a live-in guest in the home of a member of the educated Jakarta elite and whose father is a member of the Socialist Party. Ardi is deeply mistrustful of political Islam since he has experienced Darul Islam’s terror campaign in the countryside of West Java.10 He is also disturbed by the religious hypocrisy in the country, as well as by the population’s lack of social and material resources.

*Ardi and President Sukarno as Head of State*

At his uncle’s wedding Ardi meets an old school friend and their conversation quite naturally turns to the country’s political situation. His friend is deeply upset by President Sukarno’s plan to include the
Communist Party in the cabinet, especially because PKI ascendancy is seen as constituting a threat to Islam. Ardi objects by pointing out that the Communist Party had received considerable popular support in the general election and that one cannot ignore the will of the people. He himself cannot see that it is essential for parliamentary democracy to continue. The coalition government composed of the PNI, Masjumi, and several other minor parties which had ruled until recently had not accomplished anything and one should therefore try something new. This shows Ardi’s support for President Sukarno long before he has any contact with Lekra.

Ardi’s backing of President Sukarno continues unabated. He supports without reservation Sukarno’s suggestion to bring back presidential power via the Constitution of 1945. According to Ardi’s way of thinking, as the present head of state Sukarno should be listened to and followed. Moreover, the revolt of the Outer Islands means that the country is in danger of breaking apart. For Bung Karno, who had devoted his life to fight for an independent and united Indonesia, the situation is obviously a great disappointment. Equally certain is his disappointment that the prosperous society for which he has fought has not been achieved. ‘This is as if one had become reduced to a rubber-stamp’, is Ardi’s harsh judgment on the failure of parliamentary democracy. He does not want to listen to his friend Hasan’s objections that if the government and the president had been more responsive, then the revolt of the Outer Islands need never have broken out.

The assassination attempt against President Sukarno at Cikini in November 1957 strengthens Ardi’s conviction that the country was in danger. It was now the artists’ duty to close ranks behind the president. He cannot agree to Hasan’s view that artists should stand outside of politics since the situation was very serious in the country.

Some years later Ardi meets Hasan at a food stall. Ardi is now relatively well off. He works for Lekra as an illustrator for one of their magazines. During the last years the country’s cultural life has become more political, and culture has been dragged into daily politics. Simultaneously with President Sukarno’s proclamation of NASAKOM as an umbrella for the country’s guidance, political parties have taken on sharper profiles. No longer is it only the Communist Party that has a cultural organ. Similar organizations have been established by the Nationalist Party and the Islamic party Nahdlatul Ulama. The country’s authors and artists are thereby drawn into these activities and offered work. Ardi now attempts to convince Hasan that the situation in the country has changed since last they talked and that he should join one
of the political party’s cultural organizations. Hasan stubbornly refuses. The politicizing of culture had split artists and he wants to preserve his independence, a position Ardi considers as leading nowhere. Ardi will most certainly not follow such a road.

Ardi’s support for President Sukarno is a red thread running throughout the book. It begins with Sukarno’s launching of the idea that the four large parties should be included in the cabinet, continues through the introduction of the presidential-steered government, and culminates in Sukarno’s concept of NASAKOM. Ardi’s backing of the president, however, is not limited to the latter’s function as head of state but stems from his agreement with Sukarno’s basic political ideas.

Ardi and the ideology of President Sukarno

Sukarno’s struggle for an independent Indonesia had always contained the idea of a unified country where prosperity and social welfare would prevail. As early as 1930 he had outlined this vision in his defense before the colonial court in Bandung where he was convicted for inciting revolt. The theme emerged again in 1945 when during preparations for independence he presented a number of ground principles for Indonesia as a state, the so-called Pancasila, which later became accepted as the philosophical foundation of the Indonesian state. The country should be a democracy with the expressed goal of creating social justice. As we have seen, Sukarno did not take the organizational form for this from the West, instead preferring unanimity under a strong leader. Hence when Sukarno brought this governmental form into operation in 1957, he at the same time advanced an ideal he had long intended to realize: namely, social justice. In a speech to his former party, the Nationalist Party (PNI), Sukarno maintained that from the party’s founding in 1927 he had worked for a just and prosperous society. In the terminology of the time this was called sama rasa sama rata [same feeling, same level]. Sukarno now gave a name to his political program. He called it marhaen-ism. Marhaen encompassed the common folk in Indonesia who even when they owned their own means of production were still poor by any standards. This group constituted the majority of the country’s population and their standard of living needed to be raised a great deal.

Ardi in Anak Tanahair becomes an advocate of President Sukarno’s marhaen-ism. This is attested to in his conversation with his friend Hasan. Ardi has accepted Lekra’s offer to arrange an exhibition of his paintings. As a result he is confronted by the criticism of his friend that
he will become merely an instrument for the PKI. To this Ardi replies somewhat impatiently. He does not see that he has done anything wrong in working for social justice and prosperity in this poverty-stricken country. In short Sukarno’s marhaen-ism. Who would not ‘desire to achieve the ideals of erecting a completely free land which is just and prosperous without the oppression between human beings over human beings, even though the others are one’s own countrymen’. According to Ardi, this was also what the independence movement had striven for and why the Indonesian revolution had broken out, a movement to which his father had belonged. In other words ‘Through establishing social justice and prosperity [in the meaning] sama rata sama rasa, I am, in fact, continuing the fight begun by my father.’ This is as close as one can get to President Sukarno’s political ideas.

Ardi feels completely alien to both Hasan’s plea for artist’s apolitical role and the ongoing debate as to whether art should exist for its own sake – art for art’s sake – or should be employed in the service of society. He sees these discussions as emanating from the West and as a result stemming from totally different historical conditions. Indonesia had been colonized until only a decade ago and was, in addition, very poor. This explained why it could not be satisfied by blindly following the West where developments towards a welfare state had taken several hundred years to accomplish. Indonesia needed to develop quickly and in such a project the artist would have an obvious role.

What were the links between Sukarno’s marhaen-ism and Lekra? In other words why does Ardi work for Lekra despite the fact that as recently as a couple of years earlier he saw Communism as dangerous? One answer is that Ardi wants to earn a living as an artist and this became possible through Lekra’s offer of employment. This answer is, however, not sufficient. There was in fact a connection between Lekra and the society that Ardi would create. This link was, among others, a prosperous state for all in which social justice would prevail. Ardi’s vision was President Sukarno’s marhaen-ism and it was the marhaen which constituted the link uniting Ardi and Lekra. President Sukarno had specifically said that marhaen-ism was Marxism tailored to Indonesian conditions. Thereby the ground was laid for cooperation around marhaen between the Nationalist Party and the Communist Party within the framework of NASAKOM. Similar cooperation had also come about between the PKI and Partindo, a splinter group of the Nationalist Party (PNI).
Yudhistira ANM Massardi’s novel *Mencoba Tidak Menyerah* portrays a man who personifies the syncretism between nationalism, religion, and Communism found in President Sukarno’s concept NASAKOM. The man was a follower of President Sukarno and he had participated in the independence struggle against the Dutch. He gave his children an Islamic religious upbringing. He also saw the issues on the distribution of society’s wealth within an Islamic solidarity perspective. Allah apportions wealth among human beings and one cannot question His will, even if this means that oneself receives less. The man earned a living through a bicycle repair shop and he was also manager of the local cooperative. This was a distribution cooperative which provided household essentials to the villages in the district. These types of cooperative were founded in Indonesia at the end of the 1950s with the goal that the state should see to it that the rural population were offered household essentials at a lower price than could be had from the many regular distribution channels. It seems likely that the man in *Mencoba Tidak Menyerah* came into contact with the political left through his engagement in the cooperative movement. He begins to read the Communist daily *Harian Rakjat* and the newspaper *Warta Bhakti*, and later becomes a subscription holder and eventually agent for both publications. These are sold by his children and other children in the neighborhood.

The man is a diligent, hard working person and he has become relatively prosperous. He is a strict pater familias and raises his children to be accustomed to hard work. The oldest son has already attended the university in Yogyakarta. The novel unfolds during little over a year, from August 1965 to October 1966. The narrator is a small boy in the family. One day a rumor is spread that the boy’s father is a Communist. Their home is attacked by a mob and the house is torn apart, after which the family moves. After some time it is written in the newspaper that a person who has sold *Harian Rakjat* and *Warta Bhakti* and who has favored Communists is now attempting to become head of the subdistrict. The rumor is false. Eventually the father is arrested. After several months he returns but must report to the local authorities everyday. During one of these occasions he disappears and his family never see him again. The family’s loss means that they sink into abject poverty despite the efforts of all the children.

A close analysis of the plot, however, shows that the military authorities had never considered the father as being a Communist.
Figure 20. Yudhistira ANM Massardi, *Mencoba Tidak Menyerah*. Cover illustration by Buldanul Khuri
Even though he was arrested and placed in a barrack he was not even classified as an ‘A’, ‘B’, or ‘C’ prisoner but remained in the section ‘D.’ To his family he relates that he was seen only as a sympathizer. He can meet his family daily. After some time he is moved to an internment outside the city and after that to a work camp in the mountains, only to be returned to his home town and placed in the district military headquarters, Kodim. While in all these places he can meet his family with the exception of the work camp in the mountains. Finally he is set free. When he subsequently disappears, he has been taken away by the civil guard, Hansip. During the family’s inquiry to the military commander for the subdistrict it becomes clear that Koramil has not ordered the father’s arrest.

The man has not been a member of the PKI or its affiliates. Nor has he put his children into any political organizations. His guiding star is NASAKOM. On National Independence day, August 17, 1965, the youngest son participates in the parade. He leads a column and proudly wears a military-like uniform. The ‘confrontation’ with Malaysia is under way and the parade is filled with students and civil servants, police and military. The boy is, however, disturbed by the ridiculing of other organizations by onlookers and participants alike. Some time afterwards there is a carnival, but this time the boy is just an onlooker. The political youth groups participated, such as Pemuda Marhaen, the Islamic Pemuda Ansor and Pemuda Islam Indonesia, and the Communist Pemuda Rakjat and Gerwani. The boy is bewildered over the Muslim banner, ‘Crush the Anti-God.’ When he afterwards hears the Communists shout ‘God is dead’, ‘God is dead’, he is terror-stricken. He is disturbed that there are so many different opinions, and even more so over the acrimonious attitude existing between groups. NASAKOM is something launched by the much admired President Sukarno and it should be taken to heart and followed. He asks himself why could not the nationalists, the religious groups, and the Communists unify themselves.

The family experiences disaster during the witch-hunt for Communists 1965–1966 and the ultimate disappearance of the father. Whether this is a personal vendetta or plot against the father is not known. What is striking is that none of the authorities do anything about the affair. The family turns to the chairmen of the neighborhood, community, and subdistrict councils – Pak Rukun Tetangga, Pak Lurah and Pak Camat – but without result. They also contact the police and military at both the district and subdistrict levels. This also leads nowhere. They even make inquiries among the personnel of Hansip, which is an even greater waste of time.
NOTES

2 Sukarno, ‘The Panja Sila’ (1945), in Feith and Castles (eds), Indonesian Political Thinking, p. 44.
3 Sukarno, ‘Saving the Republic of the Proclamation’ (1957), in Feith and Castles (eds), Indonesian Political Thinking, pp. 84–87; Feith, The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia, pp. 515–520, 538–544.
4 Sukarno, ‘Saving the Republic of the Proclamation’ (1957), pp. 85–89. Quote on p. 85.
5 Feith, The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia, pp. 543–555; Cribb and Brown, Modern Indonesia, pp. 52–59, 68–95.
7 Ajip Rosidi, Anak Tanahair, p. 254.
9 The Taman Siswa school was founded in Yogyakarta in 1921 by Suwardi Surjaningrat (Ki Hadjar Dewantara), a leading nationalist intellectual upon his return from exile in the Netherlands. Taman Siswa [Garden of Pupils] was a reaction against reformist Islam and the Dutch school system, and it adapted Javanese culture as the philosophical basis for a new national character, in the sense a synthesis of Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Western ideas. Many of the graduates of the more than two hundred Taman Siswa schools became leading nationalist politicians. Ki Hadjar Dewantara was already a close friend of Sukarno during the latter’s years in Bandung and he influenced Sukarno even during the 1950s. See The Encyclopedia of Asian History.
10 Darul Islam [House of Islam] was a rebellion whose aim was the establishment of an Islamic state in Indonesia. It was founded by a Javanese mystic named Kartosuwirjo. In 1949 Kartosuwirjo proclaimed the Islamic state of Indonesia, whose main area of operation was the Priangan in West Java. During the 1950s Darul Islam turned to terrorism, and in 1962 Kartosuwirjo was captured and executed. See The Encyclopedia of Asian History.
12 Ibid. p. 228.
16 Sukarno, ‘The Promise of a Brightly Beckoning Future’ (1930), in Feith and Castles (eds), Indonesian Political Thinking, p. 32.
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17 Sukarno, ‘The Pantja Sila’ (1945), pp. 44–49; ‘Preamble to the 1945 Constitution’, in Feith and Castles (eds), *Indonesian Political Thinking*, pp. 49–50. The Panca Sila [Five principles] was first set out by Sukarno in a speech delivered before the Investigating Committee for the Preparation of Independence on June 1, 1945. The principle of social justice was one of five principles. When the Panca Sila was written into the preamble to the Constitution two months later (August 18) it was declared that the principle of social justice was the goal for the country, while the other four principles – belief in God, democracy, just and civilized humanity, and Indonesian unity – were means to this end.

18 Sukarno, ‘Saving the Republic of the Proclamation’ (1957), pp. 84–87

19 Partai Nasionalis Indonesia (PNI) was formed in 1927 by Sukarno and other nationalist leaders. When Sukarno was sentenced to prison in 1930, the PNI dissolved itself and formed the Partai Indonesia (Partindo). After the Proclamation of Independence in 1945, the PNI was restored. By that time Sukarno had become president of Indonesia and he did not commit himself to one party, neither as a member nor as a leader.

20 Sukarno, ‘Marhaen, a Symbol of the Power of the Indonesian People’ (1957), in Feith and Castles (eds), *Indonesian Political Thinking*, pp. 154–160. In his speech Sukarno explains how he came to use the term marhaen:

> It was for no other reason but that on a certain day I was walking in the rice fields to the south of Tjigereleng and came across a man hoeing a field. I asked him: ‘Brother, who owns this field?’ ‘I do’, he said. And so he participated in ownership of the means of production, owning that field. ‘And the hoe, who owns that?’ ‘I do.’ ‘These tools, who owns these?’ ‘I do.’ ‘But Brother, you live in poverty?’ ‘That’s right, I live poorly.’ And I thought to myself then, this man is clearly and certainly not a member of the proletariat. He is a pauper, he is poor, he suffers a great deal, he has not enough to live on. But he is not a member of the proletariat, for he does not sell his labor power to another without participating in ownership of the means of production. His rice field is his own, his hoe is his own, his sickle is his own, his rake is his own. Everything is his own property; the crop of his rice field is for his own use. But still he is a pauper, he is poor. Nevertheless, he is not one of the proletariat; he is a small farmer, a very poor farmer, barely making a living, a ‘chicken flea farmer’ as I said at that time. He is not one of the proletariat. Then, Brothers and Sisters, I asked him ‘What is your name?’ ‘Marhaen’, he said. He said his name was Marhaen. I had an inspiration: Now, this name I will hold to;
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I will use this name to describe the destitute People of Indonesia, (p. 157).
22 Ibid. p. 254.
23 Ibid.
24 Ibid. pp. 242, 261.
28 Yudhistira ANM Massardi, Mencoba Tidak Menyerah, pp. 1–10.
31 Ibid. p. 94.
34 Ibid. pp. 142–145, 152.
Conclusion

LITERATURE AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE

Taken as a whole, Indonesian literary works dealing with the consequences of the 1965 coup attempt show the violence to which individuals were subjected by the Indonesian state. They tell of arrest and detention without trial. Karman (Kubah) is detained for twelve years, the greatest part in a prison camp on Buru. Srintil (Jantera Bianglala) sits in a prison two years. Tono (Musim Gugur Kembali di Connecticut) is arrested more than once, uncertainty concerning what will happen fill him with deepest despair. Sri Sumarah’s daughter Tun (Sri Sumarah) is detained for an unspecified period of time. The trade unionist Karsono (Jentera Lepas) is arrested in 1965, only to be transported to Buru after some years. In common with other prisoners he does not know how long this will last. Those authors who were themselves political prisoners relate their personal experiences in poetry and prose. Hr. Bandaharo and Pramoedya Ananta Toer were both sent to Buru, the latter spending some 14 years in detainment. Uncertainty as to their fate and how long they would be on the island was enough to break the strongest of wills. Their overriding concern was with survival. It was as crucial to get nutritious food, no matter how terrible it might taste, as to avoid illness by ensuring a balance between intake of nutrients and the work they were forced to do.

That they were victims of arbitrary arrest and detention made prisoners vulnerable to physical abuse and torture. The most powerful description of this is found in the poetry of Hr. Bandaharo (Dosa Apa) and Putu Oka Sukanta (Tembang Jalak Bali). Torture in the interrogation camps calls up grim images of wartime conditions. Just as enemy soldiers were interrogated, so too Indonesian officers attempted
to pry information out of the arrested civilians in order to discover and eliminate Communist networks.

Pramoedya Ananta Toer (Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu) tells of continually cruel treatment at the prison island of Buru which left many dead. Even authors who had not been political prisoners have dealt with the theme. In Ahmad Tohari’s description of Karman’s first wobbling steps towards freedom the reader meets a terrified human being who seeks to hide himself. His vulnerability is unmistakable (Kubah). For the ronggeng Srintil her years in prison were a traumatic experience. She bore all the signs of having been the victim of systematic violence by prison guards. Even after her release she still harbored a deep fear of soldiers (Jantera Bianglala). Mbakyu Sinto in Ashadi Siregar’s Jentera Lepas was also subjected to sexual abuse during interrogation about her husband’s activities in the labor movement.

People also disappeared after they had been taken for interrogation by the army. Another type of disappearance was when a person was picked up by the civil guard Hansip and taken away. The father in Mencoba Tidak Menyerah disappeared during his daily reporting to the local authorities. What brings these actions into conflict with the law is that the authorities made no effort to find a person, despite pleas by their next-of-kin for help. In other words, the book shows that the individual could not count on protection from the state.

A similar selective protection is encountered in the portrayal of how the family’s house was stormed by a mob and destroyed. Destitute, the family was forced to leave their now ruined home. The settlement Dukuh Paruk (Lintang Kemukus Dini Hari) was burned to the ground, but the inhabitants received no help even though they appealed to subdistrict officials. Only after several years did they even get permission to rebuild their homes. Equally illegal were the arbitrary confiscations of property experienced by Sri Sumarah (Sri Sumarah).

A worst fate befell all those who were victims of the massacres of Communists and left-wing sympathizers, a taboo-laden topic relating to 1965–66 events. The literature touching on the subject tends to fall into two groups. One indicates that the army massacred innocent people, individually or in groups; the other that the army and civilians worked together to bring about the massacre.

With regard to the first theme Umar Kayam and Ahmad Tohari take as their starting point the well-known army offensive against the revolting officers in Central Java. This is also dealt with in some detail by the official work Sejarah Nasional Indonesia. What the literary authors do, however, is to give their readers an alternative history of what
happened in Central Java. In essence they say that the army offensive became a war against civilians. The short story Bawuk describes peasants’ desperate resistance to the oncoming army in the Communist-ruled regions outside of Yogyakarta. A quarter of the population died. Of the remaining peasants half were arrested. Among the victims are Sri Sumarah’s son-in-law, Yos (Sri Sumarah) who, inspired by the land reform act, fought for a more humane pay for the rural day laborers, and the Dukuh Paruk settlement which was obliterated, with some of its inhabitants killed (Lintang Kemukus Dini Hari).

With regard to the extensive massacre brought about by the army and civilians together, this theme is dealt with by four authors: namely, Yudhistira ANM Massardi (Yudhistira Ardi Noegraha), Hr. Bandaharo, Ajip Rosidi, and Umar Kayam. Both Ajip Rosidi and Umar Kayam lead the reader to the conclusion that the massacre must have been organized and to a certain extent carried out by army units backing ‘local vigilantes.’ Anak Tanahair takes up the subject of the ad hoc executions along the Brantas River in East Java, an area characterized by particularly sharp conflicts between Communist and Islamic groups in the years leading up to 1965. People were transported in trucks to the shore where they were beheaded. They were then thrown into the river which in some places was choked with dead bodies. The novel’s normative character Hasan raises doubts as to whether such deeds could have been managed by the civilian population alone. The large number of dead over a very short period of time could hardly have been carried out without considerable logistics. For that cooperation with the army was necessary. A similar doubt is also expressed in Para Priyayi. The author’s alter ego, Harimurti, asks how could it happen that violence rolled forth everywhere like a tidal wave. The broader moral issue raised by the novel in this context is how the civil society can witness this without doing anything to intervene. The poet Hr. Bandaharo expresses sorrow over the killing of young people who did not understand why they were killed (Dosa Apa).

In addition, the literature relates the tragedies experienced by the next-of-kin of Communists who run afoul of the authorities as a result of their family ties. These are exemplified by Muryati in Nh. Dini’s novel Jalan Bandungan whose husband turns out to be a Communist; equally victims are the children of Communists or apparent Communists, such as the girl Mirah in Putu Wijaya’s short story ‘Darah’ and the young woman Mbak Nyus in Ahmad Tohari’s newspaper column compilation Mas Mantri Gugat. All lived under a social stigma following the purge of Communists.
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In short, Indonesian literary works reveal the coercion and violence exercised by the state over its citizens which have been neglected or denied in the writing of the nation’s history.

LITERATURE AND THE ISSUE OF INNOCENCE

Many of the victims were, in fact, innocent. They neither participated in the murder of the six generals, nor were they members of the Communist Party that was accused of instigating it. Some were members of organizations subsequently classified as Communist. Ajip Rosidi and Umar Kayam narrate the fate of individuals within the Communist cultural institute Lekra, such as the artist Ardi (Anak Tanahair), the writer Tono (Musim Gugur ...), and the actor Harimurti (Pura Priyayi). Ahmad Tohari focuses on a member of Partindo, a political party which worked with the PKI (Kubah), while in Ashadi Siregar’s novel Jentera Lepas a secondary figure, a teacher named Parmanto, becomes a member of a trade union which was declared illegal only in 1966. Other characters in these literary works had some connection with the PKI. For the settlement Dukuh Paruk it was the performances of their ronggeng Srintil at the Communist propaganda meetings (Lintang Kemukus Dini Hari); for Sri Sumarah it was leasing her house and sawah to the Communist peasant front Barisan Tani Indonesia, and for the family father in Mencoba Tidak Menyerah it was becoming a newspaper agent for the Communist papers Harian Rakjat and Warta Bhakti.

One figure which departs from this pattern is Bawuk in Umar Kayam’s short story of the same name. She began to work for the PKI only in an attempt to find her (Communist) husband whose life was in danger. Since she continued with this work after the PKI has been declared illegal, she committed a criminal act in a formal sense. Even so, the story raises the question of whether she can be considered guilty in a moral sense.

For those who were members of left-wing organizations or whose activities had been confined to some form of contact with the PKI, the underlaying motivation for such activity is not to be sought in ideological conviction. Rather, it stemmed from other circumstances. They were either drawn into the Communist sphere through the organizations’ false pretenses or they had been ordered to participate in them. Karman (Kubah) was brought into Marxist circles through accepting an offer from Partindo to participate in an educational program with the goal of becoming a civil servant. Similar deceit was
used by Lekra in persuading Ardi (*Anak Tanahair*) to sign an appeal which was said to contribute to maintaining Indonesian unity, thus to hinder a possible disintegration of the nation. Others were forced into the PKI, as were the inhabitants of the settlement Dukuh Paruk whose ronggeng was used for the Communist Party’s propaganda activities. Another who was also ordered to join an organization which later turned out to be led by Communists was the school teacher Parmanto in *Jentera Lepas*.

That these persons of their own accord continued to participate in the respective organizations is explained by the fact that their behavior conformed to customary norms learned during childhood, above all that of obeying authority. Combined with this was the guiding principle of accepting one’s fate. The impoverished inhabitants of Dukuh Paruk accepted their fate. In this manner they personified the Javanese motto *nrimo pandum*. The village elder obeyed authorities and it was for that reason that he did not oppose the Communist Party. Their eventual distancing themselves from the PKI came only with the beginning of the land occupation campaign. Through involvement in unilateral land occupation they came into direct conflict with the primary rule set by the village founder and guardian spirit: namely, that the inhabitants were forbidden to destroy anything for other human beings.

Similarly Sri Sumarah accepted her fate and followed the authorities. She also acquiesced in their demands to the extent that she never criticized them, even though her possessions were confiscated and she herself became a pauper. She was a traditional Javanese woman who consistently acted within the bounds of her culture, the priyayi milieu. Sumarah was drawn into Communist circles because of her surroundings. Her son-in-law Yos worked for the peasant front *Barisan Tani Indonesia* and because he was in close contact with the head of the subdistrict, Sri Sumarah had great faith in him. Moreover, Yos had a university degree and the subdistrict head, Pak Camat, had assured Sumarah that her son-in-law had a future ahead of him. Therefore, Sri Sumarah made no objection when Yos suggested that she let out her house and sawah to the BTI. The main actor in the short story *Bawuk* had also been given a traditional upbringing with emphasis on a wife remaining loyal to her husband. She stood behind her husband, supported him, and was loyal to all his decisions. It was therefore unthinkable for Bawuk to abandon her husband when he found himself in flight from the army. On the contrary, she tried to help him in different ways, even if this meant that she worked against the Indonesian state. She followed him even at risk to her own life.
Indonesian Literature vs. New Order Orthodoxy

Besides these principles of obeying authority and accepting one’s fate, there was a third characteristic feature of Javanese culture: namely, a strong attraction to power. Karman (Kubah) pursued power, while at the same time obeying his superiors. This meant that his loyalty was directed to those who had become his patron(s). In common with many of his younger fellow countrymen, he found himself in an impossible situation when trying to earn a livelihood. He could not become a farmer as he had no land; he did not want to become a hired farm hand; and a civil service career was closed to him because he lacked education, money, and connections. Triman’s offer of education with the aim of becoming a volunteer in the local district’s administration came as a gift from above. Kubah also illustrates the conflict in Javanese culture between the norm of accepting one’s fate and an orientation toward power. Karman could not accept that his family had fallen into poverty. On being offered the chance of becoming a governmental official, he immediately started maneuvering to get the family’s land returned. In this specific instance he drew upon the national land reform program. He was secretary of a branch office of Partindo, a political party which worked together with the Communist Party. As a result of this cooperation, he was punished and interned for many years.

Another characteristic feature of Javanese political attitudes is the urge for oneness. Ajip Rosidi’s portrayal of Ardi (Anak Tanahair) is the tale of a man whose political actions can be seen as directly originating out of a dependence on the country’s center, namely President Sukarno. His guiding concept of NASAKOM was based on the idea that the government should reflect the three most important political streams in Indonesian society: nationalism, religion, and Communism. Ardi in Anak Tanahair supported President Sukarno in his role as head of state. When he signed Lekra’s appeal this was because its contents were in line with Sukarno’s efforts to maintain Indonesia intact. Ardi was also a follower of the president’s ideology marhaen which provided the grounds for his engagement in Lekra. When Ardi became a member of Lekra this was because he considered that its policies were in line with Sukarno’s ideology of marhaen-ism. The president had expressly stated that marhaen-ism was Marxism adapted to Indonesian conditions.

The family father in the novel Mencoba Tidak Menyerah was guided not only by President Sukarno but also personified the syncretism of nationalism, religion, and Communism found in Sukarno’s political concept of NASAKOM. The father was a follower of Sukarno and had participated in the struggle for independence; he was a good Muslim;
he worked together with the Communist Party through his position as manager in the district’s cooperative. He followed President Sukarno’s admonition to work together with, among others, the Communists. Finally he became a distributor for the Communist newspapers which was his ‘crime’.

In contrast, Tono in *Musim Gugur* ... had joined Lekra because his work was appreciated by the institute. Yet he had ceased coming to Lekra’s meetings due to an inner crisis. He realized that continuing membership was not compatible with freedom of expression as a writer. He had, however, not formally withdrawn from Lekra. Harimurti’s (*Para Priyayi*) engagement in Lekra sprang from his aim of bringing spiritual sustenance to the general public in the form of the Javanese cultural treasures of dance and drama. He was motivated by his background, which was infused through and through with the ideas of Ki Hadjar Dewantara of giving people a modern education and at the same time imparting traditional Javanese culture to them. This he felt could come about only through Lekra.

Those authors who were themselves interned during the New Order – both on the notorious island of Buru and in Salemba prison – maintain that they had not committed any crime and therefore could not understand why they were imprisoned. The instances are those of Pramoedya Ananta Toer and Putu Oka Sukanta, although the authors do not develop this theme further.

None of the individuals indicated above had been directly or indirectly involved in the murder of the generals in Jakarta nor had they participated in armed conflicts following the coup attempt. Even so, they were severely punished. In this literature the reader is confronted with an assertion of innocence in a double sense. The literary figures were not members of the Communist Party, but of other organizations which the army only much later classified as Communist and hence subversive. Other individuals were, in point of fact, not members of any organization, legal or (retrospectively) illegal; they were persons who had behaved in a traditional manner by following accepted authority.

**LITERATURE AS NEGATION OF THE OFFICIAL VIEW**

The issue raised in the Introduction as to whether the literary works perform a negating role *vis-à-vis* the official view of the events of 1965 will be discussed in this section. By way of tackling the question of which social issues the literary works address they are grouped chronologically around the date of publication.
The first group consists of Umar Kayam's two short stories 'Musim Gugur Kembali di Connecticut' and 'Bawuk', as well as the novelette *Sri Sumarah*. The first two were written during the purge of Communists and left-wing sympathizers in 1965–67 but published by *Horison* in 1969 and 1970 respectively. The theme is that the on-going arrests are arbitrary and that individuals who cannot be considered Communists were deprived of their freedom. In 1975 ‘Bawuk’ was published by *Gramedia* together with the novelette *Sri Sumarah*. There, attention is directed to the long period of incarceration of individuals, particularly from the point of view of women. Children are negatively affected and families suffer. In addition, the stories describe how a defenseless civil population is exposed to the professional army's enormous resource of weapons.

The second group consists of a single work, Yudhistira Massardi's novel *Mencoba Tidak Menyerah* (1979) which had won a literary prize in manuscript form a few years earlier. It deals with a widespread social problem in Indonesia at that time, the stigmatization of the political prisoners' families. This stigmatization was grounded in fear, fear of a similar fate befalling oneself. As many lived constantly under such fear, it was difficult to banish this view from society. Even so, the novel raises the issue by showing how a family became stigmatized as a result of a false rumor.

The third group consists of the majority of the literary works such as the novels *Kubah*, the Dukuh Paruk trilogy, *Anak Tanahair*, and *Jentera Lepas*. These started to appear after the political prisoners had begun to be released and continued through the middle of the 1980s. The released prisoners were forced to accept limited freedom of movement and lack of full civil rights. Ahmad Tohari, Ajip Rosidi and Ashadi Siregar write about individuals who cannot by any measure be considered Communists. Moreover they show how easy it was to belong to an organization or group which retroactively would be classified as Communist. The latter theme is attacked by Umar Kayam in his novel *Para Priyayi* from 1992. The authors also take up for discussion the injustices which Indonesian society had visited upon the suspected Communists during 1965–66 in the form of the half-year long massacres on Java. Those authors who had been political prisoners openly describe their vulnerability in regaining freedom, a vulnerability exacerbated by difficulties in earning a living and existing in an intellectual vacuum. The poetry of Putu Oka Sukanta and Hr. Bandaharo come readily to mind in this context.
Conclusion

A fourth group within the literary works appeared during the 1990s. They contain sharp criticism of the proposal which was then advanced that everyone should prove that they had come from a ‘pure’ environment as a condition for obtaining employment as a governmental civil servant, teacher, or within professions influencing public opinion such as journalists, authors, etc. If accepted, the proposal would have meant that children of former Communists, or those thought to be Communists, would then become stigmatized, even in the formal meaning of the term. The question provides the point of departure for Umar Kayam’s novel *Jalan Menikung* from 1999 and is also dealt with by Ahmad Tohari in one of his newspaper columns found in *Mas Mantri Gugat*.

And finally a fifth group of works are those written by authors who demand redress and/or compensation for the many years they have been deprived of their freedom. There is no other way of interpreting Pramoedya Ananta Toer’s autobiography *Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu* (1995) and Putu Oka Sukanta’s novel *Merajut Harkat* (1999).

A comparison between the contents of the literature considered here and that of the official historical work the *Sejarah Nasional Indonesia* leads to the following observation. The official version of the coup attempt on the eve of October 1, 1965 is not questioned in the literary works. Nor is it supported. The authors are strikingly silent on the issue. The novels do not take any position with regard to the army’s assertion that the Communist Party was behind the coup. However, the authors do challenge the official version of what happened after the coup attempt. The literature portrays the army killing totally innocent individuals and setting innocent persons in jail where they were forced to remain for years. Some works emphasize that the army’s offensive in Central Java was also aimed at the civilian population. Tens of thousands were killed or incarcerated for over a decade without trial. Other novels refute the official picture of the events in East Java: namely that Communists had committed murder in the province and that the army acted in response to this. Instead, the literary works relate that an extensive massacre of individuals took place there and that they were carried out by non-Communist armed forces. This body of literature shows that contrary to the government’s version innocent people fell victim to a terror carried out by the army and its accomplices.

Finally the literature actualizes the need for Indonesia to come to terms with its past. The events of 1965–66 continue to plague the nation’s public life. The released prisoners have limited civil rights and they and their families have become in practice pariahs within Indo-
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Indonesian society. Herein lies the crucial consequence of the 1965 events for Indonesia today. Literature thus performs a negating role in refuting the official version of the events of 1965.
Appendix I

Synopsis of the literary works

AHMAD TOHARI

Kubah [Cupola]

Ahmad Tohari’s novel Kubah originally appeared in 1979 as a serial in the newspaper Kompas, being published the following year by Pustaka Jaya. It takes up for debate a sensitive social problem: namely, the legal position in Indonesian society of the political prisoners as a result of the coup attempt of September 30, 1965. During the period 1976–79 they had been successively released and transported from the notorious prison island of Buru in the Moluccas to their respective home tracts. However their freedom proved to be a chimera. They were not re-admitted to full citizenship. They had but limited political rights. Possibility of employment was meager, at best. Many of them had had their possessions confiscated and had also lost their families, making their situation even worse.

The novel’s main character, Karman, is a penniless young man who has grown up in a landless peasant family, a fate he shares with many others on Java. The family’s sawah has been lost through a dubious transaction between Karman’s father and the village’s rich man, Haji Bakir, revolving about a loan with the land as surety. On the death of Karman’s father, the family cannot redeem the mortgaged land which defaults to Haji Bakir. His father’s death and the loss of the sawah are a catastrophe for Karman and his sister. Haji Bakir’s wife takes pity on them and in the best Muslim spirit makes a place for the children at the family’s meals. Karman is sent to school in return for helping with lighter work in Haji Bakir’s household. Although he graduates from the elementary school, Sekola Dasar, higher education is closed to him for
economic reasons. Unexpected circumstances, however, give him a chance to continue his schooling and thereby possibilities of raising himself from poverty. Through his uncle Hasim he receives an offer to become a volunteer at the subdistrict administration. He accepts happily and begins to study. His aim is to become a civil servant. By doing so he also came closer to another dream, namely to marry his childhood sweetheart, Syarifah, Haji Bakir’s daughter. Karman passes his examination but experiences a great disappointment through Haji Bakir refusing his marriage proposal. Much later he marries a daughter of the people, Marni, and their marriage is blessed with three children.

The milieu in which Karman finds himself is the politicized administration of the 1950s. This does not present immediate problems because his patron, Triman, is chairman in the local section of the left-wing nationalist party Partindo, a party which constitutes an acceptable branch of the independence movement. Karman subsequently becomes secretary in Partindo. What is problematic is that Partindo has been infiltrated by the Communist Party, and Triman is the key person in this movement. After the coup attempt of 1965 and with the resultant witch-hunt for Communists, members of the Partindo Party are in grave danger. Karman is imprisoned and is ultimately sent to Buru. Only after twelve years’ internment is he released and able to return to his village.

The novel ends with Karman’s daughter Tini marrying Haji Bakir’s grandson. For the marriage Haji Bakir gives a present to Tini: the sawah which Karman’s father had pawned to Haji Bakir but which has originally belonged to Karman’s mother. In the final scene Karman has even returned to the village in a spiritual sense. He participates in the restoration of the village mosque by building the cupola.

_Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk. Catatan buat Emak_ [Ronggeng of Dukuh Paruk. Notes for mother]; _Lintang Kemukus Dini Hari_ [Comet at dawn]; and _Jantera Bianglala_ [Rainbow’s arch]

Ahmad Tohari’s Dukuh Paruk trilogy focuses on a young woman whose life is dictated by others. It portrays a patriarchal, sexist society dominated by a cult of the forefathers. The novel’s action takes place between 1946 and 1971 as a tale of how the Communist Party used the settlement for its own purposes and how the latter came to grief because of it. The story was inspired by the fates of several persons in Tohari’s home tract of Banyumas, Central Java. The novels were first serialized by _Kompas_ in 1981, 1984, and 1985 before being published by the commercial publishing house Gramedia.
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Dukuh Paruk is an impoverished settlement in the arid region of Central Java. The novel's main character is the orphan, Srintil. When she is 12 years old, she shows all the signs of becoming the settlement's ronggeng dancer. She usually dances accompanied by her fellow playmates. Her maternal grandfather, the village elder Sakarya, turns her over to the village dukun, Kartareja, to be initiated into the ronggeng arts. At this time famine breaks out and the village discovers that as the village's new ronggeng Srintil brings them fresh hope. In this manner Srintil begins her life as a semi-prostitute and the settlement becomes relatively prosperous. Sakarya has a new roof put on his house, Kartareja earns so much money from Srintil that he can buy water buffaloes, and Srintil's accompanist Sakum can feed all his hungry children. The women in the village do Srintil all kinds of small services for which they are rewarded. Srintil herself acquires wet-rice fields.

Yet by becoming a ronggeng Srintil is struck by a personal tragedy. Her childhood sweetheart Rasus leaves her and leaves the village to become a soldier. Srintil tries to follow but has to return as she has nowhere else to go. Afterwards she is so filled with loathing for her clients that she decides to quit being a ronggeng. The motivation is her strong desire to become a mother. She moves home to her maternal grandparents who leave her in peace.

One day Sakarya is sought out by a civil servant from the subdistrict administration. He wants to find out if Srintil will perform on Independence Day in the neighboring town of Dawuan. Sakarya makes the request directly to Srintil, but she refuses the invitation. The civil servant becomes furious and leaves in a huff, making threats. Sakarya becomes frightened and attempts to persuade Srintil to change her mind. Her accompanist also tries to get her to accept the offer. In the end Srintil acquiesces and gives a performance at Dawuan. What neither she or her following know is that this celebration of Independence day the 17th of August is in reality a Communist rally. Srintil's performance at Dawuan becomes the beginning of her unwitting association with the Communist Party's propaganda meetings and rallies where she dances. She becomes acquainted with one of the party's propagandist, Bakar. In him she finds the father she has never had. He treats her well and rewards her for her services to the Party. Dukuh Paruk sees Bakar as an experienced leader and receives him with open arms. Shortly the whole village is decorated with Communist emblems. When the unilateral land occupation begins in the mid-1960s, Dukuh Paruh wants to break with the PKI (Indonesian Communist Party) and Sakarya seeks out Bakar with this in mind.
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However, the villagers are tricked by Bakar and it continues as a PKI stronghold. When the purge of Communists starts in October 1965, Dukuh Paruk finds itself on the losing side. Srintil, Sakarya, and Kartareja are arrested and imprisoned; the village is burned to the ground.

After two years Srintil returns, marked by her time in prison. She is particularly vulnerable because at any time she can be sent back to prison. As a former political prisoner she is in addition stigmatized by her past. After a time she becomes acquainted with a state civil servant named Bajus, who turns out to be a deceiver. During a trip he urges her to receive a high official from Jakarta. She refuses to prostitute herself again and Bajus threatens her with having her put back in prison. Confronted with having to go through this ‘hell on earth’ once more, Srintil retreats into herself and no longer communicates with the external world. The shock has caused her to lose her mind.

Mas Mantri Gugat [Mas Mantri accuses]

Ahmad Tohari’s *Mas Mantri Gugat* consists of some 40 vignettes that originally appeared in his regular *Amanah* (Message) column during 1993. The following year they were compiled and published in Yogyakarta under the title *Mas Mantri Gugat* [Mas Mantri accuses]. Ahmad Tohari had been a member of the magazine’s editorial board for a number of years.

The vignettes portray life in the countryside. Most of them take up political issues and are strongly critical. The main character, from whom the work takes its title, is Mas Mantri (literally, ‘brother official’), a middle-aged bachelor who is a responsible figure in the **abangan** (nominally Muslim) group in Javanese society. Another frequently appearing character is Den Besus, actually Raden Besus. As suggested by his title *Raden* (prince, nobleman), he is a priyayi and demonstrates a deep commitment to the so-called Hindu-Javanese culture. Den Besus is a state civil servant and works in the subdistrict administration. A third character in the group is Kang Martopacul, a simple illiterate small farmer. The final figure is the author’s alter ego, ‘I’. He is a farmer but the reader knows no more about him than that he is more oriented toward Islam than Mas Mantri and Den Besus. Deep down he is a *santri*, but he is not a member of any Muslim organization. Common to them all is that none has a high place in the country’s administration. They are neither lurah, camat, or bupati, nor are they military or police. In other words, they are not responsible for the prevailing economic and political situation and thus do not need to defend it. By the same token
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they do not belong to that strata which has accumulated great profits from Indonesia’s economic development under the New Order. They have improved their lifestyle, as have most Indonesians, but are not among the big winners. They constitute a cross section of the population and are respected persons in their village. It is through their eyes that the reader takes part in the social changes in Indonesia and views its consequences for the common folk. Repetitive themes in the vignettes are political oppression as a hinderance to the country’s welfare; corruption as a deterrent to its development; the absence of balance between individual rights and society; as well as the uneven distribution of the country’s resources. One of the vignettes takes up the pariah situation of children whose parents have been affected by the purge of communists in 1965–66.

AJIP ROSIDI

Anak Tanahair [Son of the fatherland]

Ajip Rosidi’s novel Anak Tanahair of 1985 is set in the Indonesia of the 1950s and 1960s with its politicized culture and struggle between political organizations. It focuses on a young artist who is unwillingly drawn into the country’s political life. Through no fault of his own, the change of regime in 1965–66 brings about disaster for him.

The main character, Ardi, grows up in modest circumstances in a village in West Java. He is sent to the Taman Siswa school in Jakarta where he lives with a relative. The school’s ideology supports the Indonesian national movement and prepares its students for modern society in which the Javanese cultural values are retained. Ardi reacts against the social inequality he encounters in Jakarta and cannot accept the lopsided distribution of the nation’s resources. He is equally critical of religious hypocrisy. He distances himself from Islam as a political force when he sees how one of his school comrade’s family in the village is killed by the Darul Islam guerrilla movement.

Ardi shows an aptitude for drawing and he studies art. His teacher and good friend Hasan gives him much prudent advice. Newspapers start buying his drawings and slowly but surely he can support himself by his art work. He even begins to paint in oils with the dream of having an exhibition. Through Hasan he meets Hermine, a young lady from Jakarta’s elite whose father is active in the Socialist Party, PSI.

Through his comrades Ardi comes into direct contact with the country’s political life. A childhood friend, Ahmad, is active in a Muslim organization. Another friend, Iskandar, has participated in the
Communist youth festival in Moscow and orientates himself more and more towards the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). Ardi’s friend Hasan remains outside of politics because he wants to hold on to his freedom as an artist. Ardi himself is not politically active but not on grounds of principle. In discussions with his friends he consistently takes the side of President Sukarno.

One day Ardi meets Iskandar and becomes acquainted with several people in the Communist cultural institute Lekra. Among them is Hendra Gunawan, the painter much admired by Ardi. Some time after this he is sought out by someone in the group by the name of Suryo. Suryo asks Ardi to sign a petition for President Sukarno. Suryo gives the impression that this has to do with a rally for President Sukarno within the context of the on-going revolt in the Outer Islands. After a certain hesitation Ardi puts his signature on the paper. What he did not know was that the rally was a demonstration for President Sukarno’s suggestion to abolish parliamentary democracy and replace it with a government in which all the large parties would be represented, even the Communist Party. This proposal had met with hard opposition from the country’s Muslim parties and the Socialist Party, which wanted to exclude the Communists from governmental power. Ardi’s signing of the petition will ultimately lead to his downfall. His anti-Communist friends turn their back on him. His drawings and illustrations are returned and he does not receive any new orders. He has little money and subsequently falls ill. In just this situation he is sought out by Lekra, which offers to arrange an exhibition of his paintings. In addition he is asked to submit his drawings for their publications. Ardi accepts the offer. He knows he has no choice.

The art exhibition is Ardi’s entrance ticket into Lekra. He becomes a contributor to its magazines and makes posters. He also makes a study trip to other non-allied countries and to the Communist world. Some years later he considers leaving Lekra, but before this happens the uprising in Jakarta breaks out in 1965 and Ardi’s house is stormed. His paintings are destroyed and his fate remains uncertain.

ASHADI SIREGAR

_Jentera Lepas_ [Detached wheel]

_Jentera Lepas_ narrates the fates of several people in Yogyakarta from the 1960s to 1970. The novel thus deals with both the time before and after the change of regime in 1965–66 and draws attention to the two periods’ similarities and differences. There are student demonstra-
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Political rights were limited under both. In 1968 the reporter Budiman by chance meets an acquaintance from the kampung he lived in as a student. This was the teacher Parmanto with whom Budiman used to play chess. Parmanto is no longer a teacher but has opened a bicycle repair shop. Permission to teach has been revoked. During Guided Democracy he had joined the teachers’ union, PGRI Non-Vaksentral, and when this became illegal in 1966 he was unceremoniously fired. The tragic part of Parmanto’s situation was that he had always tried to keep out of politics but one day it could not be avoided. He was urged by his boss to join the union. Budiman is distressed by what has happened to his old neighbor. In fact by this time he himself was doing rather well. In contrast, during Guided Democracy he had had great difficulties because he had defended the cultural manifesto, Manifes Kebudajaan.

Another family which also found itself in difficulties in 1965 is Budiman’s host, a trade union man, Karsono, and his wife, Mbakyu Sinto. Karsono has been arrested and shipped to the prison island Buru in the Moluccas. His wife was made to undergo painful interrogation regarding her husband’s activities.

NH. DINI

_Jalan Bandungan [Bandungan Street]_

Nh. Dini’s novel _Jalan Bandungan_ takes up an important sociopolitical problem: the situation for the next-of-kin of Communists during the purge of 1965–66. The book, however, lays the blame on the victims. In other words, one affected group, the Communists’ next-of-kin, is set against another affected group, the Communists and fellow travelers.

Muryati has lived in an unhappy marriage with Widodo. She is a trained teacher but her husband does not allow her to work for a living since she has had children. When he also gives her too little to run the household, conflict erupts between the pair. After the purge of the Communists Widodo is arrested. Only then does Muryati learn that her husband has been a member of the Communist Party for years. Widodo is arrested and detained for an unspecified period of time before being shipped off to Buru.

Muryati divorces Widodo but she is still affected by the regime’s reprisals against the next-of-kin of Communists. Her license to teach is withdrawn. People avoid her and she becomes stigmatized by society. Muryati supports herself and her children by assisting in her mother’s
warung. Only after two years can she return to her profession and begins to teach at her old school, thanks to the help of good friends. After some time she remarries her ex-husband’s brother, Handoko, and the marriage is a happy one. Muryati continues her working and is sent for advanced training to the Netherlands. She is confronted, however, with a further trial in her life. In the middle of the 1970s Widodo is freed and returns to Jakarta. He has nowhere to go and the situation becomes impossible between the brothers. This eventually leads to conflict between Handoko and Muryati. They decide to go their separate ways but do not divorce.

PRAMOEDYA ANANTA TOER

_Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu – Catatan-catatan dari P. Buru_ [The mute's soliloquy. Notes from the island of Buru]

_Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu_ is an autobiographical description by Pramoedya Ananta Toer of his time as a political prisoner on the island of Buru. It also contains letters he wrote to his children in which he gives them advice on how they should live and tells of his own youth and his relationship with his parents.

Description of his life on Buru is set out chronologically. In 1969 Pramoedya and other prisoners are put on board a ship with the Moluccas as its destination. They are set ashore on the infertile Buru where they are cynically left to survive on their own. After a time they receive implements and they began to lay out sawah fields and plant rice and vegetables. When the military command discovers that they can earn money by using the internees’ rice, the prisoners are ordered to stop growing vegetables and concentrate only on rice. Their diet becomes worse and to meet the demands for protein they eat mice and lizard eggs. They also eat cassava in great quantities.

Lack of nutrition and the hard physical life consumes Pramoedya’s body. When a few journalists visit Buru at the end of 1969 he is hardly recognizable. Through international pressure in 1973 Pramoedya finally has access to paper, pen, and ink, as well as permission to write. He says himself that during these four years he never understood what he had done to deserve such a punishment as the detention camps on Buru. The following year, 1974, a number of prisoners escape from the camps, but they are caught and executed. The remaining internees are disciplined by collective punishment. The incident leads to a change of command at Buru and conditions become better for the prisoners.
In 1977 the release of internees from Buru begins. It is expected that Pramoedya will be in the first group to be freed. Journalists visit the island and in conversation with them Pramoedya experiences something unusual in the life of a prison camp internee, human kindness. When he is not released he is filled with deep anxiety. This is the first and only time the reader meets a Pramoedya who is about to go under. He sees himself withering away, forgotten by the world, and with the expectation that he will die on Buru. It will take another two years before Pramoedya is released.

At the end of the book Pramoedya has appended a list of some 325 internees who died or disappeared while at Buru. The list contains personal data for each person and their cause of death so that they will not be forgotten.

PUTU OKA SUKANTA

_Selat Bali. Sajak-sajak buat burung Camar_ [Bali straits. Poems made for a seagull]

Putu Oka Sukanta’s poems were gathered together and published in 1982 and include poems written before 1965. However the largest part deal with his experiences while in prison and the trauma of readjusting to civil society after his release. The anthology has received high praise from overseas critics. Significantly, a couple of the poems penned before 1965 were only discovered when they were published abroad.

_Tembang Jalak Bali. The Song of the Starling_

The anthology _Tembang Jalak Bali. The Son of the Starling_ from 1986 contains poems reflecting on Putu Oka Sukanto’s many years as a political prisoner. He writes about torture and abuse in the interrogation camps where a prisoner’s life was worth no more than a sewer rat hunted by hungry dogs. He describes the monotonous life at Salemba prison, a life without paper or pen and where internees attempted to teach one another without access to books. Physical activities were restricted to walks in the prison yard over which they passed time and time again. The only thing that was allowed was silence. Prisoners were dehumanized and became only a cipher. Even in death one was a victim of corruption. Puto Oka describes how he slowly withered away: no one hears you; no trial has taken place and he cannot present his case.

Both volumes touch on the new trials awaiting him. After he is released, he feels himself alienated in the commercial Bali which has
developed during his absence. He has no money and cannot even give any happiness to his son in the form of a much wished for cake in which nine candles burn. He is also very lonely. As a former prisoner, he is invisible to writer colleagues.

**Merajut Harkat**

In contrast to Puka Oka Sukanta's poetry with its contemporaneity and direct impact on the reader, *Merajut Harkat* (1999) bears the mark of a work written long after the events in question in the light of mature reflection. The novel tells the story of Mawa, an autobiographical stand-in for the author, and his prison experiences. It shares with Pramoedya Ananta Toer’s *Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu* – with which it invites comparison – an ‘ego’ perspective and flashbacks to preprison times in juxtaposition with the harsh realities of prison life. It differs from it in that Mawa’s life is enclosed by the walls of the central Jakarta prison in which almost the only physical movement is when being transferred from one cell block to another.

The author has divided the novel – whose name can be translated as something like ‘Knitting together Dignity’ – into four sections. Like the title itself, each bears a cryptic name more in the style of poetry than prose. The first is entitled ‘Mengenali Jejak’ [Learning to know the traces/steps] and deals with Mawa’s arrest and introduction to prison life, as well as visits from his betrothed, Nio. It also describes the first of his many visits to the interrogation rooms of the First Section, where Mawa steadfastly maintains that he is only a member of Communist affiliated groups, not the PKI itself. One result of these visits is the constant fear over who has betrayed whom or will do so in the near future. ‘Menatap Arah’ [Fixing a direction] relates the experience of Mawa’s group of prisoners who are moved to Block E which is inhabited by ordinary criminals who are egged on by the prison authorities to show utter contempt for the ‘PKI-ers.’ In ‘Bersua dan Bersaling’ [To meet and cross] is found the tale of Mawa’s transference to the hospital block. While in ‘Ning’ he is moved to the ‘tiger cages’ where he learns to value, and perhaps fear, the total isolation. The final section, ‘Nyawa Sisa’ [Left-over soul], includes Mawa’s short term with a rice planting team and ‘corvee’ work in town. Both cause him to fall physically and emotionally ill. In the final scene, while visiting the market he feels his soul sliding away from his body.... towards freedom.
Appendix I

UMAR KAYAM

Musim Gugur Kembali di Connecticut [Autumn returns in Connecticut]
The short story ‘Musim Gugur Kembali di Connecticut’ written in 1967 deals with the acute problem facing Indonesian intellectuals: namely, the repeated arbitrariness of arrest and detention of the nation’s writers after the change of regime in 1966.

The main character, the writer Tono, has at one time been a highly respected colleague in the Communist cultural institute Lekra. As a result of an inner crisis he stops contributing to Lekra’s publications. He wants to develop as a writer and not to be held back by demands on what he should write and how he should do it. During the purge of the Communists in 1965–66 Tono is arrested. A fellow prisoner is executed. This is his old quarreling partner Samusu who was a leading person within Lekra and who has been classified as a B prisoner. Tono is classified as a C prisoner and this makes it easier for his next-of-kin, a high military officer, to get his prison sentence commuted to house arrest.

However since the remains of the Communist Party have begun an underground counter-offensive in East Java, Tono is picked up by the army and transported. He does not know where they will take him or what will happen to him, but it is as if Death has arrived. What actually happens to Tono the reader never discovers.

Bawuk

The story ‘Bawuk’ first appeared in the literary magazine Horison in 1970. Five years later it, together with the novelette Sri Sumarah, was published under the title Sri Sumarah dan Bawuk by Pustaka Jaya, a company which had received its start-up capital from Jakarta’s governor, Ali Sadikin, and whose director was the writer Ajip Rosidi.

Bawuk is a young lady who has grown up in a high priyayi milieu in Central Java. Her father served in the Netherlands East Indies colonial administration and this influences her parents’ lifestyle. They put their children in Dutch schools. At the same time an old-fashioned mentality remains. The girls are taught always to be loyal to their men and to support them but in a subordinated position. Servants recite the old Javanese sagas to them and these fascinate Bawuk who, according to her father, spends too much time in the kitchen with the servants.

Bawuk breaks out of her elite milieu and marries a young idealist, Hassan, who will later become a propagandist in the Communist Party. Bawuk is not politically active. After the coup attempt in Jakarta 1965
her life becomes onerous. Army troops are on their way to Central Java in order to punish not only revolting officers but also civilians. Hassan organizes armed resistance among the peasants. When the front collapses and fights break out Hassan flees. Bawuk attempts to follow him and begins to search for her husband. She comes into contact with a man called Jogo who asks her to work for the now underground Communist Party. Bawuk agrees and moves from place to place. When she sees that her children suffer from this constant moving, she decides to leave them in her mother’s care. She warns her mother of her arrival. Bawuk’s brothers and sisters are summoned so that they all can meet.

The novel’s climatic point is reached in a conversation between Bawuk and her successful brothers and sisters, a conversation in which her brother-in-law takes part. They attempt to convince her to stay with her mother. Bawuk rejects this solution to the precarious situation in which she finds herself. She must continue to search for her vanished husband. When they accuse her of being a traitor and try to determine if she is a Communist, she becomes confused. She knows only that she is Hassan’s wife and therefore must follow him. At dawn she packs and leaves her mother’s house. The only one who has understood her is her mother, a traditional aristocrat from Surakarta.

At the novel’s close Bawuk’s mother sits on the veranda with a newspaper. She listens as a Muslim teacher tries to teach her grandchildren to recite ‘Alfatihah,’ the first sura of the Koran. For her it is as alien as it is to her grandchildren, but she realizes that new times are coming. Islam has been allowed to become stronger after the change of regime in 1966 and Nyonya Suryo sees that it is necessary to shield her grandchildren so that they do not become victims of the pariah stamp which affects the offspring of Communists. She casts a glance at the newspaper, where she reads that the army has broken up a Communist cell in East Java. Many of the leading persons have been killed, among them a man named Hassan. Bawuk’s fate remains unknown.

**Sri Sumarah**

Umar Kayam’s novelette *Sri Sumarah* of 1975 is one of the most analyzed literary works in modern Indonesian literature. The story focuses on a young woman who is brought up to accept her fate and follow authority. She comes from a lower priyayi milieu in Central Java.

*Sri Sumarah* grows up with her grandmother, who makes her aware that her name, Sumarah, means ‘accept’ in the sense of understanding, being open, and not objecting. When Sumarah reaches 18, it is time for marriage and this is arranged by her grandmother. Sri Sumarah falls in
love with her future husband at their first meeting. The marriage is a happy one and the pair is blessed with a daughter. After few years her husband becomes a school inspector and takes the name Martokusumo, a name which can only be held by a person of rank. This idyllic life is shattered when he dies unexpectedly of a fever. Since his pension is modest Sri Sumarah takes in sewing to pay for the education of her daughter in the city.

One day her daughter Tun returns from the city announcing that she is pregnant. This is a catastrophe for Sri Sumarah because her husband’s last words to her were: ‘Take care of Tun.’ Now she tries to save her child through holding a magnificent wedding. It is on such a scale that she is forced to take a loan and in the process pawns half of her sawah. She is convinced that her son-in-law Yos has an assured future. He has a university degree and is in close contact with the chief for the subdistrict, Pak Camat.

Sri Sumarah cannot repay the loan and she loses half of her sawah fields. At Yos’s suggestion she leases her house and the remaining rice fields to the organization Barisan Tani Indonesia and moves to her daughter’s house in the city. She does not know what kind of organization it is, but she trusts Yos. During the purge against the Communists in 1965–66 Sri Sumarah experiences severe difficulties. Her house and sawah fields are confiscated because she has hired them out to the Communist peasant front Barisan Tani. Her son-in-law is killed and her daughter sent to prison. Sri Sumarah takes upon herself the financial responsibility for her grandchild and her daughter. The question is how can she earn money for this? She performs a tirakat and received a visit from her dead husband, who suggests that she exploit her natural talent for massage. She accepts this and begins to give massages to her neighbors. As a result she became a masseuse, but at the same time she is respected. One day, however, she is mistaken for a prostitute by a client from Jakarta. When she returns home she begins to have doubts as to whether this type of occupation is appropriate, but she accepts her fate.

Sri Sumarah is thus a story of how a widow of a school inspector becomes a masseuse due to the military authorities’ actions against her and her daughter.

*Para Priyayi, Sebuah Novel* [The Priyayi, a novel]

*Para Priyayi*, published in 1992, became an immediate commercial success and has been reprinted in many editions. It is a generational novel played out against the background of Indonesia’s twentieth-
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century history. The family’s founder is the teacher Sastrodarsono, a person of humble peasant origins. Thanks to his parents’ ambitions and the help of the local patron, Ndoro Senen, he is sent to the teachers’ training institute in Madiun where he graduates. Returning home before taking his first position, he is quickly married off to Ngaisah, a girl of the lower priyayi class, but well situated culturally within the priyayi world. At that time he changes his name from Soedarsono to Sastrodarsono (sastro = letters). From her he learns how a true priyayi behaves.

Sastrodarsono has three children, two sons and a daughter, and one foster child, Lantip. The youngest son is Hardojo. One of the chapters goes in more detail into Hardojo’s failure in the courtship of a Solo beauty, Dik Nunuk, who is a Christian. In essence the engagement fails because neither is willing to give up their religion in order to marry. The two families are equally committed to their respective religions and neither will agree to a civil wedding. Disappointed in love, Hardojo meets a student, Sumarti, whom he later marries. At this time he has an interview with the educational section of the Mangkunegaran, the minor palace of Surakarta, and accepts a place teaching there.

Time passes quickly and by 1940 Hardojo has been working for seven years at the Mangkunegaran and has a five-year-old son, Harimurti. On his visits to his grandfather’s house Harimurti becomes quite enamored of Lantip’s stories and songs and especially of the wayang. After secondary school Harimurti continues his studies at Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta. He is truly a modern man with a taste for traditional music and drama of Java. He and an adopted child, Sunaryo, are good friends. They both are strongly drawn to dance-drama, music, art, and at that time the growing influence of the Marxian trends represented by Lekra. He is quick to describe others as feudal and out-of-date, especially the priyayi class. Harimurti becomes attached to a young, Marxist-orientated female writer, Marasinem, known as ‘Gadis.’ This is the time of the controversy between Lekra and the Cultural Manifesto. Harimurti and Gadis are part of the intellectual left of the period. Their relationship deepens from talk of socialist art to a love affair. Harimurti visits her parents who live in modest circumstances outside of Yogyakarta. In the meantime Lantip, who is still good at tembang and singing, marries Halimah in a simple ceremony.

The following day the coup attempt takes place in Jakarta. The revolting officers are quickly dispersed and the rounding up of known sympathizers begins. Harimurti is subsequently arrested and thus
Appendix I

completely separated from both family and his loved one. The family mobilizes support, mainly through Lantip, and Harimurti is freed from prison but remains under house arrest. Of Gadis there is no word. One only knows that she is part of the Communist women’s organization Gerwani. After several months of waiting, the family discovers that she is in the prison at Plantungan. Lantip is sent to meet her and finds her in the late stages of pregnancy. She asks only for a better place to give birth to the awaited child. Before Harimurti’s uncle Noegroho can arrange for her to be moved, she dies giving birth to twins.

Jalan Menikung [Twisted road]
The novel continues the story of the Sastrodarsono family. By the time the book opens Harimurti has married Sulistaningsih and they have a 20 year-old-son, Eko, who is studying at Sunnybrook College in Connecticut. Lantip and Halimah live nearby in Jakarta. Yet even a quarter of a century after the events, the stigmatization of involvement with what had become known as G30S/PKI (the events of September 30, 1965) raises its ugly head. Because he is not considered as having cleansed himself (bersih diri), political pressure forces Harimurti’s boss to ask him to resign from his current position. Despite the family’s not insignificant connections, employment for Harimurti is impossible. To avoid passing the stigma to his son and by implication future generations, Eko is advised to remain in the United States. This he does and lands a promising position with a publisher in New York City. In the meantime he has become intimate with Claire, Professor Levin’s daughter. He has been lodging at the professor’s house during his college days, and eventually the couple marry when it is learned that Claire is expecting a child. They decide to visit Eko’s family before the baby is born.

The second half of the novel relates their visit in Indonesia with Harimurti’s family, the most dominate being Tommi, obviously a stand-in for Tommy Soeharto. In addition to descriptions of riches, lechery, and corruption, the story centers about Tommi’s plans to build an adequate monument to the founder of the clan, Sastrodarsono, in Wanagalih near Maduin. The monument, complete with Italian marble and all the trimmings, would be more appropriate for a Renaissance prince than a Javanese schoolteacher, but shows the power of new money strewn about in sufficient quantities. Umar Kayam’s description of the elaborate ceremony marking the opening of the finished mausoleum is a testament to the extravagantly bad taste of New Order pseudo-traditions in which money and power are the major com-
ponents. This is underscored by the contrast between the long line of luxurious motor cars driving up to the air-conditioned festive tents for the Jakarta visitors which pass through the hot, dusty, and pot-holed back roads of Wanagalih and the inevitable gaggle of undernourished village children hoping to share the leftovers. The contrast is made even more striking with the visit a few weeks later to the grave of Lantip’s father-in-law on Sumatra, an unpretentious, somewhat neglected but real resting place. The novel ends with the return of Eko and Claire and the birth of their son, Solomon, celebrated in the heavy snows. Autumn has become winter in Connecticut.

YUDHISTIRA A.N.M. MASSARDI

Mencoba Tidak Menyerah [Try not to surrender]

Yudhistira A.N.M. Massardi’s novel *Mencoba Tidak Menyerah*, published in 1979, relates how a relatively well-off family sinks into poverty after a rumor has spread that the father is a Communist. The action takes place in a smaller city on Java during the course of a year, from August 1965 to October 1966.

The head of the family is a hard-working person who owns a bicycle repair shop and is also the manager for the district’s cooperative. This is a distribution cooperative which furnishes the near-by villages with household goods. The man is also the agent for the Communist newspapers *Harian Rakjat* and *Warta Bhakti*. They are sold by his children and the other children in the town. The father is a strict family head. He is also ambitious in that he wants his children to obtain a higher education. The oldest son already studies at a university in Yogyakarta.

After the failed coup attempt in Jakarta in October 1965, a persecution of Communists breaks out. One day the rumor spreads that the father is a Communist. A mob storms their house and it is burned to the ground. The father’s tools are also destroyed. The family leaves what is left of the house and take refuge in a friend’s house. The father again opens a bicycle repair shop, but business does not go well. People avoid them. The family is stigmatized. The situation is exacerbated when a newspaper article names the father as a Communist who is now attempting to become head of the subdistrict. It is only a question of time before he is arrested. In the beginning he is kept at the District Military Command (Kodim), only to be moved subsequently to a prison outside the town. After that, he is put into a labor camp in the mountains and then moved back to Kodim.
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During the father’s absence the family tries to support itself on its own. The oldest son comes home from Yogyakarta for a visit but quickly returns in fear of also becoming stigmatized. Ultimately the father is allowed to come home but still must report daily to the office of the lurah. During one of his visits there he disappears and the family never see him again. The loss of their father results in the family sinking into degrading poverty.
Appendix II

Notes on the authors

AHMAD TOHARI

Ahmad Tohari was born in Tinggarjaya, Banyumas, Central Java in 1948. After many years in Jakarta he returned to Tinggarjaya in 1994 where he still lives. His first major work, Di Kaki Bukit Cibalak [At the foot of Cibalak mountain], was awarded a literary distinction by the Jakarta Arts Council in 1977 and was subsequently published in 1986 by Pustaka Jaya. The book’s plot updates the situation in Indonesia, which may explain Gramedia’s decision to come out with a new edition in 1994. The novel focuses on a corrupt village chief or lurah and his misuse of power. It describes how the state’s increased control over villages, in concert with large doses of foreign aid, led to comprehensive corruption. The next issue which Tohari took up for debate was the pariah status of the political prisoners from the events of 1965–66 who were released in the mid-1970s. The theme of these works is that in many cases the individuals were innocent, often even in two senses: they were not Communists and in addition had acted in the usual Indonesian manner by following and obeying authority. This subject is dealt with in the novel Kubah (1980) and in the Dukuh Paruk trilogy (Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk; Lintang Kemukus Dini Hari; Jantera Bianglala published in 1982, 1985, and 1986 respectively).

The short story anthology Senyum Karyamin [Karyamin’s smile] appeared at the end of the 1980s. The stories focus on poverty-stricken people and their vulnerability within the context of Indonesian
development and social alterations. These are not always easy to understand and not everyone participated in the improvements in living standards, as is illustrated in the novel *Bekisar Merah* [Red Bekisar, 1993]. The following year saw publication of an anthology of stories entitled *Mas Mantri Gugat* [Mas Mantri accuses], consisting of some 40 vignettes which had originally been published in *Amanah* in 1993. The stories contain strong social criticism, many of them dealing with thorny political issues. Several years later a sequel appeared, *Mas Mantri Menjenguk Tuhan* [Mas Mantri seeks God, 1997], concentrating on ethical questions within religious, political, social, and cultural life. In 1990 Tohari participated in an advanced educational program as a Fellow at the highly respected writers school at the University of Iowa in the United States.

His most recent books include *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air* and *Orang-Orang Proyek*. The former touches upon the beginnings of the Darul Islam revolt. This had its origins in a clash at Ambarawa between the Indonesian national army, then fighting for independence, and the Islamic forces – leading ultimately to a prolonged struggle which took place mostly in West Java. The novel follows a few of the fighters in their isolated flight to the mountains. The other book, *Orang-Orang Proyek*, raises the question of corruption in a plan to build a bridge. In it, the major figure, a young idealist engineer, refuses to acquiesce in the project leaders’ plan to award much of the materials to local lobby groups and politicians, thus leaving the bridge with substandard construction norms. He resigns from the project. A year later, on a chance visit to the bridge site, he discovers that it has been ‘closed for repairs.’

**AJIP ROSIDI**

Ajip Rosidi was born in 1938 in Jatiwangi, West Java. In the beginning he was engaged in the literary group *Angkatan Terbaru* [The newest generation] which maintained that one should deal with Indonesian culture and not let oneself become inspired by Western authors. During this stage he published five collections of short stories on life in the countryside often characterized by insensitive relations between people. Later, he changed to poetry and often depicted meetings between the traditional world and modern Western or Westernized society in which the former had to give way to the latter. He was also a sharp observer of
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how conditions of the poor were becoming increasingly perilous in modern Indonesia.

During the New Order Ajip Rosidi contributed as an organizer within Indonesia’s cultural life. He became head of the publishing house Pustaka Jaya in 1971, a company which received its start-up capital from the city of Jakarta and was also chairman of the prestigious Jakarta Arts Council. In 1981 he left Indonesia to take a position as visiting professor at Osaka Foreign Languages University in Japan where has been resident ever since. He has, however, continued his writing and participation in Sundanese cultural life.

Early on Ajip Rosidi distanced himself from the politicizing of art which took place during the Sukarno era. An unwillingness to become involved in politics resulted in his refusal to sign the cultural manifesto for the freedom of the arts, the so-called Manifes Kebudajaan. He rightly saw this as being directed at President Sukarno’s control over the nation’s cultural life and the Communist Party’s increasing influence over the president. When the chief of staff of the armed forces, General Nasution, showed interest in a large conference which the signers of the manifesto were going to hold, President Sukarno banned the Manifes Kebudajaan. The writers who had signed the manifesto were open to reprisals.

The novel *Anak Tanahair*, published in 1985, is written from the background of Ajip Rosidi’s own experiences in the early 1960s. It deals with a young artist who attempts to steer clear of the politicizing of the arts and cultural life but who is inexorably drawn into it.

ASHADI SIREGAR

Ashadi Siregar was a student activist in the early 1970s. When the Yogyakarta student newspaper *Sendi* was banned in 1971, Ashadi Siregar turned to popular literature. He was then a lecturer at Gadjah Mada University. In 1979 he published the novel *Jentera Lepas*, which draws parallels between student demonstrations of the 1970s and how these were crushed by the army with the political left of the 1960s and how these students were annihilated by the army in 1965–66. It highlights the sufferings of the victims of the 1965–66 purge.
Appendix II

HR. BANDAHARO

Hr. Bandaharo was born in 1917 in Medan, Sumatra. By the 1950s he had become a leading figure within the Communist cultural institute Lekra. After the army took power in 1965–66 Bandaharo was detained and eventually transported to the notorious prison island Buru in the Moluccas where he remained for many years. Since his release he has published a poetry anthology concerning these dark years for the country’s Communists under the title *Dosa Apa* [What sin?]. It was published by the small publishing house Inkultra.

NH. DINI

Nh. Dini (b. 1936) hails from Semarang, Java. She married a French diplomat and spent many years abroad. Since 1980 she has resided in Indonesia.

Nh. Dini is a very popular writer. She writes about women for women with the repeated theme of women’s subordination *vis-à-vis* men and the problems this brings about for them. Nh. Dini throws light on the inequality between the sexes which at least in Indonesia has support in the country’s legal system.

Among her earlier works are the short story ‘La Barka’ in 1976 and the novel *Pelabuhan hati* [Harbor of the heart, 1978]. The novel *Jalan Bandungan* (1989) deals with the problems confronted by the next-of-kin of the political prisoners of 1965–66.

PRAMOEDYA ANANTA TOER

Pramoedya Ananta Toer was born in 1925 in Blora, East Java. He is Indonesia’s greatest writer and has been nominated for the Nobel Prize in literature. Pramoedya’s output includes some two dozen literary works, as well as historical presentations and translations. His first long work was the novel *Keluarga Gerilja* [A guerilla family] in 1950 and the novelette *Perburuan* [Pursuit] which earned him the Balai Pustaka Prize the same year.
The novel *Korupsi* [Corruption] deals with a state civil servant who is faced with the dilemmas that his salary does not suffice to support his family and whether he should take bribes as do all his colleagues. *Cerita dari Blora* [Stories from Blora] is a collection of short stories from his childhood in Blora. One of them, ‘Dia yang menyerah’ contains a damning picture of Communist inhumanity to fellow human beings in Indonesia.

In 1956 Pramoedya traveled to China where he was impressed by the revolutionary changes taking place there. He was active within the Indonesian political left and became editor of Lekra’s magazine. In connection with the publication of the Manifes Kebudajaan he became one of its sharpest critics, thus winning him many enemies. When the purge against Communists started in the autumn of 1965, Pramoedya was arrested. After two years’ imprisonment, he was transported to Buru where he was detained for ten years, released finally in 1979. During his years on Buru he wrote two novels on racism in the Dutch East Indies and on the awakening of the independence movement subsequently titled *Bumi Manusia* [This earth of mankind] and *Anak Semua Bangsa* [Child of all nations]. The two novels were published by Hastra Mitra, in which Pramoedya was a part owner. They became immediately bestsellers. When a third book, *Jejak Langkah* [Footsteps], was to be published it was declared illegal by the authorities, a fate retrospectively imposed on the first two volumes. Pramoedya became a nonperson in Indonesia’s literary life. During his subsequent house arrest in Jakarta Pramoedya wrote the fourth part of the tetralogy, *Rumah Kaca* [Glasshouse], which was published in Malaysia. He also wrote an autobiography on his years on Buru under the title *Nyanyi Sunyi Seorang Bisu. Catatan–catatan dari P. Buru* [The mute’s soliloquy. Notes from the island of Buru], which was published in 1995 in Indonesia. Only after President Soeharto’s fall in 1998 was Pramoedya freed from the last of the restrictions imposed upon former political prisoners.

**PUTU OKA SUKANTA**

Putu Oka Sukanta was born in 1939 in Singaraja, Bali. During the 1960s he was active in Lekra and through the cultural institute published the poetry collection *Jembatan Merah* [The red bridge]. At the end of the 1960s Putu Oka was arrested and subsequently lived for many years as a political prisoner in Salemba prison, Jakarta. Upon being released he moved back to Bali where he opened
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a practice for alternative medicine. During imprisonment he had learnt acupuncture from a Chinese doctor who was a fellow prisoner.

In the collections of poems *Selat Bali* [The straits of Bali, 1982] and *Tembang Jalak Bali* [Song of the starling, 1986], Putu Oka portrays his time as a political prisoner, as well as the difficulties in becoming accepted by society after his release. The novel *Merajut Harkat* (1999) sketches his experiences as a political prisoner.

**PUTU WIJAYA**

Putu Wijaya, born on Bali in 1938, is one of Indonesia's most important and prolific authors. Although he writes mostly antirealist fiction and drama, the short story 'Darah' is the narrative of a girl who is cared for by relatives after her parents disappeared during the purge against Communists in 1965.

**UMAR KAYAM**

Umar Kayam was born in 1932 in Ngawi, East Java. He studied at Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta in the 1950s and continued with graduate studies in the United States, where he earned a Ph.D. in sociology at Cornell University in 1965. After he returned to Indonesia he worked for the Ministry of Information between 1966 and 1969 where he was in charge of the radio–TV–film unit. In 1969 he became chairman of the Jakarta Arts Council and several years later a professor at Gadjah Mada University.

Umar Kayam began to write short stories set in the United States in which he portrays the lack of human contact in Western society and its characteristic loneliness. They were published in 1972 under the title *Seribu Kunang-Kunang di Manhattan* [A thousand fireflies in Manhattan]. The events of 1965–66 and its aftermath have left their traces in his writings and he has dealt with this theme in many works. The story 'Bawuk' is thought to have been written in 1966 and some years later it was published in *Horison*. It focuses on a young woman from the higher
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priyayi milieu who is driven into the Communist sphere and finds herself in flight. The short story ‘Musim Gugur Kembali di Connecticut’ [Autumn returns in Connecticut] is dated December 1967, when Umar Kayam was in Hawaii. The story describes the repeated arrests of the country’s intelligentsia during the first years of the New Order. The novelette Sri Sumarah was published in 1975. One of the most analyzed works in modern Indonesian literature, it never ceases to fascinate readers in its portrayal of the Javanese world. At the same time it takes up an important social problem for debate: namely, the arbitrary confiscation of land which was done in connection with the purge of Communists and left-wing sympathizers in 1965–66. Umar Kayam returned to the theme of the events of 1965 in the novel Para Priyayi (1992) which includes pleas for a reconciliation within Indonesian society and for a stop to the on-going discrimination toward the former political prisoners, a theme predominating his last novel, Jalan Menikung (1999).

YUDHISTIRA ANM MASSARDI

Yudhistira ANM Massardi (Yudhistira Ardi Noegraha) was born in 1954 in Subang, West Java. In 1977 he received a prize from the Jakarta Arts Council for his manuscript, ‘Aku Bukan Komunis’ [I am not a Communist]. Two years later Gramedia published it under the title Mencoba Tidak Menyerah [Try not to surrender]. A new edition followed in 1996, this time by Bentang Budaya in Yogyakarta.

Mencoba Tidak Menyerah relates how a relatively well-off family in a small Javanese town sinks into poverty when the rumor spreads that the father is a Communist. The father is arrested, interned, and eventually is allowed to return home, but in the end disappears during the daily reporting to the local officials. He is never heard of again.

The author has never returned to the theme of the victims of the killings in 1965–66, but has concentrated on the glittery life in Jakarta, as in his novel Arjuna Cari Cinta [Arjuna seeking love, 1977]. Yudhistira Ardi Noegraha is a productive writer with a dozen novels published and almost as many short stories.
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